First of all congratulations for putting a worthwhile work effort and organizing a successful workshop.

Now, all week one of the things what you have heard repeatedly from me is that conciseness is a virtue. So I am about to practice what I have preached. I just have three concise closing points. First, we from APCSS came here to help you identify and try to outline what you consider to be appropriate next step requirements relating to strengthening governance roles and responsibilities to enable real security reform in Bangladesh today and in the future. It is obvious to present to all from the recommendations that you have just briefed and offered some helpful initial steps forward. It now remains to be seen if what you offered is used. Second, through out the week, I heard three important concepts stressed day after day in most discussions. They are: First, legitimacy, second, complementarity and third responsibility. I suggest you continue to emphasize these in all next steps that you take together. And last I suggest you also keep in mind three time honored keys to progress during times of national change. And they are as I think we all agree:

1. Popular recognition that the change is needed
2. Later collaboration in mapping out and agreed way ahead
3. Continuing initiatives among key stakeholders in Bangladesh to ensure momentum that began this week does not lack.

At the end of the day it is all about you. Action oriented leaders with vision with the welfare of the people and the nation always in mind remain the nation’s most valuable resource. And finally, we from APCSS sincerely feel privileged to have been with you this week and wish your success in the future.

Thank You.
Speech by the Special Guest
Ms. Geeta Pasi
Charge d’Affaires
Embassy of the United States of America,
Dhaka

Thank you for your warm welcome today. I would like to thank the participants for your informative presentations. I know that a great deal of discussion went into their formulation.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to address you as you conclude this week’s workshop on “Democracy, Governance, and Security Reforms.” I have spoken to many of you this week about your experiences. I hope your work here has been rewarding.

Your recommendations, and the process of dialogue, which led to them, are valuable, and represent a wealth of knowledge that will be of use to policy makers. I urge you to continue the process initiated here.

For those of you who are academics or are involved in the private sector, you have the tools of research and analysis that you can continue to apply to the questions, and possible answers, raised at this conference. Your inquisitive attention, writing, and reflection are crucial to fueling healthy public discussion on matters of great importance to Bangladeshis.

For those of you serving in the government, your daily actions set a course for that political future. You have the support of the international community and your own citizens to undertake an ambitious reform process that will help lay a solid, democratic foundation for the future.
For those of you serving in the military, you have the responsibility to ensure Bangladesh's security. Your efforts at home and abroad – whether in peacekeeping or as we've seen recently with the terrible floods, to provide emergency aid to populations in crisis, are all tremendously important. As you undertake this work, you provide vital support to the civilian government.

For all of you engaged in anti-corruption efforts across multiple sectors, we applaud your efforts. This is long overdue. It will reap dividends in good governance. In prosecuting corruption as well as all other legal cases, it is imperative to meet international standards of human rights and due process to ensure the legitimacy and credibility of the proceedings. As former American President John F. Kennedy once said, "the rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened."

Bangladeshis have entrusted the Caretaker Government with a great responsibility, including to put into place a foundation for a free and fair election by the end of 2008 and a healthy, functioning democratic system that Bangladeshis deeply desire. The people of Bangladesh have fought hard and sacrificed their lives for democracy. They deserve no less.

I thank you for your contributions to this conference, and I look forward to seeing the fruit that it bears.

Thank you.
Address by the Chief Guest
Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury
Hon’ble Foreign Advisor
Caretaker Government of Bangladesh

Let me just say how hugely delighted I am to be with you today. I see in the chairs ahead of me some other finest minds of this city and I am, therefore, deeply beholden to the organizers. I would also like to applaud them for being able to bring to fruition the four days of hard labor in the form of this document that has just been presented to me.

Chairman,

We are all aware that a post colonial society is often beset with immediate problems of economic constraints, social cleavages and political conflict which are manifested in class at the social and on religious lines. This unenviable situation becomes as a double jeopardy when a country is victimized as an internal colony by a repressive undemocratic regime and when it inherits war ravaged independent territory as a result of a long sanguinary War of Liberation of the state. I am referring to the history and the birth pangs of Bangladesh.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are all aware also of the reasons behind the changes that occurred in January. It followed a total breakdown of political system based on a version of the Westminster model. Unfortunately, without the checks and balances that the model normally entails, it was truly manipulated by the winner take all principle where the loser had no option but to take opposition to the streets. The nation was totally dichotomized.
The result as the general economists called it the most polarized politics in the world. Violence threatened to rip apart the societal fabric. Corruption was all pervasive, as the Roman Senator Cicero has said two thousand years ago, *inter arma enim silent leges* (in the face of arms or muscle power). Ironically, all this happened in a nation that was truly egalitarian and fundamentally classless where the feudal structure had been eliminated over half a century ago, where the media was fiercely free, where the popular urges were pluralist and which prided itself in possessing one of the most vibrant civil societies in the world. These particular characteristics, that I have just described, that mark the Bangladeshi ethos were also the nation’s historical heritage. Bangladeshis have a history of political consciousness fed by protestant intellectual tendencies. By protestant, I mean argumentative. We are aware of the great phenomena of what has been called the Bengal renaissance which is the opening of the horizons of the minds in the areas of literature, arts, political and economic thinking. All these have contributed to the Bengal Socratic tradition of refusing to accept without questioning, what they hear at the feet of the good.

It was this progressive feature of society that had led Gokhale to say ‘what Bengal things today, India thinks tomorrow’. Today concepts like micro-credit, non-formal education that had emanated from this soil, is progressively transforming not just the societal landscape of this country, but altering other societies’ comparable milieu, empowering women in Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia and Afghanistan. This must be and has to be a matter of pride for this country.

Behind these periodic shifts of Bengalis’ political and social evolution was an insatiable resort for a just and equitable social order. ‘We never fear to change nor do we ever change out of fear’. It is their will to change fed by the foreshadow of the perfection that rendered the Bangladeshis
such a vibrant and some would describe with a modicum of truth such a turbulent society. It was the same qualities that have inspired the language movement, anti-Ayub revolt and the War of Liberation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bangladesh, as you know, has made some tremendous strides in various social and economic sectors, having rather many domestic limitations and external challenges. However, we still have a long way to go. This country has experimented with several models of democracy as well as military rule resulting in palpably sometimes governance deficit. Needless to say, these internal experiences of governance' philosophies and development models have had the inevitable reflections in the nation's policy orientations, foreign and domestic, and specific policy goals. As such discourses, discussions and debates on the issues relating to democracy, development and governance is not new in Bangladesh. However, with the advent of the concept of governance or good governance in the late sixties, the Huntingtonian Third Wave of Democracy, the demise of communism in Europe and consequential trial of the liberal democracy and market economy together with neo liberalism and globalization has assumed very significant proportions. This was further transformed by the tragic events of 9/11 as far as the concept and practice on security is concerned in the national, regional and international arena. Militancy and terrorism both national and transnational have emerged as a great menace for the entire humanity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You will, therefore, agree that the task ahead for the government in the national as well as in the international matrix is Herculean. The immediate goal must be and has to meet expectations of the people and everyday we are having
to meet up these challenges. However, some of the long term challenges pertain to the evolution of the model of democracy suiting the realities in Bangladesh having both the democracy and stability, judiciously accommodating both market forces and public delivery services, balancing democratic norms and tightening entire security measures.

I am glad that all these issues and concerns have been deliberated upon threadbare in the workshop over the last few days by reputed experts from home and abroad as evident from the recommendations that has just been presented by Brig. Gen. Khan. As I understand from these deliberations, all of these are very relevant for Bangladesh’s experience. Democracy is both a system of governance and a value system to be practiced in all walks of life. One of the fundamentals of democracies is service by the ruler, to the rule and the consent of the rule to the ruler. It also means that a citizen must be protected for his or her life and property and can not be subjected to the arbitrary decision of the state without recourse to due process. Bangladesh military has played a historic role in this country’s War of Liberation. It also plays an important role in peacetime, particularly in the time of natural disasters, such as cyclone, and floods as well as in combating serious crimes. The nation might consider these as valuable services. However, many tend to entertain some misgivings about their perceived ambitions. And these results at times in a wide gap between military and their civilian counterparts. A close and cooperative civil military relationship must be and will be a helpful component of national integration that in turn will be a huge investment in the national security of Bangladesh.

Chairman,

Civil Society in the form of professional associations and organizations acts as a crucial space in the realm between the
state power and the common masses. Usually, CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) aim at preventing the spread of repressive hand of the state and promoting the interest and the rights of the masses. A cooperative state-civil society relationship strengthens democracy by negotiating limits of state power and moderating the ever-increasing popular demand on the state. The role of security forces in a democracy is defined and delineated by the cardinal principle of civilian supremacy of the affairs of the state.

However, in a violence and crime infested society with trans border links they may assume a more robust role to the extent as it is warranted by the demands ensuring proper law and order, peace, stability, uninterrupted development process and the protection of life and property and internationally accepted human rights standards. The government may call out on the military to come out in times of civil authority. The government of Bangladesh has done so in a number of occasions. As its part of the global war on terror and in combating religious militancy within its own territory, Bangladesh has employed its security forces and they are doing a good job whenever necessary with crucial assistance from friends at home and abroad. This is also the success story of the foreign policy of Bangladesh. We are also aware of the tremendous contribution that we have been making in stabilizing parts of war in Africa not just in peace keeping, but also in building of peace as well as sustaining peace competently and effectively. These reforms must be aimed at facilitating greater coordination and integration of all security forces of the country with a view to contributing towards improved law and order situation, helping turn the economy of the country and ensuring social stability in Bangladesh. However, these reforms must enhance both the state and human security. They must be subordinate to the goals of good governance and consistent with democratic norms and principles.
Mr. Chairman,

In fine, I extend my thanks to all concerns, who have helped in organizing this event. Bangladeshis thrust for new ideas and always welcome them. This is ingrained in our ethos. This is what always helps us surmount difficulties and assists us like a kite to rise against the wind.

Thank You Chairman.
Remarks and Vote of Thanks by the Chair
Ambassador Mufleh R. Osmany
Chairman, Board of Governors, BIISST

We are indeed very grateful to Honorable Advisor for his kind words. I think at this stage distinguished audience might wish to know how we conducted ourselves during the last four days. This exercise was organized jointly by BIISST and APCSS. General Smith and I are representing our own organizations. Our agenda was to provide an objective structure, a fair process and to provide facilities for our distinguished participants to come together, and to exercise their minds over the key issues being faced by the nation today. We are indeed very lucky and fortunate that some of the brightest minds of the country could come together to focus on these issues and naturally you can see the product. We had resource persons from the profession of law. Former Chief Justice Mustafa Kamal was very kind to be with us. We are grateful to him for the time he has given to us. Without his support and help we could not have come here. From the profession of politics, we had former ministers, former members of parliament, and academics. From the media, Mr. Mahbubul Alam was with us through the process. We do appreciate his time and effort. Then we had participants from the civil and military bureaucracy, and all the security services. They all contributed a lot. Also present were the senior police officers, retired and serving members from the ministries of foreign, defense and home affairs.

We are very fortunate indeed to have had with us our distinguished co-partner from Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies. I would like to congratulate General Smith and members of his team. We have tested their patience, their skill and their knowledge and all their resources. They were
extremely patient with us and at the end of the day, all of us would agree, that the spirit that they have shown represented true spirit of America in terms of freedom and democracy. And those of us, who look at the Statue of Liberty as the symbol of America, are more reinforced. And those who think the Guantanamo Bay represents the American values are proved wrong.

We received support from American Embassy, which we appreciate very much. We received a lot of support from the armed forces, as well as the civil bureaucracy. We deeply appreciate it, without their support we could not have worked through the process. We are deeply indebted to the Honorable Advisor for being with us today. And last but not the least, our distinguished participants, who have been with us for the last five days and made enormous contribution to the nation, which is something, very important and valuable. I do not think that ever before so many bright minds came together to produce something like this, which has immense importance for our society for today, tomorrow, and the years to come. And we hope this is a good beginning and we will continue the process and also our partnership with APCSS will continue. This is for the first time that we are doing this and we hope to continue the process in the years to come.

Thank you very much.