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## MEETING ON COOPERATION BETWEEN ELECTION COMMISSIONS OF SOUTH ASIA REGION

Radisson hotel, Dhaka 29-30 May 2010

Participants arrive in Dhaka on 28 May 2010
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This programme provides a brief description of each session, which will be chaired by participating election commissions. The chair who will also serve as the facilitator will be briefed ahead of time on the details of the session and his/her role. Where applicable, specific discussants will be assigned for the session to allow for a more guided and structured discussion, giving commissions that have a particular experience in a subject area the opportunity to share it with the group.

Day 1: 29 May 2010

09:30-11:00 Inaugural session

16:30-18:00 Welcome by Resident Representative of the United Nations Mission in Bangladesh

Welcome by the Chief Election Commissioner of Bangladesh

Address by keynote speaker

Book launch and vote of thanks

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-13:00 Recent election experiences and systems in the region

All participating countries have experienced national elections at some point within the past two years: this session will allow participants to share their experience from these elections. Resource persons will highlight these experiences as well as outline the design and features of the different electoral systems in the region employed for national elections.

Chair: Election Commission of Sri Lanka

Presentation on electoral systems in the region  
Presentation on election experiences in the region

Discussant: Election Commission of Nepal

Open discussion

13:00-14:00 Lunch and Prayer Break

14:00-16:00 Voter and civic registration: approaches and challenges



Day 2: 30 May 2010  
09:00-10:30  
This session aims to enable a discussion of the different systems and methods of voter registration in the region, dissemination of information and the factors affecting the conduct and outcome of a voter registration process. It also aims to share information on the use of biometrics in voter registration from the experience of Bangladesh.

Chair: Election Commission of India

Presentation of the Bangladesh experience

Discussant: Election Commission of Pakistan

Open discussion

Demonstration of voter registration process

16:00-16:30 Coffee break

16:30-18:00 New technology and electronic voting

This session aims to share information and experience on the use of new technology in elections. A presentation will highlight the role of technology and its possibilities for the electoral process as well as unforeseen risks involved. The session will also offer an opportunity to participants to examine and discuss the experience of electronic voting machines. For the demonstration, space will be allocated for the Indian and Bangladesh systems and participants would be able to move between the two demonstrations.

Chair: Election Commission of Nepal

Presentation on Electronic Voting

Discussant: Bangladesh Election Commission

Open discussion

12:30-14:00  
14:00-15:30  
Demonstration of electronic voting machines by India and Bangladesh

The demonstration of voter registration technology and electronic voting will be set up outside the meeting room for the entire duration of the meeting.

19:30 Dinner hosted by the Bangladesh Election Commission, Dhaka Westin Hotel



## **Day 2: 30 May 2010**

**09:00-10:30** Role of election management bodies in partnership building

This session focuses on relations between election management bodies and stakeholders in the electoral process. Following a presentation on the role and impact of partnerships with election management bodies, participants will have the opportunity to exchange ideas and share their own experience on partnerships.

Chair: Election Commission of Pakistan

Presentation by civil society representative

Discussant: Election Commission of Bhutan

Open discussion

**10:30-11:00** Coffee break

**11:00-12:30** Political party and campaign funding

Campaign spending has become one of the most important areas of regulation to account for donations to and spending of political parties in election campaigns. This session is designed to provide a forum for participants to share and discuss their experience with regulating political party spending and curbing the influence of money in elections. Discussion will also include the risks and challenges election management bodies face in this area.

Chair: Election Commission of Afghanistan

Presentation and overview of political party and campaign funding

Discussant: Election Commission of India

Open discussion

**12:30-14:00** Lunch and Prayer Break

**14:00-15:30** Women in the election process

In this session, participants will exchange ideas and experience on mainstreaming women in the conduct of elections. An expert presentation will highlight some of the ways that other commissions have succeeded in increasing the participation of women in electoral administration. Participants will have the opportunity to share their experience, ideas and challenges they face in recruiting women for the conduct of elections.



Chair: Election Commission of the Maldives

Presentation on women in the electoral process

Discussant: Election Commission of Sri Lanka

Open discussion

15:30-15:45 Coffee break

15:45-17:00 Appointment processes, terms and conditions of employment of election commissioners

Efficiency, integrity and neutrality of an election commission depend largely on the quality of people that are appointed as commissioners and the manner in which they are selected and the terms and conditions of service offered to them. Participants would get an opportunity to share their views on this sensitive issue during this session.

Chair: Election Commission of Bhutan

Discussant: Election Commission of Afghanistan

Open discussion

17:00-18:30 Towards the formation of a regional election commission forum

As a key objective of the meeting, this session will discuss how to move forward toward forming a regional forum to enable regular interaction between election commissions from the SAARC countries. Bangladesh Election Commission will share a paper on formation of such a forum and present it to meeting participants before their arrival in Dhaka. It is envisaged that participants will have read and considered the paper and come prepared to take the matter forward.

Chair: Bangladesh Election Commission

Adoption of a resolution for forming the forum

Closing of the conference

19:00 Cultural event and dinner at the invitation of the Bangladesh Election Commission

**Day 3: 31 May 2010**

**Departure of the delegations**