

## Rep. Bilirakis Comments on the Assassination of Former Pakistan PM Bhutto

WASHINGTON (27 Dec.) - U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.), member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Subcommittee on Middle East and South Asia, today released the following statement on the reported assassination of Former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

"Today we mourn the loss of a courageous woman who returned to her country to fight for the restoration of democratic rule.

"As Pakistan is gripped with a growing struggle against Islamic extremism and today's senseless murder of such a historic figure as Benazir Bhutto, this nation is now confronted with an even greater challenge to consolidate democracy and restore peace.

"The Pakistani people must not bend to the will of terrorism, and upcoming parliamentary elections must go forward unimpeded by the government or the military."

"The United States and the international community must also continue to do its best to work with the Pakistani government and moderate political forces within the country to support positive democratic change and curb the onslaught of Islamic extremists seeking to undermine the country."

"My sincere and heartfelt condolences to Benazir Bhutto's family and the Pakistani people for this great loss."

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