

WASHINGTON - Congressman Spencer Bachus, along with criminal justice and law enforcement officials, today met with Aruban authorities regarding the Natalee Holloway case.

He released the following statement after the meeting:

“The day after Natalee’s disappearance, I contacted Aruban authorities and they agreed to invite the FBI to the island. It was at that time I established ongoing communications with those authorities. That communication has continued. As a result, an invitation was extended to them to come to Washington to review the Holloway investigation and answer our questions.

“The meetings today in Washington were not intended to be a substitute for meetings between the family and their representatives and Aruban officials. Meetings between the family representatives and Aruban officials were previously arranged and it is my understanding some of those meetings took place this week in Aruba.

“The meetings today were between state and federal law enforcement agencies and Aruban officials. The first meeting was with state officials and included Jefferson County District Attorney David Barber, Shelby County District Attorney Robert Owens and Alabama District Attorneys Association Investigator Russell Yawn.

“Also in a separate meeting with the Arubans - from the FBI - were Chris Gregorski, Acting Chief Violent Crimes Section, and Chip Burrus, Deputy Assistant Director of Criminal Investigation Division.

“The Aruban delegation included two law enforcement officers involved in the ongoing Holloway case, as well as representatives of the Aruban Prime Minister and Dutch Embassy. Adolfo Richardson was the senior Aruban police official in the investigation and took over the investigation after the retirement of Jon Vandor Stratten.

Renato Emerencia is the police analyst who is responsible for the maintenance, organization and analysis of the evidence in the Natalee Holloway case. Other Aruban officials, including Deputy Police Chief Dompig, participated in today’s meeting by telephone from Aruba.

“We had a frank and open discussion regarding the progress of the investigation and of their efforts and intentions going forward. Disclosure of confidential information could compromise the investigation, and, therefore, I am not at liberty to share any information not previously released.

“The Arubans assured us the case is going forward with 14 investigators presently assigned. They also advised us that 40 percent of their annual law enforcement budget has been spent on this case.

They did make one specific request of me: to facilitate greater cooperation and coordination with federal authorities. I will most certainly honor that request, and hopefully, the meeting with the FBI will be helpful in that regard.

“Our thoughts and prayers remain with Natalee and with the Holloway family.”

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