

For Immediate Release

**Bangladesh High Commission
Canberra**

06 May 2009

Press Release

New Zealand Governor General appreciates Bangladesh's return to democracy and economic achievement

The Governor General of New Zealand Anand Satyanand expressed his satisfaction on Bangladesh's return to democracy through a free, fair and credible election in December 2008. He also appreciated hard working and resilient people of Bangladesh for achieving social and economic development. He hoped that in coming days expansion of trade and business links between Bangladesh and New Zealand would be materialised by capitalizing the duty free entry of Bangladesh products to New Zealand. These were stated by the Governor General during the presentation of credentials by Bangladesh High Commissioner Lieutenant General Masud Uddin Chowdhury this morning in Wellington, New Zealand. In the ceremony Hon Maurice Williamson, Minister of Customs of New Zealand, Mr. Malcolm McGoun, Chief of Protocol of New Zealand, Mrs. Jasmin Masud, wife of the High Commissioner, Mr. Peter McKenzie, Honorary Consul of Bangladesh in Wellington, among others, were also present.

The Governor General conveyed his best wishes to the Hon'ble President and people of Bangladesh. He expressed his keen interests in the recent political and economic developments of Bangladesh, particularly in the electoral reform, separation of judiciary from the executive, human rights and rule of law. He reassured that New Zealand would be supportive of the development process of Bangladesh as has been doing so since the independence. He also lauded the role of Bangladesh in the UN peace keeping operations all over the world being one of the top contributors of troops in the world as well as in the Commonwealth. He also fondly mentioned about the recent cricket matches between New Zealand and Bangladesh.

During his remarks at the presentation of credentials before the Honourable Governor General, the High Commissioner Lieutenant General Masud Uddin Chowdhury highlighted recent electoral reform in the country as well as very investment friendly climate prevailing in Bangladesh. In this context, he expressed his hope that New Zealand businessmen could explore the investment opportunities in Bangladesh through relocating their industries. Bangladesh High Commissioner emphasized that the present government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has engaged itself vigorously to establish the rule of law and make the administration more transparent and accountable so that good governance could be ensured.

Contd. To page No. 02

Bangladesh High Commissioner also highlighted the importance of having mutually beneficial economic interactions through a variety of other means, including knowledge and skill sharing by setting up training institutes for technical and vocational education and funding for training of primary school teachers for capacity building in this area in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh High Commissioner also met Mr. Michael Green, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand where important bilateral issues such as trade, investment, assistance for primary education, health and climate change were discussed. Bangladesh High Commissioner requested Mr. Green to provide assistance in expanding trade and investment between the two countries including encouraging New Zealand investors to relocate their industries to Bangladesh as the investment incentives there are very lucrative. He also hoped that New Zealand would be expanding their aid to Bangladesh in education and health sectors. Mr. Green acknowledged that there is a room for further improvement in bilateral relations between the two countries.

Earlier Bangladesh High Commissioner met Dr. Richard Grant, Executive Director of the Asia New Zealand Foundation where issues of mutual interests were discussed. Asia New Zealand Foundation provides assistance in various activities in the field of culture, research, track-2 diplomacy and media including funding for visiting dignitaries from Asia to New Zealand. Suitable dignitary from Bangladesh may visit New Zealand to brief the New Zealanders about business and investment opportunities in Bangladesh, which could be facilitated by Asia New Zealand Foundation, Dr. Grant informed.

The High Commissioner also met Professor Roberto Rabel, Pro-Vice Chancellor (International) of Victoria University of Wellington. Collaboration between different Universities in Bangladesh and Victoria University of Wellington through credit transfer and student exchange programmes were discussed in the meeting. Professor Rabel appreciated the interest about his University and informed that he was happy to explore those opportunities. He mentioned that credit transfer arrangement with reputed Universities in Bangladesh could be done immediately and in respect of student exchange programmes there should be negotiations between faculty members first for a successful conclusion of agreement in this regard. The High Commissioner assured that Bangladesh High Commission in Canberra would facilitate to conclude agreements between Universities in Bangladesh and the Victoria University of Wellington.

Bangladesh High Commissioner also met the Chief of Protocol of New Zealand and the Dean of Diplomatic Corps in Wellington.

