VISIT OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER

OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF NEPAL

SAARC SECRETARIAT, KATHMANDU, 07 FEBRUARY 2020

WELCOME REMARKS BY H. E. MR. AMJAD HUSSAIN B. SIAL, SECRETARY GENERAL OF SAARC

The Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister of Nepal and the Chairman of SAARC,

The First Lady,

Hon. Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal and the Chairman of the SAARC Council of Ministers,

Distinguished Chief Adviser to the Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister,

Distinguished Foreign Affairs Adviser to the Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister,

Distinguished Foreign Secretary and the Chairman of the SAARC Standing Committee,

Distinguished Press Adviser to the Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister,

Distinguished Chairman of the SAARC Programming Committee,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of all officials at the SAARC Secretariat and on my own behalf, I have the honour to extend a very warm welcome to the Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister of Nepal and the Chair of SAARC, and the First Lady. I have also the honour to cordially welcome the distinguished members of the Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister’s entourage.

We are greatly honoured by the Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister’s momentous visit to the SAARC Secretariat today. I am particularly happy that this is the third such visit of a SAARC Head of State or Government in two years. Moreover, this is a unique and historic occasion, which brings together the distinguished Chairs of four Charter Bodies of SAARC to the Secretariat at the same time.

Rt. Hon. Prime Minister,

As a founding member of SAARC, Nepal has been playing a very constructive role in its evolution since inception. The three milestone SAARC Summits hosted and several important initiatives spearheaded by Nepal have contributed enormously toward the SAARC process.

We wish to convey our sincere gratitude to the esteemed Government of Nepal for hosting the SAARC Secretariat and SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centre. We are grateful to the Government of Nepal for its help in retrofitting this Annex Building, which was damaged in 2015 earthquake.

Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister,

The convening of meetings of the Charter Bodies of SAARC, including the Summit, provides renewed impetus to the SAARC process. In this context, we greatly value endeavours of the Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister and the Chair of SAARC for convening of the Nineteenth Summit in Islamabad.

Even though the Charter Bodies could not meet as required, SAARC has progressed steadily over the years. During 2019 alone, besides many other SAARC activities, five ministerial meetings were convened. SAARC’s Specialized Bodies and Regional Centres also remained very active in pursuance of their mandates. SAARC’s collaboration with regional and international organizations has been progressing well. We are also working to initiate substantive project-based collaboration with the observers of SAARC.

Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister,

My tenure will come to an end on 29th February. I avail myself of this opportunity to thank the esteemed Government of Nepal for its valuable support to me in carrying out my responsibilities. I am happy to have served twice at this Secretariat. I have high regard for this beautiful and great country, and its friendly and hospitable people.

I wish to thank the Office of the Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their valuable help in organizing this memorable visit.

I now wish to request the Rt. Hon’ble Prime Minister to kindly say a few words.

Thank you.

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