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Head of the Slovak delegation in the EPP Group
Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection
Committee on Industry, Research and Energy
President of SME Europe

Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina Wazed
The Prime Minister of Bangladesh
Prime Minister's Office
Old Shangsha Bhaban
Dhaka 1215
Bangladesh

In Brussels, 8 December 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

I urge you as a long-standing Prime Minister of Bangladesh to adopt a humanitarian approach with regard to the necessary treatment of former Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

I understand that 76 year-old Khaleda Zia was incarcerated on corruption charges in February 2018. In April 2019, she was shifted from the Dhaka Central Jail, where she was the lone prisoner, to the BSMMU for treatment under jail conditions pursuant to the recommendations of a medical board. In March 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic broke out, she was released for six months from jail hospital on condition that she would stay at her home. This executive order has been renewed until date with Begum Khaleda Zia complying with the condition satisfactorily.

I note that a 2019 Amnesty International Report urged "Bangladeshi authorities to allow Begum Khaleda Zia access to the specialised health care she requires".

Current media reports indicate that the family of Khaleda Zia has submitted an application to the Bangladesh Ministry of Home Affairs requesting an extension of her conditional release and permission for her to travel overseas to seek urgently required medical treatment. In the recent months, she has been under treatment in a Coronary Care Unit at a Dhaka hospital and her state of health is 'deteriorating' as reported by international news media.

In light of Khaleda Zia's worsening health condition that is well documented, we appeal to you and your government to grant the request from Khaleda Zia's family and allow her to travel abroad for urgent medical treatment.

We note that the Bangladesh government has taken a commendable approach allowing and providing for more than 900,000 Rohingya refugees. It is indeed an enormous contribution to the world refugee crisis.

We urge that you honor Begum Khaleda Zia's human and advanced health rights considering her critical situation at this perilous time and allow her to travel overseas to have access to the highest attainable standard of healthcare.

Yours sincerely,



Ing. Ivan Štefanec, MBA, PhD.
Member of the European Parliament