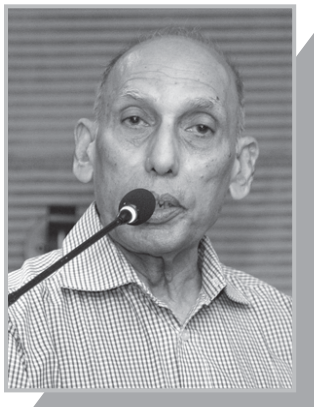


WELCOME REMARKS



Mr. Shamsul Huda

Executive Director

Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD)

As we gather here in Dhaka, Bangladesh, both in person and virtually, we must first acknowledge the gravity of the challenges that many communities in Asia and Africa face. Our regions bear the impact of natural disasters, making them the most affected and the most vulnerable. The intertwined issues of poverty, land tenure insecurity and climate change have left countless lives in a state of jeopardy.

Let us not mistake this conference as a mere academic exercise — it is, in fact, a powerful call to action. We have heard the voices of the marginalized and are committed to amplifying their stories. The "humanization" of this issue lies at the heart of our mission. We seek to bridge the gap between public awareness and the harsh realities faced by those who lack secure land tenure rights, often losing their homes and livelihoods in the wake of natural disasters.

We aim to create inclusive climate disaster prevention and resilience policies. By weaving the land rights of the rural poor into the fabric of climate discourse, we aspire to bring about lasting change and empowerment.

Furthermore, we are deeply committed to exploring the cross-cutting dimensions of land concerning climate change. Despite the growing awareness of climate change, the connection between its impacts, social and policy responses, and the importance of land tenure security needs to be more understood and adequately addressed. Therefore, the case studies documented in selected communities in Asia and Africa are not mere research findings; they are narratives of resilience and struggle that demand our attention and action.

As we embark on this conference over the next two days, I encourage every one of you to participate actively. Share your experiences, ask questions, provide insights, and engage in the discussions that will take place. Through your active involvement, we can collectively pave the way for greater awareness and action on the importance of land tenure rights in the climate change narrative.

Let this conference serve as a platform for meaningful change. Let us emerge from it with a Joint Statement that captures the essence of our deliberations, providing a roadmap for increased visibility of land tenure issues in the climate change narrative.