* **The SAARC Anti-Terrorism Mechanism**

At the Thirty-first Session of the Council of Ministers (Colombo, 27-28 February 2009)recognizing the imperative to forge deeper collaboration to address the growing menace of terrorism in the region and to convey the region’s collective concern over the challenges posed by the current global economic crisis adopted a ‘SAARC Ministerial Statement on Global Economic Crisis’ and a ‘SAARC Ministerial Declaration on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism’.

At the Sixteenth SAARC Summit (Thimphu, 28 – 29 April 2010), the Heads of State/Government strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and expressed deep concern over the threat which terrorism continues to pose to peace, security and economic stability of the South Asian region. The leaders reiterated their firm resolves to root out terrorism and recalled the Ministerial Declaration on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism adopted by the Thirty-first Session of the Council of Ministers (Colombo, 27-28 February 2009).

The Member States emphasized that the linkages between the terrorism, illegal trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substance, illegal trafficking of persons and firearms all continue to remain a matter of serious concern and reiterated their commitment to address these problems in a comprehensive manner. The Leaders emphasized the need to strengthen regional cooperation to fight terrorism and transnational organized crimes.

The Member States reaffirmed its commitment to implement the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and its Additional Protocol and SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The leaders re-emphasized the importance of coordinated and concerted response to combat terrorism. The Leaders also recognized in this regard the value of the proposed UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and noted the progress made during the recent rounds of negotiations and called for an early conclusion of the Convention.

The Thirty-seventh Session of the Standing Committee (Thimphu, 25 – 26 April 2010) noted that all measures are being taken by the Member States to implement the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and its Additional Protocol and that the enabling legislation is being concluded by the Member States.

* + **The Meeting of the High Level Group of Eminent Experts to strengthen the SAARC Anti-Terrorism Mechanism**
* **1st meeting**: in New Delhi, on 09-10 February 2012
* **2nd meeting**: in New Delhi, on 22-23 September 2016

Key Facts Issues of terrorism and the measures to strengthen the SAARC anti-terrorism mechanism were discussed. Besides, other important issues discussed during the meeting included terrorism financing, drugs trafficking and cyber crimes. The member countries shared their national experiences on various related legislations to counter terrorism. They agreed towards operationalizing the SAARC Drugs Offences Monitoring Desk (SDOMD) and SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk (STOMD) in order to strengthen the combat efforts against terrorism. STOMD: The desk was established in 1995 in Colombo (Sri Lanka) to collate, analyze and disseminate information on terror offences, strategies, tactics and methods in SAARC region. It is not functional due to some technical issues.

* **3rd meeting**: SAARC Secretariat has suggested to Sri Lanka to organize this meeting

parallel to the Eighth meeting of the SAARC Ministers of Interior/Home preceded by the Eighth Meeting of the Secretaries of Interior/Home