

Bangladesh Embassy

Bangkok

Press Release

**Foreign Minister Momen seeks support and cooperation from ASEAN
Regional Forum Partners in the early repatriation of Rohingya**

Bangkok, 02 August 2019

Foreign Minister Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen sought support and cooperation from ASEAN Regional Forum Partners so that the Rohingyas can return to their homeland in safety and security. Dr. Momen made this appeal today in Bangkok at the 26th ASEAN Regional Forum. The Government of Thailand as the Chair of ASEAN is hosting this year's ASEAN Regional Forum where Foreign Ministers from 26 countries and High Representative from European Union including USA, UK, Japan, China and India are participating. Bangladesh Foreign Minister mentioned that if the Rohingya crisis remains unresolved for long, it may seriously undermine the security and stability of the entire region. He sought comprehensive engagement of the international community, particularly ASEAN, in the creation of a conducive environment in northern Rakhine State as well as in the repatriation and reintegration process. Foreign Minister Momen stated that Bangladesh is not in a position to bear the burnt for indefinite period and it should be a global responsibility to resolve this issue. At the Forum, Foreign Ministers from Japan, USA, Canada, Australia, South Korea, New Zealand, and Malaysia urged Myanmar to create conducive environment for early repatriation of Rohingya in safety and dignity and they also sought ASEAN's enhanced engagement in this process. USA, Canada and Malaysia particularly emphasized on ensuring justice and accountability in relation to atrocities committed against Rohingyas.

At this regional high-level Forum, Dr. Momen embarked on key regional issues including denuclearization of Korean Peninsula, degradation of marine environment, human trafficking, illicit drugs trafficking, cybercrimes, etc. He stressed on the need for sustained peaceful atmosphere in the Korean Peninsula for the continued stability in the Asia-pacific region.

Dr. Momen also held bilateral meetings with the Foreign Ministers of Canada, India, Sri Lanka and Vietnam on the sidelines of the 26th ASEAN Regional Forum. During the meeting with the Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland, Bangladesh Foreign Minister thanked the Government of Canada for its vibrant role and support extended to resolve the Rohingya problem. Dr. Momen urged Canada to continue putting pressure on Myanmar to get back their nationals in safety and security. The Canadian Foreign Minister highly appreciated the act of generosity shown by the by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. She stated that Canada is working at the international level for ensuring the repatriation of Rohingyas. She highlighted that getting out of this severe crisis is not only the sole responsibility of Bangladesh rather this is a global responsibility.

At the meeting with his Sri Lankan counterpart Tilak Marapana, Dr. Momen highlighted the need to inculcate a mindset of tolerance and mutual respect among different communities regardless of their race, color, religion and ethnicity to address violent extremism and terrorism. The two ministers also explored areas of further cooperation in trade, investment and connectivity. Dr. Momen also met with Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and both the Foreign Ministers discussed issues of mutual concern like trade, investment, connectivity. etc. Dr. Momen sought India's support for the early repatriation of Rohingya. Jaishankar assured India's support in this regard. At the bilateral meeting with Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh, Dr. Momen congratulated Vietnam in advance for Vietnam's taking over ASEAN Chairmanship in 2020 and sought Vietnam's support for the early repatriation of Rohingya to maintain regional peace, stability and security. Both the Ministers followed up the decisions and MoUs signed during the Vietnamese President's visit to Bangladesh in 2018 and agreed to continue to ensure speedy implementation of these instruments.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Thailand Md. Nazmul Quaunine and high officials from Bangladesh, Canada, India, Sri Lanka and Vietnam were present during the above meetings.