

**Briefing on the work of Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, UN Under-Secretary
General, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs),
Landlocked and Small Island Developing States
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By Amalia Dickie, SDI UN Representative, Vienna

This office is a relatively new department and Mr. Chowdhury is the first appointed to lead it. His job involves mobilising support for the most vulnerable group of countries which include 50 LDCs 31 Landlocked and 37 small island developing states. Placing this among the Millenium Development Goals (Nr. 8) was one of the first main achievements of his office. In recognising the potential for stability in regions of conflict through development, one focus is on promoting a culture of peace, particularly through education in respect for diversity. Within this focus as a conflict prevention measure, is the empowerment of women, girls education and micro-credit programmes. For this years 5 year review of the 10 yr 'Brussels programme' adopted in 2001, the newly elected President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has been invited to open the meeting.

His office negotiates with governments at a national level, with the UN and non UN agencies, with Civil Society through NGOs and the private sector. He emphasised that many development partners prefer to work directly with NGOs involved in grass roots level work, rather than through governments. The NGO caucus on sustainable development is one example he highlighted where the work of his department greatly benefits from their cooperation in highlighting matters of concern.

Prior to this appointment he served as Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN in New York, during which time I met him when attending the UN Peace summit in 2000. I learned that he is the recipient of the U Thant Peace Award and UNESCO Gandhi Gold Medal for Culture of Peace and has received an Honorary Doctorate from the Soka University of Tokyo, for his work on women's issues, child rights and culture of peace as well as for the strengthening of the United Nations.

In 2000 Mr. Chowdhury also joined me in a meeting with Sharif Horthy and Daniel Cheifetz and was informed about Subud and SDI, and today repeated his willingness to assist us in our work if at anytime we need to consult him.

(The attached photograph was taken after the briefing together with Mr. Chowdhury and members of the NGO VICOSD. The Vienna International Community on Sustainable Development, is an organization which due to its good contacts to international, regional and national institutions is apparently able to lobby the interests of its campaigns and the organization itself. It's activities are focused on information campaigns on various activities and networking, which may be an area that Subud in general, but particularly SDIA, would like to consider expanding in a way that would be mutually beneficial for our member's projects and promoting related UN development goals. For more information about how they work, see their website www.vicosd.org and click on the British flag for the English version.

