

Joint Statement
on the Outcome of the Official Visit of
His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan,
to Bangladesh on 06-07 September, 2014

[Dhaka, 06 September, 2014]

I. Introduction:

01. His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan is on an official visit to Bangladesh from 06 to 07 September 2014 at the invitation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Earlier, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid an official visit to Japan on 25-28 May 2014 during which the bilateral relationship between the two countries was elevated to a new level by launching “Comprehensive Partnership” based on the shared values of peace, democracy, human rights and rule of law. During the visit the two Prime Ministers had a summit meeting on 06 September 2014 where they reiterated their resolve to widen bilateral relationships under the framework of “Comprehensive Partnership” and had in-depth discussions on wide-ranging bilateral, regional, international and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

02. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe paid tribute and respect to the memory of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He also visited the National Martyrs’ Memorial at Savar and paid homage to the memories of the fallen heroes and great freedom fighters of Bangladesh.

II. Deepening Bilateral Political Relations:

03. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina noted that the visit of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had infused renewed momentum to the existing excellent bilateral relations. The two Prime Ministers also noted with satisfaction that Japan and Bangladesh had developed a strong and mutually beneficial partnership at bilateral, regional and multilateral

levels and were working closely for fostering greater regional cooperation for the socio-economic development, peace and stability in South Asia. The two Prime Ministers shared the view on the importance of promoting democratic principles globally.

04. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina applauded Japan's outstanding achievement in socio-economic development under the leadership of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. She also noted with appreciation Japan's valuable contribution in socio-economic and infrastructural development in South Asia. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe praised Bangladesh for its spectacular success in economic and social sectors and lauded Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's dynamic and visionary leadership in guiding Bangladesh towards becoming a Middle Income Country by 2021 and in promoting peace, stability and progress at regional and global level. He further reaffirmed that Japan would remain a trusted friend and partner of Bangladesh in achieving these goals.

05. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina appreciated Prime Minister Abe's strong commitment towards women empowerment and his vision of increasing the percentage of women in leadership positions to 30% by 2020. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also apprised Prime Minister Abe of the Speaker of Bangladesh National Parliament Her Excellency Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury's participation in the World Assembly for Women (WAW) to be held in Tokyo in the second week of September. She would share Bangladesh's initiatives and success in the area of women empowerment with the audience/stakeholders.

06. The two Prime Ministers expressed their satisfaction at the launching of the Foreign Secretary level dialogue between the two countries. They hoped for deepening of bilateral policy dialogue and cooperation in the above said Foreign Secretary level dialogue to be held early next year in Dhaka.

III. Deepening Economic Cooperation:

07. The two Prime Ministers acknowledged the imperative and benefits of regular bilateral consultations that would afford to review

and seek ways for expanding and deepening bilateral trade and investment relations between the two countries. They noted with satisfaction the follow-up process on issues raised in the first meeting of the “Joint Bangladesh–Japan Public–Private Economic Dialogue” held in Dhaka on 21 August 2014, headed by respective high ranking government officials and with participation of representatives from private sectors of the two countries. Prime Minister Abe emphasized location, competitive incentives, improvement of infrastructure and labor supply are critical factors for Special Economic Zones (SEZs). He stressed the need for improving services rendered by Bangladesh’s foreign investment regulatory authorities and making serious effort to ensure stable supply of primary energy and power to the industries. In this context, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina directed relevant authorities to address these issues as soon as possible. Prime Minister Abe expressed that relevant ministries started their further consideration of reviewing the existing rules of origin of Japanese GSP scheme for knitted articles (Chapter 61 of the HS). Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina thanked Prime Minister Abe for his intention towards further promoting bilateral trade and investment, expressing her hope that Japan’s import from and investment in Bangladesh would be increased. Emphasizing the importance of expansion of overall bilateral economic relations including bilateral trade, the two Prime Ministers welcomed the holding of “Bangladesh-Japan Business Forum” organized by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), the Board of Investment (BOI) and the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) inviting high level Japanese CEOs on 06 September, 2014. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed her expectation on Japanese Tech-Oriented SMEs investment in Bangladesh and welcomed the establishment of JETRO’s SME support platform in Dhaka.

08. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed appreciation to Japan’s continuing support to the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. In this context, she deeply appreciated reiteration by Prime Minister Abe of his commitment made in May to provide up to 600 billion Yen of additional assistance, mainly Yen loans, to Bangladesh in about 4 or 5 years from 2014. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also thanked Prime Minister Abe for having dispatched an ODA Mission to Bangladesh in

August, 2014, to discuss strengthening of policy dialogue in accordance with the Joint Statement issued on 26 May, 2014. The two Prime Ministers welcomed that the two countries shared a view on the direction of economic cooperation to be pursued under the initiative of the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B) and the need for strengthening collaboration and cooperation in project formulation and implementation through policy dialogue. The two Prime Ministers shared their intention to carry out cooperation in the areas of 1) transport network improvement, 2) stable power supply, 3) urban development such as economic zone development, and 4) private sector development such as financial accessibility promotion. While noting the three pillars of the BIG-B initiative, namely 1) developing economic infrastructure, 2) improving investment environment, and 3) fostering connectivity, the two Prime Ministers also shared expectation that BIG-B initiative, with maximum use of Japan's advanced technologies, such as high efficient coal-fired power generation, would contribute to mutual benefits and prosperity of both countries.

09. The two Prime Ministers welcomed that Japan Mint had produced and delivered 500 million pieces of 2 Taka Bangladesh coin by April, which was the first occasion for Japan Mint to produce circulating coin for any foreign government since the Second World War.

10. Keeping in mind that stable energy supply is the key to economic development in Bangladesh, the two Leaders reaffirmed the importance of strengthening energy cooperation between the two countries including in the area of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this regard, the two Prime Ministers shared their intention to hold the first meeting of "Japan-Bangladesh Expert Dialogue on Peaceful and Safe Uses of Nuclear Energy" before the end of 2014 and continue to hold such meetings in the years ahead in order to strengthen the bilateral cooperation in the area of peaceful and safe uses of nuclear energy and human resources capacity building, as well as to share the experience and lessons learned from the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station of Tokyo Electric Power Company. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina appreciated the support of Japan Atomic Energy Agency's Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security (ISCN) in the workshop in Dhaka co-organized by ISCN and

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission in June this year.

11. The two Prime Ministers observed that the two countries experience natural disasters in increasing intensity and frequency such as earthquakes, cyclones, floods and sediment related disasters and that the risk and impact of these disasters are expected to rise in future due to climate change as a result of global warming. The two Prime Ministers expressed their intention to share information for research on, and management of natural disasters. Both sides also decided to cooperate in the sector of disaster risk reduction (DRR), particularly mitigating earthquake disaster, through technology transfer and to work out a framework of cooperation in this regard soon. Bangladesh side lauded Japan's leadership in global discourse on DRR and hosting the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Sendai, Japan in March 2015. The two Prime Ministers emphasized the need for high level participation in and close cooperation for the Conference in order to adopt the succeeding framework of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed the importance of maintaining close cooperation to implement Bilateral Offset Credit Mechanism (BOCM) in order to promote investment in low carbon technologies, particularly adaptive to the changing needs of and challenges in Bangladesh.

The two Prime Ministers also shared the view that it is important to make an effort to utilize highly efficient coal-fired power generation technology for energy security and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and to share such a view in international fora.

12. The two Prime Ministers recognized the importance of establishing food value chain from farmers to consumers by making beneficial investments in Bangladesh, including through Public-Private Partnership. They emphasized having stronger agricultural cooperation between the two countries, which would promote the improvement of food productivity, crop diversification and the development of the agricultural infrastructure. It would also help better maintain food safety, food security, promote steady social and economic growth and maintain multiple functions such as conserving lands and preserving biodiversity.

The two Prime Ministers shared their views that marine resources should be utilized in a sustainable manner based on scientific evidence. In this context, the two Prime Ministers express their intention to work together for promoting the idea of Blue Economy.

13. The two Prime Ministers welcomed recent progress of the cooperation between medical professionals of both countries, such as the establishment of a hospital introducing Japanese medical excellences and the implementation of an ultrasound training program in Bangladesh. They also expressed the hope that a medical inspection mission from Bangladesh would soon be dispatched to review the issue of equalizing Japan's medical PhD with appropriate clinical training with that in Bangladesh. The two Prime Ministers also welcomed the introduction of Information Technology Engineers Examination (ITEE) in Bangladesh in September 2014 through the technical cooperation of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Information technology Promotion Agency (IPA).

IV. Cooperation on Peace and Security issues:

14. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina apprised that her government maintains a 'zero-tolerance' approach to all forms of terrorism, financing of terrorism and violent extremism, as well as remains firm in their resolve not to allow any terrorist individual or entity to use Bangladesh territory against its neighbors and others. Expressing her satisfaction at the existing bilateral cooperation on counter-terrorism Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed her intention to add further depth and dimension to Bangladesh's cooperation with Japan to combat the scourge of terrorism and financing of terrorism as well as to work on future cooperation about transnational crime issues.

15. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe explained Japan's determination to contribute even more proactively to the peace, stability and prosperity of the international community under the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation and its July 2014 Cabinet Decision on Development of Seamless Security Legislation. Prime Minister Hasina welcomed Japan's increasing efforts to

contribute to peace and stability of the region and the world. The two Prime Ministers underscored the importance of the freedom of navigation and shared the view that international disputes and issues should be resolved peacefully and all relevant countries should adhere to relevant international law as well as globally agreed norms and practices. The two Prime Ministers also underscored the importance of overflight over the high seas and civil aviation safety, in accordance with the principles of international law and the relevant standards and recommended practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

16. The two Prime Ministers reciprocated appreciation for each country's role in the maintenance of global peace and security, especially through the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) as well as Peace-building activities under the auspices of the United Nations. Prime Minister Abe specially appreciated Bangladesh's leadership in the UNPKO as one of the largest Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) and Bangladesh's proactive role as a member of the Peacebuilding Commission. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina appreciated Japan's intention to provide assistance including sharing its experience by dispatching experts to the proposed Peace Building Centre in Bangladesh. Both Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction for the progress made so far towards setting up of the Peace Building Centre in Dhaka as well as for the implementation of Japan-Bangladesh-UN tripartite training cooperation on Protection of Civilians through the UN's mobile training teams in November.

17. Expressing their deep concern over the death of innocent civilians, including women and children, and the resulting humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Prime Minister Abe welcomed the ceasefire agreement reached between the parties in the aftermath of latest offensive. They both underscored the need for renewed efforts by the concerned international actors to resume the Middle East Peace Process for ensuring durable peace and security in the region. They also expressed their unequivocal support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian People to establish a sovereign, independent and viable State of Palestine.

18. The two Prime Ministers shared their concern over the DPRK's continued development of nuclear and missile programs, including its uranium enrichment activities. They urged the DPRK to fully comply with its international obligations under all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and its commitments under the 2005 Six-Party Talks Joint Statement. They also urged the DPRK to address, without delay, the humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the abduction issue.

19. Prime Minister Abe appreciated Bangladesh's hosting of a large number of refugees from Myanmar over a long time. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina explained Bangladesh's recent efforts in this area including the 8th round of Foreign Office Consultations between Bangladesh and Myanmar. Prime Minister Abe expressed his expectations for further progress of dialogue between the two countries, while expressing Japan's willingness of continuing support to Bangladesh in keeping with the spirit of international burden sharing.

V. Cooperation on Cultural Issues and Enhanced People-to-People Contact:

20. The two Leaders appreciated the importance of promoting cultural harmony, maintaining diversity and richness of different cultures, and of promoting dialogue and mutual learning among cultures with a view to sharing the progress of human civilization. They thus shared the view to deepen cultural and educational ties between the two countries through cultural and educational exchange programmes for promoting greater understanding between the peoples of the two countries. In this regard, the two Prime Ministers highly appreciated and expressed their intention to further strengthen research activities conducted by "Japan Study Center" of University of Dhaka. The two Prime Ministers also expressed their resolve to encourage greater high-level interactions, particularly at high political and government officials as well as between academics, media, youth and sports persons, and cultural personalities etc. to enhance mutual understanding between them. In order to facilitate easier interaction between the

officials of the two countries, the two Prime Ministers welcomed the decision of reciprocal visa exemption for diplomatic passport holders. They also decided to consider introducing reciprocal relaxation of visa requirements for the holders of official passports.

21. The two Prime Ministers emphasized the need for increased knowledge sharing initiatives through technical cooperation and capacity building between think tanks and research organizations of the two countries. Such cooperation would not only help the governments make well informed policy decisions based on quality analysis and research but also boost private sector investment and cooperation.

22. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wished for a very successful preparation for 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games and offered her Government's full support in this regard, including through providing workforce in the construction process. The two Leaders expressed the hope that movement of tourists between the two countries will increase in the coming days, and expected that both public and private sectors of the two countries will cooperate in tourism promotion. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina informed Prime Minister Abe that a high powered delegation from Bangladesh will visit Japan in late September with a view to resuming direct air connectivity between Bangladesh and Japan.

VI. Cooperation on the Issues of Mutual Interests at Regional and International Forums:

23. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the existing level of cooperation between the two countries in various regional bodies. Prime Minister Abe appreciated Bangladesh's constructive role and initiatives in promoting regional peace, stability and progress in the region. They reaffirmed their commitment to further enhance and strengthen bilateral cooperation in various regional cooperative frameworks, including the SAARC, ACD, ASEM and ARF, for regional peace, stability and prosperity.

24. Recalling with deep gratitude the support and empathy of the

friendly people and the government of Japan during our War of Liberation and in view of Japan's continued and strong support in Bangladesh's development process, and also in the interest of solidarity and unity of the Asia-Pacific Group at the UN, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had great pleasure to declare as a gesture of Bangladesh's deep amity and cooperation towards Japan, that Bangladesh would support Japan's candidature from the Asia Pacific Group for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the term 2016-17, and simultaneously withdraw Bangladesh's candidature in favour of Japan. Prime Minister Abe, on behalf of the People of Japan and his Government, expressed his profound gratitude to the Government and the People of Bangladesh for their generous gesture towards Japan and also termed it as a watershed in the history of Bangladesh- Japan friendship.

VI. Conclusion:

25. His Excellency Prime Minister Shinzo Abe expressed his deep appreciation to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and to the people of Bangladesh for the warm welcome, and elaborate and gracious hospitality extended to him during the visit. The two Prime Ministers underscored the need for high level visits including by the top leaders on a regular basis between the two countries and expressed their resolve that such visits would be maintained in future in order to take the bilateral relations between the two countries to ever higher plane.

Shinzo Abe
Prime Minister of Japan

Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister of
the People's Republic of
Bangladesh