

US Chargé d’Affaires Pays Farewell Call on Chief Adviser

Ambassador Tracey Ann Jacobson, the Chargé d’Affaires of the United States to Bangladesh, on Monday paid a farewell call on Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna.

During the meeting, they discussed the upcoming February parliamentary elections and referendum, as well as trade, civil aviation, labour reforms initiated by the Interim Government, and overall bilateral relations between the two countries.

Jacobson, who is returning home after an eventful year in Bangladesh, appreciated the leadership of the Chief Adviser over the past 17 months and reiterated the support of the United States government for the February elections.

The Chief Adviser reaffirmed his government’s commitment to holding free, fair, and peaceful elections, adding that full preparations were underway to ensure the success of both the parliamentary elections and the referendum.

“We are fully prepared,” Professor Yunus said, adding that any attempts to disrupt peace ahead of the elections would be dealt with firmly.

The US Chargé d’Affaires lauded the reforms undertaken by the Interim Government and, in particular, praised the “truly remarkable and extraordinary” labour laws, saying they would help attract greater foreign direct investment to Bangladesh.

She also commended the Interim Government for withdrawing 45 of the 46 cases that had been filed against the country’s

labour leaders under previous governments.

In response, the Chief Adviser described the new labour ordinance as a “excellent piece of legislation,” adding that leading Bangladeshi labour activists have publicly welcomed the reforms and the ratification of International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions by the Interim Government.

They also discussed funding for Rohingya humanitarian assistance. Chief Adviser thanked the United States for continued support for the Rohingyas.

“The United States remains the single largest donor to life-saving humanitarian aid for more than one million forcibly displaced Rohingya living in camps in southeastern Bangladesh”, Professor Yunus noted and expressed the hope that such support will continue in the future.

The Chief Adviser thanked the US Chargé d’Affaires for her “critical work” during her year-long tenure and for being a “friend to Bangladesh” and extended invitation to her to visit in future.

National Security Adviser Dr Khalilur Rahman and SDG Coordinator and Senior Secretary Lamiya Morshed were also present at the meeting.