



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Celebration of '35<sup>th</sup> SAARC Charter Day' held on 09 December 2019**

**Organized by SARSO at the SARSO Secretariat, Dhaka**



The South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO) organized an event to commemorate the 35<sup>th</sup> SAARC Charter Day on 09 December 2019 at SARSO Secretariat Dhaka to mark and express solidarity to signing of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Charter. The SAARC came into being on 8 December 1985 with the adoption of its Charter by the Heads of State or Government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Afghanistan joined SAARC in April 2007 as the eighth member.

Mr. Md. Muazzem Hossain, Director General, Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI), Mr. Chanchal Chand Sarkar, Director (ETF), SAARC and Ms. Israt Ara, Director (SAARC & BIMSTEC Wing), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh were distinguished guests during the function. The event was attended by representatives from the diplomatic corps of the SAARC Member States in Bangladesh, officials from SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), senior officials from Ministries, government agencies, Chambers and business leaders of the private sector.

Mr. E. Devendar, Director General, SARSO welcomed the distinguished guests and other dignitaries present in the event. Mr. Devendar highlighted the institutional arrangement of SARSO and its role in facilitating intra-regional and global trade. He also mentioned the objectives of SARSO and its international cooperation. Mr. Chanchal Chand Sarkar, Director (Economic, Trade and Finance), SAARC delivered the opening remarks. Mr. Sarkar, in his remarks expressed his gladness for being able to be in Dhaka for the celebration of 35<sup>th</sup> SAARC Charter Day as he mentioned that, it was in Dhaka, Bangladesh where the initiation of the establishment of regional cooperation took place during the First SAARC Summit held in Dhaka. Mr. Sarkar highlighted the history of establishment of SAARC including its objectives and establishment of SAARC institutes to fulfill the aspirations of SAARC. He also emphasized the importance of SARSO in removing technical

barriers to trade. Mr. K. Jayantha Sirikumara, Director, SARSO delivered a presentation on 'SARSO towards regional harmonization of Standards'. Mr. Md. Gulam Sarwar, Dy. Director and Mr. Md. Nozir Ahmmod Miah, Dy. Director of Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) delivered presentation on 'BSTI and its role'. A short video clip about BSTI was also displayed. Mr. Muazzem Hossain, Director General of BSTI in his remarks appreciated the role of SARSO in harmonizing regional Standards and hoped SARSO would formulate and harmonize more Standards in the coming years. He requested the Member States of SAARC to extend cooperation to facilitate its activities and the National Standards Bodies of the region to share knowledge and resources. He also highlighted about BSTI and mentioned that, BSTI has formulated about 3800 Standards. Ms. Israt Ara, Director (SAARC & BIMSTEC Wing), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in her remarks expressed her warm felicitation on the celebration of the 35<sup>th</sup> SAARC Charter Day. She expressed her appreciation to SARSO for organizing the event smoothly. Ms. Ara affirmed Bangladesh's commitment to SAARC initiatives and regional cooperation and expressed appreciation to SARSO for making good progress over the years and hoped for further continuity of the efforts. She hoped SARSO would organize more meetings of the SARSO Sectoral Technical Committees to harmonize more SAARC Standards and requested Member States to extend cooperation. Ms. Ara finally expressed sincere thanks to the Director General and staff of SARSO for successfully conducting the 35<sup>th</sup> SAARC Charter day. Mr. Ramesh Khadka, Dy. Director SARSO proposed the Vote of Thanks.



*Left to right: Ms. Israt Ara (Director, MoFA, Bangladesh); Mr. Chanchal Chand Sarkar, (Director, SAARC); Mr. Md. Muazzem Hossain (Director General, BSTI); Mr. E. Devendar (Director General, SARSO)*

\*\*\*\*\*