



Secretary General



**Secretariat  
Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral  
Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)**

06 June 2019

**MESSAGE**

On the occasion of the Twenty-Second anniversary of the establishment of BIMSTEC, I wish to extend my heartiest greetings and felicitations to the peoples and the governments of the Member States of BIMSTEC - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Founded on 06 June in 1997 through the adoption of Bangkok Declaration, BIMSTEC has gained considerable maturity over the last two decades as a regional organisation dedicated to accelerate economic development and social progress in the Bay of Bengal region. Significant progress has been made towards intra-regional trade facilitation, revival of the historical connectivity by land and sea, and promotion of a common perception of human security for the Bay of Bengal region. The BIMSTEC Leaders at the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 30-31 August 2018 reaffirmed their strong commitment to make BIMSTEC a dynamic, effective and result oriented regional organization for promoting a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable Bay of Bengal Region through meaningful cooperation and deeper integration and also underscored the importance of robust institutional arrangements to effectively steering the process of regional cooperation under BIMSTEC. The Secretariat is fully committed to the realisation of the goals set by the BIMSTEC Leaders.

On this occasion, I wish to record my deep gratitude to the Government of Bangladesh for providing continued support to the Secretariat since its establishment in 2014. I would like to express my deep appreciation to Nepal, former Chair of BIMSTEC for their active leadership role and to Sri Lanka as the current Chair of BIMSTEC. My appreciation goes to all other Member States for their continued efforts towards achieving the goals of BIMSTEC.

I strongly believe that the time of BIMSTEC has come. The Secretariat will work closely with the Member States to ensure that we seize this opportunity to bring tangible benefits to the peoples of the Bay of Bengal region.

(M Shahidul Islam)