

POLITICAL RELATIONS

Bangladesh opened its resident diplomatic Mission in Abuja in 1977 but it was closed after a while in the same year. Nigeria also opened its resident Mission in Dhaka in 2000 but shortly it was closed down. Currently, Nigerian High Commission in New Delhi, India is concurrently accredited to Bangladesh. Bangladesh High Commission in Morocco was concurrently accredited to Nigeria for a while but later Bangladesh High Commission in Nairobi, Kenya was concurrently accredited to Nigeria till opening of the Mission in Abuja. Bangladesh reopened its High Commission in Nigeria on 26 November 2016. Bangladesh proposed the Nigerian authorities on different occasions to re-open their Mission in Bangladesh.

The role of Nigeria in peace-keeping in the region is significant, while Bangladesh also enjoys high reputation for being one of the largest contributors under the UN Peacekeeping Missions and operations worldwide including in Africa.

Both Bangladesh and Nigeria share similar views and take identical positions as common members of the UN, NAM, OIC, the Commonwealth and the D-8 Group. Nigeria voted in favour of the Resolution on Myanmar at the UN General Assembly in 2018 and 2019.

Visits :

1. From Bangladesh to Nigeria :

- (a) Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited Abuja, Nigeria in October 2010 to attend the D-8 Summit.
- (b) A 5-member delegation led by H.E. Mr. Amir Hossain Amu, M.P., Hon'ble Minister, M/o Industries of the Government of Bangladesh visited Nigeria from 13-17 November 2017 to attend 6th D-8 Ministerial Meeting on Industry.
- (c) Hon'ble Foreign Minister H.E. Dr. Dipu Moni, MP visited Nigeria from 6-9 July 2010 to attend the Ministerial Conference of the 7th D-8 Summit held in Abuja on 6 July 2010.
- (d) H.E. Mr. Abdullah Al Islam Jakob, Hon'ble Deputy Minister for Environment and Forest of the Government of Bangladesh made a stopover in Lagos, Nigeria from 10-12 October 2016 on way to his official visit to Kigali, Rwanda.
- (e) Chief of Army Staff General Abu Belal Muhammad Shafiul Huq, SBP, ndc, psc, of Bangladesh paid an official visit to Nigeria from 21 April 2017 to 26 April 2017 and led a 5-member delegation at the invitation of his Nigerian counterpart.
- (f) A 3-member delegation from Bangladesh Armed Forces Division (AFD) led by Brig. Gen. Mohammed Mahabubul Hoque, PBGM, ndc, afwc, psc, visited Nigeria from 15-21 October 2017 to participate at the International Seminar on Managing Asymmetric Security Challenges in the 21st Century.
- (g) A 6-member delegation from Bangladesh Armed Forces led by Major General Walker Uz Zaman, ndc, visited Nigeria from 12-19 November 2017 to participate a seminar on Counter Insurgency / Counter Terrorism in Nigeria.
- (h) Ms. Sanchita Haque, Counsellor of Bangladesh at the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to UN, New York attended a seminar on Promoting International Cooperation in Combating Illicit

Financial Flows (KFFs) and Enhancing Assets Recovery in order to Foster Sustainable Development held in Abuja, Nigeria on 5-7 June 2017.

(i) A 9-member delegation led by Ms. Shahana Zaman, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Bangladesh participated at the 11th International Arts and Crafts (INAC) Expo organized by the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) of Nigeria (17-24 November, 2018).

(j) A 9-member delegation led by Mr. Md. Naoshad Hossain, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Bangladesh participated at the 12th International Arts and Crafts (INAC) Expo organized by the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) of Nigeria (20-24 November, 2019).

(k) A 20-member delegation led by Mr. Md. Ataur Rahman, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Bangladesh visited Nigeria in connection with the 2019 Abuja Carnival organized by the Federal Ministry of Information & Culture of Nigeria (23-25 November, 2019).

(l) A 19-member team comprising representatives from M/o Cultural Affairs and M/o Foreign Affairs led by Mr. Fahimul Islam, Joint Secretary participated for the first time at the “**Carnival Calabar**” (27-29 December, 2019) known as the “Africa’s Biggest Street Party” and showcased cultural beauty of Bangladesh.

2. From Nigeria to Bangladesh :

(a) Nigerian Minister for Commerce H.E. Engr. Mustafa Bello visited Bangladesh in 2002.

(b) A 10-member delegation led by H.E. Prof. Anthony Gozie Anwukah, Honorable State Minister of the Federal Ministry of Education of Nigeria visited Bangladesh to attend E-9 Ministerial review meeting on Education 2030 held in Dhaka from 5-7 February 2017.

(c) A 8-member joint delegation comprising high Officials of the Nigerian National Commission for Refugees, Migrants & Internally Displaced Persons and the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited Bangladesh to participate at the 9th GFMD Summit Meeting held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 10-12 December 2016.

(d) A Nigerian parliamentary delegation participated at the 63rd Conference of CPA held in Dhaka from 01-08 November 2017.

(e) A 5-member delegation from Nigeria led by H.E. Mr. Isa Muhammadu Dodo, Ambassador, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia attended the 45th Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) held in Dhaka from 5-6 May 2018.

Finalized Bilateral Agreements/MoUs :

1. A Protocol on Bilateral Consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Nigeria and Bangladesh has been signed on 28 September 2020.

2. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation between the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) has been signed on 29 September 2021.

3. Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DCCI) and Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) signed an MoU on 29 September 2020.

Pending Bilateral Agreements/MoUs :

1. A Draft Memorandum of Understanding on Agricultural Cooperation between Bangladesh and Nigeria.
2. Agreement on Educational Cooperation between Bangladesh and Nigeria.
3. A Draft Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in the field of Defence between Bangladesh and Nigeria.
4. Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the Elimination of Double Taxation with respect to Taxes on Income and the Prevention of Tax Evasion and Avoidance.
5. A draft Cultural Cooperation Agreement between Bangladesh and Nigeria.

Defence Cooperation :

Nigerian military officers have been attending senior professional courses in the Defence Services Command and Staff College, National Defence College and other Defence Training Institutions in Bangladesh in big numbers and performing well over the past years. In one estimate 289 Nigerian Defence Officers were trained in Bangladesh which makes it a visible activity in bilateral relations. On the other hand, number of Bangladeshi participants attending Courses in Nigeria is insignificant. One senior Defence Officer (at the level of Brigadier General) has been attending the NDC, Nigeria each year.

Potentials, Prospects and Plan of Action

Pursuing economic contents of diplomacy has been one of the focused areas of the High Commission as there are huge potentials of enhancing commercial links between the two countries. It has been participating almost all trade fairs to showcase Bangladesh's export potentials. Nigeria is an important country in Africa which plays a vital role in the African Union and ECOWAS and possesses huge economic and business potentials. Nigeria is the largest economy of Africa and 6th largest producer of oil in the world. It is a huge market of 200 million people and the country imports most of her requirements from abroad. However, the potentials of our relations and prospects of Nigerian markets are not exploited as yet. There has also been increased demand of business visas in recent months (around 300 visas in each month and most of them are for business purposes until the outbreak of Covid-19) which indicates the growing interest about Bangladeshi products among the Nigerian business community. Exchange of high level visits including trade delegation is important to inject dynamism in bilateral relations.

Nigerians are keen to see that Bangladesh helps them establish textile/RMG, pharmaceuticals/jute and ceramics factories in Nigeria as a joint venture utilizing the wide expertise Bangladesh has in this regard. Bangladesh can benefit by joint ventures particularly in the fields of textiles/RMG as Nigeria being a member of AGOA has duty and quota free access to US market while Bangladesh can't avail this facility as a LDC. It is important to note that Nigeria is trying to reduce its dependence on oil and diversify its sources of revenues which paves the ways for foreign investments.