

# EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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## REMARKS BY

# ASSISTANT SECRETARY WILLIAM R. BROWNFIELD AT THE GOOD GIVING COUNTERTERRORISM FINANCE TRAINING FOR REGIONAL PROSECUTORS

**Hotel Sarina  
December 8, 2014**

Good morning and thank you for allowing me to speak alongside the honorable Law Minister Huq. I am William Brownfield and serve as the Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, DC. I would like to welcome you all to this important conference, which will allow us to focus our attention on an issue of great global concern.

As many of you already know, charities and NGOs collect millions of dollars each year for benevolent causes across the globe. The vast majority of these organizations are created to help those in need and serve to promote socioeconomic development.

Unfortunately, a portion of this money, whether by design or through the exploitation of legitimate organizations, is diverted to support acts of terrorism. For example, investigators have linked certain charities to the funding streams for violent extremist groups accused of conducting the attacks in the 2008 Mumbai bombings. In addition, contrary to common belief, Osama Bin Laden did not have access to any significant amounts of personal wealth. Instead, al Qaeda was funded, to the tune of approximately \$30 million per year, by diversions of money from Islamic charities and the use of well-placed financial facilitators who gathered money from both witting and unwitting donors, primarily in the Gulf region.

Several countries in the South Asia region are taking preventive measures to stem the flow of terrorist financing, including the consideration of charity and oversight laws. This conference gathers like-minded partners from both the public and private sector to discuss how to counter terrorist financing and violent extremism in the charitable sector. For three days, we will work together to understand the risks and strengthen charitable regulation regimes so that we can feel confident that our charitable communities are not being abused.

The fight against terrorism is truly a global endeavor. Six nations are represented at this conference – Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and the United States. In the audience, we have members of Financial Intelligence Units, prosecutors, police and judges as well as officials from various charities and NGOs. Domestic, inter-agency cooperation as well as international collaboration are critical if we are to succeed in denying terrorist organizations a safe-haven in the charitable and NGO sector. I urge you to speak your minds openly and collaboratively, and make a concerted effort to reach out to the representatives from your neighboring countries.

Thank you for your commitment to preventing, addressing, and countering this concerning and dangerous trend. I wish you a productive and successful conference. The U.S. government stands with you in this fight against violent extremism. Thank you.

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*\*As prepared for delivery.*