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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND BANGLADESH: THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT

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ABSTRACT

Bangladesh is one of the fastest growing economies among the countries with similar nature. The country has made a notable progress during the MDG era despite several political and environmental challenges. At the end of MDG a new era has just begun with much more diversified targets called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG is a transformative, universal agenda with an overarching imperative of 'leaving no one behind' and requires each country to commit to her own agenda and priorities with a monitoring and reporting mechanism. At the same time the SDG also puts massive challenges to all countries to ensure financing and effective implementation by incorporating SDG in to the national policies. This document tries to identify what important role Bangladesh Parliament, as the supreme law making and oversight body of the executives, can play to i) identify national priorities for the country and ii) ensure effective monitoring and implementation of these global targets. The SDG has just begun as well as many analysis and activities of the world community. At the beginning of the process each country and its oversight body has some role to play. This document tries to identify those initial priorities that in Bangladesh the Parliament should take at the soonest.

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INTRODUCTION

The world leaders in September 2015 agreed and signed off new global targets as, the post 2015 development agenda called Sustainable Development Agenda (SDGs). This SDG has 17 much-diversified targets. The Goals and targets are more comprehensive and inter-related in comparison with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The SDGs like MDG will continue the fight against extreme poverty, adding the challenges of ensuring more equitable development and environmental sustainability. In addition to this, the SDG brings a new dimension in to these global targets by adding 'Governance' as a separate goal and making the quality of governance crucial to ensure the progress of other goals. This emphasize on how much states need qualitative focus in the current development agenda than before. No doubt the SDGs set an ambitious new agenda for the world community but implementation is what matters. SDG is a transformative, universal agenda with an overarching imperative of 'leaving no one behind'. These goals will be the center of the development for next 15 years.

The SDGs built on the success of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and aim to go further to end all forms of poverty. This is unique in a way that it requires all countries of the world to act upon and make sure the progress despite poor, developing and developed. The SDG recognizes that only focusing on ending poverty doesn't ensure sustainable growth. But it requires plan and long-term strategies to ensure economic growth and address other social needs, for an example, education, health, social protection, employment opportunities, environmental protection among others. This also poses a huge challenge on the world community, as it requires additional financing to ensure effective implementation. According to UN estimation approximately \$172.5 trillion¹ is required for implementing SDG over a period of 15 years; to this estimation \$11.5 trillion will require each year which is not a easy thing to ensure. This requires enabling environment for more investment, be it public, private or foreign and business to grow with proper governance mechanism so that no single penny is wasted. Bangladesh with its current stable GDP growth rate and

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¹Countdown to September Summit on SDGs: The Financial Express; Publish 26 August 2015; <http://thefinancialexpress-bd.com/2015/08/26/105314>

poverty declining is relatively in a better position than many other countries in the similar ranking, however, ensuring additional financing remain the key challenge for Bangladesh. Nevertheless, the government of Bangladesh like MDGs is also committed to achieve the goals of post-2015 development agenda (SDG).

Sustainable Development Goals and Bangladesh

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress during the era of MDGs. It has become a role model to the world community. According to the Bangladesh Government MDG Progress Report 2015 it has met targets like reducing headcount poverty and poverty gap ratio, reducing the prevalence of underweight children, attaining gender parity at primary and secondary education, under-five mortality rate reduction, increasing enrolment at primary schools, lowering the infant mortality rate and maternal mortality ratio, improving immunization coverage and reducing the incidence of communicable diseases among others. However, the report also highlighted where the country need more attention. These areas includes hunger-poverty reduction and employment generation, increases in primary school completion and adult literacy rates, ensuring quality education at all levels, creation of decent wage employment for women, increase in the presence of skilled health professionals at delivery, increase in correct and comprehensive knowledge on HIV/AIDS, increase in forest coverage, and coverage of Information and Communication Technology². According to a World Development Indicators by World Bank published in July 2015 showed that the country has moved up to a lower-middle income country, by joining those with annual incomes ranging between \$1,046 to \$ 4,125³.

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the per capita income in Bangladesh rose from \$1,190 in FY 2013-14 to \$1,316 in FY 2014-2015.⁴ The current government had targeted to transform Bangladesh into a middle-income country, under its "Vision 2021". In the classification committee meeting held on 17 June 2015 the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) upgraded the overall country ratings for Bangladesh by one notch (category 5 from category 6) for the resilience by its economy and the high and stable growth for well over a decade despite political upheaval and external demand.⁵ This upgrade puts Bangladesh just behind India but ahead of other South Asian Countries i. e. Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar and Mongolia. The above global prediction shows that the country is heading towards achieving a world acknowledgment of a strong economy. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the 2015 Outlook Updated Report forecasted that Bangladesh is

headed in the right direction to secure 6.7% GDP growth in the 2015-16 fiscal year.



The UN has estimated that \$172.5 trillion⁶ is required for implementing SDG over a period of 15 years; according to this estimation \$11.5 trillion will require each year. The UNCTAD (UN Commission for Trade and Development) calculated that yearly financing gap for developing countries will be \$2.5 trillion. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) estimated that Asia and the Pacific region would require at least \$1.0 trillion per year to finance the targets of the SDG while the Official Development Assistance (ODA) of this region is still below \$30 billion. According to World Bank, Bangladesh would require an additional investment of up to \$93.9 billion per year to achieve the SDGs.⁷ The country has successful experience in achieving MDGs. Bangladesh was made as a role model to the world community in achieving MDGs. However, MDG targets were based on low-cost solutions, whereas, the SDGs are not at all economical. In addition to that MDGs were not applicable to developed countries as much as the SDGs are, which means, the developed countries will also have to spend a remarkable portion of their resources for their own development, which will lower down the curve of foreign investment to other countries. The global economic context has also changes extremely due to rise of more extremist groups, the Middle East crisis, migration crisis etc. The SDG put very strong emphasize on sustainability, 10 out of 17 goals are focused on sustainability, which requires quality of the progress more than quantity. These factors will have great impact on all countries of the world in achieving SDGs. Bangladesh will face more difficulties in this regard than many other countries of the world. The reasons are obvious

- Bangladesh would try to at least keep the MDG achievement progress ratio in achieving SDGs, which will require either acquiring or generating more resources as soon as possible to meet the gap, and
- The country has to maintain its current status for next 5 to 6 years to be categorized as a middle-income country. Bangladesh very successfully has recently come out of the group of least developed countries and introduced itself in the group of lower middle-income countries.

These 2 dynamics will very strongly drive the social, economic and political context of the country in coming future and will pose massive challenge to continue its development at least in the same pace, if not more. The 70th UN General Assembly set out common 5 key challenges to address with effective initiatives to achieve the SDGs, those are ⁸– i) SDG integration in the national planning process, ii) financial and

² General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, (2015), Millennium Development Goals, Bangladesh Progress Report 2015, Dhaka, Bangladesh

³ World Development Indicators by World Bank: <http://wdi.worldbank.org/table/1.1>

⁴ Metropolitan Chamber and Commerce and Industry; CHAMBER NEWS Issue 03, March 2016: WB Global Economic Prospects (GEP) Report, January 2016 (*The Daily Sun 2nd July 2015: Bangladesh Moves up to Lower Middle Income Country*)

⁵ Bangladesh Higher in OECD ranking; The Daily Star, 3 July 2015 <http://www.thedailystar.net/business/bangladesh-higher-oecd-rankings-106600>

⁶ Countdown to September Summit on SDGs: The Financial Express; 26 August 2015; <http://thefinancialexpress-bd.com/2015/08/26/105314>

⁷ SDGs: Financing gap is \$94b: The Daily Star, 21 March 2016; <http://www.thedailystar.net/business/sdgs-financing-gap-94b-1197175>

⁸ CPD spells out five key challenges to achieve SDGs; The Daily Sun, online desk, 5 October 2015; <http://www.daily-sun.com/post/80808/CPD>

non financial resources, iii) institutional mechanism for implementation, iv) data for monitoring and v) participation and accountability. These are equally applicable for Bangladesh. However, Bangladesh has little advantage as it has already taken initiative to align SDGs into the 7FYP. Both SDG and 7FYP were formulated in 2015 that gave Bangladesh a good opportunity to integrate. The General Economic Division has done a rigorous analysis to identify how much we are aligned with the goals and targets of SDG with our various national developments plans. For an example, according to GED – 9

- 33.14% SDG targets and only 17.90% indicators are aligned with 7FYP,
- 21.89% SDG targets and 11.79% indicators are partially aligned, and
- 38.46% SDG targets and 60.26% indicators are not aligned at all.
- 6.51% SDG targets and 10.04% indicators are not relevant for Bangladesh

However, 7FYP is not the only development plan Bangladesh has. Other available development plans, for examples, are

- National Social Security Strategy
- National Food Policy
- National Health Policy
- Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Development Programme
- National Women's Development Policy
- Power System Master Plan
- National Skill Development Policy
- National Sustainable Development Strategy
- Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
- National Plan for Disaster Management

The challenge is to guarantee integration of SDGs into various national development plans, currently existing in Bangladesh and will be formulated in future for an effective implementation plan. However, even after full integration of SDG with our national plan and policy the question remains how to ensure quality of the progress. As stated above the SDGs are more about quality than quantity. How Bangladesh ensure qualitative aspects of SDG reporting, particularly on Goal 16 that talks about governance, justice, security, peaceful society, inclusive decision making and most importantly effective institutions. Vision 2021, which is also a guiding principle for the current government recognizes key role for governance institutions in implementing the plan and highlights reform of the civil service and other central institutions as well as combating corruption. Vision 2021 commits to: 1) guarantee the rule of law; 2) avoid political partisanship; and 3) build a society free of corruption. The plan outlines the need to develop civic participation as a key constituent part of stability and middle income status with the

⁹Inter-ministerial Report (December 2015) on Consultation on Integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the 7th Five Year Plan by General Economic Division (GED) and Supported by SSIP Project of UNDP at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

development of a “culture of democracy - a primary focus of governance.”

Sustainable Development Goals and Parliament:

“The SDGs and targets are integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. Targets are defined as aspirational and global, with each government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances. Each government will also decide how these aspirational and global targets should be incorporated in national planning processes, policies and strategies. It is important to recognize the link between sustainable development and other relevant ongoing processes in the economic, social and environmental fields.” - The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN 2015)¹⁰

The SDG emphasize on inclusive, peaceful and right-based society. It requires all stakeholders to work together to promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection to all, including men, women, children, youth and also coming generations. This is an universal agenda and requires an integrated approach to sustainable development and collective action, at all levels, to address the challenges, with an overarching imperative of ‘*leaving no one behind*’ and addressing inequalities and discrimination as the essential feature. The SDGs integrates all three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.” The SDGs are universally applicable but each government has to set its own national targets and monitoring mechanism guided by this universal agenda but taking into account the country specific context. Each government has also to decide how this global agenda to be incorporated in national planning process and policies. This SDG aim sat a world of equity, non-discrimination, peaceful that protect human rights. Thus it puts much emphasize on the governance issues. Parliament, as an institution of democracy has a great role to play in order to make the SDGs effectively successful. The Rio+20 outcome document “The Future We Want” have also put stress on democratic governance, human rights and the participation of all stakeholders in building an inclusive model for sustainable development. Parliament as a national independent body is at the very suitable position to ensure democratic governance as well as quality of development. The basic mandate of Parliament of law making, oversight and representation brings Parliament at the center of development agenda. In addition to this, budget approval is another important mandate of the Parliament that is very much crucial for effective implementation of SDG.

Example of some good practices

- **UK:** The Parliament passed a bill that enshrines in law its commitment to spend 0.7% of its gross national income (GNI) on ODA every year (March 2015).

¹⁰ Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; Interim Reference Guide to UN Country Teams; United Nations Development Group 7 October 2015

- **Pakistan:** An SDG Task Force was established in the National Assembly to promote debates, engage, and increase awareness of MPs on the SDGs.
- **Trinidad and Tobago:** The Parliament established a new Joint Select Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development.
- **Zambia:** MPs in Parliament formed a SDGs caucus (July 2015).
- **Africa:** MPs adopt the African Parliamentary Declaration on the Post 2015, assuring their commitment to cooperation towards achieving the SDGs in the region (May 2015).
- **Germany:** Parliament established The Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development with each legislature. With responsibilities for monitoring and supporting the Federal Government's National Sustainability Strategy as well as monitoring and supporting the Federal Government's sustainability policy at the European level.

The Parliamentary System in Bangladesh

Bangladesh Parliament, as often referred, as Jatiya Sangsad is the supreme independent law making body of the country. The current structure of the Jatiya Sangsad is comprised with 350 seats including 50 reserve seats for women, to promote women's political and leadership participation. These reserved seats are distributed to political parties in proportion to their overall share of the votes received in general elections. In accordance with the constitutional amendment (Fifteenth Amendment Act) passed by parliament on 30 June 2011, the number of seats reserved has increased from 45 to 50, bringing the total number of seats to 350. The Constitution of the country originally provided for reserving 5.0% of total seats for women; the percentage was increased to 10% in 1979, 15% in 2005 and 16.7% in 2011.¹¹ The Constitution of the country, however, does not impose any restriction on women to contest from general seats. In fact, the number of women elected on popular votes has also increased over the years – from 4 in 1991 to 19 in 2008. The Bangladesh Parliament so far had enacted 1152 bills between 1973 and 2012, among which only 7 were private members' bills; the rest, government bills. The constitution of the country bestows the parliament with ultimate power in law making, allocate national budget and ensure accountability of the executive branch.

Bangladesh Parliament is the symbol of independence of the country in 1971. History of Bangladesh Parliament revealed that the first Legislative Council was formed during the British Colonial Rules in 1861. However the growth of Bangladesh Parliament faced a lot of barriers due to several structural changes, procedural and political constraints, change of powers and rule of Pakistani Government (1947-71). In 1971, Bangladesh achieves independence through 9 months bloodshed. The Awami League formed the first parliament in 1973 with the great leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. In the 45 years of independence, the history of Bangladesh Parliament revolved between electoral democracy and military rule. Bangladesh is now having its

10th Parliament. In Bangladesh the Parliament has been playing a key role since 1971 in shaping the country as it looks like today. It has scrutinized and enacted a number of laws that promoted governance in the country. For example it includes but not limited to from recent past - The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2009; Money-laundering Prevention Act, 2009; Anti-Terrorism Act, 2009; Right to Information Act, 2009; Consumer Protection Act, 2009; the Overseas Employment Migrants' Act, 2013 and the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2009 (Sangshad Bulletin, 2012). The National Human Rights Commission and Right to Information Act 2009 and the National Integrity Strategy not only enhances the ability of citizens to participate in government programmes but also enhances the power of civil society to ensure accountability of government officials towards its citizens. Currently the 10th Parliament, elected on January 2014 is in power with AL led Alliance keeping Sheikh Hasina as the Prime Minister. As stated above the Constitution of the country bestows massive power to the Parliament; it has three major roles to play – law making, representative and oversight that makes it a most critical organization to ensure sustainable development of the country. According to Article 65 (1) of the constitution - There shall be a Parliament for Bangladesh (to be known as the House of the Nation) in which, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, shall be vested the legislative powers of the Republic

Law making:

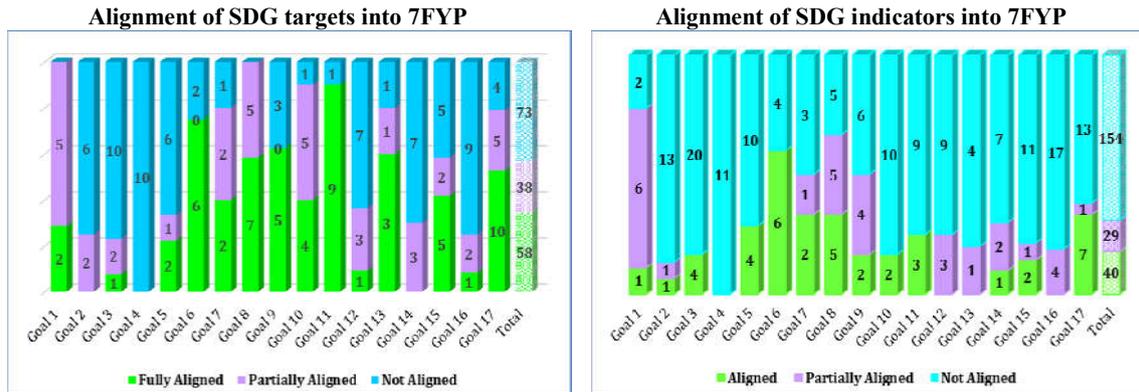
Law making is one of the most important mandates of the Parliament and empowered by the constitutions. According to Article 65 (1) as stated above as well as Article 80 give Parliament the authority to scrutinize, recommend and make sure suitable laws for the country. Parliament does not make any law, rather, any law before its enactment places at the Parliament as draft bill for review and scrutinize. Parliament has the authority to make any amendment seems necessary to ensure public friendly laws. Apart from this, there are provisions in the Constitutions to form number of Standing Committees who also has the authority to scrutinize any draft bill before it places to the Parliament. According to Article 76 (2) Standing Committees are empowered to examine draft bills and any other legislative proposals.

Oversight

Parliament has several mechanisms to perform its oversight functions over the executives. However, the Standing Committees have the most responsibility in to this oversight process. The Article 76 (2) empowers Standing Committees to – *'review the enforcement of laws and propose measures for such enforcement'*. According to Article 76 (2/C) - *in relation to any matter referred to it by Parliament as a matter of public importance, investigate or inquire into the activities or administration of a Ministry and may require it to furnish, through an authorized representative, relevant information and to answer questions, orally or in writing.* Apart from this, individual Members of Parliament also has the right to ask any question/clarifications during the session, to even the Prime Minister. All Ministers, MPs including Prime Minister is obliged to provide any clarification or answer to any questions raised by any MP in the Parliament.

¹¹<https://www.psa.ac.uk/psa-communities/specialist-groups/parliaments-and-legislatures/blog/jatiya-sangsad-parliament>

Table 1.



Source: Inter-ministerial Report on Consultation on Integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the 7th Five Year Plan by General Economic Division (GED) and Supported by SSIP Project of UNDP at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Table 2. At a glance of Bangladesh Parliamentary evolution 1972 – 2014

Parliament	Elected (Year)	Political System, Elected Majority Party, Head of Government
1972-1974: Parliamentary Democracy Provisional Constitutional Order 1972 Bangladesh Constitution 1972		
First	1973	Awami League (AL) Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Prime Minister
January 1975: Presidential form of Government 4th Amendment of the Constitution Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, President		
1975-1981: Military Rule (Presidential form of Government) Army Chief of Staff Major General Ziaur Rahman (Zia)		
Second	1979	Bangladesh nationalist party (BNP) Ziaur Rahman, President
1981-1982: Civilian Rule (Presidential form of Government) Justice Abdus Sattar, Acting President		
1982-1990: Military Rule (Presidential form of Government) Army Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Hussain Mohammed Ershad, President		
Third	1986	Jatiya Party (JP) Hossain Mohammad Ershad, President
Fourth	1988	Jatiya Party (JP) Hossain Mohammad Ershad, President
1991: Restoration of Parliamentary Democracy		
Fifth	1991	Bangladesh nationalist party (BNP) Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister
Sixth	1996	Bangladesh nationalist party (BNP) Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister
Seventh	1996	Awami League (AL) Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister
Eighth	2001	BNP led Four Party Alliance Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister
2007-2008: Military backed Caretaker Government		
Ninth	2009	AL led Grand Alliance Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister

An effective and functional opposition plays a vital role in this regard. The ninth Parliament made a revolution in the manner Standing Committees used to work. The ninth Parliament for the first time formed all Standing Committees necessary as per the Constitution and the Rules of Procedures (RoP) in the first sessions of the house and MPs including from opposition party were made chair of the committees where the ministers were made members. This further empowers the Standing Committees to better scrutiny of executive functions and also to avoid any clash of interest.

Representation:

Parliament is the only independent constitutional body that represents all the citizens of the country. It is the only organization that is to represent all citizens' demand, rights and interest. However, the constitution doesn't specifically state anything about this important role of the Parliament/Parliamentarians, nevertheless, as the Parliament forms with MPs who comes with people's mandate through elections, it's effectiveness and success mostly depends on how commendably it fulfill its mandate of representation.

Budget approval: Many scholars these days demand that Parliament has a fourth function that is as equally important as law making, oversight and representation. That is budget approving for a country.

Parliament each year approve development budget for the country, ensure required budget is allocated at required sectors. Parliament also ensure the execution of the allocated budget through oversee the ministry functions. MPs obtain a better overview of the situation in the country, allowing them to make informed decisions on priorities and goals for the future.

Sustainable Development Goals and Role of Parliament in Bangladesh

The above-mentioned functions put Parliament at the center position to ensure governance of any country, which is a prerequisite for attaining the high ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The existence of a parliament is not synonymous with democracy, but democracy cannot exist without a parliament.¹² At the same time Parliament is not synonymous to governance but without a working Parliament governance mechanisms are dysfunctional. The agenda of Sustainable Development is universal, transformative, integrated and inclusive. The SDG is accepted by world community but should be implemented by each country based on their own national priorities and without strong commitment of the Government SDG can't be transformed universally. SDG is a transformative, universal agenda with an

¹² UNDP/IPU Global Parliamentary Report, 2012

overarching imperative of 'leaving no one behind' which means people's participation in implementing SDGs are crucial in all 3 pillars of sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. This is perhaps the important reason that SDG unlike MDG emphasize much on governance and has a specific goal 16 on governance that requires each country to promote peace, security, justice and strong institutions. This is evident through many research and articles that without proper governance mechanism all-inclusive development, which is sustainable, cannot be ensured. The parliament as an important arm of the State has a crucial role in promoting and protecting democracy and governance thereby establishing not only the necessary check and balances, but also developing norms and standards for institutions of democracy and governance. The role of Parliament to promote and ensure governance has a great significance in a parliamentary democracy system as it is empowered to do so directly by the people of the country through general elections. Therefore, it has the great responsibility to implement the will of the people of the country and in exercising this mandate promoting and ensuring governance mechanism is the most effective way. For a better implementation of SDGs and to place Bangladesh again as a role model to world community Parliament has to make sure that the government is taking necessary measures and at the same time fulfilling people's demand through its oversight functions. It is one of the prime responsibilities of the Parliament. The purpose of this oversight is to make sure that the executive mechanisms are functioning with integrity, transparency and is accountable to the citizen of the country. There are other organs that does oversight of government functions, however, parliament is moderately in a better position to do this. According to the BIGD State of Governance Report 2014-2015 Parliament compares favorably with other institutions in exercising oversight for three broad reasons. *Firstly*, it can utilize more techniques than other organizations to make the government accountable for its actions. *Secondly*, it has better potential than the other oversight agencies to redress public grievances against wrongdoing by the government and its institutions. *Finally*, it is expected that, the public have greater access to the Parliament through their elected representatives than in other institutions capable of exercising oversight.¹³ Bangladesh Parliament like other Parliaments has Standing Committees to check on the government. Standing Committees are empowered to ask any executive branch any question in relation to their responsibilities. This system was established when the Parliamentary system restored in the country in 1990 and further empowered during the 9th Parliament when the chairmanship of such committees were given to MPs including opposition and Ministers were made members of the committee.

Important Role of Bangladesh Parliament

Parliament being a strong agent for change in Bangladesh can translate SDGs into enforceable national laws/policies that respond to country specific development priorities, monitor their implementation and ensure government is responsive to

people's demand and is at the same time accountable to the people for national progress on the SDGs. By regularly holding hearings and requesting plenary reports, Parliament can bring the SDGs to the attention of the public, media, CSO and others and thereby encouraging accountability at all levels. To ensure an integrated approach and make all actors accountable for SDG implementation, the parliamentarians can also offer a platform for communication among people, whom they represent, civil society and the government over the SDG issues. Parliament can also initiate an inclusive and participatory political dialogue to develop a national development vision. Through annual parliamentary reviews of proposed government expenditures, parliament can ensure adequate financial resources are allocated to the achievement of the post- 2015 objectives and that sustainable development priorities are reflected in national and local budgets. However, while SDG requires a strong commitment from parliament to engage effectively on SDG issues, it at the same time is important to take in to consideration the capacities of the parliament in fulfilling this mandate. The role of Parliament has also become crucial in the SDG era for incorporating Governance (Goal 16) as a separate goal, which aims at "building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions". Goal16 demonstrate an understanding that effective, accountable and inclusive institutions including Parliaments are not only important for their own sake, but are also crucial for the successful implementation of all other 16 goals of SDGs.

One of the important features of sustainable development is social sustainability which means inhabitants should be safeguarded social security and protection. The social security and protection can only be given and ensured by Government of one country. Here Parliament has to draw state policy as it ensure citizens primary needs of life like right to food, shelter, clothing, education, medical care, recreation and social and national security. Article 15 of the constitution of Bangladesh spells out the right to social security as follows: "--the right to social security, that is to say to public assistance in cases of undeserved want arising from unemployment, illness or disablement, or suffered by widows or orphans or in old age, or in other such cases." A basic element of development strategy in Bangladesh is to ensure the primary needs of life for all the inhabitants. And to ensure these rights followed by Constitution, Parliament has to formulated and enacted laws in the country. Effective parliamentary process can be framed by the strategy of governance as well as sound law and order, people public service, reinforced local governance, and a corruption free society with social justice. But without improvement of good policies and with poor governance, completion of Sustainable development will be enormously difficult. Implementing SDG by 2030, intensive engagement is needed in support of application of all the goals and targets. Every country endorses the need to bringing together governments, civil society, the private sector, the United Nations system and other actors and assembling all available resources in attaining SDGs. The scale and ambition set by the new agenda require the inclusion of new partners such as national parliaments, regional and local authorities, academia and volunteer groups. The revitalized global partnership will attempt to deliver the means of implementation through domestic public resources, domestic and international private

¹³The State of Governance Bangladesh 2014-2015; Institutions Outcomes Accountability: BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD)

business and finance, international development cooperation, international trade as an engine for development, debt and debt sustainability, addressing systemic issues and science, technology, innovation and capacity building, and data, monitoring and follow-up. Bangladesh Parliament, based on the above, can play below roles to ensure effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Parliamentarians can exercise a leadership role in policy formulation, the development of legislation and most importantly its implementation at national level. Parliamentarians represent citizens and can give expression to the will and voice of citizens.

- **Set National Priority and Turning SDG into reality:** SDG is a global target that will drive the world development for next 15 years. This requires each country to set their own agenda based on their priority that reflects their social, economic and political structure of each country. In Bangladesh, Parliament is at the suitable position to bring SDG to the citizen at both national and local level and engage all stakeholders to set national priorities and make all stakeholders accountable. Successful implementation of SDG is not only the responsibility of the government, rather all civil society members, NGOs, think tanks, academicians and other public, private organizations or platforms has equal role to play.
- **Ensure quality of SDGs:** parliament/parliamentarians through their oversight function can monitor government actions in relation to the progress of SDGs implementation. Parliament can bring SDG and its progress and the importance of ensuring quality to people's attention through bringing SDGs into various discussions including plenary and committee meetings. Parliament monitor and observe government's work and achievements. All relevant ministries reports back to parliament outlining how their expenditures contribute towards the policy priorities the parliament has endorsed. It is also a prime opportunity to solicit facts and statistics. By doing so, MPs will obtain a better overview of the situation in the country, allowing them to make informed decisions on priorities and goals for the future. In the case of the SDGs, debate and questioning will help find out which goals are most critical. MPs can then provide direction as to what plans and agendas are required to achieve the goals by the agreed 2030 deadline.
- **Ensure Financing:** Parliament as the authority to allocate national budget can ensure appropriate financing for SDG implementation, Parliament can analyze and identify areas of priority and allocate budget that ensures effective implementation. Implementation of SDGs requires allocation of enough resources to implement SDGs. Members of Parliament provide supports to allocate financial resource from government which ensures to keep rolling the development process. It is critical to place the SDGs on the agenda of the parliament in the early stages of budget discussions and debates. Parliamentarians are now attentive of the SDGs and can dedicate an amount of the national budget every year for implementing these goals. Before the yearly approval on the budget is

the perfect timing for MPs to raise the issue at the parliament sessions and campaign for a suitable share of the budget for SDGs.

- **Co-operation with executive power:** Integrating SDGs agenda in established national strategies obliges cooperation between the legislative and executive powers, by which the government and other state institutions provide the practical and technical support for the agenda approved by the parliament. In Germany there is a State's Secretary Committee on Sustainable Development this Committee rests with the Federal Chancellery, the main entity responsible for sustainable development at the national level. It works closely with ministries in shaping and implementing the national sustainable development strategy.
- **Form active partnerships:** Active partnerships are every important to attain this very high ambitious goals. It is not possible only for the government to ensure effective implementation as well as quality of the implementation. All partners and stakeholders have equal responsibility to take part in SDG implementation. Parliament can play a key role in this regard. It can form partnerships among different stakeholders including CSOs, academicians, business community, government, international development organizations and others. This can ensure adequate knowledge and experience flow required to ensure quality of SDG as well as finding new avenues to generate financing.
- **Ensure Governance:** 'Governance' is such a strong prerequisite for quality of SDGs, it can be backed by the endorsement of a specific goal 16 in the SDGs that emphasize on promoting governance, peace, justice, strong institutions. This goal is not just an individual goal like others but it is a tool and means to attain other 16 goals of SDGs. Parliament through its 3 important mandates can play a great role to ensure that the government is giving much emphasize on the governance mechanism in attaining SDGs. Parliament as the representative body of all citizens of the country it is their prime duty to uphold people's will and give it top most priority.
- **International Cooperation and Conference:** Another big duty of MPs is to maintain continuous communication with UN Bodies, development donors and partners. In implementing the SDGs, it is important to stay up to date on what is happening and where the agenda is heading. This can be achieved by being part of the international network working on the SDGs.
- **Cross Party Collaboration and forming a Parliamentary Caucus on SDGs:** Achieving SDGs as a county depends on collective work and shared efforts of a country. MPs from different parties who share the same interest in SDGs, or in one specific goal, can join forces and create cross-party group as a platform to discuss and support the SDGs.

Conclusion

The SDGs built on the success of the MDG but aims to go further. These new goals are global and unique; it requires all counties of the world, regardless of poor, developing,

developed, to act upon this. SDG recognized that only focusing on ending poverty would not bring sustainability that the world community intends to bring; rather it at the same time needs strong strategies for economic growth and addressing all other social needs. No countries are legally bound to implement SDGs, however, it is a global commitment by global leaders to make a better world for future. All countries are expected to take ownership and establish national framework to attain SDGs and at the same time ensure monitoring and quality reporting. Bangladesh as a signatory to this global agenda also share the same responsibility like others and the Parliament here has the most authorities with people's mandate to make sure an effective mechanism and success in this regard. There are many roles that Bangladesh Parliament can play, however, this document highlights few key roles that Parliament should take immediately.

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