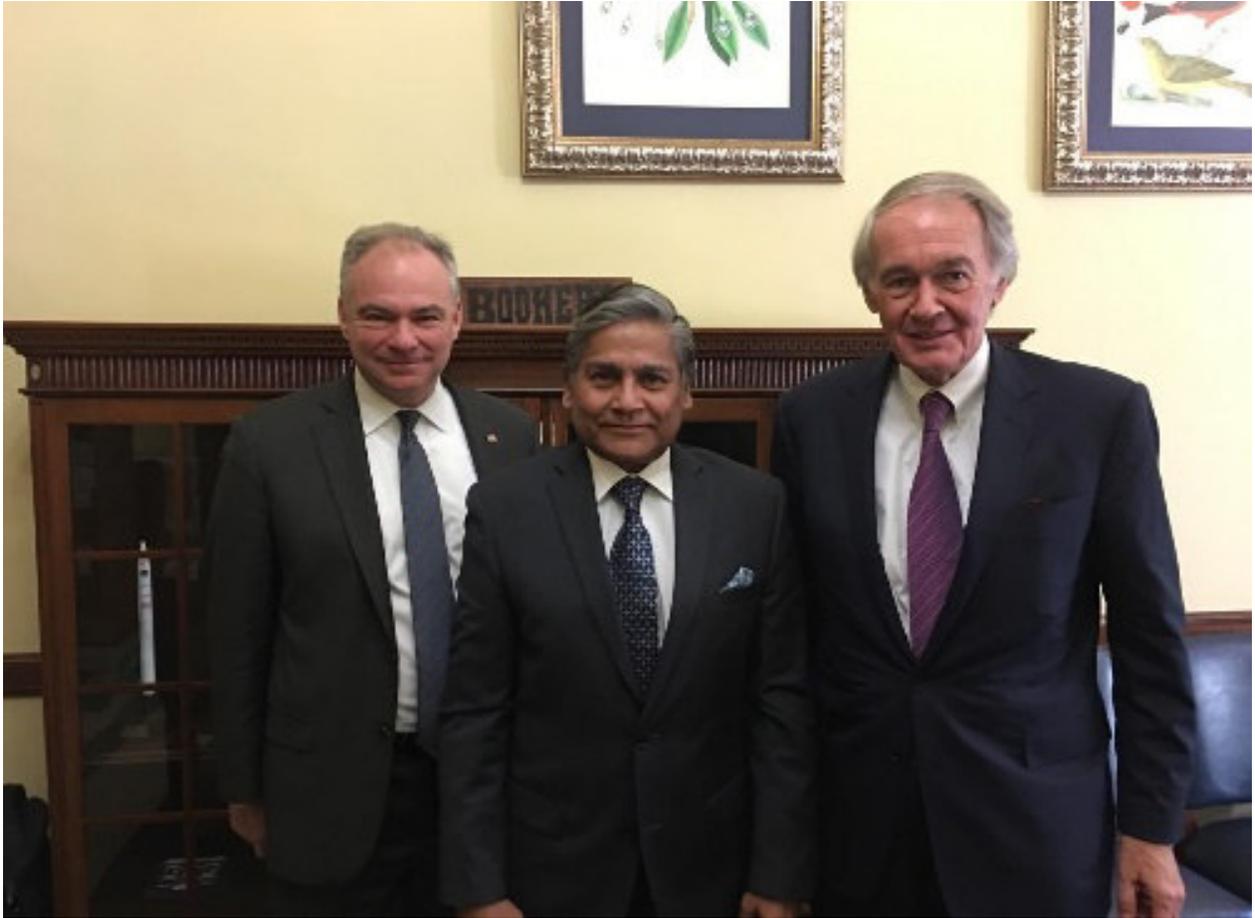


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Press Release



Ambassador Ziauddin meets Senators & urges US to put sustained pressure on Myanmar to take back Rohingyas

Washington, DC, November 17, 2017:

Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States H.E. Mr. Mohammad Ziauddin met yesterday with two influential senators - Senator Tim Kaine (Dem- Virginia) who is also the Ranking member of the U.S. Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, Central Asia, and Counterterrorism; and Senator Ed Markey (Dem-Massachusetts) who is the Ranking Member of the Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy. The meeting that lasted for about an hour was held at the office of Senator Kaine. Both of them listened to the Ambassador with great interest and concern.

It may be noted that Senator Kaine and Senator Markey were also present at the hearing held on 24 October 2017 by the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on "Assessing U.S. Policy towards Burma: Geopolitical, Economic and Humanitarian Considerations". During the hearing they both had been very much appreciative of Bangladesh for giving shelter to the Rohingyas fleeing Myanmar. In his remarks during the hearing, Senator Kaine enquired how the influx of the Rohingyas were affecting Bangladesh and what assistance the U.S. needed to extend in this regard.

The purpose of the Ambassador meeting with the senators was to update them on the ongoing violence in Myanmar, influx of persecuted Rohingyas to Bangladesh on a daily basis, and apprise them further the gravity of the crisis and its possible consequences. The Ambassador highlighted during his discussion the stronger role to be played by international community and the U.S. to keep sustained pressure on the Myanmar government to bring normalcy in the Northern Rakhine State and to take back the Rohingyas to their own homes.

Senator Kaine praised the government of Bangladesh for hosting a huge number of Rohingyas and to help them in their tough time. He wanted to know the perspectives of Bangladesh in resolving the issue and how U.S. could be engaged in the process. He also enquired about the conditions of the Rohingyas and efforts of Bangladesh government and international organizations in supporting healthcare, accommodation, food etc. for the Rohingyas sheltered in the camps in Bangladesh.

While listening to the remarks of the Ambassador in response to the queries of Senator Kaine, Senator Markey also enquired about the magnitude of torture, ramped sexual abuse and other physical and mental persecution that the Rohingyas had to face before fleeing to Bangladesh. He dreaded of Rohingyas being radicalized by the targeted terrorist groups in the region. He was keen to know about Bangladesh's plan in resolving the crisis.

The Ambassador thanked both the senators for their time and interest into the matter and for raising their concerns during the hearing of Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on Myanmar held on 24 October. Mentioning the zero-tolerance policy of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and success of her government in containing terrorism and extremism in Bangladesh, the Ambassador stated that the crisis had to be resolved immediately and the Rohingyas to be taken back the soonest to avoid any further tension or rise of terrorism in that region resulting from the horrendous persecution against the Rohingyas in Myanmar. He apprised them in detail the measures taken by Bangladesh government along with other international agencies working there in looking after the Rohingyas. He stressed upon sustained continued pressure on Myanmar government by the United States and the international community to stop the violence and to ensure the continuous flow of humanitarian assistance to the Rohingyas temporarily sheltered in Bangladesh as well to those uprooted Rohingyas in Northern Rakhine region of Myanmar. The Ambassador urged the U.S. authorities to take concrete steps to create sustained pressure on the Myanmar government to stop the violence immediately and to take back the Rohingyas to their own homes. The Ambassador also urged upon the U.S. lawmakers to keep continuing the pressure on the U.S. administration to take strong actions against the Myanmar government to end the violence in the Northern Rakhine State.

H.E. the Ambassador was accompanied by Mr. Dewan Ali Ashraf, Counsellor (Political) of the Mission during the meeting.

(Shamim Ahmad)
Minister (Press)