



*The Prime Minister of Nepal*

### Message

On the auspicious occasion of the 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi- Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), I would like to extend warm felicitations and best wishes to the Governments and Peoples of the BIMSTEC Member States.

BIMSTEC has completed the journey of a quarter century since its establishment in 1997. The region with diversity in geography but closeness in cultural and civilizational values brings together the South and Southeast Asian Member States for meeting the aspirations of about 1.6 billion peoples. With the adoption of BIMSTEC Charter and reconstitution of the BIMSTEC areas of cooperation, the Fifth Summit of BIMSTEC has given a new momentum to the regional process. Now our concerted efforts and solidarity for implementation of all our decisions and commitments are instrumental for making the region prosperous, resilient, and sustainable.

At present, we all are struggling hard for the sustainable recovery from the adverse impacts of the pandemics like COVID-19, the financial hardships and disrupted supply chains, which have aggravated further to our efforts in achieving developmental goals in the region. Global warming, climate change, natural disasters and ecological imbalances have added more challenges to our efforts in alleviating poverty and achieving sustainable development goals to the member states. At this critical juncture, I believe it is the high time to put our concerted efforts as a region to deal with all our common issues and challenges by transforming the regional potentials into a reality for the benefits of our people.

As an active member of BIMSTEC, we are delighted to lead the People to People Contact Sector as one of the important areas of the BIMSTEC cooperation and look forward to work with all Member States for cultivating fruitful connections among the peoples of the region with new ways and dimensions.

I am confident that the 6<sup>th</sup> BIMSTEC Summit scheduled to be held in 2023 under the chairmanship of the Kingdom of Thailand will have extensive deliberations for furthering the economic growth, social progress and sustainable development of the region.

We cherish the 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of BIMSTEC with commitments for actions to collective responsibility and common prosperity.

*Prachanda*

(Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda')

Kathmandu, 6 June 2023