

Phone: (202) 244-5071  
Fax : (202) 244-2771/7830  
E-mail: [press.bew@gmail.com](mailto:press.bew@gmail.com)  
Website : [www.bdembassyusa.org](http://www.bdembassyusa.org)



EMBASSY OF THE  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
3510 International Drive, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Ambassador Ziauddin briefs Congressmen on Anti-terrorism steps in Bangladesh**

The Bangladesh Ambassador to the USA, Mohammad Ziauddin, met with Congressman Robert J. Dold (Republican– Illinois) and Congressman Matt Salmon (Republican-Arizona) separately on Tuesday at their offices in Washington, DC and briefed them on strong measures undertaken by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to root out terrorism and violent extremism from Bangladesh.

During the meetings, Ambassador Ziauddin expressed his deep shock at the recent mindless gun shooting in Dallas, Texas which took away invaluable lives of five police officers.

The meeting with Congressman Dold was held at the request of the congressman when the Ambassador briefed him about existing communal harmony and secular values on which Bangladesh has been founded. The Ambassador highlighted the 'zero tolerance' policy of Prime Minister Shiekh Hasina against all forms of terrorism and violent extremism. He also underscored that Prime Minister Hasina being a victim of terrorism herself had been steering the country with a determined leadership to eliminate terrorism and violent extremism.

Ambassador Ziauddin also briefed the Congressman on the mutual cooperation between Bangladesh and the USA in countering terrorism and extremism through capacity building.

Congressman Dold appreciated counter-terrorism measures taken by the government of Bangladesh and commented that USA would like to see Bangladesh tomorrow a stronger country than today.

Congressman Matt Salmon during his meeting with the Ambassador offered condolences for the terrorist attack in Holey Artisan Bakery in Gulshan, Dhaka and praised members of the law enforcement agencies who were involved in getting down the terrorists. The Ambassador appreciated the USA's support for enhancing capacity building of members of the law enforcement agencies by imparting training to them.

Ambassador Ziauddin gave a detailed account of various initiatives taken by the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to contain the menace of terrorism and violent extremism from society and her absolute commitment to and quest for upholding the underlying secular values of Bangladesh. He mentioned that secularism was one of the founding principles of Bangladesh. The brutal assassination of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with most members of his family and subsequent usurpation of state power by military regime had done away with this principle and religious politics crept into Bangladesh. Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islam under direct patronage of BNP has been actively involved in acts of terror and violence for the last four decades.

Congressman Salmon appreciated the culture of tolerance in Bangladesh and remarked that all need to act together to uproot terrorism from society.

On bilateral trade issues, the Ambassador informed the Congressman that unlike AGOA countries, Bangladesh along with other Asian and Oceanic Least Developed Countries (LDCs), does not enjoy Duty Free Quota Free (DFQF) access of their products to the US market. Therefore, a section of LDCs are deprived of getting equal access to the US market as their products are less competitive. The Ambassador urged that the USA to grant all LDCs Duty Free Quota Free access to the US market. In this regard he referred to the example of the European Union which is providing DFQF access to all the LDCs.

Mr. Nural Islam, Counsellor (Political) at the Embassy, accompanied the Ambassador during the meetings.





