



For Immediate Release

Statement by Earl Miller, United States Ambassador to Bangladesh

Election Violence in Bangladesh

December 27, 2018 - I thank Chief Election Commissioner Huda and all members of the Election Commission for taking the time to meet with me today at short notice.

I asked for this meeting because the United States is concerned by the high level of campaign violence over the last two weeks. All parties have been victims of violence, including minorities and female candidates. However, it appears opposition party candidates have borne the brunt of most violence. I appreciated the opportunity to consult with the Election Commission to see what plans it has to create a conducive atmosphere so all Bangladeshis, no matter their political affiliation, feel safe to go to the polls on Sunday and cast their votes for the candidates of their choice.

Bangladesh is rightfully proud of its democratic traditions, including elections where upwards of 70 percent of the electorate turns out to vote. In any democratic election there must be space for peaceful expression and assembly; for independent media to do its job covering electoral developments; for participants to have access to information; and for all individuals to be able to partake in the electoral process without harassment, intimidation, or violence.

The United States wishes all Bangladeshis a free, fair, tolerant and peaceful Election Day on December 30.

=====

**As delivered GR/2018*