**Closing remarks by**

**H.E. Mr. Anisul Huq, Hon’ble Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs**

 **at the 4th Cycle of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Bangladesh**

**10:00 – 13:30 hrs, 13 November 2023, Human Rights Council, Geneva**

**Thank you Mr President, Excellencies and distinguished delegates,**

I would like to quote from the Preamble of my constitution that states-

*“We, the people of Bangladesh, having proclaimed our independence on the 26th day of March, 1971 and through a historic struggle for national liberation, established the independent, sovereign People's Republic of Bangladesh”*

Bangladesh’s engagement with the human rights mechanism is rooted in its belief that the promotion and protection of human rights is best pursued through constructive engagement and cooperation. This is the belief that guides us towards being a committed, responsive, responsible, and contributing country, respecting human rights and globally recognized principles. We expect our commitment towards human rights would be reciprocated with the spirit of cooperation, proportionality, objectivity, neutrality and non-selectivity by all human rights mechanisms.

In addition to our National report, in my opening remarks and in my following interventions, I have tried to outline the various initiatives of our Government for the fulfilment of our obligations and respect of human rights including our success in meeting in SDGs and creating an inclusive economy and society. We believe that UPR is the most effective mechanism that can play a far-reaching impact on the human rights situation on the ground.

We greatly appreciate the engagement of our National Human Right Commission, civil society, and NGOs, some of whom are present in this room. We appreciate their work and stress the need for continuing with our dialogue and cooperation.

I would like to stress upon the fact that while considering the human rights situation of a country, we must not lose sight of the specific social, political, cultural, economic and demographic situation as well as numerous other challenges and constraints of that country. I would like to highlight that as a democratic and representative Government reflecting the will of the people, our efforts need to be aligned with the people's views and opinion as well as the social, cultural and religious values of our people.

I sincerely thank all the delegation present here today for your constructive participation and engagement in our UPR. It is encouraging that a large number of member States took to the floor today. We have heard and taken careful notes of your comments, queries and recommendations. We have tried to respond to as many issues as possible within the stipulated timeframe.

We value your comments and recommendations which would undoubtedly be examined and given due considerations by our government in delineating the next steps for further advancing the goals for protection and promotion of human rights of our people. My delegation members from different Ministries, division and agencies will be returning with renewed commitment and new ideas for further strengthening our institutional, legislative and administrative framework for better protection and promotion of human rights of our people.

Despite our challenges, we remain steadfast to establish rule of law, justice and accountability, in order to safeguard and promote the rights of the people. Indeed, the spirit of safeguarding the rights of the people, providing good governance, realizing inclusive and sustainable development for the welfare of our people has been the *raison d’etre* (rey-zohnz de-truh) of Bangladesh. All our efforts are geared towards a pluralistic and inclusive society which is sensitive to the needs and sentiments of vulnerable segments of the society and all kinds of minorities.

I hope that you would value and acknowledge the level of our sincerity and pro-activeness to effectively address the human rights issues. I also expect you to be cognizant of the soil truths of our challenges ahead. As a responsible and responsive nation, Bangladesh will continue to deploy efforts towards gradually building a prosperous nation where everyone would fully enjoy all civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural rights. Bangladesh looks forward to continue candid dialogue and cooperation with the UN, including the OHCHR, and the international community to continue supporting us in this journey.

I conclude by thanking the OHCHR Secretariat and the interpreters for their commendable work without whom this interactive dialogue would not have been a success. Let me also place on record our deep appreciation for members of the Troika – the delegations of Cuba, Pakistan and Romania for assuming the onerous responsibilities of overseeing the reporting process.

I would like to particularly thank you, Mr. President for your impeccable time management