BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

REPORT OF
THE FOURTH BIMSTEC SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING

19-20 December 2001
Yangon, Myanmar
FOURTH BIMST-EC SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING

REPORT OF THE
FOURTH BIMST-EC SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING
(YANGON, 19-20 DECEMBER 2001)

1. The Fourth BIMST-EC Senior Officials' Meeting was held from 19 to 20 December, 2001, in Yangon, Myanmar.

2. Delegates from Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand attended the Meeting. The list of delegates appears as Annex 1.

Agenda Item 1: Inauguration of the Meeting by His Excellency U Khin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar.

3. The Fourth BIMST-EC Senior Officials' Meeting was inaugurated by His Excellency U Khin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar. The inaugural address by His Excellency U Khin Maung Win appears as Annex 2.

Agenda Item 2: Election of Chairman

4. The Meeting elected, by acclamation, the leader of the Myanmar delegation U Win Mra, Director-General, International Organizations and Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Chairman. India handed over the Chairmanship of the SOM thereafter to Myanmar. The opening remarks made by U Win Mra appears as Annex 3.

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of the Agenda

5. The Agenda adopted by the Meeting appears as Annex 4.

Agenda Item 4: Business Arrangements

6. The Meeting took note of the schedules and arrangements for the Fourth Senior Officials' Meeting. The programme of the Fourth Senior Officials' Meeting appears as Annex 5.

Agenda Item 5: Consideration of the Report of the Chairman of the BIMST-EC Working Group

7. A report on the BIMST-EC Working Group meetings held in Bangkok was presented by India, which chaired the Working Group since the holding of the

Agenda Item 6: Adoption of BIMST-EC Légo

8. The SOM adopted the BIMST-EC logo for submission to the Ministerial Meeting. The logo appears as Annex 7. It was agreed that the logo be given maximum publicity in the Member Countries and internationally.

Agenda Item 7: Coordination of the Decision taken at the Third Meeting of the BIMST-EC Trade and Economic Ministers held in Yangon in February 2001.

9. The SOM recalled the decisions of the Meeting of BIMST-EC Trade and Economic Ministers held in Yangon in February, 2001. The delegation of India informed that the Meeting of Group of Experts (GOE) to study in greater detail the pros and cons of a negative-list approach versus a positive-list approach for the BIMST-EC free trade area has been rescheduled on 17 and 18 January 2002 in New Delhi. The Indian delegation further informed that the Agenda and draft Terms of Reference (TOR) are being circulated to the Member Countries. The Indian delegation requested that all delegations inform their respective experts about the meeting in order to enable the experts to participate in the meeting.

Agenda Item 8: Report by Lead Countries on the Progress in the Sectors of Cooperation

10. The lead countries presented reports on their respective areas of responsibilities — Bangladesh on Trade and Investment Sector (Annex 8), India on Technology Sector, Transport and Communication Sector and New and Renewable Sources of Energy (Annex 9, 10 and 11), Myanmar on Energy Sector (Annex 12), Sri Lanka on Tourism Sector and Textile and Clothing Sub-Sector (Annex 13 and 14), and Thailand on Fisheries Sector (Annex 15), Processed Food, Gems and Jewelry and Drugs and Pharmaceuticals.

11. The SOM was informed by the Lead Countries about the upcoming meetings on their respective sectors and sub-sectors. With reference to the areas under the Trade and Investment sector, the delegation of India informed that the following meetings are being arranged in 2002:

Automotive Industry and Parts—16 January 2002, in New Delhi

Coconut and Spices—February/March 2002, in Cochin, Kerala
12. The Indian delegation further informed that an Auto Exhibition is being organized in New Delhi from 15 to 22 January, 2002, and a free BIMST-EC pavilion would be provided for Member Countries at this Auto Exhibition. The display can be in the form of range of components or other visuals. A seminar for BIMST-EC countries during the Auto Expo is also being planned on 19 January, 2002, and the delegates were requested to confirm their participation in the event.

13. Thailand, the chair country of Gems and Jewelry, Processed Foods, Standards and Conformity, and Drugs and Pharmaceuticals sub-sectors, informed the meeting of the following:

- Gems and Jewelry Sub-sector: Thailand is planning to organize the Gems and Jewelry Round Table Meeting in conjunction with the Thailand International Bangkok Gems and Jewelry Fair in March 2002 in Bangkok.

- Processed Food: Thailand is providing stalls, free of charge, for BIMST-EC Member Countries at the next Thailand International Food Exhibition in May 2002 in Bangkok.

- Standard and Conformity: Thailand plans to host a seminar in the first quarter of 2002 with the purpose of providing a forum for exchange of information, discussion of trade barriers, and channel for communication for the industries and exporters.

- Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Sub-sector: Expert Group Meeting to be held during the first quarter of 2002, which, among other things, will explore the possibility of joint venture in the region.

14. Myanmar as the Lead Country for Energy Sector, reported to the Senior Officials’ Meeting that the Third Meeting of Energy Sector Committee of Experts/Official will be held on 28-29 January 2002 in Yangon. The SOM encouraged Member Countries to furnish information to Coordinating Country as requested by the Task Force for the Development of Energy Infrastructure project as soon as possible.

15. As part of the follow-up of the First Expert Group Meeting in the Transport and Communication Sector, India, the Lead Country, would organize a meeting of the CEOs of the Railways of BIMST-EC countries in the first quarter of 2002. India also circulated a paper on the status of multi-modal transport operations in India and invited other members to send similar status reports to the Lead Country.
Designation of Lead Country status for sectors/sub-sectors for cooperation

16. The designation of Lead Country status and Co-ordinating Country status for sectoral and sub-sectoral cooperation appears as Annex 16. It was recommended by the SOM that the transfer of Lead and Co-ordinating status should commence as soon as practically possible. Activities already planned/scheduled should go ahead on the basis of existing division of responsibility.

Agenda Item 9: Discussion on “Visit BIMST-EC 2001”

17. The SOM recommended that “Visit BIMST-EC Year”, which was earlier planned for the Year 2001, be observed in 2003 in order to allow concerned authorities and agencies to coordinate their efforts and work out an effective strategy to successfully launch and observe the year. The SOM recognized that marketing is an important component of efforts needed to promote tourism and therefore also recommended to establish a BIMST-EC marketing task force on tourism.

Agenda Item 10: Discussion on the availability of financial assistance for BIMST-EC Projects

18. The SOM decided that the project(s), which need financial assistance, should be short-listed by the Working Group and that possibilities for potential external assistance be explored for consideration by the SOM. The SOM was of the view that the invitation of ADB and ESCAP to future BIMST-EC meetings in this regard should be considered.

Agenda Item 11: Future Direction of BIMST-EC and
Agenda Item 12: Institutional Review of BIMST-EC

19. Thailand introduced the Position Paper on Institutional Review of BIMST-EC, which was viewed by the SOM as timely. The Position Paper is at Annex 17.

20. With regard to the setting up of a permanent secretariat for BIMST-EC, the SOM recommended that the Working Group in Bangkok should prepare a paper on the subject for consideration by the next Senior Officials’ Meeting.

21. The SOM was of the view that the Ministerial Meetings of BIMST-EC should be upgraded to the full Ministerial level in order to reflect the strong commitment of the Member Countries to the BIMST-EC and to give further impetus to BIMST-EC cooperation.
22. The SOM welcomed India's offer to request the Research and Information Systems (RIS) for Non-aligned and other developing countries, New Delhi, to develop, in consultation with think tanks and other relevant institutions in BIMST-EC countries, ideas on the future direction and priorities for cooperation.

**Agenda Item 13: Consideration of the Draft Joint Statement**

23. The SOM considered the draft Joint Statement for submission to the Fourth BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting. The Joint Statement is at Annex 18.

**Agenda Item 14: Date and Venue of the Fifth BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting**

24. The SOM welcomed the offer by Sri Lanka to host the Fifth BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting in Colombo in December 2002, at which the chairmanship will be handed over by Myanmar to Sri Lanka. The SOM noted that Sri Lanka will also host the next meeting of the BIMST-EC Trade and Economic Ministers in 2002.

**Agenda Item 15: Other Matters**

25. The SOM exchanged views on the BIMST-EC web-site and decided to explore the feasibility of establishment of e-BIMST-EC.

**Agenda Item 16: Consideration and Adoption of the Report of the Senior Officials' Meeting**


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BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

REPORT OF THE FOURTEENTH BIMSTEC SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING

10 December 2009
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL
TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

REPORT OF
THE 14TH SESSION OF BIMSTEC SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING 10
DECEMBER 2009, NAY PYI TAW

I. Opening of the Meeting

1. The Fourteenth BIMSTEC Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 10 December 2009. Delegates from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand attended the Meeting. The list of participants is at Annex-I.

2. SOM was co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Latha Reddy, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and U Thant Kyaw, Director General, International Organizations and Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar. Co-chair H.E. Ms. Latha Reddy opened the Meeting.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

3. The agenda as adopted by the Meeting is at Annex-II.

III. Business Arrangements

4. The Meeting took note of the programme and business arrangements made for the 14th SOM.

IV. Report of the Chairperson of the BIMSTEC Working Group (BWG)

5. The Report of the Chairperson of the BIMSTEC Working Group (BWG) was presented by H.E. Ms. Latha Reddy, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs of India. The report is at Annex-III.

6. The Meeting took note of the report of the Working Group. It recognized the efficient manner in which the Working Group coordinated the work of BIMSTEC. It also expressed appreciation to the Chairperson for her able leadership and to Thailand for its invaluable support to the work of the Working Group.
Report of the Lead Countries on the priority sectors

7. The Lead Countries presented progress reports on the activities in the priority sectors of cooperation. SOM noted with appreciation the reports submitted by Lead Countries of the Priority Areas and welcomed the offer of Bangladesh to be the Lead Country for Climate Change. SOM urged the Lead Countries to continue their efforts for furthering the work of BIMSTEC in their respective focus areas.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Cooperation</th>
<th>Lead Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Trade and Investment</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>2. Technology</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
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<td>3. Energy</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
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<td>4. Transport and Communication</td>
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<td>5. Tourism</td>
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<td>6. Fisheries</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
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<td>7. Agriculture</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
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<td>8. Cultural Cooperation</td>
<td>Bhutan</td>
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<td>9. Environment and Disaster Management</td>
<td>India</td>
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<td>10. Public Health</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
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<td>11. People-to-People Contact</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
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<td>12. Poverty Alleviation</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Climate Change</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trade and Investment

8. SOM welcomed the finalization of the text of the Agreement on Trade in Goods under BIMSTEC and other provisions relating to the Rules of Origin, Operational Certification Procedures and the Agreement on Customs Cooperation. SOM also welcomed the offer of India to host the 19th meeting of the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) and urged the TNC to finalize the Annexes to the Agreement on Trade in Goods.

9. SOM also took note of the progress on the negotiations on the Agreement on Trade in Services and Investment.

Technology

10. SOM took note of the revised Concept Paper circulated by Sri Lanka on the BIMSTEC Technology Transfer/Exchange Facility in accordance with the decision of the 21st Summit.

Energy

11. SOM noted Thailand's suggestion that the Memorandum of Association (MoA) for the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre, which was finalized and approved at the 10th Ministerial Meeting be signed at the 21st BIMSTEC Energy Ministers Meeting proposed to be hosted by Thailand on 4-5 March 2016.

Transport and Communication

12. SOM noted that all Member States have since endorsed the BIMSTEC Transport Infrastructure and Logistics Study (BTILS) conducted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and recommended that the Chair
of BIMSTEC communicate this decision to the ADB. It was also recommended that BIMSTEC Working Group in Bangkok liaise with ADB to initiate further steps in this regard.

Tourism

13. S.O.M. took note that the 11th Ministerial Meeting decided to constitute the Tourism Working Group to implement the tourism cooperation programmes and follow-up on the Plan of Action, and welcomed India's offer to hold the 1st meeting of the Tourism Working Group.

Fisheries

14. S.O.M. took note that a BIMSTEC meeting on sustainable fisheries in the Bay of Bengal was hosted by Thailand in Bangkok in January 2009.

Agriculture

15. S.O.M. expressed hope that the 3rd Expert Group meeting would be held at an early date. S.O.M. also noted that some countries had responded to Myanmar's request for information about contact officers from each
country under each of the areas of agricultural cooperation and urged the countries which had not yet done so to provide the requested information.

Cultural Cooperation

16. SOM urged the early signing of the MoU on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission (BCIC) and BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory (BCIO) by all BIMSTEC Member States.

Environment and Disaster Management

17. SOM urged the early signing of the Memorandum of Association (MoA) for the Establishment of BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate.

Public Health

18. SOM took note that the 2nd Summit Declaration announced cooperation in traditional medicine through setting up of the BIMSTEC network of national centres of traditional medicine and welcomed Thailand’s offer to host the 3rd BIMSTEC Meeting on the Network of National Centres of Coordination in Traditional Medicine in Bangkok. SOM took note of India’s ongoing programme of granting scholarships to nationals from BIMSTEC countries to study in India in the fields of traditional medicine.

People—to—People Contact

19. SOM took note of the 2nd Summit Declaration that India would set up a BIMSTEC network of policy think tanks. SOM welcomed India’s proposal to host the V Meeting of the BIMSTEC network of policy think tanks in February 2010.

20. SOM also took note that Thailand in June 2009 had organized an event to mark the 12th anniversary of the formation of BIMSTEC.

21. SOM recommended that Member States observe the BIMSTEC Day (8 June) annually to create greater public awareness about BIMSTEC.
Poverty Alleviation

22. SOM took note of the Plan of Action circulated by Nepal and requested Member States to send their comments as soon as possible. SOM welcomed the offer of Nepal to host the 2nd BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation in 2010.

23. SOM also took note of the decision to establish the BIMSTEC Poverty Alleviation Centre in Bangladesh as a step forward for the realization of the MDGs in the BIMSTEC region.

Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime

24. SOM noted with satisfaction that all Member States were ready to sign the BIMSTEC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking at the Ministerial Meeting on 11 December 2009.

Climate Change

25. SOM noted that the 11th BIMSTEC SOM recommended and the 1 Ministerial Meeting had endorsed inclusion of Climate Change as the 14th priority area of cooperation as proposed by Bangladesh. SOM recommended designating Bangladesh to be the Lead Country for this area of cooperation.

VI. Other Issues

Establishment of the BIMSTEC Secretariat

26. SOM took note of the progress made by the Joint Working Group (JWG) on the establishment of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat and urged the Group to conclude its work as mandated by the 10th Ministerial Meeting.

27. SOM recalled the decision of the 2nd BIMSTEC Summit to establish a Permanent Secretariat for BIMSTEC. SOM also recalled the Report of the 11th Ministerial Meeting that a decision on the location of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat would be taken at the 12th Ministerial Meeting.
BHVISTEC Official Website

28. SOM welcomed inputs of new ideas and suggestions from member countries into the BHVISTEC website and called on all members to post BHVISTEC related developments in their countries on the website.

BHVISTEC Business Visa Scheme

29. SOM took note of the progress made by the Expert Group with regard to BHVISTEC Business Visa Scheme and BHVISTEC Visa Exemption Scheme and called upon the Group to convene its next meeting at the earliest with a view to completing discussions on the issue.

Depository of Legal Documents

30. SOM recognized that the Permanent Secretariat would act as the Depository of all BHVISTEC legal documents. SOM recommended that the original legal documents meant for the Secretariat shall be deposited with the Chair until the Permanent Secretariat is established.

VII. Consideration and adoption of the SOM Report

31. The SOM considered and approved by consensus the above report of the 14th BHVISTEC Senior Officials’ Meeting held in Nay Pyi Taw on 10 December 2009.

VIII. Expression of Thanks

32. Heads of SOM Delegation expressed their deep appreciation to the Government of the Union of Myanmar for the warm reception and gracious hospitality extended to the delegations and excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.

10 December 2009.
REPORT
OF
THE FIFTEENTH BIMSTEC SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING

21 January 2011
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
I. Opening of the Meeting

1. The Fifteenth BIMSTEC Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 21 January 2011. Delegates from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand attended the Meeting. The list of participants is at Annex-I.

2. The Senior Official’s Meeting was chaired by Myanmar SOM leader U Maung Wai, Director-General, International Organizations and Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar. The Chairman delivered a welcoming address to the BIMSTEC Senior Officials.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

3. The agenda as adopted by SOM is at Annex-II.

III. Business Arrangements

4. The Senior Officials took note of the programme and business arrangements for the 15th SOM.

IV. Report of the Chairperson of the BIMSTEC Working Group (BWG)

5. The Report of the BIMSTEC Working Group (BWG) was presented by Chairperson of the Working Group, H.E. U Aung Thein, Ambassador of Myanmar to Thailand and is at Annex-III.
6. The Meeting took note of the report of the BIMSTEC Working Group. It also accorded recognition to the BIMSTEC Working Group for the efficient manner in which it coordinated and moved forward the work of BIMSTEC. It also expressed appreciation to the Chairperson for his able leadership and to Thailand for its invaluable support to the work of the BIMSTEC Working Group.

7. In reference to paragraph 2 of page 12 of the Report of the Chair of the BWG as contained in Document No. 2 Agenda Item No 4, the Meeting noted that the 3rd JWG discussed and agreed that a combination of equal and assessed contribution may be applied. The Meeting further agreed that the percentage point for the equal contribution from Member Countries would be between 3 and 9 percent.

V. Report of the Lead Countries of the Fourteen Priority Areas

8. The Meeting noted with appreciation the reports submitted by Lead Countries of the (14) Priority Areas. SOM urged the Lead Countries to continue their efforts for furthering the work of BIMSTEC in their respective focus areas. BIMSTEC has on its agenda the following work programmes for future cooperation and coordination among Member Countries.

Areas of Cooperation

1. Trade and Investment
2. Technology
3. Energy
4. Transport and Communications
5. Tourism
6. Fisheries
7. Agriculture
8. Cultural Cooperation
9. Environment and Disaster Management
10. Public Health
11. People-to-People Contact
12. Poverty Alleviation
13. Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime

Lead Country
Bangladesh
Sri Lanka
Myanmar
India
India
Thailand
Myanmar
Bhutan
India
Thailand
Thailand
Nepal
India
14. Climate Change

Bangladesh

Trade and Investment

9. The SOM welcomed Thailand’s offer to host the 6th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Business Forum, the 6th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Economic Forum and the 19th Meeting of the BIMSTEC TNC, and urged for early completion of the negotiations on the Agreement on Trade in Goods and acceleration of negotiations on the Agreement on Trade in Services and Investment.

Technology

10. The SOM noted with appreciation the revised Concept Paper circulated by Sri Lanka for the establishment of the Centre/Facility to promote enhanced cooperation in advance areas of fundamental and applied scientific and technological research among the Member Countries. It also urged Member Countries to move forward through collaborative and cooperative efforts for the realization of the Centre for Technology Transfer / Exchange Facility. SOM welcomed the offer of Sri Lanka to host the 3rd Expert Group Meeting on Science and Technology in April 2011 in Colombo.

Energy

11. The SOM welcomed the Joint Ministerial Statement of “the Second BIMSTEC Ministers on Energy’s Meeting” held in Bangkok in March 2010 and noted the decisions taken to hold the Energy SOM once a year and Ministerial Meeting every two years.

Transport and Communication.

12. The SOM noted with satisfaction the follow-up progress made in implementation of the recommendation of the BTILS Report particularly with regard to setting up of the five Technical Expert Groups.

Tourism
13. The SOM noted that the 1st Meeting of the BIMSTEC Tourism Working Group would be held in India.

Fisheries

14. The SOM conveyed its appreciation to Thailand for conducting the BIMSTEC International Training Programme on Ornamental Aquatic Plants Propagation from 1-28 August 2010.

Agriculture

15. The SOM conveyed its appreciation to Sri Lanka for hosting the 3rd Expert Group Meeting on Agriculture Cooperation in Kandy from 22-23 November 2010. SOM also welcomed the offer of Nepal to host the 4th Expert Group Meeting on Agriculture Cooperation.

Cultural Cooperation

16. The SOM requested the Member Countries to complete their internal process for early signing of the MoU on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission and BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory in Bhutan.

Environment and Disaster Management

17. The SOM requested Member Countries to complete their internal process for early signing of the Memorandum of Association (MoA) for the establishment of the BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate.

Public Health

18. The SOM thanked Thailand for hosting the 2nd BIMSTEC Meeting on the Network of National Centers of Coordination in Traditional Medicine in August 2010.

19. The SOM also took note of India's ongoing programme of granting AYUSH scholarships to candidates of BIMSTEC countries to study in India in undergraduate, post-graduate and doctorate programs.
20. The SOM noted Sri Lanka’s offer to invite experts from BIMSTEC Member Countries the Symposium on Traditional Medicine to be held in Sri Lanka in July 2011.

People-to-People Contact

21. The SOM took note of the 2nd BIMSTEC Summit declaration to establish BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks.

22. The SOM also expressed the appreciation to India for hosting the 1st Meeting of the Network of Think Tanks in February 2010 and recommended that the dialogue process to continue.

Poverty Alleviation

23. The SOM noted the comments of the Member Countries on the draft Poverty Plan of Action (TPA) had been received by Nepal and look forward to convening of the 2nd BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation in Nepal in the first half of 2011.

Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime

24. The SOM requested Member Countries for early ratification of the Convention on Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking. SOM recommended that the Sub-Group on Legal and Law Enforcement issues should begin negotiations on the Draft Agreement for Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal Matters.

Climate Change

25. The SOM welcomed the offer of Bangladesh to circulate a Concept Paper reflecting possible regional initiatives and programmes and host a Workshop in 2011 to discuss the Concept Paper.

VI. Private Sector Cooperation with BIMSTEC (Presentation by the UMFCCI of Myanmar)

26. The SOM appreciated the presentation made by the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI).
VII. Status of signing of Document finalized at the 2nd BIMSTEC Summit

The Memorandum of Association (MoA) for the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre

27. The SOM noted with satisfaction that the Memorandum of Association (MoA) for the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre was ready for signing at the 13th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting.

VIII. Establishment of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat

28. The SOM appreciated the efforts of the BIMSTEC Chair, the BIMSTEC Working Group and the Joint Working Group for their contribution and effective coordination towards the establishment of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat.

29. The SOM took note of the Special SOM held in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 January 2011 and endorsed its recommendation that the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat shall be located in Dhaka, Bangladesh and that the first Secretary General of BIMSTEC shall be nominated by Sri Lanka.

IX. Discussion on the next BIMSTEC Chairmanship

30. The SOM appreciated the kind offer of Nepal to assume the next BIMSTEC Chairmanship. SOM decided that the Chairmanship, henceforth, will rotate in alphabetical order.

X. BIMSTEC Official Website

31. The BIMSTEC website (www.bimstec.org) shall continue to be maintained by Sri Lankan webmaster until the Permanent Secretariat is operationalized. In the interim, the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Bangkok will coordinate with BIMSTEC Working Group in obtaining the required materials to be uploaded. The SOM welcomed this offer.

XI. Finalization of draft Joint Ministerial statement

32. The SOM finalized the draft Joint Statement of the 13th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting.
XII. Other Matters

33. The SOM welcomed the offer made by Bangladesh to host the 4th JWG Meeting in March 2011 in Dhaka. It agreed that Bangladesh would circulate a detailed working paper on the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat and related issues.

34. The SOM also agreed that the BWG meetings would continue to be held in Bangkok until decided otherwise.

XIII. Consideration and adoption of the SOM Report

35. The SOM considered and approved by consensus the above report of the 15th BIMSTEC Senior Officials’ Meeting held in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 January 2011.

36. Heads of SOM Delegation expressed their deep appreciation to the Government of the Union of Myanmar for the warm reception and gracious hospitality extended to the delegations and excellent arrangements made for the Meeting. They also conveyed their deepest appreciation to the Chair for his able stewardship and the efficient manner in which he successfully conducted the deliberations of the meeting.

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21 January 2011.
Nay Pyi Taw.
BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

JOINT STATEMENT
OF
THE FOURTH BIMSTEC MINISTERIAL MEETING

21 December 2001
Yangon, Myanmar
THE FOURTH BIMST-EC MINISTERIAL MEETING

YANGON

21 DECEMBER 2001

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE BIMST-EC MINISTERIAL MEETING

The Fourth BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting was held in Yangon on 21 December 2001.

The Ministerial Meeting was attended by H.E. Mr. Reaz Rahman, Hon’ble Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh; H.E. Mr. Rajeev Pratap Rudy, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Government of India; H.E. U Khin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of the Union of Myanmar; H.E. Mr Lal Dhammapali Garang, Minister Assisting Foreign Affairs, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka; and H.E. Dr. Pothira Gunasekara, Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Kingdom of Thailand, and their respective delegations.

Nepal attended the Meeting as an Observer.

At the commencement of the Meeting, H.E. Mr. Rajeev Pratap Rudy, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Government of India, invited H.E. U Khin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of the Union of Myanmar, to assume Chairmanship of BIMST-EC. This was unanimously agreed to.

H.E. U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of the Union of Myanmar, inaugurated the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of BIMST-EC, and stressed that shared ideals for peace, freedom and economic well-being can be best obtained by fostering greater understanding, good neighbourliness and meaningful cooperation among the countries of the sub-region. He also highlighted that the core principles of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference in internal affairs, peaceful co-existence and mutual benefit should serve as basic guidelines for cooperation within the BIMST-EC countries.

The Ministers endorsed the report of the Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM) which had met on 19 – 20 December 2001.

At the conclusion of their Meeting, the Leaders Delegation issued the following statement:

1. We are of the view that the time is now opportune for Member Countries to strengthen their cooperation and inject greater dynamism into the BIMST-EC process.

2. We feel that the Ministerial Meetings of BIMST-EC should be held at full Ministerial level commencing from the next meeting so as to reflect our strong commitment to the BIMST-EC process, and to give BIMST-EC cooperation further prominence.

3. We note with concern that the global economic slowdown has reached every corner of the world, including the BIMST-EC Member Countries. There is a clear need for BIMST-EC to redouble their efforts to further enhance economic, commercial and technical cooperation among the Member Countries, both at the government and private sector levels.
4. We welcome the participation of the Kingdom of Nepal in this Meeting as an Observer and take note of the request by Nepal for membership to BIMST-EC, keeping in mind the moratorium on further expansion of membership until end of 2002 and criteria to be evolved on BIMST-EC membership.

5. We take note of the deliberations of the Third Meeting of BIMST-EC Trade/Economic Ministers, held in Yangon on February 14, 2001. We welcome the setting up of a Group of Experts to examine the different approaches to the establishment of a BIMST-EC Free Trade Area.

6. We note with appreciation the offer of Sri Lanka to host the next meeting of BIMST-EC Trade/Economic Ministers in 2002.

7. We believe that active participation by the private sector in BIMST-EC activities is crucial to the attainment of our collective objectives and, in this context, stress the importance of strengthening the linkages among Chambers of Commerce and Industry through the BIMST-EC Business Forum. In this regard, we affirm the need for the Business Forum to be convened with the next meeting of BIMST-EC Trade/Economic Ministers. We also affirm the need for active involvement of the private sector in the implementation of BIMST-EC decisions.

8. We reiterate the importance of the BIMST-EC Economic Forum and urge its convening back-to-back with the BIMST-EC Senior Officials' Meetings and Ministerial Meetings, so as to provide inputs to the latter on promoting private sector-government interaction to help achieve the aims and objectives of the BIMST-EC.

9. With a view to further strengthening the BIMST-EC institutional mechanisms and ensuring regularity in the schedule of Ministerial Meetings for the effective implementation of the Bangkok Declaration, we reaffirm the decision that future annual Ministerial Meetings should be held in the month of February each year. However, it was agreed that the next Ministerial Meeting will be held in December 2002, and thereafter, in February 2004.

10. In order to facilitate effective monitoring and coordination of BIMST-EC activities, we reaffirm the decision that future SOM meetings may be held bi-annually, before the Ministerial Meetings in February, and later as per mutual convenience of Member Countries during the same year.

11. We are encouraged by the progress made in the six sectors i.e., Trade and Investment, Technology, Transportation and Communication, Energy, Tourism and Fisheries identified for cooperation under BIMST-EC. Respective Action Plans identified under each sector and sub-sector have to be monitored for early implementation. In this regard, we urge that any pending action pertaining to identified areas of cooperation be taken up expeditiously.

12. Visit BIMST-EC Year which was earlier planned for the year 2001 will now be observed in 2003 in order to allow concerned authorities and agencies to coordinate their efforts and work out an effective strategy to successfully launch and observe the year. We recognize that marketing is an important component of efforts needed to promote tourism and therefore decide to establish a BIMST-EC marketing task force on tourism.

13. We recognize that globalization presents both opportunities and challenges. Many developing countries, particularly the least developed among them are, being threatened with the danger of further marginalization. We affirm that to take optimum
advantage, at the sub-regional level, of globalization, cooperation between BIMSTEC Member Countries should be enhanced, especially in capacity building. BIMSTEC countries should also strengthen cooperation in the consideration of globalization-related issues at the relevant regional and international fora.

14. We discussed the need for the setting up of a permanent secretariat for BIMSTEC and tasked the Working Group in Bangkok to prepare a paper on the subject for consideration by the next Senior Officials’ Meeting. In the meantime, we agreed to further strengthen the Working Group to provide ongoing support to BIMSTEC.

15. We recognize the importance of having financial resources for the implementation of BIMSTEC projects. In this regard, we entrusted the Working Group in Bangkok to shortlist projects and explore possibilities for potential external funding, and submit its recommendations to the next SOM for consideration. We acknowledge with appreciation the contribution of ESCAP to BIMSTEC’s ongoing programme of cooperation.

16. We endorsed India’s offer to request the Research and Information System for Non-Aligned and other Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi, to develop, in consultation with Think Tanks and other relevant institutions in BIMSTEC countries, ideas on the future direction and priorities for cooperation under BIMSTEC, for the consideration of relevant BIMSTEC organs. Such inputs from the academic community would be seminal to the enhancement of BIMSTEC cooperation.

17. In order to project and highlight the identity and the activities of BIMSTEC, we agreed to adopt the BIMSTEC logo and consolidate BIMSTEC website.

18. We appreciate the offers by Member Countries as contained in the Report of the SOM, to act as Lead countries in the identified sectors for cooperation and Coordination Countries in sub-sectoral cooperation. We request the Member Countries to propose through the Working Group in Bangkok, within 8 weeks, possible dates for the convening of the related expert group meetings in order to facilitate a calendar of events to be evolved for better coordination.

19. We continue to recognize the threat posed by terrorism to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries, their economic growth and development, and international peace and security. The expanding linkage of terrorism to illegal fund raising, narcotic and human trafficking and the illicit arms trade is of particular concern. Since this problem has to be addressed to facilitate economic and social progress, we call upon the international community to further intensify its efforts to comprehensively combat terrorism in all its dimensions and forms. On our part, we reiterate our resolve to support the international consensus and abide by the relevant international legal instruments against terrorism.

20. We would like to express sincere appreciation to Myanmar for the warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the meeting.

21. We welcome the offer by Sri Lanka to convene the Fifth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting in Colombo in December 2002.
BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

BIMSTEC

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE TWELFTH BIMSTEC MINISTERIAL MEETING

11 December 2009
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Joint Statement of the
Twelfth Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multidisciplinary Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Ministerial Meeting
Nay Pyi Taw, Union of Myanmar on 11 December 2009

The Twelfth Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multidisciplinary Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Ministerial Meeting was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Union of Myanmar on 11 December 2009.

The Meeting was attended by H.E. Dr. Dipu Moni, M.P., Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, H.E. Lypom Kyong Teiloring, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bhutan, H.E. Mr. S.M. Krishna, External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India, H.E. U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, H.E. Ms. Sujata Koirala, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, H.E. Mr. Rohitha Bogollagama, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and H.E. Mr. Kasit Proromsri, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand.

His Excellency General Thein Sein, Honourable Prime Minister of the Government of the Union of Myanmar addressed the Opening Session.

H.E. U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar assumed chairmanship of the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting from H.E. Mr. S.M. Krishna, External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India.

Heads of Delegation expressed their sincere appreciation and profound gratitude to the Government of the Union of Myanmar for the cordial reception and generous hospitality to the delegations and for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.

The Meeting considered and approved the Report of the 14th Meeting of the Senior Officials held on 10 December 2009. At the conclusion of the Meeting, the Heads of Delegation issued the following Joint Statement:

We, the Heads of Delegation to the Twelfth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting, having convened in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 December 2009, reiterated our commitment to the founding objectives and principles of BIMSTEC to promote socio-economic development and to create an enabling environment for cooperation among Member States.

We noted with deep concern the critical challenges that climate change poses for the world at large, and for our region in particular. Climate change threatens human security in areas as diverse as food, energy and livelihood security; it also poses existential challenges such as climate change induced large scale displacement.
We welcomed the inclusion of Climate Change as the 14th priority area of cooperation, as recommended by the 13th BIMSTEC SOM and endorsed by the 11th Ministerial Meeting held in New Delhi in November 2008. We accepted with appreciation the initiative by Bangladesh to be the lead country for Climate Change. We are confident that the inclusion of this new area of cooperation will contribute significantly to the joint efforts on the mitigation and adaptation to climate change in the BIMSTEC region.

We recalled with appreciation the finalization of the following four documents by the 10th Ministerial Meeting.

i. BIMSTEC Convention on Cooperation in Combating international Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking.

ii. Memorandum of Association (MoA) among the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Member Countries for the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre.

iii. Memorandum of Association (MoA) among the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Member Countries Concerning Establishment of a BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate.

iv. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission (BCIC) and BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory (BOO).

We welcomed the signing of the BIMSTEC Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking at Nay Pyi Taw on 11 December 2009. We encouraged the Member States to sign the remaining three documents at the earliest.

We reviewed the ongoing progress in the following priority areas of cooperation in BIMSTEC.

Trade and Investment

We reaffirmed the importance of the BIMSTEC FTA in promoting trade and investment in a mutually beneficial manner for all Member States, and enhancing competitiveness and socio-economic development in the BIMSTEC region.

We welcomed the finalization of the text of the Agreement on Trade in Goods and other provisions relating to the Rules of Origin, Operational Certification Procedures and the Agreement on Customs Cooperation at the 18th Meeting of the BIMSTEC TNC at Phuket in June 2009.

We called upon the TNC to finalize the Annexes to the BIMSTEC FTA Agreement on Trade in Goods at the earliest. We welcomed India’s kind offer to host the 19th Meeting of the BIMSTEC TNC.
We took note of the ongoing negotiations on the Agreements on Services and Investment under BIMSTEC FTA, and urged the Member States to conclude them as soon as possible.

Transport and Communication

We agreed that improved transportation and communication linkages and greater connectivity between our Member States are important elements for the BIMSTEC process that will provide direct benefits to our peoples. We expressed our satisfaction at the endorsement by all Member States of the BIMSTEC Transport Infrastructure and Logistics Study (BTILS) conducted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and requested the Chair of BIMSTEC to formally communicate the decision to the ADB. We advised the BIMSTEC Working Group in Bangkok to liaise with ADB to initiate further steps with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the Study.

Tourism

We appreciated the finalization of the Terms of Reference (TOR) at the 10th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting held in New Delhi in August 2008, and the establishment of the Tourism Working Group for the BIMSTEC to implement tourism cooperation programmes and to follow up the Plan of Action.

We welcomed the setting up of the BIMSTEC Information Center by India for exchange of tourism information. We expressed confidence that the joint promotion and marketing of tourism destinations will promote the tourism industries of the Member States and also create tourism awareness and better understanding among the peoples of the Member States.

Energy

We stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation amongst Member States in the fields of grid connectivity, gas pipelines, hydro power, renewable sources of energy, energy efficiency and energy sector reforms and regulations, and sharing of experiences and best practices with a view to ensuring energy security in the BIMSTEC region. We took note of Thailand's proposal to sign the MoA for the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre during the Second BIMSTEC Energy Ministers Meeting to be held in Thailand in 2010.

We reiterated our belief that the proposed BIMSTEC Energy Centre in India which was approved at the 10th Ministerial Meeting would contribute to enhancing cooperation in the energy sector among the BIMSTEC Member States.

Technology
We reiterated the need to enhance cooperation in advanced areas of fundamental and applied scientific and technological research among the member states and took note of the revised concept paper submitted by Sri Lanka regarding the establishment of the BIMSTEC Centre for Technology Transfer/Exchange Facility as agreed to by the Second BIMSTEC Summit.

Fisheries

We reaffirmed our commitment to continue cooperation for the sustainable use of marine resources through effective conservation and management of resources in the Bay of Bengal and decided to include inland fisheries in the scope of cooperation in this area. We welcomed the progress in terms of the Joint Survey undertaken during 2007 followed by the relevant workshop in 2008.

We also considered that more workshops should be conducted to further promote cooperation in this sector.

Poverty Alleviation

We welcomed the progress made at the first Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation held in Dhaka in July 2008 and particularly noted the observations of the Ministerial meeting.

We focused on discussions on poverty alleviation in the context of ensuring food security in the BIMSTEC region. We took note of the Plan of Action circulated by Nepal and requested Member States to send their comments as soon as possible. We also welcomed the kind offer of Nepal to host the 2nd BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation in 2010.

We welcomed the decision to establish the BIMSTEC Poverty Alleviation Centre in Bangladesh as a step forward for the realization of the MDGs in the BIMSTEC region.

Cultural Cooperation

We recalled the Poro Initiative and Plan of Action adopted at the First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Cultural Cooperation held in Bhutan in May 2006. We reiterated our commitment to expand cooperation in culture to include cultural values, diversity and heritage and agreed to extend cultural exchanges among Member States.

We looked forward to the early signing of the MoA on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission and BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory in Bhutan by the Member States. We expressed the hope that the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory (BCIO) would be operational as soon as possible.
Agriculture

We welcomed the progress made during the 2nd Expert Group Meeting held in India and a wide range of cooperation activities. We expressed hope that these concrete activities and projects would be implemented expeditiously. We felt the need to address the issues relating to agricultural productivity, post harvest technologies and management, and competitiveness in the region. In this regard, we emphasized the importance of further collaboration in research and development, technology transfer and private sector participation among the Member States.

Counter-Terrorism & Transnational Crime

We welcomed the signing of the BIMSTEC Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking by the Member States which reflects the resolve of our Governments and peoples to combat the menace posed by terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking. We reiterated the significance of the work done in the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime and its four sub-groups covering Intelligence Sharing: Legal and Law Enforcement Issues; Combating the Financing of Terrorism and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals.

Environment & Disaster Management

We agreed that the BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate to be established in India, as approved by the 10th Ministerial Meeting, would be an effective mechanism in promoting regional cooperation on disaster risk reduction and management among BIMSTEC Member States.

Public Health

We took note of the efforts in enhancing cooperation in the area of traditional medicine and welcomed Thailand's offer to host the 2nd BIMSTEC Meeting on the Network of National Centres of Coordination in Traditional Medicine in 2010. We expressed our appreciation for Thailand's continued support to BIMSTEC Member States in capacity building in public health.

We also took note with appreciation India's initiative on capacity building by granting scholarships to the nationals of BIMSTEC Member States to study traditional medicine in India.

People-to-People Contact

We expressed appreciation for initiatives taken by India to set up a BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks. We expressed our hope that the forthcoming meeting of the Network to be organized by the Research & Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India, in 2010, would significantly enhance mutual understanding and goodwill through people-to-people contact in the BIMSTEC region.
We also expressed appreciation for Thailand’s hosting the 12th Anniversary of BIMSTEC to promote people-to-people contact and interaction among Member States. We encouraged the Member States to observe the BIMSTEC Day (6 June) to create greater public awareness about BIMSTEC.

Permanent Secretariat

We stressed the need for early establishment of the BIMSTEC Secretariat to impart greater dynamism and added momentum to cooperation among Member States in the BIMSTEC region. We agreed that the Chair, in consultation with Member States, will devise the mechanism in order to decide the venue for the Permanent Secretariat.

In this context, we directed the Chair of BIMSTEC Joint Working Group to conclude its assigned tasks as decided at the 11th Ministerial Meeting in November 2008, at the earliest.

BIMSTEC Centre

We thanked Thailand for its continued contribution to the BIMSTEC Centre for the past five years.

13th Ministerial Meeting

We decided that the 13th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and 15th Senior Officials Meeting will be held in 2010 in Myanmar.
BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

BIMSTEC

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE THIRTEENTH BIMSTEC MINISTERIAL MEETING

22 January 2011
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Joint Statement of the Thirteenth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting
Nay Pyi Taw, 22 January 2011

The 13th Ministerial Meeting of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 22 January 2011.

The Meeting was attended by H.E. Dr. Dipu Moni, M.P., Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, H.E. Lyonpo Yeshey Zimba, Minister-in-Charge, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bhutan, H.E. Mrs. Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs of the Republic of India, H.E. U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, H.E. Ms. Gunalaxmi Sharma Bishowkarma, Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal to Myanmar, H.E. Mr. Neomal Perera, M.P., Deputy Minister of External Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and H.E. Mr. Kasit Piromya, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand. The Meeting was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar.

His Excellency U Thein Sein, Honourable Prime Minister of the Government of the Union of Myanmar addressed the Opening Session.

The Meeting considered and approved the Report of the 15th Meeting of the Senior Officials held on 21 January 2011.

At the conclusion of the Meeting, the Heads of Delegation issued the following Joint Statement:

We, the Heads of Delegation to the Thirteenth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting, having gathered in Nay Pyi Taw on 22 January 2011, reiterated our commitment to the founding objectives and principles of BIMSTEC to accelerate economic and social growth in the region and noted with satisfaction the progress made since we last met.

We welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Association among the BIMSTEC Members for Establishment of BIMSTEC Energy Centre.

We reviewed and agreed to enhance the ongoing progress in the following priority areas of cooperation in BIMSTEC.

**Trade and Investment**

We once again reaffirmed the importance of the BIMSTEC FTA in promoting trade and investment in a mutually beneficial manner for all Member Countries, as well as enhancing competitiveness and socio-economic development in the BIMSTEC region. We also emphasized the crucial role that the private sector can play in driving our economic cooperation in BIMSTEC.

We welcomed Thailand’s kind offer to host the Sixth Meeting of the BIMSTEC Business Forum, the Sixth Meeting of the BIMSTEC Economic Forum and the 19th Meeting of the BIMSTEC TNC.

We urged for early completion of the negotiations on the Agreement on Trade in Goods and acceleration of negotiations on the Agreement on Trade in Services and Investment.

We further welcomed the offer of Bangladesh to hold BIMSTEC Trade / Economic Ministers’ Meeting in 2011 to take stock of developments and to identify challenges and possible responses for the solution.
Transport and Communications

We noted with satisfaction the follow-up progress being made with activities such as uploading the BTILS Report on ADB website as well as publishing the hard copies of the reports. We also noted that the five sub-sectors are identified for Technical Expert Groups to be set up for further detailed discussions. We called upon the Technical Expert Groups to meet early and work out the road map for implementing the recommendations of the BTILS Report.

We expressed our appreciation to the BIMSTEC Working Group in Bangkok for liaising with the ADB to initiate further steps with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the study. The draft Terms of References (TORs) prepared by ADB are being examined by the Member Countries.

We acknowledged with appreciation Thailand’s offer of training course on Road Construction and Maintenance and training course on Bridge Engineering. We also welcomed India’s offer to conduct training programmes on highways and ports.

Tourism

With the finalization of the Terms of Reference (TOR) and the establishment of the BIMSTEC Tourism Working Group, we look forward to the first meeting of the Group to be held in India.

We expressed our confidence that the joint promotion and marketing of tourism destinations will promote the tourism industries in the Member Countries. It will also provide opportunities to work together to minimize the negative impact of tourism on environment, cultural heritage and local communities while maximizing the benefits of tourism in promoting sustainable development, including poverty alleviation.

We urged all Member Countries to effect their contribution to the Tourism Fund and to provide their publicity material to the BIMSTEC Information Centre for effective utilization of the Information Centre.

Energy

We welcomed the Joint Ministerial Statement of “the Second BIMSTEC Ministers on Energy’s Meeting” held in Bangkok in March 2010 and noted the decisions taken to hold the Energy SOM once a year and Ministerial Meeting every two years.

We reiterated our agreement to promote utilization of natural gas as clean energy source for Member Countries in order to lessen dependence on imported oil and also noted that import and export of natural gas among BIMSTEC Member Countries could be an important element of our energy security policy and called for more cooperation among the Member Countries to promote governmental and private investment in natural gas infrastructure.

We welcomed the offer of Bangladesh to host the Third Meeting of the Task Force on Trans-Power Exchange in 2011. We appreciated Nepal’s offer to host the 3rd Meeting of the BIMSTEC Ministers of Energy in 2012.

We noted with appreciation India’s offer to host the next meeting of the Senior Officials on Energy in February 2011 and directed the Senior Officials on Energy to expedite the modalities for setting up the BIMSTEC Energy Centre.
Technology

We recognized the importance of science and technology for development and agreed to enhance the technology base of the Member Countries through collaboration and partnership in micro, small and medium scale enterprises.

We noted with appreciation the revised Concept Paper circulated by Sri Lanka for the establishment of the Centre/Facility to promote enhanced cooperation in advance areas of fundamental and applied scientific and technological research among the Member Countries.

We welcomed Sri Lanka's offer to host the 3rd Expert Group Meeting on Science and Technology in April 2011.

Fisheries

We reaffirmed our commitment to continue cooperation for the sustainable use of marine resources through effective conservation and management of resources in the Bay of Bengal. Recognizing the importance of effective management of inland fisheries resources, we included the inland fisheries in the scope of cooperation for BIMSTEC to enhance cooperation in the area.

We expressed appreciation to Thailand for conducting the BIMSTEC International Training Program on Ornamental Aquatic Plants Propagation from 1-28 August 2010 with participants from BIMSTEC Member Countries.

Poverty Alleviation

We recognized that poverty is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon that goes beyond income poverty. We, therefore, welcomed BIMSTEC's initiative to devise comprehensive strategies to address poverty in the draft Poverty Plan of Action (PPA) circulated by Nepal.

We welcomed the proposed convening of the 2nd BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Alleviation in Nepal in the first half of 2011.

Cultural Cooperation

We look forward to the early signing of the MoU on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission (BCIC) and BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory (BCIO) by the Member Countries.

We recognized that the signing and implementation of the BCIC and BCIO would promote development of cultural industries and in turn would gain the twin benefit of community revitalization, poverty reduction for socio-economic progress and cultural development as enunciated in the Paro Initiative.

Agriculture

We noted with appreciation the progress made during the 3rd Expert Group Meeting held in Sri Lanka. We were cognizant of the necessity to address the issues relating to agricultural productivity, post harvest technologies and management, and competitiveness in the region. In addition, we look note of considering the importance of further collaboration in research and development, technology transfer and private sector participation among the Member Countries. We expressed our hope that these concrete activities and projects would be implemented expeditiously.
We welcomed Nepal’s offer to host the 4th Expert Group Meeting on Agriculture Cooperation.

**Counter-Terrorism & Transnational Crime**

We welcomed the signing of the BIMSTEC Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking by the Member Countries during the 12th Ministerial Meeting in 2009 in Nay Pyi Taw, which reflects the resolve of our Governments and peoples to combat the menace posed by terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking.

We also urged all the Member Countries to conclude ratification formalities of the BIMSTEC Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking early.

We reiterated the significance of the work done in the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime and its four Sub-Groups covering Intelligence Sharing; Legal and Law Enforcement Issues; Combating the Financing of Terrorism and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals.

We welcomed Nepal’s offer to host the 5th Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime.

We agreed that the Sub-Group on Legal and Law Enforcement Issues should begin negotiations on the draft of the Agreement for Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal Matters.

We welcomed India’s offer to host the Meeting of the Sub-Group on Legal and Law Enforcement Issues in March 2011.

**Environment & Disaster Management**

We recognized that the BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate, to be established in India, would be an effective mechanism in promoting regional cooperation on disaster risk reduction and management among BIMSTEC Member Countries and agreed to expedite the signing of the Memorandum of Association on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate.

We welcomed India’s offer to conduct workshop / training programmes on Seasonal Prediction & Application to Society and on Climate Change and Disasters.

**Public Health**

We commended the efforts in enhancing cooperation in the area of traditional medicine and appreciated Thailand for hosting the 2nd BIMSTEC Meeting on the Network of National Centres of Coordination in Traditional Medicine in 2010. Taking note of successful deliberations at the meeting, we urged Member Countries to expedite the follow-up of the four areas of cooperation as agreed upon at the meeting.

We took note with appreciation Thailand’s continued support in capacity building in public health.

We also took note with appreciation India’s initiative on capacity building by granting AYUSH scholarships to the nationals of BIMSTEC Member Countries to study traditional
medicine in India and welcomed the offer to conduct a workshop cum training programme on IPR issues in Traditional Medicine.

We welcomed Sri Lanka's offer to invite experts from the BIMSTEC Member Countries to the Symposium on Traditional Medicine to be held in Sri Lanka in July, 2011.

People-to-People Contact

We expressed our appreciation to India for setting up a BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks and organizing the 1st Meeting of BIMSTEC Network of Think Tanks. We noted the Report of the deliberations of the 1st Meeting and recommended the dialogue process to continue.

We also expressed our appreciation to Thailand for hosting the 12th BIMSTEC Anniversary Celebration to promote people-to-people contact and interaction among Member Countries.

We urged Member Countries to promote exchange of TV programmes, films, exchange of media visits, photos and book fairs, and organize BIMSTEC film festivals.

Establishment of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat

We agreed that the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat shall be located in Dhaka, Bangladesh and that the first Secretary General of BIMSTEC shall be nominated by Sri Lanka.

BIMSTEC Centre

We appreciated the contribution of Thailand in supporting the BIMSTEC Centre in Bangkok from 2004 to 2010.

Cooperation with External Development Partners

We noted Thailand's suggestion to seek the enhanced involvement of multilateral development partners, such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UNESCAP in BIMSTEC.

BIMSTEC Summit

We noted with satisfaction BIMSTEC achievements and welcomed Myanmar's offer to host the 3rd BIMSTEC Summit in 2011.

We also welcomed Myanmar's offer to host the 14th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and 16th Senior Officials' Meeting in 2011 preceding the 3rd Summit.

Next Chairmanship of BIMSTEC

We welcomed the kind offer of Nepal to assume the next BIMSTEC Chairmanship.

We endorsed the recommendation of SOM that the Chairmanship, henceforth, will rotate in alphabetical order.

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