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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Bangladesh Ambassador meets Congressman Chris Van Hollen**

Mohammad Ziauddin, Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States, met with US Congressman Chris Van Hollen at Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. today and briefed him on various development activities of Bangladesh.

Christopher "Chris" Van Hollen, Jr. is the U.S. Representative for Maryland's 8th congressional district, serving since 2003. He is a member of the Democratic Party and a member of Congressional Bangladesh Caucus.

The Ambassador focused on the existing excellent bilateral relations between Bangladesh and the USA, especially the mutual cooperation in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. He mentioned about Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's "zero tolerance" against all forms of extremism and terrorism. He also mentioned about US Secretary of State John Kerry's recent successful visit to Bangladesh which paved the way of taking the existing partnership to a new height.

Speaking on women empowerment in Bangladesh, the Ambassador informed that Bangladesh is the only country where the prime minister, opposition leader, speaker and a few other cabinet ministers are women. He said that 20% of Bangladesh Parliament Members are women while 38000 women have been elected to local government offices. He further said that 90% of more than four million women are engaged in the RMG sector in Bangladesh, and contributing to the alleviation of poverty, elimination of child labour and containing the menace of extremism.

The Ambassador sought US support for duty free quota free (DFQF) market access for Bangladeshi products along with all the least developed countries (LDCs) to the American market. Currently 34 out of 48 LDCs are enjoying DFQF access to the US market, whereas the European Union is providing this facility to all the LDCs on the basis of EBA (Everything But Arms).

Congressman Chris Van Hollen thanked the Ambassador for the briefing. Ms. Karen Robb, Chief of Staff of the Congressman and Mr. Toufique Hasan, Counsellor (Political) of the Embassy were present in the meeting.

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With Congressman Chris Van Hollen