As we celebrate the Thirty Fifth Anniversary of the establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), I convey my felicitations from the Government and the people of the Republic of Maldives to the Secretary-General of SAARC, the SAARC Secretariat, SAARC bodies and the people of all SAARC member states.

SAARC has helped forge a strong regional identity amongst the South Asian nations and achieved significant milestones in several priority areas as identified in the Charter. We in the Maldives are pleased to have hosted the Third Meeting of SAARC Ministers of Education/Higher Education, the SAARC Artist Camp and Exhibition of Paintings and the South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC)’s Governing Board Meeting this year.

We have to re-double our efforts to ensure that the decision-making process of SAARC is more efficient, our interventions more targeted, our delivery more result oriented and provide tangible benefits to the people. To unlock the great potential in SAARC, we must encourage greater connectivity and technical cooperation among the people of SAARC. The realization of the South Asian Economic Union will certainly break down many barriers to trade and act as a catalyst to boost economic prosperity in the region.

As we commemorate this auspicious day, I also acknowledge the foresight and vision of the founding members of SAARC, including former President His Excellency Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, for their endeavouring spirit to promote regional cooperation in South Asia. Once again, I reiterate the full commitment of the Government of Maldives in consolidating stronger regional cooperation among SAARC members.

Ibrahim Mohamed Solih
President of the Republic of Maldives
TEXT OF A MESSAGE BY
HIS EXCELLENCY ABDULLA SHAHID,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

QUOTE:

Male’, 8 December 2019

On the auspicious occasion of the Thirty Fifth Anniversary of the founding of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), I am pleased to extend warm greetings and sincere good wishes to the Secretary General, the SAARC Secretariat, all entities affiliated to SAARC and the peoples of all SAARC Members States.

The SAARC Charter embodies the ‘raison d'être’ of SAARC. Founded in 1985, SAARC has striven to promote regional cooperation in South Asia, as a means to improve the economic welfare and the quality of life of the peoples of South Asia. Notwithstanding the demographic and geographic diversity in the region, our members share much in mutual values and principles, as well as historic and cultural ties. Collectively, the peoples of South Asia aspire to a life of dignity, prosperity, social harmony, peace and security. As the sole regional intergovernmental platform in South Asia, SAARC’s role is central to deliver on the dreams and aspirations of the South Asian people.

As member states, we must strive to heighten SAARC’s relevance for the peoples of South Asia. Mutual trust, understanding and partnership must be reinforced amongst member states for the SAARC community to flourish.

Maldives remains hopeful that SAARC will be revitalized and wish all member states success in realizing our shared vision of a bright future for the people of South Asia.

Abdulla Shahid
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Maldives

UNQUOTE: