

**Interventions of Mr. Md. Faruk Hossain, Minister, Bangladesh Permanent Mission to the UN, at the Informal consultations on a multidimensional vulnerability index (MVI) for Small Island Developing States (to be held remotely without physical presence), New York, 28 April 2023**

Hon'ble Prime Minister, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

First of all, my delegation commends the two distinguished co-chairs and other high-level panelists for their hard work on the MVI. We also thank the UN DESA and OHRLLS for their support to the panel in carrying out their responsibilities.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Nepal on behalf of the LDC Group.

From the perspectives of my delegation, we have reviewed the documentations which have been made available to the member states on the proposed MVI and the first thing that we recognize is the complexity of developing such an index which could be applied for all the vulnerable countries, and not only the SIDS. Given the technical nature of the work at hand, my delegation today would only make some initial, general, and procedural remarks. In the subsequent consultations, we shall try to ensure participation from the relevant agencies of our capital.

Distinguished co-chairs,

My delegation is pleasantly surprised to see that Bangladesh is ranked 87<sup>th</sup> in the MVI Prototype Preliminary Results, well below some of the major economies in the world. We are wondering what may be the reasons which could place Bangladesh ahead of some of the developed countries. To be sure, Bangladesh has made lots of economic and social progress in recent years, but it is still a LDC and also well recognized as one of the most climatically vulnerable countries in the world. This is not well reflected though in this prototype.

This may be so because the indicators that have been used in this prototype may not well be representative. It is possible that certain indicators have been used which may have favored certain countries instead of countries like Bangladesh. This is why it is very important to widely consult all the developing countries, and collect comprehensive data, before finalizing the MVI. This is however presently not the case though. As per information available at the MVI website, the panel received no inputs from any of the LDC countries or Land Locked Developing countries.

In para 71 of the SG's report contained in A/76/211, it has been mentioned that consultations have been undertaken with member states without specifying who those member states are. So we are not sure whether the panels consulted any of the LDCs or the Land Locked developing countries for choosing the 27 indicators.

But since the index is now being developed in a way which could be applied to all developing countries, including the LDCs, it is important to hear from each and everyone of them. There is another reason why more consultations with developing countries, including the LDCs, are necessary because the panel which is developing this index was constituted with a mandate to develop it for the SIDS, not for all the developing countries. We are certainly not questioning the credentials of the panel here; we think that the panel members are outstandingly qualified. But what we are trying to suggest here is that the current panel was not tasked to develop an index for all developing countries, but rather an index for the SIDS, which the Secretary General, and not the member states, recommended, could be applied for all other countries. There is a big difference here, because **if** the panel was mandated to develop an index for all developing countries, there are reasons to believe that the composition of the panel might have well been different.

Because in the UN process, the question of mandate is very important, we need to be very clear about the mandate for the MVI. If we read the three guiding resolutions, which are 77/245, 75/215 and 74/217, the mandate to us is clear which is to develop a MVI for the SIDS.

We know that the panel is developing the MVI as per the principles highlighted in paragraphs 80 to 83 of Secretary General's report contained in A/76/211. But these are recommendations of the SG, and to the extent my delegation is aware, they are not endorsed by the member states.

So our point here is since there is currently no clear mandate for the MVI's universal applicability, further consultations are necessary to finalize the MVI and clear mandate for it to be universally applicable.

And my third point is related to the deadline of 12 May which has been set for receiving inputs from member states. My delegation believes that given the technical nature of the MVI, and the serious implications the MVI might have in our country's development, we would certainly need more time to be able to provide substantive inputs on the indicators. We know that LDCs have certain capacity deficits, and for understanding and meaningfully contributing to technical issues such as the MVI,

often they need help of the UN Systems or the UN Country team or external consultants. There is no reason to believe that that it would be different this time. Therefore, we certainly would need more time and the panel to engage more inclusively and extensively before finalizing the MVI.

I once again thank the distinguished cochairs and all the eminent panel members for their valuable work thus far.