

# High time to form ministerial forum on South-South Cooperation: Momen

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**Online Desk:** Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen has reiterated his proposal — made at the BAPA+40 Conference held in Argentina in March 2019 — to create a Ministerial Forum on South-South Cooperation. There is no dedicated ministerial platform under the auspices of South-South Cooperation, he said speaking as the chief guest at a meeting in New York on Friday. Momen said it is high time to establish a forum comprising the Foreign and Finance or Development Cooperation Ministers of the global south to regularly meet and exchange views on critical issues, discuss opportunities and challenges, explore potentials, articulate likely solutions and share lessons learned on shared priorities and concerns, reports UNB.

“I have received very encouraging support on my proposal from the President of the General Assembly, UN Secretary-General and a number of ministers from the Global South,” said the foreign minister. He also expressed readiness to host the first meeting of such ministerial forum at a convenient time this year in Bangladesh to begin the process. The ambassador-level meeting on South-South cooperation was held at the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN in New York.

The meeting was participated by a select group of permanent representatives from Argentina, China, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Maldives, Malawi, Morocco, Nepal, Philippines, Rwanda, Singapore, South Africa, Solomon Islands, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam. Referring to the critical role played by South-South Cooperation for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development commitments, the participating member states in the meeting thanked Bangladesh for proposing establishment of a ministerial forum.

Cuba, Kenya, Egypt, Rwanda, and Morocco voiced their commitment and wholehearted support to work closely with Bangladesh in the establishment of the forum very soon, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Saturday. The representatives of Singapore, South Africa and Nepal constructively engaged themselves in the discussion. The participants considered the proposal as a stepping stone in exploiting the untapped opportunities in the South-South Cooperation on multiple areas of interests including trade, finance, investment and knowledge sharing. The Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN in New York moderated the meeting and delivered his welcome remarks. A representative from the UN Office for South-South Cooperation was also present at the meeting.