

IVI welcomes Bangladesh as state party with ratification ceremony

SEOUL, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, July 15, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The International Vaccine Institute (IVI) hosted a ceremony at headquarters today honoring the People's Republic of Bangladesh's ratification of the IVI Establishment Agreement. Over 20 years of vaccine research and capacity-building initiatives with partners in Bangladesh have led to significant achievements in global public health, including the domestic development and delivery of IVI's oral cholera vaccine, and IVI officially welcomes Bangladesh as its 19th state party.

The event took place in hybrid format, streamed live from IVI in Seoul, Republic of Korea (ROK) with the in-person attendance of Her Excellency Abida Islam, Ambassador of Bangladesh to ROK, and featuring online remarks from the governments of Bangladesh and IVI's core member states, ROK, India, Sweden, and Finland, as well as several of IVI's key research and industry partners based in Bangladesh. Ambassador Islam raised the flag of Bangladesh at IVI to signify Bangladesh's state membership.

Mr. George Bickerstaff, Chairperson of IVI's Board of Trustees, gave the opening welcome remarks followed by:

- His Excellency Zahid Maleque, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Bangladesh
- His Excellency Shahriar Alam, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh
- Her Excellency Abida Islam, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the ROK
- Mr. Abdul Muktatir, Chairman and Managing Director of Incepta Vaccine Ltd
- Dr. Tahmeed Ahmed, Executive Director of icddr,b
- His Excellency Chang Wook-jin, Director General of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ROK
- Her Excellency Sripriya Ranganathan, Ambassador of India to the ROK
- Ms. Gabriella Augustsson, Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Sweden in Korea
- Mr. Mika Ruotsalainen, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Finland in Korea
- Dr. Jerome Kim, Director General, IVI

Mr. Bickerstaff said: "IVI's research and capacity-building collaborations with partners in Bangladesh for the past 20 years are exemplary cases of IVI's work with member states to advance and make available safe, effective, and affordable vaccines where they're needed most."

His Excellency Maleque said: "I would like to thank IVI for two decades of assistance to Bangladesh. IVI has helped improve our understanding of the disease burdens caused by cholera, shigella, Japanese encephalitis, and antimicrobial resistance in Bangladesh. The ratification of the IVI Establishment Agreement and our new role as a state party signify our appreciation for IVI's previous contributions to Bangladesh, and our country's desire to expand cooperation with IVI."

His Excellency Alam said: "With Bangladesh's full membership, we look forward to the continuation of assistance and further cooperation in capacity building, disease surveillance, and technology transfer to advance vaccine solutions for urgent global public health challenges. We hope such collaboration will help protect the health and well-being of our people from infectious diseases and improve the capacities of researchers and healthcare workers."

Her Excellency Islam said: "I believe Bangladesh's full membership to IVI will further facilitate our relationship in protecting public health from communicable diseases through enhanced research, clinical development, and manufacturing of affordable vaccines in Bangladesh. As a state party of IVI, Bangladesh is committed to supporting IVI's work in its endeavors to make the world an even healthier and safer place."

Dr. Kim said: "It is a privilege to be able to review the work we have done together and to think about our opportunities in the future. This could involve new vaccines for global health, new projects, special partnerships with icddr,b and other institutions in Bangladesh to advance sustainable global health and reduce the burden of infectious diseases through vaccination."

Bangladesh is a founding signatory to IVI's Establishment Agreement, the 1996 UN treaty that established IVI as an independent international organization dedicated to vaccine research and development and strengthening vaccine technology capacity in developing countries. The IVI Agreement remains open for accession by any state or intergovernmental organization.

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