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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Bangladesh worried over US Trade Bill Ambassador Ziauddin meets Congressmen Brad Sherman, Tom Marino**

Bangladesh has expressed concern over the US trade bill concerning the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) apprehending that LDC like Bangladesh would lose its competitive edge in the American market due to preferential treatments to the trans-pacific partners.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States Mohammad Ziauddin expressed Dhaka's concern while meeting separately US Congressmen Brad Sherman (D-California) and Tom Marino (R- Pennsylvania) at the Capitol Hill on June 15 and 16 respectively.

Brad Sherman is the ranking member of the subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of the US House Foreign Affairs Committee and Tom Marino is the chairman of the subcommittee on Regulatory Reform and Commercial and Antitrust Law.

During the meetings Ambassador Ziauddin briefed the Congressmen on Bangladesh's trade relations with the US. He said that as a LDC Bangladesh does not receive any special or deferential treatment from the US in terms of trade and commerce.

The Ambassador stated that the US is a major destination for Bangladeshi products mainly RMG, receiving nearly one fourth of Bangladesh's total exports. Bangladesh apparels are subjected to high tariff in the USA as opposed to zero tariffs to almost all other least developed countries in the world.

Ziauddin said that the around 90% ready-made garment workers are women, this huge number of women employment accelerated the process of women empowerment and socio-economic development in Bangladesh. At this juncture, to encourage the women empowerment and socio-economic growth partner, the US should grant preferential market access (duty free and quota free) for Bangladeshi products as accorded to other developing countries of the Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean and reinstate the GSP facilities for Bangladesh.

Responding to the Congressman Brad Sherman, the Ambassador informed that the international community should persuade Myanmar to take back the Rohingyas from the southern part of Bangladesh. He said Bangladesh cannot afford to host such a large number of refugees inside her territory. He also mentioned that the Burmese Rohingyas are extremely susceptible to the religious extremist groups; there are evidences of using Rohingyas for terrorist activities.

The Ambassador briefed the Congressmen on the colossal adverse effect of climate change on Bangladesh. He said that climate change, a fact of life of the people of Bangladesh, is hardly of their own making, and being one of the least emitters of CO<sub>2</sub> (with only 0.3 metric ton per capita emissions), Bangladesh is the most vulnerable to the severe effects of climate change. The present Government under the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina created 'Trust Fund' of US\$ 375 million and launched nearly 238 projects for adaptation and mitigating the adverse effects of climate change in Bangladesh.

The Ambassador said that the present struggle of the government is against the extremists, perpetrators of the crimes against humanity and the anti-liberation forces in Bangladesh. He mentioned that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who lost her 18 family members in an act of terrorism in 1975, vowed "zero tolerance" against all forms of extremism and terrorism.

Congressmen Brad Sherman and Tom Marino thanked the Ambassador for the detail briefings on Bangladesh. Political Counselor Nayem Uddin Ahmed accompanied the Ambassador during the meetings.

