



**PROTOCOL  
TO  
THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT  
ON  
BIMST-EC FREE TRADE AREA**

**WHEREAS** the Governments of the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Republic of India, the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Nepal, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Kingdom of Thailand are Parties to the Framework Agreement on BIMST-EC Free Trade Area (hereinafter referred to as "the Framework Agreement") signed on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2004 in Phuket, Thailand;

**WHEREAS** the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is a member of the BIMST-EC;

**WHEREAS** the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh had been participating in the negotiations of the Framework Agreement;

**WHEREAS** the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has expressed the desire in becoming a Party to the Framework Agreement as a Founding Member; and

**WHEREAS** Article 11 of the Framework Agreement provides that the Framework Agreement may be modified through amendments mutually agreed upon in writing by the Parties;

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Governments of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Republic of India, the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Nepal, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Kingdom of Thailand hereby agree as follows:

1. The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh shall accept all the rights and obligations under the Framework Agreement as accrued on the date of entry into force of this Protocol.

2. The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh shall be considered as a Founding Member and shall be a Party to the Framework Agreement;

3. A certified copy of the Framework Agreement shall be provided to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

4. Preamble paragraph 1 of the Framework Agreement shall be amended as follows:

**"THE GOVERNMENTS of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Republic of India, the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Nepal, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Kingdom of Thailand, Member States of BIMST-EC, hereinafter referred to collectively as "the Parties" and individually as "a Party";"**

5. Article 3 paragraph 2 (a) and (b) of the Framework Agreement shall be amended as follows:

"(a) Fast Track: Products listed in the Fast Track by a Party on its own accord shall have their respective applied MFN tariff rates gradually reduced/eliminated in accordance with specified rates to be mutually agreed by the Parties, within the following timeframe:

Countries	For Developing Country Parties	For LDC Parties
India, Sri Lanka & Thailand	1 July 2006 to 30 June 2009	1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007
Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar & Nepal	1 July 2006 to 30 June 2011	1 July 2006 to 30 June 2009

(b) Normal Track: Products listed in the Normal Track by a Party on its own accord shall have their respective applied MFN tariff rates gradually reduced/eliminated in accordance with specified rates to be mutually agreed by the Parties, within the following timeframe:

Countries	For Developing Country Parties	For LDC Parties
India, Sri Lanka & Thailand	1 July 2007 to 30 June 2012	1 July 2007 to 30 June 2010
Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar & Nepal	1 July 2007 to 30 June 2017	1 July 2007 to 30 June 2015

6. This Protocol shall enter into force on the date of its signing.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Protocol.

DONE at Bangkok, the Kingdom of Thailand, this 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2004 in seven originals in the English language.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**



(H.E. Mr. Shahed Akhtar)  
Ambassador of Bangladesh to Thailand


**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN**

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(H.E. Lyonpo Chenkyab Dorji)  
Ambassador of Bhutan to Thailand

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA**

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(H.E. Mrs. Leela Krishnamurthy Ponappa)  
Ambassador of India to Thailand

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR**

*Kyaw Thu*

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**(H.E. U Kyaw Thu)**

**Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar**

**FOR HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL**

*Yadav Khanal*

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**(H.E. Mr. Yadav Khanal)**

**Charge' d' Affairs a.i., Royal Nepalese Embassy, Bangkok**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST  
REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA**

*L.D.A. Wijewardena*

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**(H.E. Mr. L.D.A. Wijewardena)**  
**Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Thailand**

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND**

*W. Muangsook*

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**(H.E. Mr. Watana Muangsook)**

**Minister of Commerce of Thailand**