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Speech by
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1. It is my pleasure to compliment the enormous efforts by the UN ESCAP to consolidate the voices and concerns of Asia Pacific Nations for 64th CSW meeting to be held in New York in 2020.

2. I also take the opportunity to thank the UN ESCAP for making comprehensive review of Beijing+25 to identify the good practices towards women empowerment in the region.

3. Bangladesh has made tremendous efforts in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women in politically, economically and socially since the historic Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA).

4. At the beginning of my speech, I recall of our Great Leader Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who is the Architect of our Independent Bangladesh. He ensured women’s equal rights in the constitution in 1972.

5. Vision 2021 and Vision 2041 of the Government led by Hon’ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has given emphasis for women empowerment.

6. The election manifesto of current Government emphasize the livelihood of the common people and all modern civic facilities will be made available in every village including women empowerment and participation.

7. The gender focuses of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been reflected in the 7th Five Year Plan. Since 2009 Gender Responsive Budget has been formulated and Inter-Ministerial Committee is working to mainstream gender issues.

8. We have prepared our National Women Development policy and National Action Plan.
9. Working Women’s Hostels and Day Care Centers are established and maternity leave has increased from 4 months to 6 months for promoting women employment and health need of their children. Joyeeta Foundation has established for development of Women Entrepreneurs.

10. Bangladesh has achieved MDGs for reducing maternal and child mortality.

11. The Government is fully aware of the need for greater participation of Women in public, social and political empowerment. It may be mentioned here that in Bangladesh the Prime Minister, the Speaker, the Leader of Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Parliament are also women which is hardly seen in the world. It is a matter of pride that in political empowerment Bangladesh has placed the 5th position amongst in the world.

12. In Bangladesh Parliament 50 seats are reserved for Women in addition, enacted law of the Local Government for reserve seats of women for directly elected by the people for empowering women in grassroots levels.

13. During the last 10 years Bangladesh has made significant progress in both economic and human development. Currently Bangladesh is placed at the top of the Gender Gap Index in South Asia.

14. Child marriage is one of the challenges in Bangladesh for women empowerment. Our Hon’ble Prime Minister has taken different measures to end the Child Marriage by 2041.

15. We formulated Child Marriage Restraint Act, Rules and National Action Plan. Mobile court is operating by Executive Magistrate to prevent child marriage instantly with punishment. It may be mentioned here that percentage of child marriage has been reduced considerably.
16. Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is providing Comprehensive supports and services through the Multi-Sectoral Programme on violence against women. Established One-Stop Crisis Centers and Cells, National Trauma Counseling Centers, DNA Laboratory, Toll Free Helpline 109 and Mobile Apps Joy etc. More than 8 thousand adolescent clubs are formed to build awareness for prevention of violence against women and children and child marriage.

17. Different programmes have been implemented to rehabilitate landless, homeless and poor families affected by Natural Disaster. We are sheltering 1.2 million forcefully displaced Rohingya people most of them are women and children which is burden to our Government.

18. Hon’ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina received Planet 50:50 Champion and Agent of Change Award in 2016, Global Women’s Leadership Award in 2018, Peace Tree Award for outstanding contribution of women empowerment and education. UN awarded her “Daughter of the Earth” for special contribution for disaster management by own finance.

19. We have successfully achieved maximum goals of MDGs and hope to achieve SDGs goals specially goal 5. We are now making efforts to fulfil the targets of sustainable development goals.

20. We all believe the successful meeting will bring changes in women leadership scenario among the member countries.

21. We remain conscious about our national and global challenges in sustained implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

22. Let us raise a strong Asia- Pacific voice to champion greater regional cooperation and partnerships for our women, including ‘gender equality and women empowerment.’

23. At last, Not least
Thank you very much for your patient hearing.

Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu

Long Live Bangladesh.