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## PRESS RELEASE

### Foreign Minister Discusses Political Situation with UN Secretary General

Washington DC, 19 February 2015: "The Government remains committed to ensuring the human rights and security of innocent civilians who are being targeted by the terrorist acts being committed by the BNP-Jamaat alliance, and remains open to account for the lawful measures taken to this effect," said the Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, MP during his meeting with the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at the US State Department on the sidelines of the 'White House Summit to Counter Violent Extremism' here.

The UN Secretary General shared his concerns over the ongoing violence in Bangladesh. He said that the Government had the responsibility to protect people in general from violence, and that all political parties should exercise their political rights upholding the established democratic norms and principles.

Foreign Minister Ali briefed the UN Secretary General about the various initiatives taken by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to create the enabling environment for an inclusive and participatory democratic process in the country. He regretted that the BNP leadership persistently rebuffed the Government's overtures, and instead chose the path of violence and terrorist methods at the expense of innocent lives.

The UN Secretary General assured the Foreign Minister of the UN's continued engagement with strengthening the democratic and development process in Bangladesh. He stressed that the UN would continue to have dialogues with the Government to understand the evolving political situation.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister expressed his interest in having further discussions soon with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al-Husseini, who was present at the meeting.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the US Mohammad Ziauddin and Foreign Secretary Md. Shahidul Haque accompanied the Foreign Minister at the meeting.

The UN Secretary General spoke at the Opening Session of the White House Summit, and shared the UN's plans to support the global initiatives to counter violent extremism leading to terrorism.