

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



815 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 637-5000
www.aflcio.org

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April 10, 2012

The Honorable Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister, Government of Bangladesh
Old Sangsad Bhaban
Tejgon, Dhaka – 1215
Bangladesh

E-mail: info@pmo.gov.bd


Dear Madam Prime Minister:

On behalf of its 12.5 million members, the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) condemns the brutal murder of a dedicated trade unionist, Aminul Islam. This is the first time to our knowledge such an occurrence has happened in Bangladesh.

Aminul Islam, trade union organizer for Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation (BGIWF) and Bangladesh Center for Workers Solidarity (BCWS) went missing last Wednesday, April 4, and was found dead the next day, April 5. Photographs taken of the body show that Aminul Islam was tortured before he was killed. In phone conversations Aminul had just before he disappeared, he expressed concern about being followed by a police van. Aminul trained recruited and organized workers in the Ready Made Garments (RMG) sector and the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) for BGIWF. Due to his activities Aminul found himself threatened by gangster elements or "mustans" working for garment factory owners. He also was continuously under police surveillance and was detained and beaten by the National Security Intelligence Agency in June 2010. False criminal charges were filed against Aminul along with his colleagues in BCWS for allegedly causing unrest during the minimum wage campaign by garment workers during the summer of 2010.

The AFL-CIO calls on the Government of Bangladesh to undertake a thorough and detailed investigation into the killing, and swiftly bring the perpetrators to justice. The eyes of the world are now on Bangladesh to see how it conducts this investigation and whether Bangladesh is a country where the rule of law is upheld. The AFL-CIO will also incorporate what is learned of Aminul's death into the ongoing documentation in our outstanding GSP petition to the U.S. Trade Representative.

Sincerely,



Richard L. Trumka
President

CC: US Embassy, Dhaka
U.S. Trade Representative, Washington, D.C.
Bangladesh Embassy, Washington, D.C.
International Trade Union Confederation, Brussels