

**The Dhaka Declaration**  
**Adopted at the**  
**South Asian Cultural Convention against Imperialism and Communalism**  
**Dhaka, Bangladesh, February 19-21, 2016**

**Preamble**

**We are concerned** that, Communal tensions-hatred-riots, terrorist attacks on the innocent people by the extremists, interventions of the imperialist forces and the shameless plundering by the neoliberal local collaborators of the global finance capital have become rampant in all the countries of South Asia. The imperialist power and their neoliberal collaborators are also spreading political, diplomatic, economic as well as cultural divisiveness among the secular democratic and progressive forces and people of South Asia to weaken their united and joint struggles against them and thereby protecting and maintaining their reactionary hold over the economy, society and states of this region. It is already clear from the recent announcements of the Asia Pacific command of the US Imperialism, the spearhead of the world imperialism that they are going to increase their presence and power in the region which is an ominous sign of danger for all the peace loving peoples of South Asia.

Evidence indicates that, now and then the imperialist forces are creating, training up and arming violent fundamentalists, terrorists and extremists in different countries and are also providing financial supports to them. Imperialist dominated global information and communication system and media is with utmost skill trying to hide these ugly activities of imperialism by maneuvering world media with orchestrated falsehood and fake information.

In order to protect the rule of neoliberal global finance capital, imperialism and their local agents purposefully create mass hysteria based on communal hatred. They destroy the human conscience. They destroy the sense of pluralism and sometimes even minimum liberal democratic rights of the people. They deliberately cultivate segregation and selfishness, spread misogynist attitude and reactionary backward thinking. They and their collaborators are, in the final analysis destroying peoples' democratic rights (Economic, social, political and cultural). In the name of so called Globalization and 'market fundamentalism' they are actually corporatizing the social sectors, such as education and health which has resulted in massive increase in global inequality and class disparity. These neoliberal regimes are exploiting the cheap labor, destroying the virgin environment and exhausting the natural resources of the third world countries.

## **We therefore acknowledge that it is very important**

- To revitalize the power of culture to save humanity. The foremost duty of art and artist is to lead the society towards the path of enlightenment and to be involved in the welfare of the people.
- To help the peoples' struggles for establishing universal human rights and Economic and social justices

From this understanding and sense of duty, we the writers, artists and the cultural organizations of South Asian countries feel the necessity to make a common cause for building a well-orchestrated cultural movement in South Asia.

## **The Declaration**

We, the participants of South Asian Cultural Convention against 'Imperialism and Communalism' organized by 'Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigosthi', representing five countries-Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Srilanka, include writers, artists and the cultural organizations, meeting here in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 19-21 February 2016 have agreed to the following declarations:

- We appreciate Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigosthi and other cultural organizations and cultural activists for organizing the Dhaka Convention as a symbol of their renewed promise to continue their struggle against Imperialism and Communalism ;
- We remember and pay homage to all the martyrs along with martyrs of language movement of 1952, who sacrificed their lives in the fight against Imperialism and Communalism in South Asia as well as all over the world;
- We acknowledge the increasing need of strengthening the bilateral and multilateral cultural cooperation among South Asian countries and increased cultural relationship amongst its people. Only the united people can overcome the worldwide increasing tension and violence fueled by religious fundamentalists, terrorist and the neoliberal anti people state. We recognize that countries in South Asia are seriously affected by the Imperialist Globalization, communal forces and religious fundamentalism. We therefore resolve to combat and overcome these dangers of menacing magnitude using our weapons of cultural.

**Reemphasizing all issues raised above, we**

**CALL ON ALL CULTURAL ORGANIZATION, CULTURAL ACTIVISTS,  
ARTISTS AND WRITERS OF SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES TO:**

1. Fully expose and vigorously oppose the deceptive approaches, programs and policies of Imperialistic Globalization in the countries of the region and worldwide by our cultural activities.
2. Fight against the reactionary communal forces and their ideology.
3. Raise voice to stop inhumane imperialist design, to dismantle imperialist military alliances and to withdraw overseas imperialist military bases and troop deployments.
4. Fight for freedom of speech, freedom of expression and opinion.
5. Promote secular democratic values, social justice, peace, gender equality, secular democratic values through our cultural activities.
6. Struggle to establish a socio-economic, political and cultural order in our respective countries which will ensure freedom from foreign domination and domestic exploitation and oppression so that inter-class, inter-ethnic, inter-religious and inter-faith equality can also be ensured and promoted.
7. Strengthen our solidarity; enhance our capacities to carry out both independent and coordinated action programs. Forge closer links among ourselves and with other anti-imperialist, anti-communal progressive organizations, groups and individuals for further advancement of the movement.