



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

August 17, 2006

The Honorable Begum Khaleda Zia
Prime Minister of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Prime Minister
Old Shangsha Bhaban
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Dear Madam Prime Minister,

On August 21st of this year, it will be two years since the well coordinated grenade and rifle attack on the Awami League Leadership, including the Opposition Leader Sheik Hasina. As you know, this attack resulted in the deaths of 23 people, and injury to over 400 bystanders. This was a calculated attack with enormous political implications since the entire leadership of the Awami League was present at the rally.

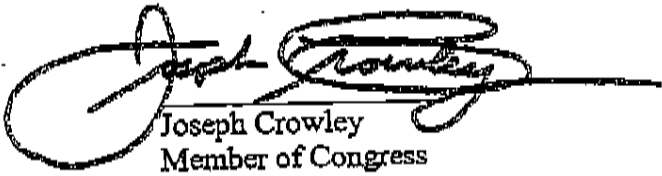
The investigation of this attack has not led to arrests of the perpetrators, and those responsible for this attack appear to have gotten away with impunity. Assistance provided at the request of your government by the United States and other nations was not utilized to fully investigate the attack. Subsequent to the attacks, political violence has escalated both in quantity and severity, including a deadly attack on Former Finance Minister SAMS Kibria, thousands of unwarranted arrests, the first suicide bomb attacks in the history of Bangladesh, along with 469 simultaneous bombings across the country last August.

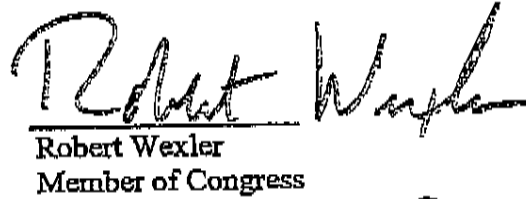
Despite assurances of a proper investigation of the attack on the Awami League rally with all Opposition Leaders in attendance, evidence was not properly preserved, and individuals with no connection to the crime were brought forward as false suspects and ultimately released. Overall, the failure of this investigation is symbolic of a serious diminution of rule of law in Bangladesh, which in our view has emboldened lawlessness and allowed Islamic extremist elements to gain ground in Bangladesh. With national elections approaching in less than six months, the failure to apprehend suspects and mete out justice in this high profile attack on the head of the Opposition Party, sends a disconcerting message to voters for the potential of intimidation and violence in the run up to the elections.

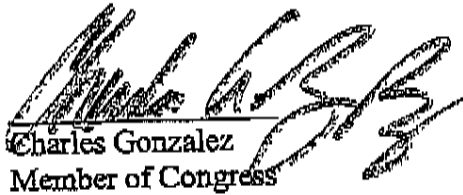
In the interests of justice, preservation of democratic institutions of law and order, and free and fair elections, we request that Bangladesh open a new and fully independent investigation of the August 21, 2004 attack on the Awami League.

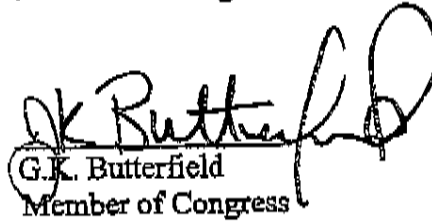
We would appreciate your prompt attention and response to our concerns in this letter,

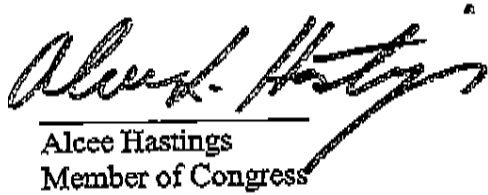
Sincerely,

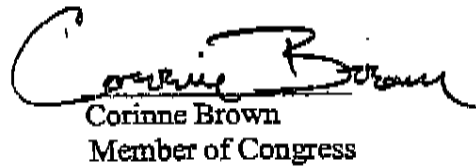

Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress

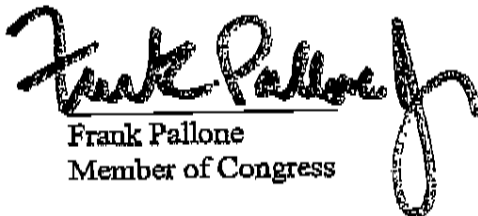

Robert Wexler
Member of Congress

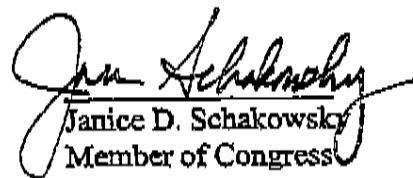

Charles Gonzalez
Member of Congress


G.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

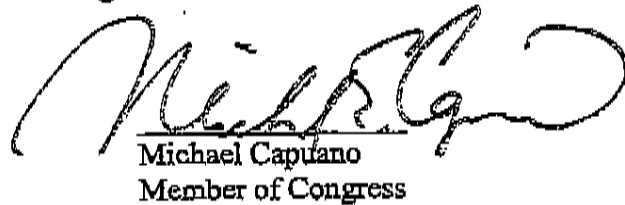

Alcee Hastings
Member of Congress


Corinne Brown
Member of Congress

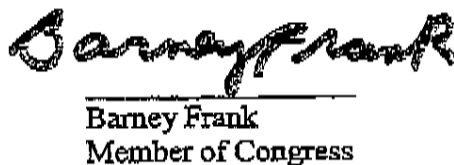

Frank Pallone
Member of Congress

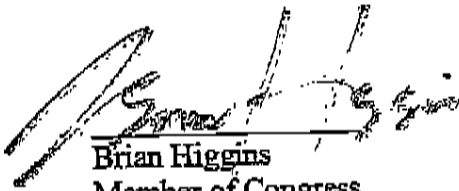

Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress


Diane E. Watson
Member of Congress

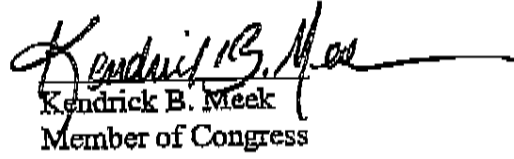

Michael Caputo
Member of Congress


Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress


Barney Frank
Member of Congress



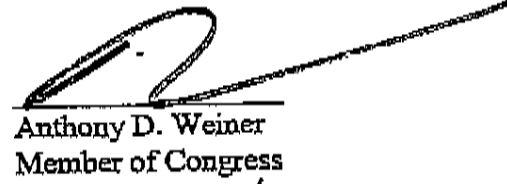
Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



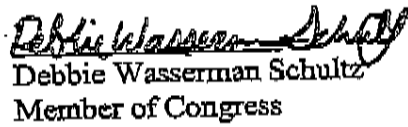
Kendrick B. Meek
Member of Congress



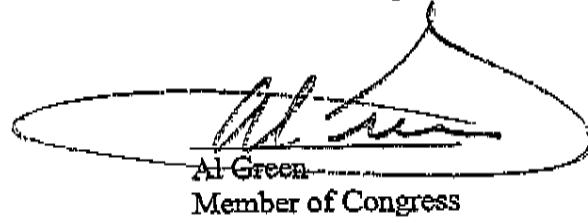
Sherrod Brown
Member of Congress



Anthony D. Weiner
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Al Green
Member of Congress