

H. Res. 1215

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

March 25, 2010.

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

Whereas the United States 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 United States Department of State 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 United States 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

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

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

(2) encourages the strengthening and consolidation of democracy in Bangladesh one year after the election;

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

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

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

(6) urges the Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh to continue its efforts to eradicate corruption;

(7) urges the Secretary of State to coordinate with Bangladesh on matters pertaining to security, economic progress, and human rights in South Asia; and

(8) encourages the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to continue supporting the build-

ing of a strong civil society and eradicating poverty in Bangladesh.

Attest:

Clerk.