

**VOTE OF THANKS BY MR. ANWARUL K. CHOWDHURY,
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL AND HIGH REPRESENTATIVE
FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES
AT THE UN TRIBUTE TO 2006 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE,
PROFESSOR MUHAMMAD YUNUS**

**17 NOVEMBER 2006
CONFERENCE ROOM 4, UNITED NATIONS**

Madame President
Deputy Secretary-General
Distinguished Ambassadors and delegates
Our partners from civil society and the private sector
UN colleagues
Believers in peace and development

Allow me to take this opportunity to join the previous speakers in extending my heartfelt congratulations to Professor Yunus and the Grameen Bank for the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize. I have the pleasant duty of presenting a vote of thanks to all of you for making this United Nations tribute to Professor Yunus a truly heart-warming event.

As the UN's High Representative for the poorest and most vulnerable countries and as a Bangladeshi, I am indeed very proud of Professor Yunus, whose Nobel Prize has uniquely honoured the 50 Least Developed Countries.

Empowering the weakest and most marginalised, as Professor Yunus have been trying to do for the last quarter of a century, is not simply the right thing to do, but it is also the pragmatic thing to do.

Key messages that we get from him and his work are:

- It not always the grandiose that only brings the change.
- Given opportunities, people in abject poverty can also change their life for better.
- Peace and poverty eradication are two sides of the same coin.
- Broadening of the definition of peace is needed.
- World's poorest need global attention to ensure sustainable peace.

It therefore makes a lot of sense that poverty reduction efforts focus on the poorest in the community – whether one is talking of the international community of states, or communities at the country level.

Madame President, we are most grateful to you for gracing and steering this occasion, and to your Office for their wonderful collaboration in the preparations. I am equally indebted to my colleague, the Deputy Secretary-General, Mark Malloch Brown for wholeheartedly

embracing the idea, the first of its kind at the United Nations, to pay tribute to Professor Yunus.

A big thank you to you all for honouring our invitation to this event. I should apologise to the Permanent Representatives, Ambassadors and my senior colleagues from the United Nations for not reserving seats for them, but we thought it would be only fitting to make it everybody's occasion --- as open, as all-embracing and as less hierarchical as possible. After all, our guest of honour is a man of the people.

Lastly, I wish to express my sincere thanks to our colleagues from the Executive Office of the Secretary General, General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management, UN Security and the colleagues from my own Office for their support in organising this special tribute

Let me end this special tribute to our dear beloved Yunus by saying I have received many many heart-felt messages from Bangladeshi peacekeepers from various parts of the globe joining us at this tribute at the United Nations headquarters.
