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PRESS RELEASE

10 April 2013

2nd Bangladesh - US security dialogue held at Washington DC.

The second Bangladesh-US security dialogue took place at the US Department of State yesterday. The fourteen member Bangladesh delegation for the dialogue, comprising senior officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, Defence, Disaster Management, Armed Forces Division, and Bangladesh Embassy in Washington, DC was led by Additional Foreign Secretary Ambassador Mustafa Kamal. The US side was led by Mr. Andrew J. Shapiro, Assistant Secretary of State for Political Military Affairs. Ambassador Robert O. Blake, Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of South and Central Affairs also attended the dialogue. Officials from both sides exchanged ideas on multiple issues pertaining to bilateral security partnership such as identification of strategic priorities, deeper engagement on both military and non-military security aspects, security cooperation, Bangladesh in the UN peacekeeping, combating counter-terrorism.

The US side particularly lauded Bangladesh's present government for its extra ordinary efforts to curb terrorism and religious fundamentalism. They assured both technical and resource support for Bangladesh's security institution building, training and exchange of professionals, granting of UN accreditation to the Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training (BIPSOT). The Bangladesh delegation suggested that the UN can recruit more women peacekeepers from Bangladesh who are joining both army and police forces in increasing numbers.

The security threats posed by undocumented Myanmar nationals in Bangladesh came up in the meeting. The Bangladesh delegation drew US attention to the reported association of some illegal entrants with foreign terrorist outfits such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba and expressed concern that unless the Rohingya issue is resolved through proper international initiatives, the porous Bangladesh-Myanmar border may degenerate into a recruiting camp for militants. Bangladesh sought US support in a peaceful repatriation of the Myanmar nationals staying in Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh delegation stressed that non traditional threats to security such as displacement caused by climate change and repeated natural calamities, food security, poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition need to be brought to the forefront of regional and global partnerships. The Bangladesh delegation apprised the US side of the various projects undertaken by the government to mitigate and adapt to global climate change and sought US assistance in those. The US officials viewed that candid discussions at the security dialogue prove the strength of Bangladesh-US relations and expressed their eagerness to work with Bangladesh for mutual, regional and global security.