

111TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. RES. 1215

Expressing support for Bangladesh's return to democracy.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 24, 2010

Mr. CROWLEY (for himself and Mr. ROYCE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for Bangladesh's return to democracy.

Whereas March 26 is the anniversary of Bangladesh's independence;

Whereas the Constitution of Bangladesh, ratified in 1972 following a war of independence, established a democracy ruled by and for the people of Bangladesh;

Whereas Bangladesh has a population of approximately 160,000,000 people, is the world's fourth most populated Muslim country, and is a stable, moderate, democratic Muslim nation;

Whereas before elections in December 2008, Bangladesh held what the international community viewed as three free and fair elections in 1991, 1996, and 2001, respectively;

Whereas in October 2006, power was handed over to a caretaker government before the January 22, 2007, sched-

uled election and the caretaker government subsequently imposed a state of emergency on January 11, 2007;

Whereas the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution in September 2008 calling for the return of democracy in Bangladesh;

Whereas the caretaker government of Bangladesh returned the country to democracy through an election held on December 29, 2008;

Whereas the December 29, 2008, election was monitored by numerous international election observers that declared the election credible;

Whereas the U.S. State Department welcomed “the success of Bangladesh’s parliamentary elections” and congratulated the “Bangladesh Election Commission and the thousands of government officials involved in organizing this successful election”;

Whereas the Awami League, led by former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed, won over two-thirds of the 300 seats in Parliament and formed a new government in January 2009;

Whereas President Barack Obama awarded Muhammad Yunus the Presidential Medal of Freedom in August 2009;

Whereas the U.S. Agency for International Development reports that 49 percent of Bangladeshis live below the poverty line;

Whereas Bangladesh’s economy grew at an estimated rate of 5.7 percent in 2009;

Whereas the Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh has commenced serious efforts to address corruption; and

Whereas Bangladesh's long-term political stability and economic progress are critical to the security of the South Asian region: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) expresses its strong support for the people
3 of Bangladesh;

4 (2) encourages the strengthening and consolida-
5 tion of democracy in Bangladesh one year after the
6 election;

7 (3) urges the Government of Bangladesh to
8 work together with all political leaders to continue
9 and deepen reconciliation;

10 (4) appreciates the Government of Bangladesh
11 for making progress in meeting the selection criteria
12 of the Millennium Challenge Corporation;

13 (5) urges the Government of Bangladesh to
14 protect the rights of religious and ethnic minorities
15 in Bangladesh, including the Hindus, Christians,
16 Buddhists, Ahmadis, and non-Muslim tribal peoples;

17 (6) urges the Anti-Corruption Commission in
18 Bangladesh to continue its efforts to eradicate cor-
19 ruption;

20 (7) urges the President to coordinate with Ban-
21 gladesh on matters pertaining to security, economic
22 progress, and human rights in South Asia; and

1 (8) encourages the Secretary of State and the
2 Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International
3 Development to commit increased resources in sup-
4 porting the building of a strong civil society and
5 eradicating poverty in Bangladesh.

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