PRESS RELEASE

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US Congressman praises PM Sheikh Hasina’s great courage to combat violent extremism
Editors: Reissuing the press release with correction

The Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States, Mohammad Ziauddin, met with Congressman Charles W. Boustany, JR., M.D. (Republican - Louisiana) in Washington, DC on Friday and briefed him about strong measures taken by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to eliminate terrorism and violent extremism from the soil of Bangladesh.

The Ambassador said Prime Minister Hasina is a strong believer of “zero tolerance” against all forms of extremism and terrorism. Having a cruel past of brutal killings of her father, the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other members of her family in 1975, as well as 19 assassination attempts on her own life till today, she possesses intrinsic detestation against violent extremism.

Congressman Boustany appreciated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her tremendous courage to fight against terrorism.

The Ambassador briefed the Congressman on the mutual cooperation between Bangladesh and the USA in countering terrorism and extremism including intelligence sharing.

On deadly gunfire in Dallas, Texas on Thursday, Ambassador Ziauddin expressed his profound shock at the gun shooting on 11 policemen with 5 policemen dead and others severely injured while Congressman Boustany offered his condolence for the recent fatal shooting in Gulshan, Bangladesh. Both shared their opinions on the recent violent extremism around the world.

Contd... P/2
During the meeting, bilateral trade issues and other development achievements of Bangladesh figured prominently. Mr. Boustany is one of the Senior Members of the House Ways and Means Committee and the Sub Committee on Trade, which has jurisdiction over all taxations, tariffs and other revenue-raising measures.

Speaking on trade issues, the Ambassador informed the Congressman that Bangladesh is one of the largest apparel exporters to the USA. However, it along with other Asian and Oceanic Least Developed Countries (LDCs), does not get Duty Free Quota Free (DFQF) access of their products to the US market. On the other hand, all the 34 African LDCs under a group called ‘AGOA’ are enjoying this facility. Therefore, a section of LDCs are deprived of getting equal access to the US market.

The Ambassador urged that the US should allow all LDCs to get DFQF access on the basis of justice. He also highlighted that the European Union is providing DFQF access to all the LDCs. Therefore, Bangladesh, as the current Chair of LDCs, sought US support on the DFQF issue to ensure justice and fair play.

Ambassador Ziauddin highlighted many development priorities of the present Government of Bangladesh, including women empowerment and education. He said the government has taken initiatives to introduce modern education for the madrasa students so that they can adapt with the mainstream society and thus get rid of the religious extremism. He also said 90 percent or four million workers in the RMG industry are women who have stepped out of their homes and are contributing to poverty alleviation, literacy, and above all weakening extremism and reinforcing the government efforts to eliminate extremism and terrorism. He said women are transforming the society into a progressive one and it is a solution for ridding the country of all forms of violent extremism.

Appreciating the Ambassador’s briefing on trade and other issues, Congressman Boustany said he would love to work with Bangladesh in capacity building for trade and energy security. Mr. Toufique Hasan, Counsellor (Political) of the Embassy and Ms. Kaitlin Sighinolfi, Legislative Director of Congressman Boustany were present.