

Closing Remarks

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The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is pleased to have organized this workshop, which is now at its final stage. We are grateful to all of you for contributing to its success. We are also quite privileged to have heard during this workshop excellent presentations made by competent and distinguished speakers from the region. They are former Justice Shafi Rahman of Pakistan, the Head of the Pakistan National Police Force, Dr. Mohammed Suddle, former head of the Bangladesh National Police Force, Mr. ASM Shahjahan, Professor Menon, and Professor Tureen Afroz.

I hope the workshop was a useful forum for you to exchange ideas and experiences in the areas of the criminal justice system. We further hope that the similarities in the legal tradition and cultural background of the three countries had facilitated the culmination of relevant and applicable lessons to all the participants. In the context of Bangladesh, the topic of the workshop is quite relevant and timely. Bangladesh has undergone impressive economic and development growth. However, there are still many challenges to the governance setting in the country, including the

poor law and order situation as well as the embedded systemic corruption. This situation limits the vast potential development of the country.

As you are aware, there is greater realization today of the increasing nexus between economic growth and good governance. One of the core areas of good conveyance is the presence of the rule of law. For the rule of law to reign supreme, it would require the availability of a credible, impartial, and effective judiciary as well as other law enforcement apparatus. This means that the judiciary and other law enforcement apparatus should apply and be perceived to apply the law in an impartial and neutral manner to all concerned parties. The law enforcement agencies should also be seen as competent. It is mainly due to the weak law enforcement agencies that poor law and order situation and rampant bribe and corruption practices flourish. This, in turn will make it difficult for the country to lure potential investors, both foreign and domestic, to invest in the country for the long haul.

Therefore, governments should continue to strive for good governance, in particular through the presence of the rule of law. This is not a simple task. The Bangladesh Resident Mission (BRM) is pleased to note though the steady progress that the Movement of Bangladesh has undertaken to address some of these problems. This includes creating the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), strengthening law enforcement agencies, and taking the initial steps to separate the judiciary from the executive, and various other civil and criminal justice reforms. BRM is, therefore, confident that the Bangladesh Government is capable of creating good governance setting and conse-

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quently reaping the rewards of further economic and development growth in the country.

For its part, ADB, as one of the major development partners, has placed good governance as one of the strategic priorities in its assistance program to Bangladesh. In this regard, ADB has indicated its commitment to the Government of Bangladesh to support, among others, (i) the operationalization of the ACC, (ii) the promotion of judicial independence, including at the lower tier of the courts responsible for trying criminal cases, and making operational the judicial service commission to complement the ACC, and (iii) the development of an independent public prosecution and related criminal justice system reforms to ensure a credible systemic deterrent for corruption and law and order concerns.

One of the concrete measures that ADB has undertaken in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh to enhance good conveyance is through a technical assistance (TA) entitled Supporting Good Governance Initiatives. This TA supports the (i) development of an overarching National Integrity Strategy to provide a strategic policy framework for anticorruption in Bangladesh; (ii) operationalization of the Anti-Corruption Commission; (iii) promoting judicial independence and operationalization of the Judicial Service Commission to complement the ACC; (iv) development of an independent public prosecution and related criminal justice system reforms to ensure a credible systemic deterrent for corruption prosecution and law and order concerns; (v) development of governance reviews, audits,

and public expenditure tracking surveys for selected line ministries, which will complement existing support by other development partners; and (vi) governance management training and capacity building to foster and create incentives for corruption prevention in government.

The success in this intervention will allow us to plan and design further assistance in this area.

As a follow-up to the above TA, ADB has approved two more TAs—an advisory technical assistance (ADTA), Supporting Good Governance Initiatives II, and a project/program preparatory assistance (PPTA), Preparing the Good Governance Project—which will be implemented during July 2006–June 2007. Under the ADTA, ADB will provide further assistance to the ACC in training and capacity building, while the PPTA would support preparation of a comprehensive national integrity strategy to identify various measures to fight corruption in Bangladesh, including strengthening the judiciary and legal education reforms in Bangladesh. These two TAs would be followed by a \$40 million Governance Investment Project to support improvement of core and sector governance in Bangladesh.

In conclusion, I hope that the information and recommendations in this workshop will leave us better equipped for our future interventions to strengthen the criminal justice system. ADB looks forward to supporting the implementation of these recommendations in your respective jurisdictions. BRM is committed to do its part to support the agenda of the Government of Bangladesh in this area.