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## **Press Release**

### **Bangladesh committed to promoting religious freedom: FM Mahmood Ali**

**Washington, D.C., July 25, 2018:**

U.S. Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Samuel D. Brownback welcomed Bangladesh Foreign Minister A H Mahmood Ali, M.P. at the U.S. Department of State on Wednesday and had a meeting and exchanged views on advancing religious freedom.

Ambassador Brownback, former Governor of Kansas and a U.S. Senator, thanked the Foreign Minister for accepting the invitation of U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to participate in the first ever Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom (MARF) being held on 25-26 July at the Department of State in Washington, D.C.

During the meeting, Foreign Minister Ali elaborated different aspects of religious freedom being practiced in Bangladesh, and the mass celebration of Bangla New Year, a truly secular national festival, which brings together people of all faiths, as well as recitation from Holy Books of all major religions at the beginning of any national event.

He reiterated the commitment of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her government to promoting religious freedom and communal harmony in the society of Bangladesh. He maintained that there is a resonance of religious freedom in Bangladesh as the U.S. is organizing the Ministerial.

Ambassador Brownback mentioned that MARF is aimed at establishing a global standard for ensuring religious freedom regardless of countries. He highly appreciated Bangladesh's role in hosting 1.1 million forcibly displaced Rohingyas from Myanmar irrespective of their faiths.

The Foreign Minister said Bangladesh and the U.S. along with their friends and partners would continue to ensure and advance religious freedom for the peoples.

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