

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

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### **Special Senior Officials' Meeting (SSOM) on the Establishment of BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat**

**24 NOVEMBER 2011, DHAKA**

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#### **Report**

The Special Senior Officials' Meeting (SSOM) on the Establishment of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat was held in Dhaka on 24 November 2011 at the invitation of the Government of Bangladesh. Delegations from People's Republic of Bangladesh, Kingdom of Bhutan, Republic of India, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Nepal, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and Kingdom of Thailand participated in the Meeting. List of the participants is at **Annex-I**.

02. The Meeting was opened and chaired by Ambassador Mohamed Mijarul Quayes, Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh. In his opening statement he welcomed the delegates to Dhaka and recalled the decision of the last BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting for early establishment of a Permanent Secretariat of BIMSTEC. The Chair expressed hope that this meeting would be able to successfully complete its work and submit its recommendations to the next Ministerial Meeting to be held in 2012. He underscored the need for early operationalisation of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat to move forward the BIMSTEC process. He expressed his confidence that the meeting would be able to recommend on critical issues related to the early launching of the Secretariat in Dhaka.

#### **II. Adoption of the Agenda**

03. The Meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda for the Special Senior Officials' Meeting (SSOM) which is at **Annex-II**.

#### **III. a. Consideration of the Report of the 4<sup>th</sup> Joint Working Group Meeting held on 30-31 May 2011 in Dhaka.**

04. The meeting considered the report and adopted it as presented.

**b. Consideration of the Report of the Preparatory Committee (23 November 2011) to the Special Senior Officials' Meeting.**

05. The delegations appreciated the work of the Preparatory Committee for adopting a comprehensive report containing funding mechanism for the Secretariat, finalization of a draft instrument on the establishment of the Secretariat and other related issues. The meeting noted with appreciation the understanding and accommodation shown by the delegates to reach a consensus.

06. The meeting adopted the Report of the Preparatory Committee which is at **Annex-III**. Certain decisions related to this Report are recorded under relevant agenda items.

**IV. Discussion on the Financing Mechanism for BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat.**

07. The meeting felt that the Report of the Preparatory Committee Meeting at para-4 reflects the decision of the SSOM.

**V. Discussion on the Draft Agreement/MOA on the establishment of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat.**

08. The matter was discussed at length and the meeting decided that the Chair of the SSOM would consult with Member States on the draft instrument on the establishment of the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat and would circulate the agreed text at an early date so that Member States can complete their internal procedures before the next BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting when the instrument could be signed.

**VI. Any other Business.**

**a. The Nomination of Secretary General.**

**b. Provisions Relating to Financial and Administrative Matters of the BIMSTEC Secretariat.**

**c. Discussion on the Preparation of the Third BIMSTEC Summit to be held in February 2012 in Myanmar.**

09. The meeting welcomed the offer of Bangladesh to host the 5<sup>th</sup> Joint Working Group (JWG) Meeting. The venue and dates of the meeting would be conveyed by Bangladesh at an early date. The meeting directed the 5<sup>th</sup> JWG to consider issues related to financial and administrative matters of the Secretariat as well as funding issues of the BIMSTEC Centres.

10. The meeting discussed about the interim arrangements for the BIMSTEC Permanent Secretariat and agreed to the following:

- a. The Government of Bangladesh would provide interim physical facilities for the functioning of the Secretary General-designate of BIMSTEC.
- b. The salary and other emoluments of the Secretary General-designate to be provided by the Government of Sri Lanka which would be adjusted against the contribution of Sri Lanka to the budget of the Secretariat.

## **VII. Adoption of the Report**

11. The Meeting adopted this Report.

### **Vote of Thanks**

The leaders of delegations of Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand expressed appreciation to the Government of Bangladesh for the hospitality extended to the participants and for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting. In turn, the leader of the Bangladesh delegation thanked the delegations for their active support and cooperation for a successful outcome of the Meeting.

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