



An eNewsletter from SUPRO, Bangladesh

Issue: July, 2008

Reach Agreement to Fight Climate Change and Ensure Food Security

Speakers told at SUPRO roundtable on the eve of SAARC Summit 2008.

[SUPRO presented a people's report on 15th SAARC 2008 at a National Press Club, Dhaka, held on July 26, 2008. More than 150 participants including political leaders, journalists, academician, professionals, activists and representatives from different civil society organizations actively took part in the discussion ahead of 15th SAARC Summit]



South Asian leaders need to reach an unanimous agreement to combat the devastating effect of climate and food insecurity in the region in the upcoming SAARC Summit in Colombo- experts, political and civil society leaders told a round table on the eve of upcoming SAARC Summit 2008. On 26 July 2008 SUPRO (Campaign for Good Governance) organized a round table discussion titled “Seeking Unanimous Commitment for Food Security and Combat Climate

Change” at National Press Club, Dhaka.

Former agriculture minister and Awami League Presidium Member Matia Chowdhury, former army chief and BNP leader Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman, Dhaka University Professor Dr Imtiaz Ahmed and Dalem Chandra Barman, MD of BSS Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, Former minister Abdul Mannan, former MP Nurul Islam Nahid, G M Qader and women activist Rokeya Kabir and Syeda Rezwana Hasan have made speech in the discussion. A position paper was presented by Mr. Lawrence Besra, Program Coordinator of SUPRO, Mr Abdul Awal, Chairman of SUPRO moderated the discussion while Mr Prodip Kumar Roy, CEO of SUPRO delivered the welcome speech.

Lawrence Besra said, to ensure food security and food sovereignty we want to focus on the sustainable agriculture, rights of farmers to access to market, irrigation and seeds. We also demand a strong political commitment from SAARC leaders establishing a south Asian Food Bank and South Asian Development Fund to reduce poverty in the region by 2015. It is also important to establish a centre for research and monitoring of climate change.

Matia Chowdhury said, we should urge SAARC forum to negotiate with developed countries. Developed countries are solely responsible for climate change. If we stand together hand in hand against carbon emission, rich countries will not be able to ignore our voice of 1.4 billion people of South Asia. She also said that use of modern technology and proper distribution of government subsidy on agriculture sector must be ensured for development of our agriculture sector.

Lt G (retd) Mahbubur Rahman said, SAARC countries should act sincerely and pay particular attention to explore identical problem and possibilities.

Former state minister Abdul Mannan said SAARC countries can give importance to generate of hydro electricity on the basis of joint partnership. He emphasized regional cooperation for 'SAARC Food bank.

Former MP GM Qader said, SAARC can not play effective role because there is no provision to discuss bilateral issues.

Former MP Nurul Islam said, there is an apprehension that many areas of the SAARC countries might go under water for adverse impact of climate change. The forthcoming SAARC should focus on the issue with utmost interest.

BSS chief editor Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury said, we are optimistic about SAARC despite many hurdles. Communications have improved among member states of SAARC.

Professor Dr Imtiaz Ahmed emphasized on changing the mentality to strengthen regional cooperation and suggested preservation of rainwater for development of agriculture.

Following recommendations came out from the seminar:

- SAARC countries should take common initiative against privatization and commercialization of essential services
- Take initiative to establish SAARC Poverty Fund
- Regional cooperation to establish SAARC Food Bank
- Common strategy to fight poverty , climate change, foreign investment, national security, food sovereignty, women and children trafficking
- Implementation of 2005 declaration of the development of environment, biodiversity conservation and radioactive waste dumping
- Establish a regional metrological research centre and common fund to asses the cost of environmental degradation
- Ensure civil society participation in SAARC Summit
- To declare SAARC countries as a visa-free region.

In the concluding speech, Abdul Awal emphasized on the common sharing of thoughts and actions as well as commitments to change the plight of South Asian people to turn the region free from hunger, poverty and injustice where people will be free to enjoy their rights.

Debt Burden Eating Up MDGs Bangladesh Needs Total Debt Cancellation SUPRO urge at a press conference



On the eve of G8 Summit in Japan, SUPRO demanded at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity on 2 July 2008 - to the leaders of G8 countries, to cancel the external debt of Bangladesh without any conditionality and urged the rich countries to fulfill their commitment of ODA target by giving 0.7% of their national income as development assistance to the poor countries.

SUPRO criticized the WB-IMF formula for determining the debt sustainability of poor countries by focusing on debt- to-export ratio only and demanded a “MDG-consistent” frame-work of debt sustainability. This framework should be applied to consider the eligibility criteria of debt cancellation..

SUPRO Chairperson Abdul Awal, Chief Executive Officer Prodip Kumar Roy, Researcher Monower Mostafa and Mohammad Shahid Ullah addressed the press conference.

Speakers also demanded that the international community including the G-8 must take necessary steps immediately to ensure total debt cancellation for Bangladesh. Additional fund should be released to mitigate the adverse effect of climate change and subsidized bio-fuel production must be stopped which created food crisis globally.

From this press conference it was urged to the government of Bangladesh to take effective steps to uphold the demand of debt cancellation and take necessary measure in international forum including UN to cancel the external debt of Bangladesh.

Convention on Institutional Good Governance of NGOs held 10 Points Accountability Charter Declared and Adopted



The 10 points accountability charter for Institutional Governance of NGOs declared and adopted for self-assessment to ensure transparent and accountable governance. Professor Muzaffar Ahmed inaugurated the national convention on 'Institutional Good Governance of NGOs' by igniting lamp at LGED Auditorium on 28 June 2008.

In the Convention, members of SUPRO network took oath to improve the governance of their respective organizations. Rasheda K Chowdhury, Honorable Adviser of People's Republic of Bangladesh spoke as the Chief Guest and Mozibur Rahman, Treasurer of SUPRO and Executive Director of SDS, Shariatpur; SUPRO National Council Member Motiur Rahman, Executive Director, Come to Work, Dinajpur; M.A. Salam, Executive Director of PPS, Pabna; KGM Faruque, Executive Director of PAVE, Bogra; Mahboob Morshed, Executive Director of Darpan, Comilla, Manju Rani Pramanik Executive Director of Shoroney, Tangail, Sharifa Khatun, Executive Director of Welfare Trust, Jhenidhah; Lolit C Chakma, Executive Director of SAS, Rangamati; Hosne Ara Hashi, Executive Director of Jago Nari, Barguna and Shamima Akhter Moon Moon, Executive Director of SBMUS, Rajbari adopted the charter on behalf of SUPRO Network. The closing session was chaired by Abdul Awal, Chairperson of SUPRO.

The 10 points of Accountability Charter are as follows:

1. Human Rights Approach to Development
2. Effective Principles and Policies for Poverty Eradication
3. Participatory Development Approach with Marginalized people
4. Participatory Governance
5. Participatory Planning and Evaluation
6. Transparency and Accountability of internal Governance
7. Financial Transparency
8. Disclosure of Information
9. Gender Equality
10. Responsibility to Protect Environment, Culture and Tradition.



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