



BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION



SIXTH BIMSTEC SUMMIT DECLARATION

04 April 2025

Bangkok, Thailand

“Prosperous, Resilient and Open BIMSTEC”

We, the Chief Adviser of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh; the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan; the Prime Minister of the Republic of India; the Chairman of the State Administration Council and Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; the Prime Minister of Nepal; the Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka; and the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand; met in Bangkok, Thailand on 04 April 2025 for the Sixth BIMSTEC Summit, and

Reaffirming our firm commitment to the purposes and principles of BIMSTEC as contained in the BIMSTEC Charter and the 1997 Bangkok Declaration;

Recalling the First BIMSTEC Summit Declaration (Bangkok, 31 July 2004), the Second Summit Declaration (New Delhi, 13 November 2008), the Third Summit Declaration (Nay Pyi Taw, 4 March 2014), the BIMSTEC Leaders’ Retreat Outcome Document (Goa, 16 October 2016), the Fourth Summit Declaration (Kathmandu, 30-31 August 2018) and the Fifth Summit Declaration (Colombo, 30 March 2022);

Expressing satisfaction on coming into force of the BIMSTEC Charter on 20 May 2024;

Recognizing the crucial role played by BIMSTEC in enhancing regional cooperation in agreed priority areas over 27 years of its existence and the need to revitalize BIMSTEC as an effective vehicle to fulfil the developmental aspirations of the peoples in the Bay of Bengal region;

Being convinced that geographical contiguity, plentiful natural and human resources, historical linkages and rich cultural heritage provide greater opportunities and complementarities to advance regional cooperation in identified core areas of BIMSTEC;

Also being convinced that now is the century of Asia and having achieved significant progress in recovering from the global economic recession, BIMSTEC is well-positioned to advance in growth and influence, harnessing strengths from our expanding demographics, great economic potential, and our collective capacity to harmonize our voices in pursuit of common progress and prosperity;

Acknowledging that the BIMSTEC Summit Declarations and BIMSTEC Ministerial Joint Statements including the recent institutional reform have provided our organization the directives to guide BIMSTEC cooperation in line with its noble vision and priorities to achieve tangible outcomes for the peoples of our region;

Noting with satisfaction that Member States have rebounded from the devastating effect of COVID-19 pandemic by boosting economic activities, sharing best practices, facilitating long-term socio-economic recovery and contributing to peace, stability, prosperity and sustainability of the region;

Emphasizing on the need to make BIMSTEC more resilient against existing and future crises, including climate change, financial crises, pandemics, and other natural disasters as well as the necessity to develop mechanisms for coordinated response to such crises;

Being mindful of the need to work towards building a prosperous, resilient and open BIMSTEC through mutual collaboration, understanding and solidarity in the shared interest of the Member States;

Do hereby commit to:

1. ***Adopt*** the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030 for common aspiration towards a forward-looking BIMSTEC region that is prosperous, resilient and open to tackle challenges and seize opportunities for the coming decade and ***agree*** to take appropriate measures on priority basis in the areas of mutual benefit to build a robust BIMSTEC to address the contemporary global challenges, expressed in the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030 (***included as Annexure***) as part of this Declaration.
2. ***Adopt*** the Rules of Procedure for BIMSTEC Mechanisms as recommended by the Ministerial Meeting and ***reiterate*** our commitment to timely holding of the Summit and meetings of all BIMSTEC mechanisms as mentioned therein.
3. ***Express*** deep appreciation to Thailand for initiating and hosting the First BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat in Bangkok on 17 July 2023 and India for hosting the Second BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat in New Delhi on 11-12 July 2024, which provided a platform for Foreign Ministers to come together and provide substantive policy guidance. ***Appreciate*** the decision of the BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers to hold the Retreats and informal Meetings on regular basis, including on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly every year. ***Express*** deep appreciation to India for hosting the 1st Informal Meeting of the BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers which was convened in New York on 27 September 2024 on the sidelines of 79th Session of the UNGA.

4. **Commend** the Eminent Persons' Group (EPG) on the Future Direction of BIMSTEC for their Report and Recommendations, and **emphasize** on the early implementation of the recommendations, as appropriate. **Task** the Secretary-General of BIMSTEC to monitor and report the progress of implementation of the EPG's recommendations to the BIMSTEC Summit.
5. **Emphasize** that the Bangkok Vision 2030 will serve as a common aspiration for a BIMSTEC region that is Prosperous, Resilient, and Open by pursuing the following:

A. BUILDING A PROSPEROUS BIMSTEC BY ACCELERATING REGIONAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

6. **Welcome** the inclusion of Blue Economy, Mountain Economy and Poverty Alleviation under the purview of reconstituted Sectors and Sub-Sectors of cooperation and **urge** respective Lead Countries to develop the Plan of Action for each of these newly added Sub-Sectors.
7. **Reiterate** our commitment to swiftly concluding the BIMSTEC Free Trade Area Agreement (FTA) and **direct** the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) and its Working Groups to finalize the constituent Agreements of the BIMSTEC FTA without further delay.
8. **Acknowledge** that several BIMSTEC Member States are poised to graduate from the LDC status, face structural constraints and challenges that hinder their competitiveness in external trade due to, among others, high trade and transit cost and **commit** to extend necessary support to the graduating and land-locked Member States in their development efforts, with a view to ensuring equitable benefits during implementation of the BIMSTEC FTA.
9. **Underscore** the need to accelerate trade facilitation measures within the BIMSTEC region and **urge** the Member States to finalize the Agreement on Trade Facilitation and the Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters on a priority basis. **Further urge** the Member States to explore the possibility of establishing BIMSTEC Mutual Recognition Arrangements of Standards to reap the benefit of trade facilitation measures within the region.
10. **Encourage** relevant officials of Member States to explore the possibility of establishing digital cross-border payment system and trade settlements with local currencies, noting that some Member States have already adopted the Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
11. **Commit** to continue to work towards shared objectives of closing digital divides, expanding the benefits of the digital economy, fostering an inclusive and secure digital space, and advancing equitable governance of data and emerging technologies to accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

12. **Appreciate** the establishment of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Fiscal and Monetary Policy and **instruct** the Expert Group to develop an action plan on Fiscal and Monetary Policy.
13. **Reaffirm** the importance of non-traditional security issues, especially Food Security, Energy Security, Environmental Security and Human Security that will support and drive productivity and sustainable growth in the region.
14. **Stress** on the implementation of “Plan of Action on Strengthening BIMSTEC Agricultural Cooperation (2023-2027)”, as adopted by the Second BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and recognizing the importance of enhanced cooperation and sustainable use in fisheries and livestock, and their entire supply chain, and the use of science and technology such as precision farming, which has a great potential to make a significant contribution towards ensuring food security and improving livelihoods of people in our region, **agree** to deepen cooperation in this sub-sector.
15. **Welcome** the signing of the Agreement on Maritime Transport Cooperation, recognizing its potential to enhance regional maritime connectivity, facilitate cross-border trade, and spur investment in port infrastructure, logistics, and related sectors and therefore **direct** relevant authorities to expeditiously implement the Agreement.
16. **Recognize** that Connectivity is one of the most vital sectors of cooperation for regional integration. **Stressing** the importance of timely implementation of the BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity, we acknowledge the progress made in the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, and **encourage** our respective authorities to speed up their efforts to conclude the ‘BIMSTEC Motor Vehicle Agreement’.
17. **Emphasize** the need for adopting appropriate policies and programmes for utilizing the youth force and for skill development to cater to the needs of the young population to develop into a workforce with adequate skills to cope up with the current and future challenges.
18. **Express** satisfaction at the formation of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Blue Economy and **instruct** the Expert Group to formulate a Comprehensive Plan of Action to harness the enormous potential that the blue economy holds for our region.

B. CREATING A RESILIENT BIMSTEC TO SAFEGUARD AGAINST FUTURE SHOCKS AND ENSURE CONTINUED PROGRESS

19. **Call** for further deepening of the Environment and Climate Change cooperation to safeguard the environment, mitigate climate change impacts and contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

20. **Welcome** the finalization of the Concept Note on Potential Areas of Cooperation and the BIMSTEC Plan of Action on Environment and Climate Change and **underscore** the importance of timely implementation of the Plan of Action.
21. **Recognize** the importance of regional security cooperation, especially in the areas of maritime security, cyber security, scams across digital and telecommunication channels, human & drug trafficking and other transnational crimes and **underscore** the need for strengthened and close cooperation between and among the law enforcement and criminal justice agencies of the Member States in combating these transnational crimes.
22. **Welcome** the formation of the BIMSTEC Home Ministers' Meeting mechanism and **call** for early convening of the First Meeting of BIMSTEC Home Ministers.
23. **Decide** to establish the BIMSTEC Health Ministers' Meeting mechanism.
24. **Take** note with satisfaction of progress being made in energy cooperation and **instruct** the relevant authorities for early conclusion and implementation of BIMSTEC Grid Interconnections with a view to promoting rational and optimal power transmission in BIMSTEC region.
25. **Direct** the officials of the Member States to develop a Plan of Action to improve preparedness and coordination for responding to natural disasters in the Bay of Bengal Region.
26. **Welcome** the signing of the Host Country Agreement between the Government of India and the BIMSTEC Secretariat for establishing BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate (BCWC) in Noida, India and **call** for effective functioning of BCWC.
27. **Welcome** the launching of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC) in Bengaluru, India following the signing of the Host Country Agreement between the Government of India and the BIMSTEC Secretariat and **call** for finalization of all necessary procedures to ensure smooth operationalization of the Centre.
28. **Welcome** the initiatives to strengthen the efforts towards institution-building within BIMSTEC by establishing the BIMSTEC Centres of Excellence in Disaster Management, in Agriculture, and in Maritime Transport in India, and the BIMSTEC Centres of Excellence on Tropical Medicine, and in Public Audit in Thailand for expanding meaningful collaboration in respective fields.
29. **Call** for intensified collective action to explore avenues to widen and deepen cooperation in Science, Technology, and Innovation, including the pursuit of appropriate external partnership for achieving regional objectives, and in this connection, **welcome** the finalization of the BIMSTEC Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (2023-2027) and **emphasize** on its timely implementation.

30. **Acknowledge** the finalization of the BIMSTEC Plan of Action on Public Health (2023-2025) and **emphasize** on its timely implementation.
31. **Welcome** the finalization of BIMSTEC Plan of Action on Human Resource Development and **emphasize** on its timely implementation.
32. **Appreciate** the ongoing collaboration on traditional medicine within BIMSTEC, recognizing its contribution to public health and well-being and **commend** the BIMSTEC Task Force on Traditional Medicine for the “Traditional Medicine Systems of BIMSTEC Member States – 2023 Report” and **encourage** all Member States to leverage its insights to improve their traditional medicine systems and strengthen regional cooperation.

C. FOSTERING AN OPEN BIMSTEC BY EMBRACING PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONNECTIVITY AND EXPLORING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

33. **Agree** to take concrete steps to promote intra-BIMSTEC tourism, including through cross-border travel facilitation and sustainable tourism practices, leveraging the region’s rich natural, cultural heritage, and historical sites, which can help boost economic growth and employment. We **underscore** the critical importance to build on the progress made with regard to BIMSTEC tourism circuits, including the BIMSTEC Buddhist Circuits, BIMSTEC Temple Circuits, and BIMSTEC Eco-Tourism Circuits. We also **encourage** greater public-private partnership to enhance infrastructure, services, and innovation in the tourism sector.
34. **Reiterate** the commitment to foster cooperation in the culture; **emphasize** on the early operationalization of the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory as a repository for information on cultural industries.
35. **Recognize** the importance of further promoting people-to-people contact at various levels, in the areas of youth entrepreneurship, digital connectivity, tourism, culture, youth and sports.
36. **Acknowledge** the need of forging common positions on issues of mutual interest, including, in climate change negotiations, and seeking group recognition in various multilateral institutions.
37. **Take** note of the Secretariat’s initiative to become observer at the United Nations (UN) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
38. **Welcome** the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and BIMSTEC, and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and BIMSTEC.

39. **Express** commitment to enhancing the visibility of BIMSTEC by organizing public awareness programmes on BIMSTEC, cultural events, sports, youth engagements and film festivals among the Member States.

D. ENDORSEMENT OF MINISTERIAL DECISIONS

40. **Note** the progress achieved in implementing directives given at the previous BIMSTEC Summits and **instruct** the Ministerial Meeting to coordinate implementation of our decisions and report to the next Summit.
41. **Approve** the Joint Statements of the Third BIMSTEC Energy Ministers' Meeting and Second BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture as endorsed by the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting for implementation of the decisions and recommendations contained therein.
42. **Approve** the Joint Statement of the Nineteenth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and Report of the Twentieth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting for implementation of the decisions and recommendations contained therein.
43. **Welcome** the deliberations of the Fourth Meeting of BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs as endorsed by the BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting. **Call** for future meetings to discuss pertinent issues related to transnational organized crimes, in particular human trafficking and scams across digital and telecommunication channels.

E. LOOKING AHEAD

44. **Reaffirm** the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030 as a vision that primarily propels the future of our region towards a Prosperous, Resilient and Open BIMSTEC by 2030, and **task** our Senior Officials to complete a comprehensive implementation plan for our consideration.
45. **Welcome** the appointment of Mr. Indra Mani Pandey of India as the Fourth Secretary General of BIMSTEC for the term 2024-2026 with effect from 4 January 2024 and **express** appreciation for his comprehensive Report.
46. **Express** our sincere appreciation to Mr. Tenzin Lekphell, former Secretary General of BIMSTEC from Bhutan, for his valuable contributions.
47. **Express** our deep appreciation to Thailand for its excellent leadership and valuable contribution during its Chairmanship of BIMSTEC.
48. **Welcome** and offer our full cooperation to Bangladesh as the next Chairman of the BIMSTEC.
49. **Express** our profound appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for the excellent arrangements made for the Sixth BIMSTEC Summit.

Annexure to the Six BIMSTEC Summit Declaration

BIMSTEC BANGKOK VISION 2030

*A Prosperous, Resilient, and Open BIMSTEC by 2030
for our people and future generations*

Remaining committed to BIMSTEC's principles and purposes as enshrined in the Bangkok Declaration 1997, we will achieve the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030 to build a Prosperous, Resilient, and Open BIMSTEC by 2030 by pursuing these following three key goals:

A Prosperous BIMSTEC, where poverty is substantially reduced and considerable progress towards sustainable development and viable growth are achieved. To achieve this goal, we will focus on

- Strengthening regional supply chains for a steady post-pandemic economic recovery by enhancing transport and energy connectivity. This also includes the promotion of port and maritime connectivity, land connectivity, the implementation of the BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity, the conclusion of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Master Plan study and its implementation, the Green Investment especially renewable energy, promotion of regional electricity trade, activation of BIMSTEC Grid-Interconnection Coordination Committee and BIMSTEC Energy Centre and linkages to other relevant regional cooperation groupings and countries with a shared vision of a secure and prosperous Bay of Bengal;
- Promoting trade, investment, trade facilitation, job creation, competitiveness of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and inclusive and sustainable development. This also includes enhanced cooperation in digital economy, blue economy, mountain economy, sustainable tourism and corporate governance, as well as concerted efforts to implement the Framework Agreement on BIMSTEC FTA;
- Expediting the implementation of BIMSTEC Poverty Plan of Action (PPA);
- Identifying poor households and implementing targeted programs for the poor to gain resource accessibility, capacity development, job creation and fulfillment of human basic needs;
- Enhancing cooperation on food security including promotion of productivity in agriculture, livestock, and aquaculture.

A Resilient BIMSTEC, where crisis-preparedness, crisis-responsiveness and human security in various dimensions, including a steady post-pandemic economic recovery, are strengthened. To achieve this goal, we will focus on

- Promoting health security, and strengthening health systems to increase accessibility to quality health services as well as preparedness for future health challenges;
- Enhancing the cooperation on disaster relief, recovery, and reconstruction;
- Enhancing the cooperation on knowledge, skill and technology transfer, and sharing good practices in development sector;
- Increasing maritime cooperation through the promotion of free and safe navigation, combating piracy, money laundering, financing of terrorism, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, as well as smuggling of narcotic drugs and illegal goods at sea;
- Promoting environmental protection, climate change adaptation/mitigation measures, and the use of clean/renewable energy to build resilient economies and communities including through creation of the BIMSTEC Himalayan Science Council for scientific research.

An Open BIMSTEC which is inclusive, using multi-pronged and multi-stakeholder approach. To achieve this goal, we will focus on

- Promoting sustainable, environment-friendly, high-value, safe and purpose-driven tourism capitalising on shared heritage and historical, cultural and people-to-people ties, and the preparation for increasing cross-border and regional mobility of peoples;
- Fostering people-centred development;
- Enhancing the collaboration and networks of young entrepreneurs, innovators, expert groups, researchers, academia, students and professionals, as well as human resource development in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), arts and creativity.

To benefit from BIMSTEC's distinct characteristic as the only organization which links South Asia and Southeast Asia, we aim to achieve the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision by 2030 with the spirit of cooperation, solidarity, equal partnership, shared responsibility, and mutual respect.
