

**THIRTY-FOURTH SAARC CHARTER DAY
(08 DECEMBER 2018)**

**WELCOME REMARKS BY H. E. MR. AMJAD HUSSAIN B. SIAL,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF SAARC,
AT THE RECEPTION ON 07 DECEMBER 2018**

**Chief Guest, Rt. Hon. Mr. Nanda Bahadur Pun,
Vice President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,**

On behalf of the SAARC Secretariat, it is my honour and privilege to warmly welcome the distinguished guests to this Ceremony to commemorate the Thirty-fourth SAARC Charter Day.

We are grateful to the Rt. Hon. Vice President of Nepal for gracing this event with his august presence as the Chief Guest.

As you are aware, on 08 December in 1985 in Dhaka, the South Asian Leaders signed the Charter establishing SAARC, marking a historic beginning of regional cooperation in South Asia.

Over the last thirty-three years, SAARC has made steady progress toward socio-economic development in the region, which is fundamental to the promotion of the welfare of the peoples and improving their quality of life.

Since commemoration of last Charter Day, a number of inter-governmental mechanisms of SAARC, including its Regional Centres

and Specialized Bodies, remained active in attaining the objectives enshrined in the Charter.

SAARC's Apex and Recognized Bodies also made laudable contribution to the SAARC process.

SAARC's cooperation with its Observers and development partners continued to thrive.

Endowed with vast human and natural resources, South Asia has immense potential. With sustained endeavours, we will surely be able to realize the region's fullest potential. Essentially, therefore, SAARC is the beacon of hope and aspiration, and a matter of pride for all South Asians. SAARC is our common identity, our inspiration and our future.

On this auspicious occasion, I wish to extend warmest felicitation to the peoples and Governments of our Member States and express sincere gratitude for their unflinching commitment to the SAARC process. We are grateful to the host of the Secretariat, Government of Nepal, for its continued support. We also thank our Observers and development partners, Diplomatic Missions and international organizations for their cooperation. We are confident that we will continue to receive the same support and cooperation in future as well.

I wish you all a very joyful evening!

Long live SAARC! I thank you.