AVTAR SINGH BHASIN
(b. 1935). BA (HONS); MA in History. Initially he had short stints of service in the National Archives of India and the Ministry of Defence. In 1963 he joined the Ministry of External Affairs where he served for three decades, retiring in 1993 as Director of the Historical Division. He was posted in Indian missions in Nepal, Bonn, Vienna, and Lagos. He travelled to several other countries in the discharge of his duties in the Ministry. Some of the countries visited were USA, China, South Africa, Kenya, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Hungary, etc. He was member of several ministerial and official delegations for discussions with various countries both in India and abroad.

Since retirement he has taken to academic research. He was Senior Fellow of the Indian Council of Historical Research from 1994 - 96. He was Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Contemporary Studies, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library from 1997 to 2001. He has edited and authored several books on South Asia affairs. He also contributed many articles in newspapers on developments in the neighbouring countries. His 75 pieces on Partition and Freedom were published in the Asian Age consecutively from June 1 to August 14, 1997 coinciding with the Golden jubilee celebrations of the Indian independence.

India’s Foreign Relations, an annual publication brought out in cooperation with the Ministry of External Affairs, contains the official documents on foreign relations for a given year. When the first volume in the series, for the year 2004, appeared in March 2005, it met with instant all-round approval. The External Affairs Minister released the book at an official function and suggested that the series be continued not only for subsequent years but similar compilations be also made for preceding years. In follow up, the compilation for 2005 appeared in March 2006 while the present volume is the first step in filling the gap for the previous years.
Other Books of Avtar Singh Bhasin

1. Some Called it Partition, Some Freedom, Last 75 days of the Raj


3. India in Sri Lanka – Between Lion and the Tigers

4. India – Bangladesh Relations – 1971 - 2002 Documents - A set of Five Volumes
   (This is a Revised edition of my earlier two-volume publication covering the period up to 1994)

   (This is a revised edition of my earlier two-volume publication covering the period up to 1992)

INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003
DOCUMENTS

Edited by
AVTAR SINGH BHASIN

PUBLISHED IN COOPERATION WITH
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MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

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To
Puneet
and
Gurpreet
India’s Foreign Relations, an annual publication brought out in cooperation with the Ministry of External Affairs, contains the official documents on foreign relations for a given year. When the first volume in the series, for the year 2004, appeared in March 2005, it met with instant all-round approval. The External Affairs Minister released the book at an official function and suggested that the series be continued not only for subsequent years but similar compilations be also made for preceding years. In follow up, the compilation for 2005 appeared in March 2006 while the present volume is the first step in filling the gap for the previous years. The volume for 2006 would appear in March 2007; that for 2002, well before that.

The year 2003 saw India coming of age as a nuclear weapon state. Following the 1998 nuclear tests and the declaration that India was a nuclear weapon state, it had become necessary to adopt a nuclear doctrine to govern its conduct as a Nuclear Weapon State. After deliberating for almost five years, on January 4, 2003, India announced its nuclear doctrine. The basic approach, enshrined in the doctrine was “building and maintaining a credible deterrent” which will be “massive and designed to inflict unacceptable damage”. Inherent in this was the principle of non-use of nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear weapon state except in the face of a major attack by “biological and chemical weapons”. India, however remained committed to:

(i) “strict controls on exports of nuclear and missile related materials and technologies”;
(ii) “participation in the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty negotiations” and,
(iii) “observance of the moratorium on nuclear tests”.

Terrorism remained the dominant theme in India’s foreign relations during the year. It signed several bilateral and multilateral agreements of cooperation to control this scourge. To supplement these efforts, several extradition treaties and agreements on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters were entered into. Terrorism too remained a recurring theme in discussions with Heads of State/Government/ministers and senior officials during bilateral visits to India or when Indian leaders went out on official visits.

In the bilateral realm, the year 2003 was dominated by ups and
downs in relations with Pakistan particularly in the backdrop of developments in the previous couple of years. New Delhi’s efforts to get Pakistan to accept the dangers of promoting cross border terrorism, met with little success. 9/11 had, indeed, brought the West face to face with the phenomenon of terrorism and its tragic impact on innocent people. But the West, seeking continued co-operation of the Pakistan government in its war against Al-Qaeda and not directly impacted by Pakistan-based terrorist groups, was reluctant to exert pressure on Pakistan on the need to curb the activities of groups targeting India. Under US pressure, Pakistan was solicitous of Western concerns and assumed the role of the front-line state in the global war against terrorism emanating from the Taliban in Afghanistan but paid little heed to Indian entreaties to stop giving succour to Pakistan based terrorist organizations operating against India. It continued to accord the status of “freedom fighters” to terrorists inflicting grievous damage to civilian life and property in India. Indian patience was already running thin when the attack on the Indian Parliament took place in December 2001. The recall of High Commissioner, suspension of communication links and the mobilization of armed forces along the international border, were signals to Pakistan that India’s patience, stretched too far and tested too long, had, finally, run out.

But there was no let up in the frequency and ferocity of terrorist attacks from Pakistan or the territory controlled by it. The fatalities in the March 2003 tragedy of Nadimarg in Southern Kashmir included many women and children. All evidence pointed to elements infiltrated and supported from across the border. In a strong reaction, New Delhi demanded that “the epicenter of international terrorism that exists in our nieghbourhood and infrastructure of support and sponsorship of cross border terrorism must be completely dismantled.” New Delhi was deeply disappointed when the US State Department, in condemning the attack at Nadimarg, said dialogue remained the “crucial element” in resolving the problem between India and Pakistan, and termed the call for dialogue “inappropriate”.

The Prime Minister, during his visit to Jammu and Kashmir in April, initiated the process of de-freezing tension between the two countries. He offered to extend his hand of friendship to Pakistan. Recounting the several efforts made by India for better relations with Pakistan, he said: “As Prime Minister of the country I wanted to have friendly relations with our neighbour and I went to Lahore, but it was returned with Kargil. We still continued and invited General Pervez Musharraf to Agra but again failed.”
He demanded that the hand of friendship be “extended from both the sides.” Repeating the conditions for resuming talks with Pakistan he reiterated “unless cross-border terrorism was stopped and training camps for militants dismantled, there could be no meaningful talks.” Pakistan’s response was halting but somewhat positive. After exchange of several statements the process led to the Vajpayee – Musharraf Joint Statement of January 6, 2004 culminating in the two countries engaging themselves in a composite dialogue.

Developments in Iraq attracted substantial attention of the Government. The Prime Minister clarified the Indian position in a statement to Parliament on March 12, before the commencement of the US action in Iraq. Underlining the importance of the region to India in economic and political terms, he called upon Iraq to comply with UNSC Resolution 1441 and cooperate with the UN Inspectors verifying Iraqi possession of Weapons of Mass Destruction. India hoped that action to secure Iraqi compliance would be within the ambit of the UN respecting the sovereignty of the Iraqi people. Any move for ‘regime change’ should come from within and not imposed from outside. When hostilities commenced in Iraq, New Delhi described them as lacking in “justification” and “avoidable”. A deeply “anguished” New Delhi expressed “grave concern” at the continuing differences within the Security Council, which “prevented a harmonization of the position of its members, resulting in the present crisis”. In April, the Lok Sabha unanimously adopted a Resolution, which “deplored” the military action of the coalition forces and called for “immediate cessation of hostilities and quick withdrawal of coalition forces from Iraq.” To the UN emergency appeal for humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq, New Delhi responded with its contribution of US $ 20 million in cash and kind. For a while, New Delhi toyed with the idea of contributing armed personnel for the stabilizing force in Iraq but in deference to the public opinion, in Parliament and outside, the Government abandoned the idea.

In September 2003, India’s determination to fight against terrorism found a robust echo during the first ever visit by an Israeli Prime Minister. In his banquet speech for Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister stressed the commonality of experiences of the two countries and described terrorism as a menace confronting both. In the Joint Statement issued at the end the visit, the two countries pledged, as “victims of terrorism” to be “partners in the battle against this scourge”.

In June 2003, the Indian Prime Minister visited China - almost a decade after the last Prime Ministerial visit - though high level exchanges continued in the interim. K. R. Narayanan visited China in October 1994
and in May 2000 as Vice President and President, respectively. Chinese President Jiang Zamin visited India in November 1996. Chinese National People’s Congress Chairman Li Peng and Premier Zhu Rongji came to New Delhi in January 2001 and 2002 respectively. Among the many agreements signed during the PM’s visit, the Memorandum for Border Trade was a landmark document in which the Chinese accepted “Changgu of Sikkim state” as a designated point on the Indian side for this purpose thereby, recognizing “Sikkim state” as a part of India – something that China had shied away from doing since the state joined the Indian Union in 1975.

The process of developing closer relationship between India and the United States remained on course. In September 2002, President Bush had spoken of developing a strategic relationship between Washington and New Delhi as a component of the US national security strategy. From consultations on missile defence to signing an agreement on non-surrender of each others citizens to international tribunals, from supporting a consensus on IAEA resolution on North Korea to advancing UN initiatives ranging from terrorism to peacekeeping, India and the United States worked to accommodate each other’s interests and address common challenges. The two countries recognized that the key threat to international peace and security emanated from global terrorism, state sponsorship of terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The high level India–US Defence Policy Group continued to address these issues. Yet to New Delhi’s chagrin, the United States, for its own strategic reasons, preferred to remain wedded to maintaining a balance in its relations with the two neighbours, India and Pakistan; even as it acknowledged India as a victim of terrorism, it stopped short of acknowledging its cross-border origins.

Relations with Russia gathered momentum. India and Russia have a unique arrangement of reviewing developments in strategic areas in a structured manner. Thus, there is a separate mechanism for consultations between the two countries for Central Asia and Caspian Sea and yet another for Afghanistan and similarly for other subjects. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Russia in June to attend the tercentenary of the city of St. Petersburg and again in November on a bilateral visit. In between the two leaders met in New York in September during the UN General Assembly session. President Putin had visited India in December 2002. Thus, the two leaders had four opportunities to meet within a space of twelve months. Regular interaction at the highest level symbolizes the close contacts and regular exchanges with Russia, in keeping with the Strategic Partnership built around defence, high technology and scientific cooperation, trade and commerce.
The documents in this volume have been arranged regionally and chronologically for ease of reference; documents of a general nature cutting across many themes and issues have been placed under the general category at the beginning. In categorizing a document, the primary consideration has been its dominant nature. Readers may find some duplication or they may find a document at a place other than where they expect it to be. I seek their understanding. Footnotes have been added to either amplify the context or to supplement the contents of the main document. In reproducing the documents, every effort has been made to adhere to the original text in terms of the spellings of proper nouns and punctuation.

External relations today have become a complex subject. Lexicon of international relations has undergone a sea change in recent years so have their content. The sophistication and the growing needs of the economy coupled with the demands of globalization have brought about a qualitative change in the conduct of international relations. Interaction among nations both multilaterally and bilaterally in diverse fields such as health, environment, agriculture, science and technology etc. contribute to pooling and sharing of knowledge for the benefit of humanity and eradication of poverty from among the countries not yet sufficiently advanced in these fields. It is therefore not possible to look at international relations from the prism of old diplomacy. They have become all embracing. This has led to the conclusion of a large number of agreements with a large number of countries in all areas of human activity. It has not been possible to accommodate all those agreements within the covers of a single volume. In order to keep the size of the compendium within reasonable limit, certain documents had to be excluded. In so doing, every effort has been made to retain in this volume what was considered immediately essential to the conduct of foreign relations. I hope the users would understand if they fail to find a particular document they are looking for in this volume.

In the preparation of this volume I have received help from many officers of the Ministry of External Affairs. I find it difficult to mention all the names individually since the list is long. However I would fail in my duty if I do not mention the names of Navtej Singh Sarna, the Official Spokesperson, Narindra Singh, Joint Secretary (Legal and Treaties Division) and Mahesh Arora of the Public Diplomacy Division. I am grateful to them for their ready help. While saying so, I remain fully responsible for all the deficiencies and inadequacies that may be found in this work.

Avtar Singh Bhasin

New Delhi, September 15, 2006.
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102. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage.

103. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on Pakistan.

104. Interview of National Security Advisor and Principal Secretary Brajesh Mishra with Indian Express Editor-in-Chief Shekhar Gupta.

105. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on Pakistan.
    New Delhi, May 21, 2003.

106. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with Financial Times.
107. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs containing the decision to release Pakistani prisoners and resume Delhi-Lahore Bus Service.  
**New Delhi, May 26, 2003.**

**New Delhi, May 26, 2003.**

109. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to the weekly magazine *Focus.*  
**New Delhi, June 2, 2003.**

**New Delhi, June 4, 2003.**

111. Response of Official Spokesperson to the resolution adopted at the Foreign Ministers’ meeting of the OIC.  
**New Delhi, June 6, 2003.**

112. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on some aspects of India-Pakistan relations.  
**New Delhi, June 9, 2003.**

113. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on operationalisation of the Lahore-Delhi bus service.  
**New Delhi, June 19, 2003.**

114. Government of India’s response to President Musharraf’s observations on Jammu and Kashmir.  
**New Delhi, June 30, 2003.**

115. Statement by Official Spokesperson on Pakistan Prime Minister’s statement.  
**New Delhi, July 7, 2003.**

116. Inaugural address by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha, at the third meeting of India-Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry.  
**New Delhi, July 7, 2003.**

117. Media briefing by the Official Spokesperson on the meeting of the SAARC Standing Committee.  
**Kathmandu, July 11, 2003.**

118. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on India-Pakistan relations.  
**New Delhi, July 21, 2003.**

119. Statement by Official Spokesperson on false propaganda by Pakistan against India.  
**New Delhi, July 29, 2003.**
120. Reaction of Official Spokesperson to questions on Pakistan from the media.  
**New Delhi, August 6, 2003.**

121. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on observations by Pakistani President.  
**New Delhi, August 12, 2003.**

122. Statement by the Ministry of External Affairs on India's offer of help to Pakistan to clean the oil spill off the port of Karachi.  
**New Delhi, August 14, 2003.**

123. Response of Official Spokesperson to Pakistani allegation of terrorist camps in India.  
**New Delhi, August 19, 2003.**

124. Statement by Official Spokesperson on India-Pakistan talks on Civil Aviation in Islamabad.  
**New Delhi, August 28, 2003.**

125. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on India-Pakistan relations.  
**New Delhi, August 29, 2003.**

126. Inaugural address by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the launch of the India - Pakistan CEO's Business Forum  
**New Delhi, September 14, 2003.**

127. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to the News of Pakistan.  
**New Delhi, September 14, 2003.**

128. Questions answered by Foreign Secretary on Pakistan at his media briefing on Prime Minister’s visit to New York to attend the UN General Assembly session.  
**New Delhi, September 15, 2003.**

129. Statement by Official Spokesperson in response to a question on India's efforts to cooperate with Pakistan to eradicate terrorism.  
**New Delhi, September 18, 2003.**

130. Proposal by India to Pakistan to increase the strength of their diplomatic missions in their respective capitals.  
**New Delhi, September 23, 2003.**

131. Response of Official Spokesperson to a question on American response to Pakistan's missile test.  
**New Delhi, October 15, 2003.**

132. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha on BBC World’s HARDTALK India.  
**October 17, 2003.**
133. Response by Official Spokesperson to the Communiqué issued at the 10th OIC Summit in Kuala Lumpur.  
**New Delhi, October 18, 2003.**

134. TV interview of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the programme ‘Court Martial’ weekly current affairs programme broadcast on SAB TV.  
**New Delhi, October 21, 2003.**

135. Press conference of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha on the suggestions made to Pakistan for normalization of relations.  
**New Delhi, October 22, 2003.**

136. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to the weekly *Outlook* on India’s proposals to Pakistan.  
**New Delhi, October 26 and 30, 2003.**

137. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on some aspects of the Indo-Pak relations.  
**New Delhi, October 28, 2003.**

138. Statement of Government of India on India-Pakistan Relations.  
**New Delhi, October 30, 2003.**

139. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee by Russian newspaper *Neazvisimaya Gazeta*.  
**November 12, 2003.**

140. Response of Official Spokesperson to the statement of Pakistani Prime Minister.  
**New Delhi, November 24, 2003.**

141. Statement by Official Spokesperson proposing establishment of communication links between the Indian Coast Guard and Pakistan’s Maritime Agency.  
**New Delhi, December 3, 2003.**

**New Delhi, December 15, 2003.**

143. Response of the Official Spokesperson to the Pakistani demarche on India’s fencing work on the Line of Control.  
**New Delhi, December 18, 2003.**

144. Joint press statement issued at the end of the technical level talks between the Railway officials of India and Pakistan on Samjhauta Express.  
**New Delhi, December 19, 2003.**

145. Interview by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with the *Friday Times*.  
**December 25, 2003.**
146. Statement by Official Spokesperson on proposals made to Pakistan for normalization of relations.  
New Delhi, December 31, 2003.

Sri Lanka

147. Media briefing by the Official Spokesperson on the ongoing visit of Sri Lanka President Chandrika Kumartunga.  
New Delhi, April 10, 2003.

148. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Sri Lankan Minister of Enterprise Development, Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion and Minister of Constitutional Affairs Prof. Peiris.  


150. Agreed Minutes of the fifth session of the India – Sri Lanka Joint Commission.  

151. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Sri Lanka Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.  
New Delhi, October 20, 2003.

152. Joint statement issued at the end of the visit of Sri Lanka Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.  
New Delhi, October 21, 2003.

New Delhi, October 21, 2003.

New Delhi, November 4, 2003.

(iii) - SOUTH-EAST, EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

155. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the 5th ASEAN- India Senior Officials Meeting.  
New Delhi, May 21, 2003.

156. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the 10th ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in Phnom Penh.  

157. Speech by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Plenary Session of Second India - ASEAN Business Summit.  
158. Inaugural address by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the 21st meeting of the Health Ministers of W.H.O. South East Asia Region.  
**New Delhi, September 8, 2003.**

159. Press interaction of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal in connection with Prime Minister’s visit to Indonesia and Thailand from 7th to 12th October 2003.  
**New Delhi, October 3, 2003.**

160. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on the eve of his departure for the India-ASEAN Summit (Bali) and Thailand.  
**New Delhi, October 6, 2003.**

161. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at ASEAN Business and Investment Summit.  
**New Delhi, October 7, 2003.**

162. ASEAN-India Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism.  
**Bali (Indonesia), October 8, 2003.**

163. Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Association of South East Asian Nations.  
**Bali (Indonesia), October 8, 2003.**

164. Statement to the Indian Media by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the conclusion of his visit to Bali and Thailand.  
**Chiang Mai, October 12, 2003.**

**Australia**

**New Delhi, August 28, 2003.**

**Adelaide, August 28, 2003.**

**China**

167. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the *People’s Daily*, Beijing.  
**New Delhi, June 20, 2003.**

168. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Xinhua News Agency.  
**New Delhi, June 21, 2003.**
169. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Wen Huibao, Shanghai.  
**New Delhi, June 21, 2003.**

170. Media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the Prime Minister’s visit to the People’s Republic of China.  
**New Delhi, June 21, 2003.**

171. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee before his departure for People’s Republic of China.  
**New Delhi, June 22, 2003.**

**Beijing, June 23, 2003.**

**Beijing, June 23, 2003.**

**Beijing, June 23, 2003.**

**Beijing, June 23, 2003.**

176. Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between the Republic of India and the People’s Republic of China issued during the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to China.  
**Beijing, June 23, 2003.**

177. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Peking University.  
**Beijing, June 23, 2003.**

**Beijing, June 23, 2003.**
179. Opening remarks by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at a press briefing for Indian and foreign media during Prime Minister’s visit to China. 
**Beijing, June 24, 2003.**

180. Keynote address by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Seminar on “China-India Economic Cooperation and Development”. 
**Beijing, June 24, 2003.**

181. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on “India & China: Challenges and Opportunities in the IT Sector”. 
**Shanghai, June 26, 2003.**

182. Press conference of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the end of his visit to China. 
**Beijing, June 27, 2003.**

183. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee on India-China Relations. 
**New Delhi, July 8, 2003.**

184. Suo Motu Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the Lok Sabha on his visits to Germany, Russia, France and China. 
**New Delhi, July 23, 2003.**

185. Admiral RD Katari Memorial Lecture by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha on “The Emerging India – China Relationship and its impact on India/South Asia”. 
**New Delhi, November 22, 2003.**

186. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference Jia Qinglin. 
**New Delhi, November 24, 2003.**

**Fiji**

187. Statement of the Government of India welcoming the decision of the Fijian Supreme Court regarding representation of all Political parties in the Cabinet and the decision of the Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase to abide by the Court’s decision. 
**New Delhi, July 21, 2003.**

**Indonesia**

188. Statement by Official Spokesperson about a terrorist attack on a Hotel in Jakarta. 
**New Delhi, August 8, 2003.**
189. Press release issued by the Embassy of India in Jakarta on the 1st India Indonesia Joint Commission meeting held in Yogyakarta. 

Laos
190. Joint Statement issued during the visit of Prime Minister Bounnhand Vorachit of Lao People’s Democratic Republic. 
New Delhi, June 16, 2003.

Malaysia
191. Media briefing by the Official Spokesperson on the treatment meted out to some Indian nationals in Malaysia. 
New Delhi, March 10, 11, 12 and 21, 2003.

Myanmar
New Delhi, January 20, 2003.
193. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha’s visit to Myanmar. 
New Delhi, January 21, 2003.
195. Question in the Rajya Sabha: “Boundary dispute with Myanmar”. 

Singapore
New Delhi, April 8, 2003.
New Delhi, April 8, 2003.
198. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister of Singapore. 
New Delhi, April 8, 2003.
**Thailand**

199. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the engagements of the Thai Foreign Minister on a visit to India.  
    *New Delhi, February 14, 2003.*

200. Press interaction by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal in connection with Prime Minister’s visit to Indonesia and Thailand from 7th to 12th October, 2003.  
    *New Delhi, October 3, 2003.*

201. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the Thai daily *the Nation.*  
    *Bangkok, October 9, 2003.*

202. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with the Thai paper *Matichon.*  
    *New Delhi, October 9, 2003.*

203. Address by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the Special Session of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Thailand.  
    *Bangkok, October 9, 2003.*

204. Media briefing by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha during Prime Minister’s visit to Thailand.  
    *Bangkok, October 9, 2003.*

    *Bangkok, October 9, 2003.*

206. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet hosted in his honour by Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand.  
    *Bangkok, October 9, 2003.*

207. Address by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Business Meeting of India and Thailand Chambers of Trade & Industry.  
    *Bangkok, October 10, 2003.*

208. Joint Press Statement on the official visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Thailand.  
    *Chiang Mai, October 12, 2003.*

**Timor Leste**

209. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Senior Minister of Foreign Affairs of Timor Leste Jose Ramos Horta.  
    *New Delhi, January 24, 2003.*
New Delhi, January 24, 2003.

211. Statement by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN on the Situation in Timor-Leste in the Security Council. 

Vietnam

212. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meetings of Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam with Indian leaders. 
New Delhi, May 1, 2003.

New Delhi, May 1, 2003.

(iv) CENTRAL AND WEST ASIA


New Delhi, March 7, 2003.

New Delhi, June 6, 2003.

217. Keynote Address of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Third India-Central Asia Conference. 
Tashkent, November 6, 2003.

218. Statement by Ambassador V. K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question in the Security Council. 

219. Statement by Ambassador V. K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on Agenda Item 37 : “The Situation in the Middle East” in the General Assembly. 

Afghanistan

220. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on Afghan President Karzai’s discussions in New Delhi. 
New Delhi, March 6, 2003.
221. Speech of President A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of the President of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai. 
   *New Delhi, March 6, 2003.*

222. Statement by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN on the Situation in Afghanistan in the Security Council. 
   *New York, June 17, 2003.*

223. Press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the discussions with the visiting Iranian Foreign Minister on Afghanistan. 

224. Statement by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal at the High-level ad hoc meeting on Afghanistan. 
   *New York, September 24, 2003.*

225. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on safe release of the two Indian nationals abducted in Afghanistan. 
   *New Delhi, December 24, 2003.*

**Armenia**

226. Speech of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of the President of the Republic of Armenia Robert Kocharian. 
   *New Delhi, October 31, 2003.*

227. Joint Declaration issued at the end of the visit of the Armenian President Robert Kocharian. 
   *New Delhi, October 31, 2003.*

**Iran**

   *New Delhi, January 25, 2003.*

229. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Road Map to Strategic Cooperation. 
   *New Delhi, January 25, 2003.*

230. Speech of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Khatami. 
   *New Delhi, January 25, 2003.*

231. New Delhi Declaration between the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the occasion of the visit of the Iranian President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami. 
   *New Delhi, January 25, 2003.*
232. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting of the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister with Foreign Secretary.  
**New Delhi, July 21, 2003.**

233. Press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi.  
**New Delhi, August 25, 2003.**

234. Opening Statement by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the 13th session of the India-Iran Joint Commission.  
**Tehran, December 13, 2003.**

235. Joint press release issued at the conclusion of the 13th India-Iran Joint Commission meeting.  
**Tehran, December 14, 2003.**

236. Speech of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the 7th India-Iran Joint Business Council Meeting.  
**Tehran, December 14, 2003.**

237. Response of Official Spokesperson to questions from journalists on Iraq at his press briefing.  
**New Delhi, February 3 and 6, 2003.**

238. Statement by Ambasador V. K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on the Situation between Iraq and Kuwait in the Security Council.  
**New York, February 18, 2003.**

239. Statement by Ambasador V. K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on the Situation between Iraq and Kuwait in the Security Council.  
**New York, March 11, 2003.**

240. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in both Houses of Parliament on the situation relating to Iraq.  
**New Delhi, March 12, 2003.**

241. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson about the situation in Iraq.  
**New Delhi, March 17, 2003.**

242. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs regarding the Cabinet discussions on the current situation in Iraq.  
**New Delhi, March 18, 2003.**

**New Delhi, March 20, 2003.**
244. Statement by Official spokesperson on the commencement of Military action in Iraq.  
New Delhi, March 20, 2003

245. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting of the Iraq Crisis Management Committee.  
New Delhi, March 21, 2003.

New York, March 26, 2003

247. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to SAB TV.  
New Delhi, April 3, 2003.

248. Statement of Ministry of External Affairs giving India’s response to U.N. Emergency Appeal on Iraq.  
New Delhi, April 4, 2003.

249. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with the New Delhi based daily the Hindustan Times.  
New Delhi, April 6, 2003.

250. Resolution adopted by the Lok Sabha on Iraq.  
New Delhi, April 8, 2003.

251. Statement by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha in Rajya Sabha on the situation in Iraq prior to the adoption of the unanimous resolution on Iraq.  
New Delhi, April 9, 2003.

252. Statement by the External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha in Lok Sabha on the situation in Iraq.  
New Delhi, April 10, 2003.


254. Media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security about the UN Resolution on Iraq.  

255. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of a U.S. Team to discuss the follow up of the UNSC Resolution 1483.  
New Delhi, June 16, 2003.

256. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs regarding Indian troops for Iraq.  
New Delhi, July 14, 2003.
257. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the situation in Iraq. 
   **New Delhi, July 18, 2003.**

258. Question in the Lok Sabha: “Deployment of Indian Troops in Iraq” 
   **New Delhi, July 23, 2003.**

259. Letter from External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to UN Secretary General condoling the death of UN Special Representative in Iraq. 
   **New Delhi, August 20, 2003.**

260. Interview of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal with the Russian newspaper *Kommersant.* 
   **Moscow, September 10, 2003.**

   **New Delhi, October 17, 2003.**

262. Statement by Minister of State Vinod Khanna in the International Donors’ Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq. 
   **Madrid, October 24, 2003.**

263. Question in the Lok Sabha re: Recognition of the Iraqi Governing Council as the Legitimate Executive Body of Iraq. 
   **New Delhi, December 10, 2003.**

264. Statement by Official Spokesperson on External Affairs Minister’s telephonic conversation with the US Secretary of State on Iraq. 
   **New Delhi, December 15, 2003.**

   **New Delhi, December 15, 2003.**

**Israel**

266. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with the Israel newspaper *Ha’Aretz.* 
   **New Delhi, September 8, 2003.**

267. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting between the Israeli Prime Minister and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. 
   **New Delhi, September 9, 2003.**

   **New Delhi, September 9, 2003.**

270. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister of Israel. 

271. Delhi Statement on Friendship and Cooperation between India and Israel issued at the end of the visit of the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. 
   New Delhi, September 10, 2003.

272. Reaction of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal to the reported statement of Israeli Deputy Prime Minister on the assassination of President of Palestinian Authority Yasar Arafat. 
   New Delhi, September 15, 2003.

Kyrgyzstan

273. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to Kyrgyzstan. 

274. Address of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Kyrgyz National State University. 

Palestine

275. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of the Foreign Minister of the Palestinian National Authority. 
   New Delhi, August 29, 2003.

   New Delhi, August 29, 2003.

277. Statement by Ambassador V. K. Nambiar Permanent Representative at the UN on the situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian Question in the Security Council. 

278. Statement by Saleem Iqbal Shervani Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN in the 10th Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly on illegal Israeli Actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. 
279. Statement by Aneil Mathrani Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN in the Regular Session of the UN General Assembly on Agenda Item 38: Question of Palestine. 

Syria

280. Special media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Syria. 

281. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet hosted by Syrian President Bashar Assad. 

282. Speech of Prime Minister at the inauguration of Syrian National Biotechnology Centre. 

283. Briefing for Indian media by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha during Prime Minister’s visit to Syria. 

284. Joint Statement issued on the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Syria. 

285. Statement to the Indian media by Prime Minister at the end of his visit to Syria and other countries. 

Tajikistan

286. Address by External Affairs Minister to the Tajik National State University. 


288. Special media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Tajikistan. 

289. Remarks made to the media by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the joint press interaction with the President of Tajikistan. 

**Dushanbe, November 14, 2003.**

292. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the banquet hosted in his honour by President of Tajikistan.  
**Dushanbe, November 14, 2003.**

293. Joint Declaration on Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Republic of Tajikistan issued at the end of the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Tajikistan.  
**Dushanbe, November 14, 2003.**

294. Statement to the India media by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the conclusion of his visit to Tajikistan.  
**November 16, 2003**

**United Arab Emirates**

295. Media briefing by Ambassador K. C. Singh on the visit of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed AL Nahyan.  
**New Delhi, July 1, 2003.**

**Uzbekistan**

296. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson regarding the discussions held by External Affairs Minister with the visiting Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan.  
**New Delhi, February 3, 2003.**

**New Delhi, February 3, 2003.**

298. Memorandum of Understanding between the Foreign Service Institute under the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the University of World Economy and Diplomacy under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Mutual Cooperation.  
**Tashkent, November 6, 2003.**

**VIII - AFRICA**

299. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting between the External Affairs Minister and Delegation of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.  
**New Delhi, February 10, 2003.**
300. Opening remarks of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Inter-Session Parliamentary Consultative Committee Meeting of Ministry of External Affairs on: “India-Africa Relations”.
   
   New Delhi, May 2, 2003.

301. Statement by A. C. Jose Member of Parliament and a Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN in joint debate at the 58th session of the UN General Assembly on Agenda Item 39 (A) and (B) : New Membership for Africa’s Development : Progress in implementation and international support.
   

302. Opening statement by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the India-SADC delegation talks.
   
   New Delhi, July 17, 2003.

Congo

   
   New Delhi, July 8, 2003.

Djibouti

304. Speech by President Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of President of the Republic of Djibouti Ismail Omar Guelleh.
   
   New Delhi, May 19, 2003.

305. Joint Statement issued during the visit of the President of Djibouti Ismail Omar Guelleh.
   
   New Delhi, May 19, 2003.

Ghana

306. Remarks by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the inauguration of the India-Ghana Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence for Communications and I.T.
   

Lesotho

307. Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit of the Prime Minister Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili of the Kingdom of Lesotho.
   
   New Delhi, August 6, 2003.

Libya

308. Statement by Official Spokesperson on lifting of UN Sanctions against Libya.
   
   New Delhi, September 15, 2003.

Mauritius

Port Louis, July 1, 2003.

311. External Affairs Minister’s remarks at the Press Conference during his visit to Mauritius.
Port Louis, July 2, 2003.

Port Louis, July 2, 2003.

313. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs pledging Indian assistance to the construction of International Convention Centre in Mauritius.
New Delhi, October 13, 2003.

314. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister of Mauritius.
New Delhi, November 21, 2003.

315. Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit of the Mauritius Prime Minister Paul Raymond Berenger.
New Delhi, November 24, 2003.

Mozambique

316. Speech by President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of President of the Republic of Mozambique Joaquim Alberto Chissano.
New Delhi, May 12, 2003.

317. Joint statement issued during the State Visit of President of the Republic of Mozambique.
New Delhi, May 12, 2003.

Namibia

318. Speech of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of the Namibian President Sam Nujoma.
New Delhi, February 27, 2003.

319. Joint Communiqué issued on the visit of Namibian President Dr. Sam Nujoma.
New Delhi, February 27, 2003.
Rwanda

320. Media briefing on the visit of the Foreign Minister of Rwanda.

Senegal

321. Joint statement issued at the end of the visit of the President of Senegal Abdoulaya Wade.
New Delhi, October 14, 2003.

Seychelles

322. Address of Vice-President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat to the National Assembly of Seychelles.

323. Joint statement issued on the visit of the Vice President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat to the Republic of Seychelles.

South Africa

324. Brasilia Declaration issued at the end of consultations between the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, South Africa and India.

325. Press release issued by the Governments of India, Brazil and South Africa on Cooperation to strengthen multilateralism.

New Delhi, October 16, 2003.


New Delhi, October 26, 2003.

329. Speech of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of President of the Republic of South Africa Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki.
New Delhi, October 16, 2003.

330. Joint Declaration issued on the occasion of the State visit of the South African President Thabo M. Mbeki.
New Delhi, October 16, 2003.
Sudan

IX- AMERICAS
(i) NORTH AMERICA

Canada

United States of America
341. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage. 

342. Media briefing by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha after his meeting with the US Secretary of State Colin Powell in Moscow. 

343. Press release of the Embassy of India on the visit of Minister of Commerce and Industry Arun Jaitley to Washington, D.C. 

New Delhi, July 11, 2003.


347. Question in the Rajya Sabha: “Visit of U.S Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee to India”. 
New Delhi, August 21, 2003.

348. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of US Assistant Secretary of State Ms. Christiana Rocca. 
New Delhi, September 11, 2003.

349. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Asia Society on “India – US Relations in the Emerging Global Environment”. 

350. Response of the Official Spokesperson to a question on American reaction to Pakistani missile test. 
New Delhi, October 15, 2003.

(ii) CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

351. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on meeting of the Consultative Committee attached to the Ministry of External Affairs on India’s relations with Latin American countries. 

ANDEAN Community

352. Agreement between the Republic of India and the Andean Community for the establishment of a Mechanism of Political Consultation and Cooperation. 
MERCOSUR

353. Framework Agreement between the MERCOSUR and the Republic of India for Cooperation in the Field of Trade and Investments. 
Asuncion (Paraguay), June 17, 2003.

Caribbean Community

354. Agreement between the Government of India and the Caribbean Community to Establish a Standing Joint Commission on Consultations, Cooperation and Coordination. 
New Delhi, November 25, 2003.

Brazil

355. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with Brazilian paper Economico-International. 

356. Brasilia Declaration issued at the end of consultations between the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, South Africa and India. 

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INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003

Section - I

GENERAL


Shri Santosh Kumar, members of the Indian Foreign Service Batch 2001, distinguished colleagues from the past, ladies and gentlemen,

I am extremely happy to be here today to deliver the First Distinguished Persons Lecture organized by the Foreign Service Institute and to attend the Valedictory function of officer trainees of the 2001 batch. I wish the young officers of the Foreign Service the very best in their careers. I am sure they have a bright future ahead of them and that all of them will do India proud in the years to come.

Friends, I chose the topic of today’s talk – “Diplomacy in the 21st Century” with some deliberation. I have already spoken on the topic of India’s Foreign Policy in other fora. I thought I should focus today on diplomacy as distinct and different from ‘foreign policy’.

Many people use diplomacy and foreign policy interchangeably. It is, therefore, important to clarify the difference between the two at the very outset. Harold Nicholson (I discovered his book with great difficulty because I have read it in my university days), the well-known author of many books on diplomacy describes diplomacy as the executive aspect as compared to foreign policy which is the legislative aspect. Diplomacy is the means by which foreign policy is implemented. Foreign Policy is therefore the larger framework and strategy which countries evolve to advance their national interests. It is formulated by the political leadership of each country on the basis of inputs from various sources such as the Foreign Office and Embassies abroad, other Ministries, State Governments in our case, experts and think tanks, the Parliament, media etc. Diplomacy on the other hand is the principal tool or set of tools by which Foreign Policy is executed and given shape to.

To proceed then to the substance of today’s topic, it is important to begin with some history. What is striking about the transformation of Diplomacy from ancient to modern times is the fact that it has been marked by both continuity and change. I am sure many of you would have seen a recent article in the ‘Economist’ on life of Ambassadors in London towards
the end of the 15th Century when the institution of permanent and resident Ambassadors was still in its infancy. The article titled “Sent abroad to lie” reflects the popular myth which has prevailed for centuries that diplomats are persons sent abroad to lie for their country. At the same time, it also describes how precarious the life of Ambassadors was in those days. How they appeared to live in great luxury and splendour but in reality had a tough time making two ends meet, how the state of communications forced them to make up their briefs as they went along. Apparently, Ambassadors even used to hover around Royal Courts to get a free meal. I wonder if this is how the much talked about diplomatic entertainment had its origins. Much of the complaints our Foreign Office receives from various Missions regarding inadequate foreign allowance, problems relating to security of Missions and its personnel, lack of timely instructions from Headquarters etc. even today echo the travails of diplomats in the 15th Century.

Diplomacy has evolved and transformed with the changing nature of the world and global problems. Yet some basic problems and practice remains the same. Scholars of diplomacy tend to divide diplomatic history into Old Diplomacy, New Diplomacy, Total Diplomacy etc. Old Diplomacy is of the variety we discussed above when Ambassadors had powers to even declare war on behalf of States they represented. New Diplomacy is characterized by the practices of the democratic age where negotiations are conducted in public and there is popular participation in decision-making. Total Diplomacy describes the age where the scope and expanse of diplomacy covers virtually every aspect of contacts between nations and their peoples.

We, in India, can trace the evolution of our diplomacy on similar lines as the above. For example, there are references to diplomatic practice in our great epic Mahabharata. The episode of Krishna going as an emissary of the Pandavas to negotiate with the Kauravas is well known. This story reflects how the use of emissaries to engage in political negotiations was prevalent in ancient India. It highlights the importance attached to resolution of disputes through dialogue and peaceful means. It advocates the need for concessions and compromise from both sides in any dispute. It also refers to the principles of diplomatic immunity and the danger of horrendous war when negotiations collapse. The Arthashastra of Kautilya contains similarly a large section on policy between kingdoms.

India, after independence made a signal contribution to diplomacy
by ushering in the “Non-Aligned Movement”. India can be considered a pioneer in “Developing Country Diplomacy” which involved efforts to place issues such as development, de-colonization, racism etc. on the international agenda. Even today in the UN and other multilateral fora, India retains its image as a country which is in the forefront of putting across developing country perspectives on international issues. We, in India, have proved by our talent and contributions that skills in diplomatic practice are not the monopoly of rich and the powerful or exclusive to the Western world.

Speaking from my personal experience of the last six months as Minister of External Affairs, let me emphasize four points. Firstly, the Indian Foreign Office and our Missions abroad are today truly in an age of Total Diplomacy. Foreign relations is defined and interpreted by us in the broadest possible fashion. There is no issue pertaining to contacts between India and other countries that the Foreign Office is not interested in or concerned about. For example, the Ministry of External Affairs is actively engaged in promoting Free Trade Areas between India and other parts of the world. It is part of decision making process on WTO matters. It closely works with CBI and MHA on issues such as extradition. It interacts closely with the Ministry of Defence and National Security Council on security related issues. It engages the United States on matters of high technology commerce. It is the lead agency for the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission which deals with all issues of economic, commercial and scientific interaction. It is organizing in the next few days from now the first ever Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

The pace and intensity of diplomatic activity that India is engaged in today is the second factor that deserves special mention. In the last six months, I have interacted with over 80 Foreign Ministers. The list of visitors to India in 2002 fills over three pages and include all important nations of the world. (Zhu Rongji in January 2002, Putin in December 2002, Khatami in January 2003 and a large number of senior visitors from the U.S., EU and our extended neighbourhood).

Thirdly, technology has transformed our diplomacy. I had an important conversation with Foreign Minister Ivanov of Russia even when I was in Cape Town. Secretary of State Collin Powell is a person I am frequently in touch with over telephone irrespective of where I am and where he is. In fact, he is going to talk to me when I get back from here today. The mobile phone thus transcends barriers of space and geography. It enables instantaneous communication at the highest levels.
Similarly, internet and e-mail is bringing increasing information to us on an instant basis and enabling us to put across India’s message effectively to the rest of the world.

Fourthly, non-state actors are playing an increasingly important role in the advancement of India’s foreign policy interests. This includes ‘Track II’ exchanges, Joint Business Councils, activities of organizations like CII and FICCI, the media and others.

Some have argued that the change in the nature of diplomacy has rendered the diplomat or the permanent Ambassador in foreign countries irrelevant. The speed of communications and active involvement of principals such as the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister have reduced the role of our Missions abroad. The above arguments, in fact, remind me of the situation of District Magistrates in our country when confronted with law and order problems such as riots, communal tensions etc. Philip Mason in his book called “The Men Who Ruled India” talks about how a Divisional Commissioner left the district at the time of a riot so as to give the District Magistrate a free hand in handling the problems. I can well imagine the difficulties faced by some of our Ambassadors who have Headquarters and delegations from India constantly breathing down their necks. When I was Consul General in Frankfurt, I had a similar experience.

It is true that today political leaders are directly involved in negotiations and are in frequent touch with each other. Moreover, the growing complexity of issues dealt with by nations such as trade, disarmament, environment, terrorism etc. have expanded the role of specialists as compared to the traditional diplomat whose primary expertise is in negotiations and in cross-cultural understanding. Today there is even talk of “Virtual Missions” which exist in cyber space emerging in the future. However, I still I cannot visualize a situation where our Missions abroad or our Ambassadors become irrelevant. ‘Our man on the spot’ continues to play a critical and invaluable role as the eyes, ears and the voice of the Indian Government and people. A good example is the recent incident involving Mr. Arun Jain of Polaris who was detained in Indonesia. Our Ambassadors in key stations such as Washington, Beijing, Moscow, Islamabad, Colombo, Dhaka and others provide vital inputs into making policy. The understanding they contribute to the making of policy based on their local knowledge and understanding of events as well as personal interaction with policy makers in the host country is something irreplaceable by anyone or anything else.
What are the principal challenges that are likely to confront us in the 21st Century? There are many issues that can be listed. Terrorism will continue to remain a primary concern. Mobilization and management of the forces of globalization will be another priority. We need to enhance our comprehensive national strength and in particular speed up efforts in the field of economic development. We must, however, accomplish this without aping the western model of development with its disastrous impact on environment and natural resources. We need to evolve new patterns of not only sustainable development but also sustainable consumption.

As an emerging economic power, we have to work hand in hand with Indian industry and business to expand India’s presence to all parts of the world. Assuring energy security will be a key goal of the future. We need to preserve and protect our culture as well as indigenous systems of knowledge. Developing our high-tech capabilities including in the field of defence and defence production will be another important task. We need to pursue our candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. In short, India's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century will be aimed at enabling and facilitating India’s rapid emergence on the world stage as a major player through the building of both its domestic strength as well as global influence.

I believe that our practitioners as well as practice of diplomacy have served us well in the past. There is, however, need for continuous introspection and constant refinement. In a rapidly changing world, the Ministry of External Affairs and its Missions must be ahead of times.

Secondly, our Foreign Service needs to be upgraded both in terms of manpower as well as quality of human resources. (I am not saying this simply because some former members of the service are present here. But I have no hesitation in saying that the batch of 2001 should remember that you are joining a Foreign Service that has upheld the best traditions of diplomatic service anywhere in the world.) As an emerging world power, 600 and odd Officers are not sufficient to provide the sinews for Indian diplomacy. Simultaneously, there must be greater and more systematic training. Language training is important and essential. But, that alone will not suffice. We need to train our officers in counter terrorism, WTO matters, global economics and finance, the intricacies of nuclear command structures, concepts of deterrence, missile defence, environment etc. In this connection, I compliment the FSI for the initiative it has taken to develop ‘on line training’ for diplomats and would encourage it to become more ambitious in its efforts.
Thirdly, our diplomats should be at the vanguard of using the latest of communication and information technology to advance India’s interests. For example, I have directed that a programme to computerize the issue of visas in all key Missions across the world be completed as quickly as possible.

Fourthly, economic diplomacy should become a mantra within Ministry of External Affairs. We need to expand our outreach to State Governments as well as to the Chambers of Commerce and Industry within India. Our ITEC programme must be revamped, if necessary with the help of private consultants. Coordination with other economic Ministries must be institutionalized with a view to ensuring maximum impact for our investment and trade promotion efforts. With these goals in mind, the Commerce and Industry Minister and I recently led a high level review involving senior officials of both Ministries to look at what steps needed to be taken in this regard. A special inter-Ministerial task force has been constituted at the behest of the Ministry of External Affairs to examine what can be done to strengthen economic relations with our immediate neighbours in South Asia. Instructions have been issued to Missions in Africa and Latin America to actively explore the possibility of preferential and free trade arrangements with them. India’s diplomacy will further need to develop expertise in facilitating the expansion of India’s industrial and commercial presence overseas. It will also need to be equipped to provide to our companies support when incidents such as the one involving the Polaris Chief occurs.

Fifthly, India has always exercised a great amount of ‘soft power’ in the world and a large number of soft power instruments are available to us today. We need to develop and perfect them. For example, Indian culture and cuisine continue to grow in popularity across the world. Bollywood is growing in its strength and global reach. Indian intellectuals who live abroad like Amartya Sen and Jagdish Bhagwati have a distinct impact on the influential academic communities in which they work. Indian writers like Rohingtion Mistry are bringing us new friends every day. Moreover, Non Resident Indians and People of Indian Origin are extremely important sources of support for the Indian Government in the execution of its policies through the influence and respect they command in the countries in which they live.

Finally, we must build a sound ‘foreign policy establishment’ within
India to supplement and contribute to the efforts of the Government in the field of foreign and security policy. While several think-tanks exist and are undertaking important work, much more remains to be done in terms of institution building in this field. A major step has been taken with the constitution of the National Security Council and the National Security Advisory Board. Proposals for setting up a National Defence University is also under consideration. We need to do much more to build expertise on our immediate neighbourhood, China, Central Asia, ASEAN, Gulf and other countries in our extended neighbourhood. Needless to say, the interface between our academic community and Government also must be streamlined.

To conclude, India has the ability to emerge as a great power and the will and determination to achieve this goal. During the first decade and a half of our independence, India played a stellar role in world diplomacy. We were trouble-shooters for the world. Our involvement in the resolution of disputes was sought after by others because we were seen as genuinely independent and effective interlocutors. We attained status and honour in the international community at that time by the sheer dint of our conviction, our sincerity, our intellectual abilities and because our policies were right. It was also because we were led by men of vision like Nehru. Our capabilities at that time were extremely limited. Our hard power was minimal. But, we ascended tremendous heights.

In contrast, we today have both the capabilities as well as the opportunities. We have built significant national strength in every sense of the term. We have averaged 6% growth rate over the last decade and are now targeting 8%. Our foreign exchange reserves are nearly US$ 70 billion. From a food shortage country, we have become an exporter and donor of food grains. Our software industry is envy of the world. We are a nuclear power. We also possess significant conventional capabilities. We have an advanced defence production industry. Our space, nuclear science, bio-tech and other high-tech capabilities are a matter of pride. Most of all, our human resources are among the best in the world.

The need of the hour therefore is simply for us to ‘get our act together’. India’s diplomacy in the 21st Century should become a force that brings together all the elements of soft power and hard power that are at her disposal today and converts them into a powerful tools for advancing India’s interests and global peace. Indian diplomacy in 21st
Century should guide and lead India to her promised tryst with destiny. And, let me affirm with confidence, I am certain that we shall succeed in this endeavour.

Thank you very much.

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002. Press release of the Government of India on the review of the operationalization of India’s Nuclear Doctrine by the Cabinet Committee on Security.


1. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met today to review the progress in operationalizing of India’s nuclear doctrine. The Committee decided that the following information, regarding the nuclear doctrine and operational arrangements governing India’s nuclear assets, should be shared with the public.

2. India’s nuclear doctrine can be summarized as follows:

(i) Building and maintaining a credible minimum deterrent;

(ii) A posture of “No First Use”: nuclear weapons will only be used in retaliation against a nuclear attack on Indian territory or on Indian forces anywhere;

(iii) Nuclear retaliation to a first strike will be massive and designed to inflict unacceptable damage.

(iv) Nuclear retaliatory attacks can only be authorised by the civilian political leadership through the Nuclear Command Authority.

(v) Non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states;

(vi) However, in the event of a major attack against India, or Indian forces anywhere, by biological or chemical weapons, India will retain the option of retaliating with nuclear weapons;

(vii) A continuance of strict controls on export of nuclear and missile related materials and technologies, participation in the Fissile
Material Cut-off Treaty negotiations, and continued observance of the moratorium on nuclear tests.

(viii) Continued commitment to the goal of a nuclear weapon free world, through global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

3. The Nuclear Command Authority comprises a Political Council and an Executive Council. The Political Council is chaired by the Prime Minister. It is the sole body which can authorize the use of nuclear weapons.

4. The Executive Council is chaired by the National Security Advisor. It provides inputs for decision making by the Nuclear Command Authority and executes the directives given to it by the Political Council.

5. The CCS reviewed the existing command and control structures, the state of readiness, the targetting strategy for a retaliatory attack, and operating procedures for various stages of alert and launch. The Committee expressed satisfaction with the overall preparedness. The CCS approved the appointment of a Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Forces Command, to manage and administer all Strategic Forces.

6. The CCS also reviewed and approved the arrangements for alternate chains of command for retaliatory nuclear strikes in all eventualities.

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1. I am delighted to be here amongst you today to share what my perceptions are about the challenges and prospects for India’s foreign policy in the months and years ahead. The challenges are manifold. Peace and security in our neighbourhood and in our region as a whole are uppermost in our mind. The combat against international terrorism presents an immense challenge. Energy security, creating favourable conditions for our economic development, coping with the consequences of instability or military conflict in the middle east, the reform of the Security Council, promoting multi-polarity, finding an adequate response to doctrines diluting the principles of sovereignty and seeking to establish the right to intervene, promoting a more equitable equation between the developed and the developing world in the political, economic and technological domains are some of the challenges facing Indian foreign policy. The prospects by definition are a function of our success in meeting the challenges. On the whole, given India’s geographical and demographic size, a huge and growing market, our human resources, the advances we are making in the knowledge economy, our steady economic growth, our desire to integrate ourselves more fully into the global market, our democracy which gives us enormous resilience, our prospects, I would like to believe, are bright.

2. India has to give priority to safeguarding its security interests in its neighbourhood. Nepal is currently being wracked by the Maoist insurgency and its political system is under strain. In Sri Lanka the Peace Process with the LTTE is showing some hopeful signs but its ultimate success will depend on Sinhala unity and the real transformation of the LTTE from a terrorist organization to a peace partner. Our largest border is with Bangladesh. This porous border creates problems of insurgency and illegal migration which can be dealt with effectively only in conditions of acceptance of each others’ legitimate concerns. The problem of Indian insurgent groups misusing Bhutan’s territory for launching terrorists operations against India has to be resolved within the framework of India’s excellent relations with Bhutan.

3. With Myanmar, with which India shares its borders in the troubled eastern region infested with violent insurgency, a cooperative relationship is being steadily built around a commitment to stabilize the area, cooperate
in economic projects and create multi-model transport links extending to Thailand and prospectively beyond. Myanmar is keen to balance its external relationships and India has vital long term interest in increasing Myanmar's strategic options.

4. The rapid growth in understanding between India and Iran will be symbolized by President Khatami's presence in Delhi on January 26 as Chief Guest at India's Republic Day celebrations. Both countries are interested in forging a long term strategic relationship built around energy security and transit arrangements. Iran is ready to work with India to provide viable and rapid access to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Russia and some projects have already been agreed upon. India and Iran have shared geo-political interests in the pursuit of which this part of Asia can be knit into networks of economic cooperation with increased stability as a consequence.

5. The biggest challenge and a prospect worthy of realization would be the emergence of Pakistan as a moderate Islamic State in the true sense, with "moderation" being evaluated not merely in terms of the pro and anti-West orientation of Islamic regimes. Pakistan was born on the basis of extremist muslim demands and the roots of its identity lie in ideologically confrontational Islam. Indeed, Pakistan's emergence was a "clash of civilizations" in action long before the West discovered this frightening concept. Political Islam, as opposed to pious Islam, which the West began to fear after the Khomeini Revolution in Iran because of its perceived anti-West orientation has long been used against India, first to break it up and now to continue wounding it through recourse to terrorism. The military, which has ruled Pakistan for large periods of its existence, has become the custodian of Pakistan's Islamic hostility towards India, not the least because under that cover it can continue to preserve its enormous privileges within the system. Pakistan was fully involved in the creation and unleashing of the Taliban on the hapless Afghans. The Al Qaeda networks were built under its nose. Together with Afghanistan, Pakistan became the epicenter of international terrorism. So long as this activity promoted Pakistan's strategic interests and was directed against India, it was ignored by the West. Now we know at what cost. Big tragedies have big lessons to offer and for the sake of the victims all of us should learn them. Today the forces behind the Taliban and Al Qaeda, displaced from Afghanistan have re-emerged in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan in Pakistan. What was removed by force in Afghanistan has re-emerged legally in adjoining areas waiting for patience and time
to run out before the politics of fundamentalism and destabilization is resumed. The nerve-centre of all this remains in Pakistan.

6. International terrorism is our common challenge today and how we deal with it holds out common prospects for all of us. Political expediency, short term gains, considerations of geo-politics, the difficulties in making a choice between one’s own immediate priorities and the global good, nurturing of old constituencies, faulty analysis, double standards, all these and other reasons unfortunately blur the moral clarity and political focus on how this terrorism should be dealt with. Pakistan is today being rewarded for its cooperation with the West against terrorism with political and financial oxygen. The military leader of Pakistan has been allowed to manipulate the political system by weakening mainstream political parties and creating space for fundamentalists. From the margins these fundamentalists have moved into the mainstream. While deep concerns are mounting about the nexus between fundamentalism, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, the spotlight is not on Pakistan which has all the three ingredients of concern, plus the additional one of fears of it becoming a “failed State”. We have seen how there is a remarkable lack of curiosity about Pakistan’s nuclear connection with North Korea in exchange for missile technology, which poses grave challenges to our security.

7. One of the major challenges facing India today is the one posed by terrorism from across its borders. In fact, it is not a challenge that appeared in the context of today; the country has been seeing its innocent citizens victimized for the last two decades. It has evolved from being a mere law and order problem because of Pakistan’s deliberate policy of relying on terrorism as a form of proxy war and an instrument of foreign policy. This has made terrorism a major security threat and countering it a predominant foreign policy challenge for us. India has successfully met this challenge earlier in Punjab. Cross-border terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir has assumed greater dimensions partly because the success that Pakistan had in foisting the Taliban in Afghanistan provided it with extensive experience of using terrorism as policy. According to conservative estimates, the extensive cultivation of opium in Afghanistan provided the Pakistani establishment with between US $ 90 million to US $ 136 million of money per annum for at least seven years. This money has been used to finance its proxy war in J&K, equip, train and arm terrorists and infiltrate them into India with weapons and modern communication equipment.
8. The evolution of the situation in Afghanistan presents a complex and enormous security and political challenge to India’s foreign policy. Afghanistan is more peaceful but not stable yet. The political vacuum in the Pashtun areas, the absence of any anti-Taliban cohesive Pashtun force, the failure to curb Pakistan’s ambitions in south and eastern Afghanistan and the likelihood that the situation in the middle east may further divert attention from the danger of pro-Taliban Pashtuns being backed by Pakistan filling this vacuum is real and present. There are reports that Taliban and Al Qaeda elements are regrouping along its southern and eastern borders and continue to receive support, both moral and material from Pakistan. Early economic reconstruction of Afghanistan is one of the most important requirements for the return of peace and stability to that country. India has provided extensive humanitarian, financial and project assistance to Afghanistan. The governing philosophy of India’s assistance to Afghan reconstruction has been to respond to Afghan felt and priority needs. India regards this as crucial for regional peace and stability and views her relationship with Afghanistan as direct and bilateral.

9. Our close historical links with Central Asia provide an asset for building important relationships with the Republics that emerged in the region following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Today we are exploring new avenues of cooperation, new routes – land, air and sea routes. Statistics suggest that 30% of the medicines consumed in Central Asia are of Indian origin. Indian information technology is becoming a part of their system. There is a cultural revival of traditional warmth. The essence of this new emerging relationship is the new way in which we address each other and the absence of any “game”, great or otherwise. The conceptual definition of our relations recognizes that Central Asia has always been the land bridge between India and Europe. India’s view of its neighbourhood has always had a trans-Himalayan dimension. That vision carried trade and culture across the Pamirs, through the silk route. More recently, we have participated in the CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia) process from the beginning. It had an impressive Summit meeting in June 2002 in Almaty. We also hold equal interest in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The menace of Islamic fundamentalism facing these countries is internationally recognized as a problem that needs to be collectively dealt with, to enable them to fully benefit from their new-found independence and to allow them full use of their resources for development. We were amongst the first to establish diplomatic missions in all the Central Asian States and
the area would continue to receive significant focus in the coming years as we seek to forge multi-faceted ties to this important region.

10. Moving eastwards, East Asia has been a natural component of India’s foreign policy priorities. India is an Asian country, the second largest both demographically and geographically. Developments in Asia impinge directly on our security and strategic interests. China is a direct neighbour as are ASEAN countries such as Myanmar and Indonesia. The Indian Ocean straddles the most important sea routes that connect the oil producing region of the Gulf with the consumer countries of East Asia. Increase in maritime trade is another reality today. Cooperation between India and these countries is a necessary prerequisite for the 21st century to become the century of Asia. India’s look east policy starts from North East Asia and not simply the ASEAN region. Yet, India is excluded from APEC as also ASEM. We have, however, a sound framework for meeting the challenges ahead – India has become a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum and a summit partner with the ASEAN. The ASEAN countries themselves have realized the value of engaging India for greater political, security and economic balance in the region. India has engaged in an effort to craft special trade and investment arrangements through an India-ASEAN Free Trade Area to be brought about in 10 years, a BIMS-EC FTA as also bilateral arrangements such as the India-Thailand FTA and India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. BIMST-EC and Mekong-Ganga Cooperation are other structural frameworks for India’s “Look-East” policy. We are working on a trilateral highway project between India, Myanmar and Thailand. Connectivity, canalizing resources and policy coordination among India and the countries in the region are the tasks ahead.

11. Our relations with the United States have entered a phase of unprecedented improvement. India and the United States are, respectively, the world’s most populous and the most powerful democracies, having clear commonalities in shaping a new democratic and pluralistic world order. The US with its belief that it is right to be good and India with its belief that it is good to be right can together promote what is both good and right, in the one case bringing power to the enterprise and in the other case numbers. Our Prime Minister has described India and the US as natural partners. Our relationship with the US is being transformed. There is an intensive dialogue covering a broad agenda, seeking new possibilities for cooperation. Besides regular political dialogue, India and the United States have established over 15 institutional
forums that meet regularly. Notwithstanding the chill of May 1998, dramatic progress has been seen in security and defence cooperation, and trade and investment – the US is our largest trading partner (US $ 23 billion in goods and services last year), the predominant destination of our IT services exports (US $ 5.7 billion last year) and the major source of foreign investments. Areas for dialogue include energy and environment, science and technology, biotechnology and health, information technology and cyber security, combating terrorism and missile defence. Yet, the challenges remain for better management of relations, given the different geo-strategic and economic contexts, and occasional differences in perspectives. Our approach seeks to deal with these differences in a transparent, positive manner, according to enduring principles of our foreign policy that sought never to define relations with any one country through the prism of any other country or regional equations or alliance systems. The investment that both sides have made in the relationship is predicated as much on mutual benefit as on its global significance.

12. India’s foreign policy has conserved its very close strategic relationship with Russia. Our challenge, as of others, has been to manage the consequences for us of the collapse of the Soviet Union. The close political contacts that have existed at the highest levels, the regular dialogue through the years, the recent coming together of both countries against the global menace of international terrorism are elements of strength in the relationship. The challenge lies in the field of bilateral trade which has failed to keep pace with the political relationship. India and Russia have identified high value and hi-tech items for cooperation like information technology, diamonds, energy etc. The Oil and Natural Gas Corporation of India is investing nearly US $ 1.7 billion in the Sakhalin-I project. This is the highest ever overseas investment by an Indian company. Under the framework of energy security, India and Russia are also cooperating in nuclear energy. The ongoing construction of the Kudankulum Nuclear Plant with Russian participation is an example. The historical perspective to defence relations between our countries is being taken further by the successful development of the Brahmos cruise missile. These activities will be expanded further in the future. We also seek to bring about greater synergy between the scientific capabilities and potentialities of both countries.

13. Our relations with China are following a positive course and a steady effort to overcome past differences and build a growing convergence of interests is being made. The challenge that we face vis-à-vis China is to sustain the steady expansion and strengthening of the relationship in
diverse fields even as we attempt to together resolve the border issue. India and China are amongst the fastest growing economies in the world, the two largest developing countries and two major Asian powers with a recognized capacity to play major roles in shaping the future of the continent. The challenge is to balance legitimate interests of all the other players – Japan, the ASEAN bloc and the US - in a cooperative framework. Bilateral trade between India and China this year will equal four and half billion US dollars. Compared to the three and a half billion dollars trade with Japan, this illustrates the progress in efforts to normalize relations. But the unresolved border issue as also elements of China’s own internal and external policies, the impact of its growing strength on the region and beyond, the extent of its sensitivity to concerns about proliferation of nuclear and missile technology in the region and the degree to which its economic success would translate into a more democratic, transparent system, would be a subject of intense interest to India as also to the international community as a whole.

14. Our foreign policy towards Japan is based on economic complementarities and developing strategic convergences. In August 2002, both countries agreed on a Global Partnership in the 21st century, at a time when economic sanctions imposed by Japan on India following our nuclear tests of May 1998 were still in force. During her recent visit, Japanese Foreign Minister Kawaguchi spoke of Japan’s strategic partnership with India and India’s pivotal role in the vision to create a pan Asian economic area extending from East to South Asia. In the second quarter of 2002, Japan, Korea, China and India were among the second, fourth, sixth and eighth largest importers of oil in the world. Cooperation amongst our countries to ensure the security of sea lanes has become another priority. India’s achievements in the software sector and those of the East Asian countries in the hardware sector offer natural synergies that are currently in the process of being jointly exploited to mutual benefit. India and Japan are also candidates for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

15. Europe is a key trading partner of India and a very important investor of capital. It is important, however, that the levels bilateral trade between India and Europe be improved. At Euro 25 billion today, it is far below its potential. Ambitious but realistic targets were set at the third India-EU Business Summit in October 2002 at Copenhagen for raising the current level to Euro 35 billion by 2005 and Euro 50 billion by 2008. Further transformation of the India-EU relationship would require a two-pronged strategy of sustaining traditional links and also exploring new linkages,
for instance, in knowledge industries i.e. information technology, biotechnology, pharmaceutical etc. In political terms, the relationship has already seen steady institutionalization, with Summit-level interaction between India and the EU. The strategic partnership between India and the EU is based on shared values such as democracy, pluralism and liberalism – all values of open, inclusive societies.

16. A few words on a country which today is under great international focus. Iraq was once the source of 30 per cent of India’s oil needs and home to 90,000 Indians working in that country until the Gulf War. We support Iraq’s compliance with the UN Resolutions and elimination of weapons of mass destruction there. We also maintain that if Iraq complies with UN Resolutions, then sanctions should be lifted in tandem for humanitarian considerations. With 3 million Indian expatriates in the Gulf region and a population of over 140 million Muslims in India, we are concerned about military action in Iraq sparking turmoil and creating more bitterness and violence, aggravating an already unstable and volatile situation. In Iraq, the international community is caught in the middle between wish and expectation. No one wishes a military conflict but most expect it.

17. Arms limitation and Disarmament through proper multilateral negotiation has been central to India’s world view. India continues to stress for a cooperative thrust to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons, by subscribing to political measures such as no-first-use, non-use against non-nuclear weapon states and a move away from deployment in hair trigger alert. India, as the only country to commit to no-first-use, believes that restraint on use of nuclear weapons will reduce their salience in strategic calculus and over time pave the way for their reduction and elimination.

18. For us it is also a conviction that the idea of comprehensive security requires not just security from war or threat of war, but also food security, energy security and a sustainable environment. This necessitates sustained economic development which, in turn, is today increasingly dependent on the technological prowess of a country. Technology - nuclear, space, hi-technology - are critical tools for development and comprehensive security. Ironically, regimes of technology denial, created in the name of non-proliferation, but which have outlived their relevance, are still being maintained even in the face of mounting evidence of their failure to prevent proliferation. The case of North Korea’s nuclear development programme and Pakistan’s involvement is the most recent
illustration; Pakistan’s own clandestine acquisitions of nuclear technology and missiles and related technology were earlier instances. These denial regimes that have proved ineffective in preventing proliferation to irresponsible regimes are inimical to our interests when used to deny developmental tools to states such as India with impeccable non-proliferation credentials. There is a pressing demand for energy to fire the engine of rapid economic growth. Given the limitations of fossil fuels, the global concerns about climate change and ecological degradation, nuclear power generation provides a clean, viable alternative. International cooperation in the civilian nuclear power generation remains hostage to denial regimes insisting on “club” rules rather than genuine non-proliferation. India, with its indigenous nuclear technology capability demonstrated, its huge market and non-proliferation credentials views nuclear power generation as the need and task of the immediate future. In a sense, it is comparable to our quest for space technology, driven by socio-economic needs, demands of weather forecasting, communications and disaster management. It is a travesty of truth to perceive this quest in narrow terms of missile proliferation in India’s case. That is why India rejects controls on transfer of technology related to peaceful uses of outer space.

19. Let me say a few words on India’s nuclear doctrine and share with you information that our Cabinet Committee on Security has also made available to the Indian public regarding operational arrangements governing India’s nuclear assets. The basic principles of India’s nuclear doctrine can be summarized as follows:

- Building and maintaining a credible nuclear deterrent;
- A Posture of ‘No-First Use’: This implies that nuclear weapons will only be used in retaliation against nuclear attack on Indian territory;
- Deterrence strengthened by maintaining capacity for retaliation;
- Nuclear retaliatory attacks can only be authorized by the civilian political leadership through the Nuclear Command Authority;
- Non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States;
- A continued observance of the moratorium on nuclear tests, participation in the FMCT negotiations and continuance of strict controls on export of nuclear and missile related materials and technologies;
• Continued commitment to the goal of a nuclear weapon free world, through global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

20. This doctrine that has been spelt out forms part of a responsible and restrained approach to the security challenges of the future. It provides for transparency and predictability and should, therefore, serve the purpose of deterrence and stability.

21. In the days ahead, we will continue to place emphasis on multilateral efforts to establish instruments and norms that will enhance respect for international law rather than perpetuate the concept of unilateral advantage, whether in the field of security or trade or other areas of international interaction. Whenever the United Nations is ready to expand the permanent membership of the Security Council to reflect the global realities of the new century, it is evident that India will stake a rightful claim for a place in it.

22. Cooperation among the countries of the Indian Ocean Rim is another concept that India would pursue with greater momentum, with the active participation of African states. India has a creditable record of supporting liberation movements in Africa and the anti-apartheid struggle. There has been, and still is, significant movement in terms of people between India and that continent. A large number of students from Africa have studied in Indian technical and other institutions. There is considerable potential for economic and commercial cooperation, for promoting small-scale industries in the continent with technological support from India.

23. There are 20 million persons of Indian origin living beyond the shores of India, making creditable contributions to the countries that they live in. India has only recently begun to give serious consideration to the resources, entrepreneur skills and goodwill that they could contribute to India in a variety of ways. Early this month, representatives of the Indian diaspora gathered in New Delhi for the first Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas to explore such possibilities. The decision to offer dual citizenship to Persons of Indian Origin in seven countries to begin with will have far reaching impact on the future development of India.

24. I'll end here. This has been a long statement, covering a broad-range of issues.
004. Speech by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Parliamentary Consultative Committee meeting on “Economic Diplomacy”.

New Delhi, February 5, 2003.

Friends,

... With your permission, I would like to begin the proceedings of this meeting. Let me start by welcoming all of you. It is an intersession meeting of the Consultative Committee. Despite the fact that attendance is somewhat low at this point of time, I am sure we will make up as we go along and people will turn up. As we had planned, the idea is that we will spend the next two and a half hours or so discussing the subject namely Economic Diplomacy and then you are most cordially invited to join for lunch. So we have ample time to discuss this issue or any other subject that Members may wish to raise, but I would like to suggest that because we have chosen the theme of Economic Diplomacy, the main discussion should be on the main theme.

On the question of economic diplomacy, friends, let me say that it is not something new that is being attempted. Right from the beginning of independence when our Foreign Policy was crafted, economic aspect of foreign policy has always been considered to be very important. From time to time, the nuances of economics in the agenda of foreign policy has been taken into account in view of the global situation and it has always occupied an extremely important place in our diplomacy. It assumed greater urgency in recent years for two reasons.

Firstly, because the world started integrating through the process of what is generally known as ‘globalisation’ more and more countries started integrating their economies with the rest of the world and, therefore, economic part of diplomacy assumed greater importance for all countries including our own. The second was the phenomena of regional groups on one hand, and individual countries on another. We see that different countries are coming together to form regional blocs. The basic purpose was to integrate within the region, take advantage of the comparative strength of each country and then face the rest of the world as a united bloc with the pool strength of that region.

The other interesting development which is taking place now is that regional groups are acquiring new economic strength besides political and strategic dimensions. This is an important global development. These blocs are now transcending the important global affairs of economic
aspects and they are emerging as power centers in their own right. The aspect of economic diplomacy is also the strength of the domestic economy in our own country and consistently we are trying to build our economic strength so that we can meet the global challenge on equal terms and will not be swamped in the process or through the process of globalisation. Now in this changing scenario we have tried to give our policy a sharper focus and I would like to share with you that we are trying as far as possible to work on our bilateral relations with other countries or regional bloc. We are trying to put it within certain juridical framework.

Firstly, you must have with the other country an Investment Promotion Agreement. Secondly, you should have Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. These two would be at government to government level. This provides assistance to businessman when making investment or promoting trade. Investment Promotion Agreement and Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement are to be entered into between the two countries. The third is setting up of a Joint Commission, Joint Economic Commission or overall Joint Commission in which economics is very important. Joint Commission is where you sit and discuss the economic relationship and strengthening it across a large number of sectors. The fourth is the Joint Business Council which governments will form for greater cooperation. Ultimately both trade and investment have to be done through market forces through business persons of the two countries, business entities. Therefore, JBC is a very useful mechanism which brings the business people together to take advantage of the judicial framework that we seek to create.

In many areas trade centers serve useful purpose as it is a permanent window to any country’s capabilities. Warehousing facilities help the exporters to keep their goods stored for quick delivery in other country.

The fifth aspect in bilateral relationship is to have a strong banking relation so that trade is able to flow through proper channels and no hurdle comes in the way of investment and banking. Connectivity, like air link, shipping, road transport, river transport in the neighbourhood, telecommunication links, is important to promote bilateral economic cooperation. Then if the country is important, as many countries are, to have a strong Commercial Section, Economic Section in our Embassies is necessary so that we are able to deliver the goods, provide services which are needed. This is the institutional jurisdictional framework which we are trying to provide wherever we are lacking in.
The other economic diplomacy aspect is WTO. Bilateral trade agreement within this judicial framework with emphasis on preferential trade tariffs ultimately leads to Free Trade Zone which could then help move on to greater integration through other various means like investment, services sector, exchange of personnel etc. In the case of trade, we have within our immediate neighbourhood SAARC and we have been forcing SAARC to move forward on the issue of preferential tariff arrangement, free trade zone.

Similarly ASEAN in its last summit in Oct-Nov, the PM suggested a 10 year time frame for establishing free trade zone. In order to promote a South-South Cooperation, we are looking at Latin America, we are looking at the African countries’ bloc, the SADCC, we are signing agreement with COMESA on 10th of this month. The African Union has come into existence and we are trying to promote linkages with them, with the regional blocs as well as individual countries in order to promote more tariff concessions so that we can promote trade, investment and create a better climate for South-South Cooperation. The other aspect of economic relationship is technology.

We have acquired a totally new and different image now. There are many developing countries which want to have exchange of technology with us, where people are willing to cooperate with us. We have acquired a very important place globally and this is another area where we are promoting cooperation. With the kind of reserves we have and with more and more reforms taking place, there is great interest now in receiving Indian goods worldwide.

The fourth aspect of economic relationship is aid, government to government credit, suppliers’ credit and we want to use it in a manner to promote bilateral and regional relationship, promote our interests. Wherever it is necessary these government to government credits and suppliers’ credit are sought to be extended. India has also joined the group of select countries which have decided to provide debt forgiveness to the heavily indebted poor countries under IMF arrangement.

The fifth aspect of economic cooperation is technical assistance. We have ITEC programme under which we are providing considerable assistance in training personnel from developing countries, training from English language to S&T, training in diplomacy and administration. More and more candidates from different countries are coming here and India is willing to provide whatever assistance it can under the ITEC programme.
We are providing a great deal of support to the developing countries in terms of capacity building. What is very important is that many of the developing countries don’t have such capacity.

WTO is becoming a complex issue. Representatives or agency in a developing country will be advising their own country in negotiations and at the same time advising other organizations. We are trying to pitch in so that capacities are built and that the developing countries can stand on their feet. Capacity building through ITEC plays a very important role. Now within various programmes, we are trying to promote the economic aspect of our diplomacy, improving the relationship with the countries of the world and help developing countries where we feel that India has a very important role to play. And then the final aspect of economic part of diplomacy cooperation with other developing countries, in the group of 77, even the NAM and through the other groups. We have the G7 group, IMF, the G20 Finance Ministers. G15 have not met for some time now and through these groups of developed countries, we try to identify common issues on which negotiations should be held under these institutions, or WTO or other kind of negotiations. For instance, in the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, there were many economic perceptions of developed countries.

Developing countries therefore have to be there, act together in their own interest, and play a very important role in tackling the problems which were said to be created by the developed countries. This is the final aspect of economic diplomacy that we will continue to practice concertedly globally in order to promote our interest, in order to promote the interest of developing countries. This is the overall framework within which we are honing. In our policy, we are trying to develop various aspects of it and I would like to share with you that this will continue to receive our very concerted attention so that through the economic aspects of diplomacy, we are not only able to protect our own interest, but we are also able to promote the interest of all developing countries and work for a better world. This is the manner in which we are trying to promote economic diplomacy.

I would like to end my remarks at this stage and give the floor to you. Before we move on the items of the agenda, there is one point about Minutes of the last Meeting, and if there is nothing then we will take the Minutes as confirmed and move. On the Minutes of the last Meeting any comments? No. So we move on to the discussion of the subject today.
005. Resolution adopted by the Consultative Committee of Parliament attached to the Ministry of External Affairs on the tragic loss of Astronaut Kalpana Chawla and six other members of the crew of the Space Ship.

New Delhi, February 5, 2003.

The Consultative Committee on External Affairs express its deepest condolences on the tragic loss of Astronaut Kalpana Chawla and six other members of the crew. Resolving to honour the memory of Kalpana Chawla the Consultative Committee placed on record that her professional dedication, success and determination to further the boundary of human knowledge had made her the symbol of pride for the people of India. Kalpana Chawla will be remembered with love, affection and admiration by generations to come.

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006. Extract from the address of President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to the joint session of Parliament.

New Delhi, February 17, 2003.

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60. My Government will continue its vigorous efforts to use India’s Foreign Policy to promote and safeguard our critical national interests. Drawing on the strength of our civilizational and historical ties with countries across the globe, we will forge ahead towards broad-basing our political links, expanding our network of economic cooperation, strengthening strategic inter-linkages, and collaborating on cutting-edge technologies.

61. India has always striven for peaceful, friendly, and cooperative relations with all its neighbours. Unfortunately, Pakistan has consistently responded to our efforts with hatred and violence, sponsoring and actively supporting a sustained campaign of cross-border terrorism. Recent revelations have shown how every civilized diplomatic norm is being flouted by the use of its diplomatic mission in Delhi to arrange financing for terrorist groups in the country. We have had to take measures against
the concerned diplomats, but have also reiterated that we would be willing to retain the level of our diplomatic representations by accepting replacements of the expelled officials. Our position remains unchanged that we are willing to resume bilateral dialogue with Pakistan, as soon as cross-border terrorism ends.

62. India’s commitment to SAARC, as an engine for economic integration and equitable development in the region, remains undiluted. We have constantly pushed for progress on substantive aspects of the economic agenda outlined in the Kathmandu Declaration. We have repeatedly declared our willingness to attend the next SAARC Summit if meaningful progress is achieved on these issues.

63. India will continue to intensify its multi-faceted cooperation with Bhutan. Historical, cultural, and ethnic affinities have shaped our relations with Bangladesh and Myanmar. We are also implementing developmental projects with Indian assistance in Myanmar. With Bangladesh, we are also engaged in a dialogue on some important political and security issues that have arisen in our interactions. The visit of the Prime Minister to Maldives in September last year further enhanced our cordial relationship with that country.

64. Nepal is passing through a difficult phase of political changes and Maoist insurgency. We believe that multiparty democracy and constitutional monarchy are two essential pillars for stability, security, and development in Nepal. We hope that the current problems will be resolved within this framework, in a peaceful and consensual atmosphere. We have maintained an intensive political dialogue and fruitful economic cooperation with Sri Lanka. We continue to support efforts towards a solution of political problems in that country in a manner that preserves its territorial integrity and meets the aspirations of all segments of its population.

65. The people of India and Afghanistan have a legacy of close and historic ties of friendship and cooperation. We welcome the expansion and consolidation of the authority of the Transitional Administration and fully support the Government of Afghanistan. We look forward to receiving the President of Afghanistan on a State visit to India in the very near future. India will continue to extend extensive humanitarian, financial, and project assistance for Afghanistan’s reconstruction.

66. The close ties of friendship between India and Iran were put on a stronger footing, when we hosted the President of the Islamic republic of Iran as the Chief Guest at our Republic Day Parade this year. We want to
expand, consolidate, and diversify our ties with Iran, which have a strategic dimension in the areas of energy and transit.

67. India’s interactions with China have grown and diversified. Trade and economic cooperation are expanding rapidly. Efforts to build trust and understanding in other areas continue. The Prime Minister has been invited to visit China this year and has accepted the invitation. We continue to strengthen our bilateral relationship with Japan, pursuing the shared objective of building a Global Partnership. India’s cooperation with the Republic of Korea continues to expand. We continue to monitor developments in the Korean Peninsula. Reports that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea resumed its nuclear weapon programme with the help of technology from Pakistan arouse serious concern, both about the security implications and about the double standards with which much of the world has handled the question of treaty obligations as well as proliferation issues.

68. India’s traditionally warm relations with South East Asia have been reflected in our recent bilateral interactions, including the Prime Minister’s visits to Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand. Our engagement with the region reached a qualitatively higher platform, when our interface with ASEAN was raised to the Summit level in November 2002. We are making good progress on the economic initiatives outlined at the India-ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh.

69. India’s deep-rooted relations with Central Asia have been enhanced by an identity of views on recent political and economic developments. India and the countries of Central Asia also have a shared determination to tackle the negative focus of terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking, which stalk our common neighbourhood.

70. The Gulf region is of great importance to India. The region is a major source of India’s energy needs and a major economic partner in trade and investment. Over 3.5 million Indians are engaged in the economic development of the Gulf countries. These multi-dimensional ties have been further strengthened and diversified through sustained interaction.

71. We share the concern of the entire world on the unhappy situation relating to Iraq. We have deep interest in peace, stability, and security in that region. We hope that the wisdom of the international community, expressed through the UN Security Council, will result in a peaceful resolution of this matter in a manner, which would benefit humanity.
72. My Government attaches great importance to the strategic partnership between India and the Russian Federation, which is enriched by regular political consultations, multi-faceted economic cooperation and intensive defence collaboration. During President Vladimir Putin’s visit to India in December last year, we also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Fighting against Terrorism.

73. India’s engagement with countries in Europe continues to be broad-based and intensive. Regular exchanges of views on regional and international developments have promoted a better appreciation in these countries of our legitimate concerns and helped to re-vitalize our bilateral relationships. The India-EU Summit in Copenhagen strengthened our institutional dialogue with the European Union, which we will take forward at the next Summit meeting in India later this year.

74. India and the USA continue to forge a new relationship. There is a mutual conviction between the two countries that their bilateral relationship must undergo a qualitative transformation in order to respond to the increasingly complex challenges to the international security and strategic architecture. The two countries are also engaged in building closer bilateral consultations on multilateral social and economic issues of mutual concern.

75. Africa continues to occupy a special place in our diplomatic interactions. This continent, which constitutes the largest group of countries in the United Nations, is also, increasingly, becoming an important economic partner for India.

76. Our bilateral relations with Latin America and Caribbean have grown considerably. The “Focus LAC” programme pursued since 1997 has resulted in increasing attention being paid to the region by the Indian public and private sector.

77. The Government’s consistent efforts to nurture a close relationship with the overseas Indian community were highlighted by the celebrations of the first Pravasi Bharatiya Conference in January. On this occasion, we honoured ten eminent persons of Indian origin whose achievements in their countries of adoption and domicile have done our country proud. The Government has also decided to grant dual citizenship for persons of Indian origin living in certain countries. The necessary legislation for this will be introduced in this session.
007. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with the Russian paper *Vremya Novoastie*.


[Today Mr. Yashwant Sinha, the head of Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who also heads Indian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade and Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation is coming to Russian capital. On the eve of the visit Mr. Yashwant Sinha told the newspaper “Vremya Novoastie” observer Alexander Lomanov about problems and prospects of bilateral cooperation.]

1. In December 2002 President Putin paid a state visit to India. How do you assess its outcomes? Which topics in India-Russia bilateral relations are most important now?

President Putin’s successful visit to India, a milestone in our relations, further elevated our strategic partnership to an even higher and qualitatively new level. His meetings with the entire Indian leadership were marked by special warmth, characteristic of our relations based on goodwill, trust and mutually beneficial cooperation. The visit reconfirmed that our relations are characterized by remarkable stability and continuity. We have a sound and substantive relationship, which is dynamic and forward-looking. This is exemplified by the fact that our relations are practically problem free; we have consultations on a wide spectrum of issues and our cooperation is multifaceted. My current visit to Russia is with the objective of maintaining the momentum in our relations and discuss with the Russian leadership the implementation of key decisions taken during the Summit. Our Prime Minister’s visit to St. Petersburg for the 300th anniversary celebrations of that city and further high-level contacts are being planned. We look forward to achievements in our relations commensurate with high expectations on both sides.

The documents signed – Delhi Declaration on Consolidating Strategic Partnership, Joint Economic Declaration, Joint Statement and MOU on Combating Terrorism - reaffirmed the common interest and approaches of both countries on a range of bilateral, regional and international issues. This is but natural given our affinity in both countries being territorially large and pluralistic and having commonality of interest in meeting current global challenges, in particular, terrorism. On the economic side, agreements were signed on Intellectual Property, Banking
and Telecommunications. It is our objective to complement our excellent political and strategic relations by deepening its economic content. Specific steps are being taken to meet this goal, which focus on increasing the contacts between the private sectors of our respective countries.

2. Could you assess the current level of our defence cooperation? Is the agreement on sale of Admiral Gorshkov going to be signed in the month of March?

Our defence cooperation with Russia is long standing, mutually beneficial and a factor of stability in Asia and beyond. We have a long term cooperation programme extended up to 2010. Recent examples included the supply of SU-30, MKI aircraft and T-90 tanks. Negotiations are in progress on the conclusion of contract on the supply of the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier. We are satisfied with the progress being made, which is being monitored regularly, including during the recent visit of our Defence Minister to Russia in January. I must also mention the Aerospace exhibition in Bangalore, in which Russian products were prominently displayed. Efforts are being made to qualitatively improve our defence cooperation from seller-buyer level to joint research, design and development. The state-of-the-Art Brahmos missile is an example of our joint research.

3. What are the prospects for economic cooperation in general?

Both sides realize that the existing level of bilateral trade and investment is not adequate and certainly below potential. The biggest challenge confronting our bilateral economic and commercial engagement is to establish a climate of greater predictability, confidence and awareness. While we would strive towards further consolidation of traditional sectors of our engagement, there is a continuous search for new areas of cooperation. Certain core sectors for future cooperation have already been identified. These include machinery and equipment, IT and telecom, energy, automobile and components, gems and jewellery, food processing, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology and tourism. India’s investment in the Sakhalin project and Russian investment in the Kudankulam nuclear power plant underline the increased interest and renewed commitment towards boosting trade and investment relations. Both investments are to the tune of $1.7 billion each. Our continuing cooperation in the field of science and technology and our joint efforts towards commercializing technologies is a matter of great encouragement and promise.
4. Pakistan is accused of cross border terrorism. What are the prospects of improvement in India-Pakistan relations?

There is widespread recognition that the epicenter of international terrorism is located in the common neighbourhood of both India and Russia, in particular Pakistan. It is no secret that a large infrastructure of terrorism has been built up over the last two decades in Pakistan and its controlled territory. Despite repeated calls by international community to effectively fulfill its commitment and obligations to put an end to infiltration of terrorists into India as well as to dismantle terrorist infrastructure operating on Pakistani soil and on Pakistan controlled territory, there is compelling evidence that little has been achieved. There is a complete convergence of views between India and Russia that there can be no double standards on terrorism. Pakistan must implement its commitments. The resumption of dialogue is possible when Pakistan gives up its deliberate policy of relying on terrorism as proxy war and as an instrument of foreign policy.

5. What is your position on India-Iran gas pipeline?

There have been repeated reports of armed tribal blowing up existing pipelines in Pakistan. In such a situation, India cannot countenance any cooperation, which involves Pakistan, especially because gas will have to transit via the territory of Pakistan.

6. US operation against Iraq is looming. Will Delhi support this action? How significant could be an estimated impact of this war upon Indian interests?

We support Iraq’s compliance with the UN Resolutions and elimination of weapons of mass destruction there. We believe that whatever decisions are taken, it is important to have the sanction of the United Nations behind them. We also maintain that if Iraq complies with UN Resolutions, then sanctions should be lifted in tandem on humanitarian considerations.

7. What kind of common goals and plans India and Russia could have in Afghanistan reconstruction?

The complex and enormous security and political challenges emanating from Afghanistan have affected not just India and Russia but far beyond. Both our countries have an interest in the successful implementation of the Bonn Agreement and extend full support to the
Karzai Administration aimed at promoting national reconciliation, economic reconstruction, rebuilding of Afghan institutions, including indigenous security structures according to Afghan needs and priorities and to bring back Afghanistan on to its feet so that it is able to defeat internal and external threats. India and Russia both individually and bilaterally have worked towards these objectives, including through a Joint Working Group on Afghanistan, established two years ago. India and Russia are one in assessing the current situation wherein Afghanistan is more peaceful but not yet stable. There are reports about regrouping of Taliban and Al Qaeda forces backed by Pakistan attempting to fulfill political vacuum in the Pushtoon areas. If not checked, we may see a repeated performance of Pakistan yet again trying to pursue its ambitious policies in Afghanistan, reminiscent of the early 90s.

8. What is India’s position vis-à-vis Shanghai Cooperation Organization?

India believes that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is pursuing an important agenda, especially with regard to combating the menace of terrorism. India is interested in joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and has made its intentions clear to the Russian Federation as well as the other Member States. Our membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is not dependant on any other state joining or not joining this Organization. We believe that India will be able to contribute constructively to the agenda of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. We understand, however, that currently the rules of membership do not allow the accession of new states into the grouping. We are, however, following the activities of the Organization with interest.
008. Speech by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha on “India’s Foreign Policy Today” at the Diplomatic Academy.

Moscow, February 20, 2003.

His Excellency Mr. Yuri Fokin, Rector of the Academy,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be here amongst you today. Having been Co-Chairman of the Inter Governmental Commission for almost five years, I am no stranger to Russia. It is always a pleasure to return to this beautiful city. I understand that the bi-centennial of the Russian Foreign Ministry was celebrated on 8th February as the Day of the Russian Diplomat. I am aware that this Academy which was set up in 1938 has played an extremely important role in grooming generations of Russian diplomats over the years. I am, therefore, honoured that the Academy has provided me this opportunity to share some thoughts on India’s foreign policy today.

The foreign policy of any major country is a direct reflection of its overall national policies, its goals for the future, and self perception of its role and destiny in the world. Permit me therefore to begin with a few words on where India is today and the future it sees for itself.

India is the fourth largest economy in the world on the basis of Purchasing Power Parity. The Indian economy has grown at an average rate of around 6% for over a decade and has emerged as one of the fastest growing economies in the world. At the time of independence, India was a food deficit country dependent on imports from outside. Today India has nearly 50 million tones of surplus food grains and exports grain to many parts of the world. In 1991, India faced a severe macro economic deficit. Today, our foreign exchange reserves have crossed US$ 73 billion. As opposed to policies aimed at conserving foreign exchange in the past at any cost, we are now encouraging Indian companies to go abroad and establish permanent stakes in the rest of the world. A good example in this regard is the Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) of India which with a view to advancing India’s energy security, has invested not only in Russia but also in Libya, Syria, Iran, Myanmar and Vietnam. The ONGC is also seeking similar opportunities in Sudan, Kazakhstan, Qatar, Indonesia and Venezuela. It is widely acknowledged that India’s human resources are among the best in the world. Our space, nuclear science, bio-tech and other high-tech capabilities are a matter of pride. India’s success in the field of software development is also well known.
Friends, all the above has been achieved by India within a democratic framework and without any dilution in our commitment to the building of an open, free and pluralistic society. India’s democracy is an article of faith for the over one billion people of our country and we have successfully welded together within this democratic framework, a nation of extraordinary linguistic, cultural, religious and ethnic diversity. India today faces the future and the world with confidence and optimism. Ladies and gentlemen, this self-assurance and a sense of achievement also permeate India’s foreign policy.

It is not easy to spell out within one single speech all aspects of India’s foreign policy. Permit me, therefore, to briefly outline some of our recent efforts vis-à-vis three groups of countries – major powers, India’s immediate and extended neighbourhood and our traditional friends and allies. I would also like to discuss the subject of terrorism which both Russia and India believe is one of the most important challenges confronted by the world in the 21st century.

India’s relations with Russia have over the last decade graduated to a level of close strategic partnership. We have institutionalised annual summits between our leaders. India understands Russia’s security concerns in Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus. At the same time, we have received understanding from Russia on our concerns. Neither country perceives a threat from the strength of the other and each perceives a stake in the increased political and economic power of the other. Our cooperation in combating terrorism is older than the coalition created after September 11. As President Putin pointed out in his address to the Indian Parliament in October 2000 itself, ‘the same individuals, the same terrorist and extremist organizations are involved in terrorist acts from the Philippines to Kosovo, including in Jammu & Kashmir, Afghanistan and Chechnya’. India and Russia have together created a sound legal basis for cooperation in combating international terrorism. Among our common challenges is also one relating to WMD proliferation and its linkages to terrorism. In fact, there is much we can do together as partners against proliferation. Our extensive relations encompass today intense political dialogue at various levels, close cooperation in the areas of defence, science and technology, atomic energy, space, culture, etc.

During the visit of President Putin to India in December 2002, both sides accorded special emphasis and attention to economic, scientific and technical cooperation. It was noted that this has not kept pace with the political relationship. A document on enhancing trade and investment
was signed, which lays down the direction of bilateral interaction in this area for the foreseeable future. As two large and modernizing economies, we share similar perspectives on the pace and direction of the globalization process. We also have the complementarities to exploit opportunities created by economic liberalization and technology diffusion to our mutual advantage.

India and Russia have identified high value and hi-tech items for cooperation like information technology, diamonds, energy etc. The Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) of India is investing nearly US $1.7 billion in the Sakhalin-I project. This is the highest overseas investment ever by an Indian company. We are interested in further expansion of cooperation in oil and gas sector to include joint activities in third countries also. Under the framework of energy security, India and Russia are also cooperating in nuclear energy. The ongoing construction of the Kudankulum Nuclear Plant with Russian participation is an example. This year the two sides will organize trade fairs in each other’s countries. As we speak, an Indian trade fair is being held in Moscow with the participation of around 300 Indian companies.

India and Russia have had substantial military-technical cooperation over many decades. A significant proportion of the military equipment of India’s three armed services is of Russian (or Soviet) manufacture. Our cooperation in this field already includes joint design, development and production of new weapons systems. The historical perspective of defence relations between our two countries is being advanced further through the successful development of the Brahmos cruise missile. We will also be jointly developing a fifth generation fighter aircraft.

My current visit to Russia has been extremely rewarding. We have had wide ranging and open exchange of views on a number of bilateral and economic issues, in the spirit of strategic partnership that exists between our two countries. We have also exchanged views on a number of issues confronting the global community today.

Let me now turn to India’s relations with other major countries. Our relations with the U.S. have undergone a sea-change in the last decade. Over 15 institutional forums have been established which meet regularly. Special attention is being paid to security and defence cooperation as well as trade and investment. The US is our largest trading partner (US$ 23 billion in goods and services in 2002), the predominant destination of our IT services exports (US$ 5.7 billion last year) and the major source of foreign investments.
The European Union is another key trading partner of India and an important investor of capital. The strategic partnership between India and the EU is based on shared values such as democracy, pluralism and liberalism. We have had annual Summit-level interaction with the EU since the year 2000. India also has warm and friendly relations with the entire range of Central and Eastern European countries, many of whom are now hopeful of entry into the European Union. Our trade ties with these countries have been on the up-swing for the past few years and Indian firms have participated in their disinvestment and privatisation process.

In August 2002, India and Japan agreed on a Global Partnership in the 21st century. During her recent visit to Delhi, Japanese Foreign Minister Kawaguchi spoke of Japan’s strategic partnership with India and India’s pivotal role in their vision to create a pan-Asian economic area extending from East to South Asia. There is also cooperation amongst the two countries to ensure the security of sea lanes.

Our relations with China are following a positive course. There is steady effort to overcome past differences and build a convergence of interests. Bilateral trade between India and China last year was over US $4.5 billion. India’s relations with China are and will remain forward looking and infused with a sense of optimism. They will be based on the conviction that a prosperous India is inevitable. So is a strong and prosperous China. Our objective is to sustain the steady expansion and strengthening of relations in diverse fields even as we attempt to resolve the border issue and address other issues of concern.

India has achieved rapid growth in understanding with Iran. Both countries are interested in forging a long term strategic relationship built around energy security and transit arrangements. Iran is ready to work with India to provide viable and rapid access to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Russia and some projects have already been agreed upon. We believe that India and Iran have shared geo-political interests in the pursuit of which our region can be knit into networks of economic cooperation.

Turning to India’s neighborhood, let me begin with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). It is a matter of disappointment that despite having come formally into existence 17 years ago, SAARC is still to make progress with regard to its primary objective of economic cooperation between its members. Pakistan denies India even the most elementary MFN treatment. Further between India and
Pakistan, there are only 18 items out of over 7000 tariff lines where we give each other preferential tariff. Similarly, with Bangladesh, there are 2672 items where India gives preferential tariff. India gets preferential tariff from Bangladesh in only 484 items. India has expressed its readiness to enter into a free trade arrangement in SAARC with immediate effect. We have also suggested that countries of South Asia should move forward and think of a South Asian Union in future. India is willing to go to any length to improve relations with her immediate neighbours. All she asks in return is that they respect and remain sensitive to her security concerns.

India is a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum, where we have excellent cooperative relations with Russia. We are also a summit partner with the ASEAN since last year. Recognizing the positive role India can play in the region, ASEAN countries have actively engaged India. We have responded with efforts to craft special trade and investment arrangements including through an India-ASEAN Free Trade Area to be brought about in 10 years, a BIMST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand-Economic Cooperation) FTA as also bilateral arrangements such as the India-Thailand FTA and India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. BIMST-EC and Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (involving India, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) are other important structural frameworks of India’s “Look-East” policy. We are also working on a trilateral highway project between India, Myanmar and Thailand. Connectivity, canalizing resources and policy coordination among India and the countries in the region are the tasks that lie ahead.

India’s historical links with Central Asia provide an asset for building important relationships with these countries with whom we are exploring new avenues of cooperation and new routes by land, air and sea. India was amongst the first to establish diplomatic missions in all the Central Asian States. We have participated in the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) process from the beginning. We are also interested in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. In this regard, may I also mention that India has been actively participating in the reconstruction of Afghanistan since the overthrow of the Taliban regime. We have earmarked US $ 100 million worth of assistance to Afghanistan of which one-third has been already provided. Our assistance includes wheat, buses, civilian airplanes and human resources training in various fields including in computers. We are negotiating a preferential trade agreement with Afghanistan and also developing transit routes to
Afghanistan through the Chabahar port of Iran. We believe that India and Russia have a commonality of strategic interests in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

As many of you would be aware, the biggest challenge to relations in India’s neighbourhood comes from Pakistan which has persistently refused to shed its compulsive hostility. Pakistan is today, unfortunately, the epicenter of international terrorism. The Taliban and Al Qaeda, displaced from Afghanistan have re-emerged in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan in Pakistan and there is indication that efforts to destabilize the region are being resumed. India sincerely seeks good relations with Pakistan. There is however no possibility of making progress in this direction unless and until Pakistan fulfills its commitment to destroy the infrastructure on its territory which trains, finances as well as sponsors terrorism and brings to an end cross-border infiltration. Here too India and Russia have a common position.

India has always maintained a high level of commitment to improving relations with traditional friends in the developing countries. We have, with the intention of modernizing our relations with fellow developing countries of Latin America and Africa, launched a special drive to strengthen trade and economic relations, through special bilateral and multilateral trading arrangements. We are pursuing FTAs / PTAs with Brazil, Uruguay, Mercosur and other regional organizations in Latin America. A delegation from the Common Market in East and Southern Africa (COMESA), led by the Foreign Minister of Mauritius, was in New Delhi recently for the conclusion of an India-COMESA MOU spanning diverse facets of economic cooperation. We are also negotiating an FTA with South Africa, the largest African economy.

As many of you are aware, the Non-Aligned Movement is to hold its summit in Kuala Lumpur a few days from now. India continues to attach importance to this Movement which represents the collective voice of the developing world. We believe an organization of developing countries such as NAM remains relevant even in the post Cold War world and proof of that rests in the fact that even today, membership of NAM is growing.

Let me now turn to the issue of terrorism. Terrorism is among the greatest challenges to democratic societies and international stability. The wounds inflicted by terrorism on India and Russia went unnoticed by the world. The events of September 11 have, however, created greater awareness of this phenomenon.
In the global war against terrorism, there can be no room for double standards, of distinction between terrorism that can be tolerated and one that cannot, of terrorism directed against the West and that directed against the others, of the former being untarnished evil and the latter requiring resolution of its root causes. Some progress has been made since September 11 in strengthening cooperation in the field of counter terrorism. But we still have to develop new paradigms of international cooperation based on actionable intelligence. We have to develop new technologies, systems and institutions for the protection of our people. We have to systematically target financial and communication networks of terrorists and their safe havens. The experience of Afghanistan teaches us that we have to deal with failing or failed States not only for the suffering that their own people undergo, but to prevent terrorists from exploiting the chaos to inflict suffering on people elsewhere. Most of all, we must develop a consensus on how to deal with sovereign states, whose policies, social ethos and institutions breed the mindset that sustains international terrorism.

The nexus between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction is frightening and there is today grave danger of these weapons falling into the hands of terrorist outfits. There is also growing incidence of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems, as a result of conscious political and strategic choice by governments. Some of these countries not only have links with terrorism, but also avowed policies to change the status quo through force or resort to nuclear blackmail. These are issues which are of particular concern to India because the best example of a conjunction between authoritarian rule, support for terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, proliferation and drug trafficking is to be found in the neighbourhood of India. These are concerns shared by Russia and the rest of the international community.

Ironically, regimes of technology denial, created in the name of non-proliferation are being maintained even in the face of mounting evidence of their failure to prevent proliferation. The case of North Korea's nuclear development programme and Pakistan's involvement is the most recent illustration. Pakistan's own clandestine acquisitions of nuclear technology and missiles as well as related technology were earlier instances. These denial regimes have neither been negotiated multilaterally nor are they effective in preventing proliferation to irresponsible regimes. However, they are used to deny developmental tools to States such as India with impeccable non-proliferation credentials.
As a developing economy, there is a pressing demand in India for energy security. Nuclear power generation provides a clean, viable alternative. But, international cooperation in civilian nuclear power generation remains hostage to denial regimes such as the above insisting on “club” rules rather than genuine non-proliferation. India will continue to place emphasis on multilateral efforts to establish instruments and norms that will enhance respect for international law rather than perpetuate the concept of unilateral advantage, whether in the field of security or trade or other areas of international interaction.

Finally, a few words on a country which today is under great international focus. Iraq was once the source of 30 per cent of India’s oil needs and home to 90,000 Indians working in that country. India believes that every effort should be made to avoid war and find a peaceful solution to the current crisis. For this to happen, it is imperative that Iraq complies with the UN Resolutions and extends full cooperation to UNMOVIC and IAEA, so that any lingering questions about eliminating weapons of mass destruction are removed. With over three million Indian expatriates in the Gulf region, we are concerned about military action in Iraq. India, like other developing countries also has special concern with regard to volatility of oil prices and security of oil supplies. The crisis over Iraq is one of the biggest challenges ever faced by the U.N. We hope the international community will show the wisdom to prevent an erosion of the credibility and legitimacy of the U.N. by striking a balance between the objective of achieving Iraq’s full compliance with the UN Resolutions and the means adopted to reach this goal.

Friends, the decade following the end of the Cold War has been a period of extra-ordinary challenges for India in the realm of international affairs. Like Russia, India too was confronted with the need to rapidly adapt to a sudden and total change in the world order. Besides the political adjustment, India’s economy had to gear itself to deal with the wave of globalization that has been sweeping across the world. Further, Jehadi elements turned their targets on the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, actively aided and abetted by our western neighbour who has sought to wage a proxy war against us. The last decade has also been a period when extraordinary pressure was mounted on India by the international community to abandon its nuclear option.

India’s response has been to confront these challenges head on. For this purpose, it adopted a number of strategies including the infusion of a heavy dose of pragmatism and realism into the making of foreign
policy, pro-active efforts to build national strength, intensive engagement with major powers and active economic diplomacy. India can note with pride that significant success has been achieved in overcoming these challenges. We have today built close political and economic relations with a wide spectrum of countries across the world and India is widely acknowledged as an emerging power and an important player on the world stage. Friends, pursuit of national interests is the primary foreign policy goal of all nations, including India. In the future also, India will continue to evolve and implement a foreign policy that maintains a healthy balance between her principles and tradition of idealism as well as the demands of realism.

Let me conclude, ladies and gentlemen, by stating that the world is poised at a turning point in history. Institutions we have grown up with such as the U.N., etc., appear under threat. We may soon face a world which has completely changed beyond all recognition. However, in the midst of all this turmoil and turbulence, if there is a ‘constant’ and one unchangeable reality, it is the friendship between India and Russia.

Whatever happens in the rest of the world, I have no doubt that our relations will continue to remain strong and robust. As is evident from the remarks I have made here today, India and Russia share common perceptions, common interests and common challenges. The building of a multi-polar world is our common goal and our world view is one. It is this mature understanding of the mutuality of interests that has inspired our Strategic Partnership which is a declaration of our solidarity in the emerging political, economic and security scenario of the new millennium. Friends, there is compelling logic for close India-Russia relations and India stands ready to work with Russia to make the world a better place for the entire humanity.

Thank you.
Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha for BBC’s ‘ASIA TODAY’.


SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: [Hello and welcome to this special edition of Asia Today. In this programme we bring to you an exclusive interview with the Indian Foreign Minister, Yashwant Sinha.]

Not everyone here is pleased by the rather ambiguous stand Delhi has taken on Iraq, with some seeing it as a kind of tightrope by India maintaining a balance between its old ties with the Arab world and its new friendship with Washington. I begin by asking Mr. Sinha, what exactly is the Indian official position on Iraq.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: When the military conflict actually started, we came out with a statement clearly saying that we did not find justification for this war and we feel that this war could have been avoided. This is something that we have said on record and said repeatedly. So, there is no ambiguity in our position. Perhaps the impression of ambiguity arises because of the fact that we have not been harsh in our language. But there is no need to be harsh in language. You can convey the same meaning by using polite language.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: I think exactly that is what the impression has been among at least the critics of this Government that the condemnation has not been strong enough.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: We had an all-party meeting. In that meeting there were some leaders who insisted to dictate even the language of the Government’s statement. We pleaded with them that as far as the language was concerned it should be left to the Government of the day.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: There are some reports in the media that the Indian Prime Minister actually spoke to the US President and said that India would not in any way help in this war. Are those reports right?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: It is true that President Bush spoke to Prime Minister Vajpayee when the conflict started and the Prime Minister conveyed to him the position of India. As far as help is concerned, to the best of my knowledge no help has been asked for, no help has been offered.
SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: Mr. Sinha, is it right again that some people are seeing a kind of new pragmatism in the Indian foreign policy on issues like these? While you are trying to maintain your old ties with the Arab world, at the same time the new friendship with the US is making you tow what many see as some kind of a tightrope or some kind of a balancing act?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: I do not know why balancing should be considered to be undesirable or uncalled for. You look at the reaction of most countries of the world today and you will find that everyone is trying to balance various considerations. Pragmatism in foreign policy is not something new. It is not a lesson that we have learnt in the last few days. I think pragmatism is something which has informed Indian foreign policy from the days after Independence.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: So, definitely those days of India fancying itself as the leader of the third world or Non-Aligned Movement are clearly a thing of the past. We are perhaps more pro-US now than ever before in terms of our foreign policy.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: I think it will be wrong to think of our position as pro-US, or pro-Iraq, or pro-west, or pro-third world, or pro-this or pro-that. I think we have come a long way indeed. After all we have been an independent nation for fifty-five years and, as I mentioned to you just now, pragmatism has been a part of our policy ever since. I would like to say we are pro-India. We would certainly keep our best national interest in mind and formulate our policies and our positions.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: Considering that India is against a war - it has said so on so many occasions in recent weeks - is there any attempt being made by India to keep in touch with other countries which are opposing the war like Russia, China, France and Germany?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: We are in touch. The Prime Minister is already on record having said that just before the war he had addressed letters to the Heads of Government of all the P-5 countries and had pleaded that war should be avoided and one last ditch attempt should be made to arrive at some understanding which could have avoided war. Now, even post-war, we have been in touch. We have been talking to each other. There has been open debate in the Security Council where India has participated; India has stated its position once again. We are in touch but the options at this point of time are very limited.
SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: Do you think there is a possibility even at this stage of something really happening, something which is more concrete?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: There is a lot of activity which is going on in New York. I would like to tell you, without going into details, that we are trying to play whatever role we could. You referred to the leadership part – India the leader of NAM, this and that. The world has changed. Nobody wants to be under the leadership of any other country. Former colonies have been independent for a long time. I do not think India is interested in imposing its leadership on any country. We are a member of the Non-Aligned Movement. We are a member of the third world. Wherever we can converge our interests we certainly stand up and speak for the third world and we will continue to do that.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: A number of people, not Governments really, a number of analysts have really concluded in their own way that what we are seeing is a kind of an end to the institution called United Nations.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: I would not go that far. I suppose you will agree with me that not only the United Nations - of course, United Nations is the most important multilateral organization in the world - but every known group of nations has been deeply divided as a result of the Iraqi conflict. The European Union has been divided; the NATO has been divided; OIC has been divided; Arab League has been divided; and Non-Aligned Movement has been divided. You think of any major grouping. You will find that there are deep fissures in all these known groupings.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: While the international focus is on Iraq, India is confronted with its own problems, its own war against terrorism, and the recent attack on Hindus in Kashmir in which 24 people were killed.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: It has been another incident in a series of very tragic and very ghastly events in our country. We have been talking about cross-border terrorism being inspired by our neighbour Pakistan. We have tried to convince the international community that no war on terror can be complete unless this kind of terrorism is brought to an end. From time to time there has been understanding of India’s position, there has been pressure on Pakistan to put a stop to this kind of activity. Unfortunately, Pakistan has not complied with the assurances it has given to the international community and that is where the matter remains.
SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: Are you satisfied with the kind of response you get from the Western Alliance, namely, the US? They issued a statement that you should resume dialogue with Pakistan. Again, after that, Colin Powell and Jack Straw have come with a joint statement.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: We were grateful to them because they condemned the massacre. But we felt that the advice to resume dialogue with Pakistan was gratuitous. This was not the occasion certainly to say that. We came out with a statement where we said that it was perhaps as misplaced as somebody’s suggestion to them to talk to either Osama-bin-Laden or to Saddam Hussein, and we talked about double standards. I am happy that they have seen reason, and the latest statement which has been issued has elements which are nearer to the actual situation on the ground, nearer to the truth.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: But such statements have not really helped in the past. Do you actually see the tension escalating in the region in the immediate future?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Let me put it like this. Tension never went down. As far as the tension engineered by the terrorists is concerned, it has been business as usual from the run up to the Jammu and Kashmir elections till today. There was some little decline in cross-border terrorism immediately after June last year when a lot of pressure was put on Pakistan. But the moment Pakistan felt that international community’s attention had shifted or wavered, they immediately came back to business as usual. Also, I would like to tell you that we are not dependent on anyone as far as this fight against terrorism is concerned. There is supposed to be an international coalition against terrorism. We are part of it and we certainly expect the international community to do whatever it can. But the fight is India’s fight. India is not only fighting, India is determined to win this war against terrorism.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: Thank you very much for giving your time to Asia Today.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Thank you.
010. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to the Russian paper Izvestia.

Moscow, February 21, 2003.

[Yesterday, visit of Indian Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha concluded. He met with the Russian President Vladimir Putin and discussed with his Russian counterpart Igor Ivanov situation around Iraq and North Korea. The main theme of discussion of Mr. Yashwant Sinha with the Russian Minister of Defence Sergei Ivanov was fight against international terrorism and cooperation in the military technical field. How this cooperation is developing and what positions does India have on the issue of Iraq and North Korea, Mr. Sinha replied to the questions of Natalia Babasyan of Izvestia.]

Q. Delhi is considered to be one of the most important partner of Moscow in the sphere of military technical cooperation. However, recently India started buying military equipment from the West and it has licence from Russia, giving rights for independent production. Do you think that in this respect instead of being partner India is becoming its competitor for the third countries?

Military technical cooperation between India and Russia has a very long history. Even after the collapse of the Soviet Union our relations in this sphere continued. This is not a mere buyer-seller relationship but we are also having joint ventures. The missile BrahMos is a product of our joint cooperation, which is produced in both the countries and being used by both. Our relations in the military technical sphere are commercial. We live in a competitive world where other suppliers also exist. We want to cooperate in the military technical sphere mainly with Russia. However, it does not exclude acquisition of weapons from other countries. We buy from Russia Sukhois, and from France Mirage. For Russian military equipment production establishments there is no bar for selling its products to other countries. Our relations are flexible.

Q: What’s Indian position on Iraq?

We always supported Iraq’s fulfillment of all UN resolutions, including 1441. Iraq must cooperate with international inspectors and prove to the international community that it has no WMD, and if it has, it must eliminate it. Any decisions on Iraq should be made with UN Security Council sanctions. India is for peaceful and diplomatic solutions of the problem.
The people of Iraq have been suffering for more than 10 years because of the sanctions, and if the international community finds there’s no WMD in Iraq, the sanctions should be lifted. Besides, we believe that the problem with Iraq should be resolved immediately because many countries, including India, are suffering due to high oil prices.

Q: If an attack on Iraq occurs, what will India do about it?

We continue to hope that military solution will be avoided.

Q: North Korea declared about resumption of its nuclear program. How does India see the resolution of that problem?

We are concerned about the situation around North Korea. What worries us is not that it has nuclear weapons but the illegal proliferation which has taken place. We have all the reasons to believe that Pakistan is responsible for that. Pakistan received missile technologies in return. To find a solution for this situation, the US and North Korea should have talks and make a mutually acceptable decision. North Korea instead of being threatened should be given chance to integrate into the international community. And North Korea should not threat the whole world with its nuclear weapons.

Q. India has not joined Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Is it planning to do this?

We have reservations about the current state of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are for complete and universal disarmament. We think that all countries should say no to the use of nuclear weapons simultaneously. We are ready to work with the international community on this. For us it is unacceptable that countries who posses nuclear weapons, do not allow others to posses them, despite the fact that there is a threat to their security. Decades India restrained itself from producing nuclear weapons, in spite of having capability. We have started developing (nuclear weapons) only when we learnt that nuclear weapons are possessed not only by China but also by Pakistan. Our nuclear doctrine clearly states India’s No First Use policy. Besides, the doctrine prohibits use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states.

Q. Recently, President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf visited Moscow. He discussed with President Putin possibilities of resolution of Indo-Pakistan crisis. Did this influence on Indo-Pakistan relations?
In Russia I believe the problem of India-Pakistan relations is very well understood. We have all the basis to say that this correct understanding was passed on to General Musharraf. I don’t think that this would result into improvement in the situation. For last few years Musharraf showed that he is not a person who could be trusted. He promises many things but does not fulfill them. He is the prisoner of internal situation in Pakistan and cannot find exit from this situation.

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011. The Second Rajendra Mathur Memorial Lecture delivered by Minister of External Affairs Yashwant Sinha under the auspices of the Editors Guild of India.

New Delhi, April 19, 2003.

Shri Hari Jaisingh, President, Editors Guild of India, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Digvijay Singh, Secretary-General Alok Mehta, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I am extremely happy and honoured to be here today to deliver the Second Rajendra Mathur Lecture.

Shri Rajendra Mathur was a journalist and the editor in the best tradition of the profession. He brought to bear on his work a keen professionalism and objectivity and, if I may say so, a basic decency. These are qualities which are increasingly required as the communications revolution transforms the reach and access of the media and its ability to shape our perceptions and our opinions.

Shri Mathur wrote on a wide range of topics – national as well as international. A consistent theme that permeated his writings was a search for the true identity of India as well as an ardent desire to see India emerge as a strong nation state. I compliment the Editors Guild of India for having instituted this lecture series in honour of this eminent son of India and I would like to assure the Guild of my continued support for all such efforts in future.

Friends, the topic of today’s talk is “India’s foreign policy in present international challenges for peace”. As all of you are aware, we live in trying times. A “new reality” with far reaching implications confronts us in
West Asia and a fresh chapter in history is being written. The military action in Iraq has caused great anguish in India. Our Parliament has given voice to the widespread concern of our people.

It is still too premature for firm conclusions to be drawn as to the direction of future events. Much has changed as a result of Iraq. But some verities remain unaffected. One of them is the fundamental and pre-eminently threat posed to peace, civilization, democracy and the rule of law by international terrorism. And as far as India is concerned, pre-Iraq or post-Iraq, one of the most critical challenges that confronts us is the menace of terrorism. There are three issues relating to international terrorism on which I intend to focus my attention today, namely, the theory of root causes of terrorism, the theory of clash of civilizations and the question of double standards in dealing with international terrorism.

Let me begin with a discussion of the so-called root causes of terrorism. There are some in the world who argue that certain ‘root causes’ are responsible for the phenomenon of terrorism and that this menace can be addressed only by tackling issues such as poverty, absence of political freedom, territorial disputes, religious intolerance, ethnic discrimination etc. Until then, we must live with terrorism or rather die at its hands. They point out that terrorism as a means of political struggle has had a long history and will not end without these root causes being resolved.

It is my view that to attribute responsibility for acts of terrorism to such root causes is to misunderstand the phenomenon of terrorism and to weaken the war against it.

Let us look at the evolution of world politics in recent times. In the last fifty years, prosperity has only increased in the world. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, most countries have turned democratic. The importance of freedom and human rights is universally accepted and even authoritarian regimes swear by it in principle if not in practice. Territorial disputes are fewer and fewer in number. Exclusive societies based on race, religion and ethnicity are rapidly being replaced by plural, multicultural societies. A natural process of increased movement of people across frontiers is taking place and the process of globalization is inexorably marching on. Despite all these positive developments, terrorism has increased rather than decreased. If the theory of root causes was correct, then these positive trends should have resulted in a fall in incidents of terrorism. In contrast, exactly the opposite is happening.
The changing character of terrorism in the modern day world needs to be properly understood. The reason there is terrorism is not because there are unresolved root causes but because terrorism has become an instrument of war by other means. It has become an instrument of revenge. What some countries and groups are unable to obtain through peaceful and democratic means is sought to be grabbed through the systematic and deliberate use of terror as an instrument of policy and through the use for subversion and violence of armed, trained and indoctrinated irregulars. This is the reason why the term ‘proxy war’ is most appropriate to describe the policy of cross border terrorism being sponsored by our neighbour. To state the above is not to contend that poverty should be ignored or discrimination tolerated. But, it is to uphold the belief that ends cannot justify the means.

Those who talk of root causes argue that ends can ‘sometimes’ justify means. If the cause for which a struggle is waged is important enough, any means including violence and terror is justified. It is true that violence, as a means of settling disputes is as old as history. However, the fact remains that massacres and killings of innocent civilians has never been acquiesced in by society at large and never been forgiven by history, whoever be the victims and whoever the perpetrators. Whether it be the Nadir Shahs and Chenghiz Khans of the past or the Lashkar-e-Toibas and Hizbul Mujahideens of today, their actions have never found public acceptance.

Friends, let us not elevate in stature something as despicable as terrorism by linking it to root causes, civilizational conflicts or by applying different standards. There cannot be any ambivalence on the question of use of violence and terror in the pursuit of political goals. No ‘root cause’ can justify the massacres of Kaluchak and Nadimarg and incidents such as the attack on Indian Parliament of December 13, 2001 which was designed to eliminate at one go the entire national leadership of India. No rational person can accept the argument that the killers of innocent women and children are so called “freedom fighters”. Distinctions between freedom fighters and terrorists propagate a bizarre logic which glorify massacres of one set of innocent civilians, while condemning killings of others. The right to life of innocent people cannot be superceded by a right to kill them or to redress some real or imagined historical wrong. Terrorism is defined by the act, not by the attributes or the description of its perpetrators. Moreover, democratic societies, which address the root causes of alienation and anger, through pluralism, tolerance and socio-economic justice, are precisely the targets of terrorism.
Today, we live in an era of democracy. All problems internal as well as external, can be resolved through legitimate, democratic and peaceful means. There is need to address issues such as poverty, territorial disputes, religious extremism etc. independently and on their own merits. But to use them to justify terrorism and to engage in tortured searches for definitions and root causes would mean undermining both the campaign against terrorism as well as the issues concerned.

Friends, the debate over terrorism being a religious phenomenon and its growing incidence heralding a clash of civilizations is also equally spurious. While it might be true that jehadi terrorism has been deliberately used for political purposes, and has become a cause of concern across the world, it is completely wrong to identify terrorism with any particular religion. No religion preaches hatred or sanctions killing of innocent human beings. Responsibility should be placed squarely on those who seek to justify killings in the name of religion. Terrorists and their sponsors have attempted to cover their campaign of killings with the cloak of jihad to try to gain false popular legitimacy and to facilitate the recruitment of misguided youth. They are themselves to be held responsible for any misperceptions created about the religion whose higher goals they falsely claim to advance. In fact, conflicts within various religions and terrorism practiced by one sect upon another itself show that religions and their adherents are not monolithic entities. Almost every religion in the world is characterised by pluralism and diversity. To advocate terrorism in the name of religion is nothing but the ultimate in political chicanery.

Let me in this connection quote from an address delivered by Prime Minister Vajpayee in February of this year to an International Youth Conference on Terrorism - “It is through such misuse of religion that jehadi terrorism is trying to violently impose its own rigid, intolerant social order uniformly around the world. The murderous campaign has not spared even Muslim populations, as was evident from what the Taliban did in Afghanistan.” Addressing the Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Kuala Lumpur two weeks later, the Prime Minister further said, “President Musharraf has referred to my country a little while ago. His strange logic masks Pakistan’s territorial designs on an integral part of India. He justifies terrorism against India by talking of root causes. Does he go into the root causes of sectarian terrorism in his country?”

I would like to now turn to the issue of double standards in the fight against terrorism. Much has been said in this regard and I have no desire to point fingers or cast blame in any direction. As is evident, there is a
tendency amongst some to condone terrorism in some places while condemning it elsewhere. This is completely counter-productive. Such lenience will only boomerang on everyone. As recent events have borne out, such groups support each other and their agenda, goals and targets mutate. Therefore, so long as the capacity, infrastructure and latitude to resort to terrorism remains, no person or country is safe. Terrorism has often turned upon its own mentors.

There can be no justification whatsoever for terrorism and it must be eradicated wherever it exists. Those connected to the heinous acts of 9/11, had inter linkages in terms of collaborators, funding, indoctrination and training including in our neighbourhood. State agencies and groups directly sponsored by our western neighbour are also known to have provided safe haven and logistical support to fleeing Al-Qaeda and Taliban terrorists.

As a member of the international coalition against terrorism, as a neighbour and friend of Afghanistan, we are greatly concerned at the re-emergence of Taliban inspired and ISI backed terrorism in parts of Afghanistan. Soon after the military phase of operations had begun in Iraq, a foreign national working with the ICRC was specifically identified and killed in Afghanistan. According to information available with us, the killers made a call to a former Taliban leader before carrying out the execution under specific instructions. Similarly, two US soldiers were ambushed recently. A large number of Taliban elements were apprehended in Helmand and Uruzgan who had entered Afghanistan from the east and were carrying a significant amount of arms, ammunition, explosives, communication equipment and publicity literature against the Afghan government. A memorandum was also submitted on 14th April on behalf of the people of Kandahar, calling upon Pakistan to stop interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and to stop supplying bombs and explosives to terrorists.

Friends, the democratic world today faces the greatest existential threat to its ideology and its way of life in terrorism. Compartmentalized national approaches cannot deal with the seamless web of international linkages which terrorism has developed. The fact that sponsorship, bases and finances for terrorism in our region come from a military regime and its intelligence agency cannot be ignored.

The issue of global terrorism is critical, complex and one of the most difficult challenges facing mankind in the 21st century. Terrorism, today recognizes no boundaries. It is not limited to a particular country or
a particular region. But, its most egregious manifestations are found in our neighbourhood. Terrorist movements have worldwide linkages and can reach any part of the world where they wish to perpetrate terrorist acts. Finances needed to support terrorism are raised globally. They use the new interconnectivity of a globalised world to their advantage. Their linkage with transnational criminal syndicates, with narcotics, smuggling of arms and money-laundering gives them added reach and lethality. No region or country is insulated; neither distance, power nor wealth provides immunity.

Few countries in the world have suffered as much as India has from this menace. We owe it to ourselves as well as to the world to push, prod, persuade and mobilize the international community into redoubling efforts aimed at eradicating the phenomenon of terrorism from its very roots. It is particularly important for us in India to speak out and articulate our perspectives in this regard in a loud and clear manner. What we have to say may not be palatable to some. Criticism and opposition may come our way. We must, however, continue to speak out.

Much of the world woke up to the menace of terrorism only after September 11. We, in India have been facing this danger for over two decades. It was only when terrorism struck close to home that many in the world realized they should have woken up earlier and before they became a victim. Similarly, our views may today meet with some opposition based on short-term expediency. But, we have a responsibility to continue to express the truth as we see it and also meet the challenge facing us. We must maintain our courage of conviction and I am sure, sooner rather than later, the voice of India will be heard and accepted. Matter of fact, a cursory glance at today’s newspapers will reveal that our voice is already being heard.

Friends, let me conclude by asserting that India must conduct its foreign policy with self-confidence, dignity and on the basis of equality with all nations, big or small. There is no dearth of advice on foreign policy issues. But let me make it clear that we neither need to panic over possible U. S. intervention in our affairs nor should there be concern that our relations with the U. S. are on the verge of collapse. India cannot remain silent simply out of fear of incurring the displeasure of others and India-US relations should not be viewed through the prism of only one issue. India-US relations are based on a whole host of objective factors and these factors continue to bring our countries closer together.

On an issue such as Iraq, it is with considerable deliberation that
the Government chose to adopt a ‘middle path’. There are some in our
country who believe that India should have been in the trenches fighting
the U.S. and U.K. with the Republican Guards of Saddam Hussein. There
are others who would like us to be a vassal state and to subordinate our
thought and action to the rich and powerful.

India will go to neither extremes. We will continue to balance the
pursuit of our national interests with our principles. Neither will we sell our
souls to others nor will we pursue blindly antagonistic policies for the
sake of antagonism. Treading the middle path might be a lonely endeavour
but if that is what our national interests dictate, we shall proceed on this
path with conviction and determination.

And, on an issue such as terrorism which impinges on the very
core of India’s security and the well being of her people, India will remain
steadfast and single minded in the pursuit of her national interests.

Thank You

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012. Reply speech by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to the debate on Demand for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs in the Lok Sabha.

New Delhi, April 23, 2003.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am very happy that the House under your leadership has taken up for discussion the Demand for Grant of the Ministry of External Affairs. I believe that it is being done after eleven long years. The last time that the Demand for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs was discussed in the House was in 1992. Therefore, all of us have reasons to be happy with the fact that Business Advisory Committee and you, Mr. Speaker, decided that we should discuss Foreign Policy and the functioning of the Ministry of External Affairs through the discussion on Demand for Grants.

I am also very happy at the level of discussion; the quality of discussion which has taken place starting with my distinguished colleague Shri R. L. Bhatia and ending with Shri Ramdas Athawale. I think all distinguished hon. Members have made their points of view. There have been many suggestions for action. We have taken note of them. I may not be able to reply to all the points that have been raised, but I certainly wish to touch upon the important issues that have been raised here.

Let me begin, Mr. Speaker Sir, by saying that foreign policy as an integral part of the overall policy of this country with a view to promoting, globally, the best interest of this nation has been an issue which has never been debated in this country on the basis of petty political considerations. This country, as one unit, has always stood behind the Government of the day whenever the Government of the day has had or has been called upon to take important decisions in the history of this country.

Shri Bhatia started with defining the objectives of foreign policy. One cannot have any quarrel with those objectives. The broad objectives of the foreign policy of this country have always been very clear; the direction has been very clear; and the thrust has been very clear. It is another matter that with respect to developing situations, from time to time, those broad principles have to be nuanced; they have to be further refined in order to suit a particular situation; in order to sub-serve the broader national interest.
Sometimes, there have been occasions where the understanding of national interest has also been differently interpreted. Some people have understood national interest in one way, and others have understood it in another way. But, I cannot think of a single occasion where all the parties together have not come behind the Government or have not stood behind the Government of the day in the pursuit of foreign policy. This is something, which is evident even today.

The Resolution on Iraq, Mr. Speaker Sir, which this House adopted was once again a demonstration of that broad national consensus with regard to foreign policy. We had problems — as I mentioned that day — with regard to the language of that Resolution, but ultimately we all agreed on a certain formulation, and under your leadership, Mr. Speaker Sir, it was possible for us to adopt a Resolution and show to the world the unity and the strength of the national consensus which backs our foreign policy.

We have the advantage today, we have had this advantage also in the past of having one of the most distinguished and successful Foreign Ministers of this country as the Prime Minister of the country today. It is under his leadership that the foreign policy of this country has been conducted over the last five years, and will be conducted in future.

I have also had the distinction of succeeding a very successful External Affairs Minister who gave a certain status and a certain stature to India’s standing in the international comity of nations. Therefore, my task has been made both easy and difficult in the given situation because I have had such an illustrious predecessor.

We have had some exchanges in this House in the course of the debate because some sentiments were expressed about the past glory of India in the world arena. It is quite natural that we should recall those days. Then, some issues were raised with regard to the past mistakes also. If we give in to the temptation of recalling the past achievements, then the temptation to recall the past mistakes will become difficult to resist. I do not want to go into that kind of a debate in my reply.

Let me begin, Mr. Speaker, Sir, by referring to some general issues, the Non-Aligned Movement. Speaker after speaker referred to the Non-Aligned Movement and bemoaned the fact that India lost its pre-eminent position in the Non-Aligned Movement; in fact, the Non-Aligned Movement itself seems to be losing its relevance. In the Kuala Lumpur Summit, which was held in February, the revitalisation of the Non-Aligned Movement
was the subject of discussion. South Africa, which was the Chairman of NAM for over four years before Malaysia took over in Kuala Lumpur, had called two meetings: the first one at a place called Zambeli and, therefore, it became known as the Zambeli Group or the Zambeli process. These meetings were held with a view to providing the vitality to NAM in the Twenty-first Century because NAM itself realised that somewhere it was being swapped of that vitality and, therefore, there was need to think about it.

The second Zambeli Group meeting, which was held, I think, in December in Cape Town, was personally attended by me. I went as the External Affairs Minister of India to Cape Town to attend this meeting. Let me, through you, Sir, take the House into confidence and inform the House that three full Foreign Ministers were present in that meeting: one was South Africa because South Africa was the host, the second was Malaysia because Malaysia was going to take over the Chairmanship from the South Africans, and the third was India. All other countries in that Group, which consisted of former Chairman of NAM and members of the Group, and also the Arab League Representative, Mr. Aamar Moosa, were represented by State Minister, Deputy Minister or at the official level. Why did I decide to go to South Africa to attend the Second Zambeli Group meeting? It is because I wanted to prove and once again demonstrate the commitment of India to the continued relevance of this Movement.

Let me also take the House into confidence, through you, Sir, and say that the South African Foreign Minister, who was chairing the Session, asked me ‘India’ to suggest the agenda for the continued relevance of NAM which could then be adopted at the Kuala Lumpur Summit, and the Indian Delegation worked hard. I think, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar will agree here, having belonged to the Foreign Service at one time, that we have some of the finest brains in the Indian Foreign Service. We get very good quality assistance from them. We put out heads together and, the next day, we presented a set of recommendations on what the agenda of NAM should be for the Twenty-first Century. I have some satisfaction in informing the House, through you, Sir, that, that agenda was adopted without any change, without any modification and that was the agenda which was adopted even at the Summit in Kuala Lumpur. That is the contribution which India has made to the continued relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement. But at the same time, I would also like to point out that both in Cape Town as well as in Kuala Lumpur, the issue of Iraq, for instance, came up.
What is it that Non-Aligned Movement should say on Iraq? There was sharp division on that because many members of the NAM had one point of view and many others had another point of view. We played our role in order to ensure that we adopted a Resolution, both in Cape Town as well as in Kuala Lumpur, which was consistent with the consensus of NAM, as well as with the relevance of NAM, as well as with the dignity of NAM. These Resolutions were adopted. But, should India become the leader of NAM, unchallenged leader of the world? I must confess that I have no such pretensions.

Leadership is not assumed. Leadership is a role which evolves. There was a period of time in our history when there was a leadership role for us along with others. We were not the unquestioned leader of NAM. There were others who were equally important. Today, in a different world, in a different context, if we were to go and say that we were the leaders of NAM, then, even the position that we have today will be lost. That is because, however small a country may be, however we might think unimportant a country might be, they are not prepared today to accept the leadership of another country automatically, without question. So, we are working with other members of NAM without claiming, without loudly claiming, that we are the leaders of NAM and everybody must listen to us. They will listen to us, they do listen to us, if we have a valid point to make. We will continue to make those valid points. We will continue to make contribution to the Non-Aligned Movement. We will continue to see that the Non-Aligned Movement plays its role.

Let me also remind this House, when we talk of the leadership of India in the Non-Aligned Movement in the past, that many of us do remember what happened when Bangladesh operations took place. During the operation in Bangladesh there was a Security Council Resolution. It could not be passed because our friend, the then Soviet Union, vetoed that Resolution in the Security Council. There is a procedure in the UN called the Uniting for Peace Procedure under which seven members of the Security Council, or 50 per cent of the membership of the General Assembly, can call a meeting of the General Assembly to discuss that issue. A procedure which was not, or could not be, adopted in the case of Iraq in the current crisis, was adopted in the case of Bangladesh. When this issue came up, the Resolution against India was passed by 104 members voting for the Resolution against India, 11 with India voting against the Resolution, and some others abstaining. The only non-aligned countries which voted with India were Cuba and Bhutan. The others were, apart from India, the then Soviet Union and countries of Eastern Europe.
I am just reminding the House that even in the heyday of the Non-Aligned Movement, there have been instances where we have not been able to convince the Non-Aligned Movement of our point of view. Therefore, while the commitment to the Non-Aligned Movement will remain, while we will continue to work for the success of this Movement, I think both in terms of the leadership of India as well as in terms of the current state of affairs, let us not expect too much.

In fact, when I was going to Cape Town, I had asked my Ministry to organise a meeting in Sapru House of some intellectuals who could give some inputs on the Non-Aligned Movement. One of the intellectuals, I was told, had said that the Non-Aligned Movement is dead but we cannot bury the dead body. I did not agree with this. I went to South Africa. We were going to Kuala Lumpur, I called a meeting at my level in which I had discussions with intellectuals, former foreign service officers, some members from the political class of this country. I know that even within major political parties, there are differing perceptions and relevance of NAM. But I leave it at that.

Sir, Shri R.L. Bhatia initiated the debate. His first question was with respect to China, and I am happy that he heads the ‘Eminent Persons Group’ from our side. He heads it because we have complete confidence in Shri R.L. Bhatia and his ability of representing the point of view of India in the ‘Eminent Persons Group’. I also had the good fortune of meeting the Eminent Persons from both sides when the last meeting was being held in New Delhi.

Sir, we seek friendly, cooperative and good neighbourly, mutually beneficial relationship with China on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, on the basis of mutual sensitivity to each other’s concerns and equality. We remain committed to the process of dialogue to resolve outstanding differences and to build a constructive and cooperative relationship with China.

Sir, there was a Conference on Asian Security organised by the IDSA in January, and they had invited me to inaugurate it. I would like to take a little bit of the time of this House in reading from the speech which I had delivered there. I quote:

“It is true that there are important differences between India and China. Some of the wounds inflicted by the conflict of 1962 have been slow to heal and their scars have not fully disappeared. Reliable and
widespread reports of Chinese nuclear and missile proliferation to Pakistan cause deep concern. The Chinese position on issues such as Sikkim and India’s candidature to a permanent seat in the UN Security Council sows doubts. There is also a sense of disappointment over the pace of improvement in the relationship.

Let me, however, assure everyone gathered here that India’s approach to relations with China is and will remain forward-looking and infused with a sense of optimism. India’s policies will not be based on fear of Chinese power nor envy of China’s economic achievements. They will be based on the conviction that a prosperous India is inevitable. So is a strong and prosperous China. It is, therefore, logical, reasonable and in the enlightened self-interest of the two countries to learn, not just to live with each other but also address differences and build on what is common. Further, both India and China are too large and too strong...— I repeat — are too large and too strong to be contained or cowed down by any country including each other.” Sir, this was the speech which I had delivered, and this was the speech which, I am sure, Shri R.L. Bhatia is aware, was widely appreciated in China and in the Chinese media.

Sir, what is our considered position on Tibet? Our considered position is that we recognise Tibet to be an autonomous region of China, and this is the position which remains. Our relations with Tibet are historical, spiritual and religious in nature. The Dalai Lama is respected in India as a spiritual and religious leader. He is not supposed to indulge in political activity on Indian soil. But we have favoured a direct dialogue between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government to resolve their all outstanding differences, and I am happy to say that some dialogue has started.

The Chinese Prime Minister Mr. Zhu Rongji was in India in January last year. Our Defence Minister is already in China. Our Defence Minister gave a speech also in the same Conference in IDSA. He explained this remark which is attributed to him about China being India’s enemy number one. I know this for a fact that China was extremely keen to have the Raksha Mantri visit China. The visit had to be postponed in view of the developments in Iraq. Fresh dates were fixed. The Defence Minister is in China. I understand that he is getting a welcome which is almost at the same level as that of the visiting Head of the Government. That is a kind of welcome that the Chinese are giving to the Defence Minister. He has had very useful talk. We will have a complete report of his visit, when he returns.
The Prime Minister is scheduled to visit China. As Shri Bhatia has said the dates are being fixed. We are hopeful that he will be visiting China soon. You, Sir, led a Parliamentary delegation to China. You had very good meetings. Our trade with China has crossed five billion dollars. It has become one of our largest trading partners. I am referring to this because in my previous capacity in this House, I have heard a great deal of concern about the new Chinese invasion in the economic field, and how India will not be able to hold its own. We have held our own. Our exports to China are growing exponentially. There is nothing, absolutely in any area that should cause any apprehension or concern in our minds, specially in the economic field. We are determined to increase our involvement, our engagement with China in the economic and other fields.

As far as the LAC and the boundary question is concerned, there is a set procedure and an agreed procedure; a three-stage formula. We are making progress. I am sure, we will continue to make progress. There will be difficulties. There will be impediments on the way. We will not allow those difficulties or impediments to create any fissures in that overall understanding. For all these years – almost two decades – peace on India-China border has held. We are determined to ensure that it holds in future also. That will be our attitude as far as China is concerned.

Sir, with Russia, our relationship has achieved new heights. It is not merely - as Shri Shivraj Patil was saying - that we had succeeded in maintaining the relationship of the past. In fact, Russia went through a tumultuous period, when the old Soviet Union broke up. We have not only been able to maintain that but improve our relationship with Russia in various areas. There is a very close interaction now. The two Heads of Governments visit each other under our strategic partnership every year. It was under that arrangement that President Putin was in India in December. I had been to Russia in February. I will be going again to Russia some time in May. The Prime Minister will be visiting Russia around the end of May, because he had been invited along with a few limited number Heads of Governments for the 300th anniversary celebration of the city of St. Petersburg. So, he will be going to Russia. As I said, in all areas of cooperation, we have very intense relationship. We describe our relationship with Russia not merely as friendly, but as civilization, because it is something which has stood the test of time. This is one relationship that India cherishes; this is one relationship to which we shall continue to invest in order to make sure that we will continue to make progress.

Let me now come to Europe. We now have a summit with the European Union; and the EU is expanding. They are going up from 15 to
25. Come 2004, ten more nations are going to join the EU. It is becoming a pan-European Union in its coverage. What is more is that the European Union is now acquiring a political and strategic personality. That is what is happening. It started as a trade body. It has now gradually grown into a real union with a common currency.

The only countries with which the European Union has a summit are China, Japan, the US, Canada and Russia, making it five; and the sixth country with which EU has a summit is India. We have had more than three summits so far. Italy is going to assume the leadership, the chairmanship or the presidency of EU from 1st of July. The next summit is due in Delhi in November. We are working hard to make that summit also a success. Each summit is accompanied by a business summit of the EU. This also is extremely successful.

Let us now take ASEAN. Ten countries in East Asia have come together and formed ASEAN, as you know. The ‘Look East’ policy is Shri Narasimha Rao’s policy. We are following that policy. I was a little surprised that the references to Congress’ contribution to foreign policy ended with the late Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, and no reference was made to Shri Narasimha Rao. It was left to Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab to refer to Shri Narasimha Rao. It was in his time that the ‘Look East’ policy was formulated. We have followed up on that policy. The elevation of India to the summit level dialogue of ASEAN has been a major achievement. The first time the summit was held in Phnom-Penh, in November last year. The Prime Minister and I had travelled for the summit. It was an extremely successful summit from our point of view because the Prime Minister of India suggested to the ASEAN that we should have a free trade agreement; he said that ASEAN and India should have a free trade agreement. We suggested a ten-year time frame with an early harvest concept built into it.

We are negotiating a free trade agreement separately with Thailand. We are negotiating a comprehensive economic cooperation agreement with Singapore. The Singapore Prime Minister was here recently to sign that agreement. But with ASEAN now, like China and like Japan, India is in the process of negotiating a free trade agreement.

With ASEAN, the only countries which have a summit level relationship are China, Japan and South Korea. India is the fourth country which has summit level relationship with ASEAN.
Similarly, our involvement with post-Taliban’s Afghanistan has been very intense and has been extremely intense. We are doing a lot of very useful work in Afghanistan through that 100 million dollar assistance or grant which had been promised by the Prime Minister. We are building schools; we have contributed to the upgradation of the Indira Gandhi Children’s Hospital in Kabul; we have contributed buses to them; and we have given them three aircraft to fly. We are drilling tube-wells; we are helping in agriculture. It is a long and broad spectrum of developmental approach and humanitarian assistance.

We are training their people; we are engaged with Afghanistan like never before. This is something which is appreciated by the people of Afghanistan. One of the earliest steps that I made when I came to this Ministry was to visit Afghanistan; and unlike most visitors, I did not remain confined to Kabul. I travelled to Heart; I travelled to Mazaar-e-Sharief; I went to Kandahar. I went to all these places; met the local Governors and discussed with them what are their requirements in terms of rehabilitation and development. So, we are doing a lot of work in Afghanistan.

Our engagement with Central Asia has reached unprecedented levels. I myself went to Tazakhstan, Kazakistan and Kirghistan recently. I was the first Foreign Minister to have gone there. I do not claim this as a great distinction but it just happened by chance that I was the first Foreign Minister of India who went Tazakistan, Kazakistan and Kirghistan in all these 10-12 years. This is a new dimension to our relationship, the involvement of India or the engagement of India with Central Asia.

I did not hear a word about Africa and the Latin America in the course of the debate but with these countries, with these continents, we have very serious engagements. With Africa and COMESA we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding. We are trying to raise the level of our engagement with all the regional groupings in Africa; SEDAC, COMESA, Community of Countries in East Africa. In fact, the trip that I am making in the next few days, the House may be surprised to know, is a trip to Tanzania and Botswana. I am not running to New York or Washington but I am going to Tanzania and Botswana because it is important that these countries feel that India gives them importance.

Sir, our engagement with Mauritius is well known. In regard to South Africa, let me again take the House into confidence. The Foreign Ministers of South Africa, Brazil and India are meeting in the month of June in Brazilia. We have decided to get together to discuss what has been
described here as the new International order and the role that the developing countries like India, South Africa and Brazil should have in the developing world.

Similarly, with Latin America, I plan a trip to Latin America, particularly to Brazil and Peru. There is a Reo Group with which we have had interactions over a period of time but this interaction had been minimal because we met during the UN General Assembly. We are in discussion with Mercosur, it is a combination of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay, for a summit, for a PTA leading to FTA with them. We are in touch with Andean Group and CARICOM. My colleague, Shri Digvijay Singh had made a trip to Latin America where he discussed all these things and his visit has contributed a great deal to their understanding of India. We have had the Mexican Foreign Minister’s visit here. We had the Colombian Foreign Minister’s visit here. I am glad to inform the House through you that the Chilean Foreign Minister is coming here and I am going to talk to her tomorrow. This is the first time ever that the Foreign Minister of Chile is travelling to India. When the Paraguay Foreign Minister came to India, he reminded me that this was the first time that a Paraguay Foreign Minister was coming to India. That was a return visit for Shri Digvijay Singh’s visit. So, our engagement with Latin America is improving. We are taking care of the persons of the Indian origin in that part of the world.

Much has been said about our immediate neighbours. Let me dispel any impression in this House or anywhere else that our relationship with Nepal is not the very best. I heard somebody saying that we have problems with Nepal. We have no problem with Nepal. There are some problems within Nepal but we are in touch with Nepal. We are giving all the assistance that Nepal needs in order to be able to fight or deal with the problem there. We have the best of the relationship with Nepal. We have the best of the relationship with Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives. There were some problems with Bangladesh.

As a Minister of External Affairs, again one of the earliest visits I made was to the immediate neighbourhood. I started with Maldives. I went to Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bhutan. Then I travelled to Bangladesh and we had a very good discussion. Then, there was some problem and I invited the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh to visit Delhi and we had a very candid discussion. Things have improved. We have had discussions at the level of the Commerce Secretaries of both the countries. The Foreign Secretary will be travelling to Dhaka at the end of this month to have
Foreign Office consultations. We have decided that the Joint Commission between Bangladesh and India will meet in Dhaka before the 15th July and I hope those dates will also be fixed. There are issues between Bangladesh and India. But it does not mean that our relationship is not very cordial and friendly. We are in touch with them. Bangladesh Foreign Minister and I speak whenever it is necessary even on phone.

Sir, with Japan, again I would like to say that we have been able to get over that phase which had started with our nuclear tests in 1998. As we know, Japan is one country which did suffer a nuclear holocaust. Therefore, their mind set is very different. They were disappointed, no doubt, when we went for our nuclear tests. We have been explaining it very patiently to them and I am very glad once again to be able to tell the House that the Japanese Foreign Minister visited New Delhi. I think Japanese Foreign Minister came to India after six to eight years. She visited New Delhi and we had very good discussions. The National Security Advisor was in Japan recently. He had also had very good discussion. The Japanese Prime Minister was in India. Our Prime Minister went to Japan. Our Raksha Mantri and other Ministers had also gone there. We are engaging Japan at all levels – economic, political and strategic. We have a global partnership with Japan. So, with most of the countries we have this relationship.

Now, I come to more difficult part. I will come to Pakistan. I have deliberately decided to talk about Pakistan last because an impression goes round that there is nothing more to India’s Foreign Policy than Pakistan. I would talk about America also. Let me begin by saying that as far as the United States of America is concerned, we worked hard to establish cordial, friendly, and good relationship with them over the last few years. There was a great deal of misunderstanding once again after the nuclear tests. The House is aware that US with some other countries had imposed economic sanctions on India in the wake of the nuclear tests. But engagement with the US has led to an understanding. I am making bold to say that sustained hostility with the United States of America cannot and should not be the policy of India. We are the largest democracy of the world. The US is also a powerful democracy. Just as we will not under estimate the strength of democracy in our country, we would and should not under estimate the strength of democracy in the US. There is no reason why the two largest democracies should not work together. I am not for a moment saying that we agree on all issues. We do not and the most recent disagreement has been on the issue of Iraq. But single
issues do not define relationship between two countries because the relationship covers a vast area.

Therefore, despite these differences — we have other areas of difference, where we are patiently working together and some of them may continue and some of them may vanish, I cannot predict that — we would continue to promote friendship between India and the United States of America. There have been exchange of visits between the USA and India and the relationship is being guided by the shared commitment of the Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and President George Bush which was outlined in November, 2001 when they met in Washington. Therefore, without compromising on anything, I would like Shri Rupchand Pal and some others to please take note of it, without compromising our national interests, without compromising on our principles if we can build a great relationship with the USA, then we would try and do so. That is why I said, this compulsive hostility to the US is something a baggage that we should leave behind. It does not suit our national interest. It is not conducive for the world peace.

(Interruptions..)

No. I think, you are reading too much into what I have said. What I meant to say was that there are sections of opinion in the country which do have this compulsive hostility towards the US. This comes out every now and then. I am also saying that in the past, I am not making this to Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar as a charge, we have dwelt more on our differences than on our commonalties. What is the difference today? How has the situation changed? It is not because those differences have vanished but both countries have decided that we will emphasise the commonalties more than our differences. We will continue to deal with our differences. We will continue to evolve a common plan but that should not be the sum total of our relationship.

Sir, I am glad that Shri Rashid Alvi has come back. But I was wondering about the paragraph from where he quoted. I got the Annual Report of the Ministry. I have gone through both the chapters on US and the introductory remarks but I could not find that sentence where we have said that our relations with the US has improved.

(Interruptions..)

It says about deepening of the Indo-US co-operation in fighting terrorism... (Interruptions). Shri Rashid Alvi read out as if Indo-US relations
have deepened as a result of that terrorist attack in the US. The terrorist attacks have led to the deepening of Indo-US co-operation in this field. Why is there any misunderstanding on this? It (cooperation) is in the field of fight against terrorism.

(Interruptions..)

The impression which Shri Rashid Alvi created in this House by quoting from the Annual Report was that because of the terrorist strike in the US and on Indian Parliament, we have come closer together.

(Interruptions..)

No. We are just saying that it has deepened cooperation in this field.

(Interruptions..)

I do not share the mindset of Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar. I have never shared it. I am sorry, I do not share it vis-à-vis the officers. There is no question of pulling up anyone because what has been said in the Annual Report is exactly what we meant to say. There is no mistake. So, what should I pull them up for?

(Interruptions..)

The Indian Foreign Service, as Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar will know, is one Foreign Service which is sought after internationally for its drafting capabilities. If Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar believes that that quality has degenerated after he left the Service, I am sorry, I do not accept it.

(Interruptions..)

The Report has to be read in its totality. That sentence occurs after many many sentences and it is in a certain perspective.

(Interruptions..)

I now come to the final issue of Pakistan and then I will be done......

(Interruptions..)

It has been a difficult relationship with our neighbour, Pakistan, not in the last few years, but since 1947, since the sub-continent of India was partitioned. This is something which is history.
There have been ups and downs in this relationship over the last 55 years. I do not want to take the time of the House over the history of this. But I would like to say that the first and the most preferred option of the Government vis-à-vis Pakistan is the option of peace, is the option of friendship and the option of dialogue. This is the first and most preferred option. The Prime Minister has clarified it in Srinagar and he has clarified it today that for a meaningful dialogue to begin, it is important that infiltration and cross-border terrorism is brought to an end and those terrorist camps which are there in Pakistan are dismantled. That is the position as explained by the Prime Minister today. As he said, the ball is in the court of Pakistan. If Pakistan were to respond, they were to see evidence in the ground, then we will certainly move forward in that direction. Now, there are many people who see a divergence of the position taken by me and the Prime Minister and much has been written and said on this. Let me quote from what I said in the interview which I gave to The Hindustan Times. The question was:

“USA and UK, without UN support, attacked Iraq. Is not Pakistan, which has weapons of mass destruction, a lack of democracy, and shelters international terrorists, a fit case for such action?”

I would quote my reply also.

“It is a fit case. I won’t oppose it. But whether they (they means US and UK) will is up to them. We can’t go to someone and ask them to attack another country. We keep pointing out the activities in Pakistan, and in them, the role of the Pakistan army; the drug business centred in Pakistan; and third, how, in PoK, people are repressed and trampled upon.”

We keep pointing it out in our dialogue with foreign countries. This is what I said. The headlines of the news report of this interview was “Pak a fit case for attack without UN support: Sinha.” I do not choose the headline. And that is why, I said that I would quote from what I have said.

(Interruptions..)

The great honourable Mani Shankar Aiyar, I do not want to waste my time joining issue with you in this House on this particular point.

I was speaking in the other House when the Iraq Resolution came up and there, this issue had been raised and I had clarified it there. I had said that as far as comparison with Iraq is concerned, I said that we have reasons to believe that Iraq does not have weapons of mass destruction.
I said that we have reasons to believe that Iraq is not linked with Al-Qaeda and terrorism. So, the only thing which is common as far as these three criteria are concerned, between Iraq and Pakistan, if at all, is the issue of lack of democracy. So, this impression that I was thereby lending support to US action in Iraq was entirely erroneous. I hope this will clarify the issue as far as Pakistan is concerned.

In the end, I would like to say that I was not surprised to hear a charge once again in this House because I have heard this charge over four years as the Finance Minister. This is with regard to the independence and autonomy of our decision-making process, whether it be the economic policy, foreign policy or any other policy. I think, as a great nation, we do injustice to ourselves by immediately linking every decision to some pressure or the other and that too, with this Government. Members like General Tripathy and Shri Kharabela Swain have pointed it out. Did we carry out the nuclear tests in May, 1998 also under American pressure?

Was that also the result of American pressure? Was the missile test also the result of American pressure? Why should the foreign policy of this country based on a broad national consensus? Our foreign policy is based on a broad national consensus and must continue to remain based on a broad national consensus, for the simple reason that when I stand up on behalf of India, I am not standing up on behalf of any particular party. I am standing up for the whole country. When the Prime Minister speaks, he speaks for the whole country. He is the Prime Minister of India.

We have our small differences. We will continue to have them because that is what politics is all about. But my very humble plea would be, let us not weaken India’s position and let us not weaken India’s case by appearing to be divided and by accusing each other of acting under pressure. India does not act under the pressure of any country. That is why I quoted from my speech on China to say that we are too big, too great and too large a nation to be cowed down by anyone. We will not be cowed down. We will continue to follow our policies independently and according to our best judgement of our national interest.

I am quite sure that when we do that the whole House, the whole country will support it because we will be acting in the best national interest. Thank you.
013. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the election of India to the Commission on Human Rights.

New Delhi, April 30, 2003.

India was elected to the Commission on Human Rights for the period 2004-2006, securing the highest number of votes among the countries elected from the Asian Region. India’s election to the Commission on Human Rights is recognition of her strong commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. The overwhelming support India gathered from member countries at the election is a testimony of her influence in the Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations. India was also elected to Commission on Narcotics and Drugs; Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ); Executive Board of the World Food Programme (WFP); Governing Council of United Nations – HABITAT.

014. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha for BBC’s ‘ASIA TODAY’ programme.

New Delhi, May 2, 2003.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: [Hello and welcome to this special edition of Asia Today. In this programme we bring to you an exclusive interview with the Indian Foreign Minister, Yashwant Sinha.]

Not everyone here is pleased by the rather ambiguous stand Delhi has taken on Iraq, with some seeing it as a kind of tightrope by India maintaining a balance between its old ties with the Arab world and its new friendship with Washington. I begin by asking Mr. Sinha, what exactly is the Indian official position on Iraq.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: When the military conflict actually started, we came out with a statement clearly saying that we did not find justification for this war and we feel that this war could have been avoided. This is something that we have said on record and said repeatedly. So, there is no ambiguity in our position. Perhaps the
impression of ambiguity arises because of the fact that we have not been harsh in our language. But there is no need to be harsh in language. You can convey the same meaning by using polite language.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: I think exactly that is what the impression has been among at least the critics of this Government that the condemnation has not been strong enough.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: We had an all-party meeting. In that meeting there were some leaders who insisted to dictate even the language of the Government’s statement. We pleaded with them that as far as the language was concerned it should be left to the Government of the day.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: There are some reports in the media that the Indian Prime Minister actually spoke to the US President and said that India would not in any way help in this war. Are those reports right?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: It is true that President Bush spoke to Prime Minister Vajpayee when the conflict started and the Prime Minister conveyed to him the position of India. As far as help is concerned, to the best of my knowledge no help has been asked for, no help has been offered.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: Mr. Sinha, is it right again that some people are seeing a kind of new pragmatism in the Indian foreign policy on issues like these? While you are trying to maintain your old ties with the Arab world, at the same time the new friendship with the US is making you tow what many see as some kind of a tightrope or some kind of a balancing act?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: I do not know why balancing should be considered to be undesirable or uncalled for. You look at the reaction of most countries of the world today and you will find that everyone is trying to balance various considerations. Pragmatism in foreign policy is not something new. It is not a lesson that we have learnt in the last few days. I think pragmatism is something which has informed Indian foreign policy from the days after Independence.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: So, definitely those days of India fancying itself as the leader of the third world or Non-Aligned
Movement are clearly a thing of the past. We are perhaps more pro-US now than ever before in terms of our foreign policy.

**SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:** I think it will be wrong to think of our position as pro-US, or pro-Iraq, or pro-west, or pro-third world, or pro-this or pro-that. I think we have come a long way indeed. After all we have been an independent nation for fifty-five years and, as I mentioned to you just now, pragmatism has been a part of our policy ever since. I would like to say we are pro-India. We would certainly keep our best national interest in mind and formulate our policies and our positions.

**SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV:** Considering that India is against a war - it has said so on so many occasions in recent weeks - is there any attempt being made by India to keep in touch with other countries which are opposing the war like Russia, China, France and Germany?

**SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:** We are in touch. The Prime Minister is already on record having said that just before the war he had addressed letters to the Heads of Government of all the P-5 countries and had pleaded that war should be avoided and one last ditch attempt should be made to arrive at some understanding which could have avoided war. Now, even post-war, we have been in touch. We have been talking to each other. There has been open debate in the Security Council where India has participated; India has stated its position once again. We are in touch but the options at this point of time are very limited.

**SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV:** Do you think there is a possibility even at this stage of something really happening, something which is more concrete?

**SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:** There is a lot of activity which is going on in New York. I would like to tell you, without going into details, that we are trying to play whatever role we could. You referred to the leadership part – India the leader of NAM, this and that. The world has changed. Nobody wants to be under the leadership of any other country. Former colonies have been independent for a long time. I do not think India is interested in imposing its leadership on any country. We are a member of the Non-Aligned Movement. We are a member of the third world. Wherever we can converge
our interests we certainly stand up and speak for the third world and we will continue to do that.

**SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV:** A number of people, not Governments really, a number of analysts have really concluded in their own way that what we are seeing is a kind of an end to the institution called United Nations.

**SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:** I would not go that far. I suppose you will agree with me that not only the United Nations - of course, United Nations is the most important multilateral organization in the world - but every known group of nations has been deeply divided as a result of the Iraqi conflict. The European Union has been divided; the NATO has been divided; OIC has been divided; Arab League has been divided; and Non-Aligned Movement has been divided. You think of any major grouping. You will find that there are deep fissures in all these known groupings.

**SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV:** While the international focus is on Iraq, India is confronted with its own problems, its own war against terrorism, and the recent attack on Hindus in Kashmir in which 24 people were killed.

**SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:** It has been another incident in a series of very tragic and very ghastly events in our country. We have been talking about cross-border terrorism being inspired by our neighbour Pakistan. We have tried to convince the international community that no war on terror can be complete unless this kind of terrorism is brought to an end. From time to time there has been understanding of India’s position, there has been pressure on Pakistan to put a stop to this kind of activity. Unfortunately, Pakistan has not complied with the assurances it has given to the international community and that is where the matter remains.

**SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV:** Are you satisfied with the kind of response you get from the Western Alliance, namely, the US? They issued a statement that you should resume dialogue with Pakistan. Again, after that, Colin Powell and Jack Straw have come with a joint statement.

**SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:** We were grateful to them because they condemned the massacre. But we felt that the advice to resume
dialogue with Pakistan was gratuitous. This was not the occasion certainly to say that. We came out with a statement where we said that it was perhaps as misplaced as somebody’s suggestion to them to talk to either Osama-bin-Laden or to Saddam Hussein, and we talked about double standards. I am happy that they have seen reason, and the latest statement which has been issued has elements which are nearer to the actual situation on the ground, nearer to the truth.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: But such statements have not really helped in the past. Do you actually see the tension escalating in the region in the immediate future?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Let me put it like this. Tension never went down. As far as the tension engineered by the terrorists is concerned, it has been business as usual from the run up to the Jammu and Kashmir elections till today. There was some little decline in cross-border terrorism immediately after June last year when a lot of pressure was put on Pakistan. But the moment Pakistan felt that international community’s attention had shifted or wavered, they immediately came back to business as usual. Also, I would like to tell you that we are not dependent on anyone as far as this fight against terrorism is concerned. There is supposed to be an international coalition against terrorism. We are part of it and we certainly expect the international community to do whatever it can. But the fight is India’s fight. India is not only fighting, India is determined to win this war against terrorism.

SHRI SANJIV SHRIVASTAV: Thank you very much for giving your time to Asia Today.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Thank you.

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015. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with the *Financial Times*.


**Financial Times:** The peace process between India and Pakistan appears to be going slowly. You don’t even have direct flights or an exchange of High Commissioners. What is holding things up?

**Yashwant Sinha:** You must remember that Pakistan has not set a time-frame and we have not set a time-frame. So everyone is aware of the time things might take. And therefore the process should not be seen in terms of deadlines. And to illustrate: the prime minister made an announcement in the Indian parliament with regards to two steps. One was appointment of high commissioners and the second was opening up of Indian airspace. Now, we’ve moved on the first. We’ve been able to announce our new high commissioner. I am not blaming Pakistan but they are in the process of nominating their high commissioner. And the first step of appointing the High Commissioners will be completed when they are appointed and then they go and take their positions. Suppose we had put a deadline on this - the appointments should be made in one week’s time, they should be in position in two weeks time - it would have been unrealistic. So I do not think at any point of time there should be impatience either in the establishment or in the media with regards to the process.

**Financial Times:** You have said before that you have a “roadmap” in mind. That implies you have certain stages envisaged and a timetable. Is that wrong?

**Sinha:** No, I said that we have a roadmap but I did not say a timetable. And I also said that because there were two parties involved, unilaterally one party cannot set a timetable and this is common sense. And in reply to first question I have already said why a deadline should not be set.

**Financial Times:** Could I therefore ask you a timeless question about the roadmap which is what takes place after these initial two steps?

**Sinha:** The prime minister of Pakistan spoke to the Indian PM on the telephone. He made five suggestions. These were economic
cooperation, improved cultural ties, sporting links, air links, and people to people contacts. These are therefore on the table. Doing these will involve doing other things too. So when you are talking of a roadmap we are clear in our mind what steps must be taken, both in regards to restoring normalcy in the relationship as well as in regard to the dialogue process and then in regard to progress of the dialogue process. And underlying all of this is the complete end to cross-border terrorism.

**Financial Times:** You have used the word “practical necessity” as opposed to “pre-condition” in regards to the ending of cross-border terrorism. Could you explain the difference?

**Sinha:** It is very simple. The difference is that if this was a pre-condition then the Prime minister would not have made his “hand of friendship” offer in Srinagar last month. But for the dialogue to succeed it is essential that cross-border terrorism comes to an end. There cannot be a conducive atmosphere for a dialogue if massacres, violence, terrorism, keeps on happening. Therefore it is important that this is brought to an end if a proper atmosphere for the success of the dialogue is to be created.

**Financial Times:** Would it therefore be reasonable to assume that no senior dialogue or summit will take place if terrorist outrages continue to occur?

**Sinha:** I only want to say this: It is an essential condition for the success of the talks.

**Financial Times:** Mr Vajpayee launched this process without consulting his colleagues. There are clearly divisions within the BJP. To what extent can you rely on BJP unity behind Mr Vajpayee’s initiative?

**Sinha:** I don’t think there is any difference of opinion in the BJP with regards to Mr Vajpayee’s initiative. To the best of my knowledge the BJP and its spokesmen have lent their support to this process. And everyone has also said simultaneously that cross-border terrorism must be brought to an end for this process to succeed.

**Financial Times:** Is it regrettable that the BJP refused to meet the parliamentary delegation from Pakistan that departed from India a few days ago?
Sinha: I cannot answer for the BJP because I am not in the day-to-day functioning of the party. But the important thing to remember is: Were they approached? What was the request made? We do not know. As far as I am concerned I got an unsigned fax message from the sponsors [of the visit] after they had already been here a few days saying they were visiting. Now clearly whoever was responsible for preparing their programme should have gone about their task in a more professional way. And therefore to read meaning into this would not be correct - that we were opposed or the government was opposed. And there are issues of convenience also.

Financial Times: We are seeing talk of Pakistan banning the Hizbul-Mujahidden [the largest Kashmiri separatist group, with headquarters in Pakistan's portion of the divided province] and then suggestions that it is not being banned. What is your reading of Pakistan's actions?

Sinha: I would not like to comment on this because any comment from me would be misunderstood at this point of time and I do not want to create a misunderstanding. I would only like to say that if they take action against these elements who are indulging in cross-border terror it is something that we welcome.

Financial Times: But if they did would you provide more allowance - give Pakistan more room - for the actions of other terrorist groups that Pakistan might not directly control?

Sinha: If there are elements which are - according the authorities in Pakistan - which are outside their control and crossing the Line of Control despite their best effort to stop them then we should cooperate with each other in order to curb the activities of these elements. This would be a subject matter of discussion - a simple thing, that they get information, intelligence information, that such and such a group has escaped their whatever net they have and is likely to cross into India, we have channels of information through which such information can be passed onto our authorities and then we will be able to handle them.

Financial Times: We have seen reports about the US finally giving Israel permission to sell the Phalcon (early warning) system to India. Clearly US restraints on the export of dual use high technology to
India is very important to India. Is there any sign of progress? Did you raise this problem recently with Colin Powell [they met in Moscow last week]?

Sinha: I have only like you seen the reports on the Phalcon. I cannot confirm them. Every time we have discussed the issues known as the “Trinity issues” [restrictions on dual use for India’s civil nuclear, civilian space and commercial information technology] the US has said that they would like to ensure that within the framework of their laws and regulations, they would do their best for us. This assurance has always been forthcoming. We have impressed on them the need to devise some kind of mechanism through which these good intentions will be translated into progress on the ground in a speedier fashion. I have no reasons to believe they will not act on this.

Financial Times: Assuming that is right, how would you measure progress? Do you have a list of shopping items?

Sinha: It can be measured in terms of increased cooperation and fewer hassles in regard to civilian use in regard to dual-use items. The various organisations in India do give them a list from time-to-time and we are looking for let’s say speed in that procedure.

Financial Times: Would it be fair to describe India-US relations as closer than ever before.

Sinha: I think that would be the right conclusion to come to.

Financial Times: What would be your optimum in terms of US-India relations?

Sinha: There is no optimum in sets of relations between two countries because there is always room for further cooperation and strengthening. So you cannot say that you will reach a peak at any point in time - it is a continuous process. Trade and economic relationship is a very important priority in our relations with the US. And on this the role of Indian professionals in the US is a very important issue.

Financial Times: The US and others have been imposing restrictions on Indian IT professionals.

Sinha: There have been some fairly retrograde signals in those areas where we have built our strength. Yes.
Financial Times: Would it be fair to conclude that non-tariff barriers are being imposed on the Indian IT industry by the US and others?

Sinha: Yes, that is true. Other priorities? Attracting more US investments into India and evolving whatever commonality we can involve with regard to the World Trade Organisation issues. And we are trying to identify trade areas on which consensus can exist.

Financial Times: Is it fair to say that the Bush administrations’ actions on trade show a big gap between rhetoric and reality?

Sinha: Not only the US but many other developed countries fall into the same category.

Financial Times: Mr Richard Armitage [US deputy secretary of state] was here recently and he was here exactly a year ago also. Then he said that Pakistan had pledged to put a “permanent” end to cross-border terrorism. That clearly hasn’t happened. Are the good offices of the US regarding Pakistan diminishing in value in India’s view?

Sinha: We have always said that as far as that is concerned, it was a promise or a commitment made to the US. Whether it has been kept or not is an issue for them to judge. Whether it is the US or any other interlocutor, when it comes to the discussion of cross-border terrorism, we tell them what we feel about the situation, they must also be getting feedback from Pakistan, it is for them to come to a judgement. But we have good reason to believe from the US statements on this matter that they do believe India has been a victim of cross-border terrorism, that it has not stopped, that Pakistan must do more to stop it. But in the final analysis, tackling cross-border terrorism is our responsibility and have to do it alone. So we are not remonstrating with anyone and saying “such and such a promise was made to you and it wasn’t honoured”. We are not treating anyone as a final court of appeal and filing a petition to them.

Financial Times: Is it reasonable to assume that Pakistan’s usefulness to the US as an ally in the war on Al Qaeda is diminishing? If so then would Pakistan’s leverage over the US be waning and does this affect India’s calculations?

Sinha: I will say that there is no permanent situation. We cannot have a world where terrorism from organisations of the like of Al
Qaeda will be a permanent feature. So anyone who is counting on it being a permanent feature would be making a big miscalculation.

**Financial Times:** You are striking a lot of bilateral free trade deals with your neighbours - Sri Lanka, Bangladesh etc. Can we conclude that your regional trade strategy will remain bilateral and therefore outside of SAARC (South Asian Agreement for Regional Cooperation) until you have fixed your differences with Pakistan?

**Sinha:** Not at all. We have always been very keen to move under the SAARC auspices also. We have been doing our best to speed up the process of the preferential trade and free trade agreements under SAARC auspices. But we will not let that hold up any bilateral understanding with countries in this region, just as we are moving forward with countries outside this region.

**Financial Times:** But you still want Pakistan to reciprocate Most Favoured Nation trade to India?

**Sinha:** This could be a part of the confidence-building programme with Pakistan. But India continues to extend MFN treatment to Pakistan. Pakistan does not give India MFN treatment. In addition, out of about 7,000 tariff lines 90 per cent are on the negative list in Pakistan which means India cannot export those items to Pakistan. Then there are other non-tariff barriers. There is a clear mismatch here between the kind of treatment we give them and they give us. It is our view that as members of the WTO, Pakistan should extend MFN treatment to India. Under Saarc they should do much more. And, trade should not be treated as a hostage to the political relationship.

**Financial Times:** Regarding “normalisation” it is fair to say that Pakistan is suspicious of it because they see India as the status quo power and normalisation as something the status quo power always wishes. Whereas it is not in the interests of the antagonistic power to normalise too much..

**Sinha:** Tell me who is the status quo power between China and India [China]? How is it that we have been able to work it out with them? We must recognise that India and China have a border conflict but we have still allowed our bilateral relationship to flourish.

**Financial Times:** So are China-India relations a model for how you should proceed with Pakistan?
Sinha: Not necessarily, I am just saying this is an example of how two nations have dealt with their differences over time and in the process created confidence and goodwill. I think we need to give ourselves such a chance with Pakistan. We both need to give each other a chance.

Financial Times: Have you fixed Mr Vajpayee’s visit to China? What are the main issues?

Sinha: Dates are not yet fixed. We will discuss the entire gamut of our bilateral relationship. There are many issues to discuss. I would like also to mention India’s relations with the UK. We have an excellent relationship with the UK, an excellent understanding on various bilateral issues notwithstanding various differences on Iran. My recent meeting with Jack Straw [UK foreign secretary] set a new level in terms of the warmth and understanding between our two countries.

Financial Times: Under what circumstances would India accede to the US request to send peace-keeping troops to Iraq?


Financial Times: Then it would happen?

Sinha: I will not give any details.

New Delhi, July 9, 2003.

- We, the participants in the International Ministerial Conference on Dialogue among Civilisations - Quest for New Perspectives, held in New Delhi from 9-10 July 2003,

Recognising that all civilizations celebrate the unity in diversity of humankind and are enriched and have evolved through dialogue with other civilizations,

Underlining the contemporary relevance of the ancient Indian concept of Vasudeva Kutumbakkam, which means that all the world is one family, and that a common humanity unites all civilisations,

Recognising that dialogue among civilisations, which has existed since the earliest stages of history has blurred the frontiers of different civilisations and led to today’s multitude of overlapping cultures, which are rich in diversity while preserving the uniqueness of identities,

- Noting that while civilisation provides an important source of identity, people have multiple identities deriving from nationality, gender, profession etc,

Emphasising that complementarity of civilisations is strengthened by constant inter-play and exchange of ideas as well as by creativity in science, art, philosophy, ethics and spirituality and allows for the highest attainments of civilisational diversity,

Noting that globalization, while offering great benefits, also presents the challenge of preserving and celebrating the rich intellectual and cultural diversity of humankind and of civilization,

Noting further the threat to equitable social and economic development of all civilisations consequent to problems of poverty, unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and profligate utilisation of the natural resource base of the planet,

- Emphasizing that international cooperation, as a key means of promoting dialogue among civilisations, should contribute to enabling
everyone to have access to knowledge, to enjoy the arts and literature of all peoples, to share in advances made in science in all parts of the world and in the resulting benefits, and to contribute to the enrichment of social, economic and cultural life.


1. Recognise that tolerance is a fundamental value common to all civilizations and that this includes respect for others, regardless of diversity of belief, culture and language neither fearing nor repressing differences within and between societies but cherishing them as a precious asset of humanity;

2. Underline the need to address and overcome ignorance and prejudice about the ways of life and customs of peoples;

3. Recognise the crucial role of education in promoting a scientific temper and an ethical and spiritual value system which facilitate the use of knowledge and reasoning in understanding other cultures and civilizations;

4. Recognise further that education promotes tolerance, respect for diversity and friendship among peoples and nations;

5. Affirm that the nature and content and quality of education should help to develop knowledge, values, attitudes and skills necessary to ensure a high quality of life for all;

6. Recognise that education is necessary to develop communities and societies rooted in principles of democracy, justice and respect for human rights;

7. Invite governments to also give special emphasis to democratic principles and practices as well as pluralism, including through the teaching and learning at all levels of formal, informal and non-formal education;

8. Encourage all governments to expand their educational curricula and learning materials in order to promote a better understanding of all cultures and civilizations – especially through the teaching of respect for various cultures and civilizations and their histories and philosophies, human rights education, non-violence and the teaching of languages;
9. Emphasise the importance of knowledge, information and scholarship among governments and civil society in order to promote a better understanding of all cultures and civilizations;

10. Emphasise that the pursuit of the six Education for All (EFA) goals, including especially the fight against gender discrimination in education, is essential to an inclusive approach to dialogue among civilizations;

11. Resolve to take suitable steps to establish in educational institutions a learning environment which will contribute to tolerance, respect and understanding about the diversity and wealth of cultural identities;

12. Urge governments to take full and effective measures to ensure that educational institutions are protected from teachings that promote extremism, intolerance and violence;

13. Reaffirm that all acts of terrorism represent an attack against humanity as the killing of innocent civilians in order to spread terror is despicable to the values of all civilizations;

14. Affirm that in the 21st century, science must become a shared asset benefiting all peoples serving as a powerful resource for economic transformation and for understanding natural and social phenomena;

15. Recognise that science and technology are major engines of social change which should be guided by ethical and moral perspectives and approaches;

16. Emphasise that social and human sciences should assume a much more proactive role in analysing all the dimensions of social interaction and transformation in a rapidly changing world with a view to ensuring the well-being of the societies and to enhancing global understanding of civilizational dynamics and processes;

17. Underline the importance of traditional and local knowledge systems as dynamic expressions of perceiving and understanding the world and that this tangible and intangible cultural heritage and empirical knowledge need to be protected and preserved;

18. Affirm further that the information and communication revolution offers new and effective means of exchanging scientific knowledge and advancing education and research which promote the economic and social development of all people;
19. Further recognise that information and communication technologies can enhance intercultural communication and mutual understanding, especially through the promotion of cultural and linguistic pluralism, the generation of cross-cultural links, and the sharing of knowledge and information in various forms by networking communities and individuals;

20. Affirm therefore the need for enhanced inter-cultural dialogue through international cooperation in order for all peoples and nations to share with one another their knowledge and skills;

21. Stress the need to develop the various branches of knowledge side by side and, as far as possible, simultaneously, so as to establish a harmonious balance between technical progress and the intellectual and socio-economic advancement of mankind;

22. Affirm that the respect for diversity of cultures, including the protection and promotion of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, values of tolerance and mutual understanding are fostered through multi-civilisational discourse and are the best guarantors of peace in the world.

23. In the context of the above, the Conference,

a. Enjoins all governments and civil society to support actively a dialogue within and among civilizations and cultures so that it will become an effective instrument of transformation, a yardstick for peace and tolerance, and a vehicle for diversity and pluralism;

b. Calls upon governments and civil society to ensure the empowerment and full participation of women and youth in efforts to foster dialogue within and among civilization and to generate equitable, inclusive societies where mutual understanding may flourish and people may learn to live together in peace;

c. Recommends that UNESCO initiate a broad based collaboration with Member States, organizations of the UN system, civil society, the scientific, academic and artistic communities, the private sector and other partners with a view to translating the various proposals contained in this Declaration into concrete action.
Indian Minister for External Affairs Yashwant Sinha has just completed a year in office. He is busy giving a fresh impetus to India’s foreign policy objectives. In an exclusive interview to Khaleej Times, Mr Sinha talked about how India and the UAE are cooperating closely in countering the challenges of terrorism and transnational crime; India’s global initiatives vis-à-vis terrorism supported morally and financially by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir. Following are the excerpts of the interview.

Khaleej Times: Let’s start with Indo-Pak peace process which is keenly watched the world over. When India talks of trade, Pakistan says Kashmir. Where do you see the peace process going?

Yashwant Sinha: Let me tell you that many positive developments have taken place in recent weeks, including non-official visits by parliamentarians from both sides, a visit by a large business delegation from Pakistan to India and significantly, the resumption of the Delhi-Lahore-Delhi bus service and the high commissioners of both countries have reached their destinations. As I have said on other occasions, we are not discouraged by the negative trends and intend to build upon the positive ones. We will persist and pursue our initiative aimed at building friendly and peaceful ties with Pakistan. This process of restoring normalcy in bilateral relations may be a slow and difficult process, but we are encouraged by the tremendous resonance generated by our efforts amongst the people and civil society in Pakistan.

KT: There have been statements by Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf on Jammu and Kashmir being the core issue that needs to be discussed first. What is India’s position on this?

YS: It is true that we were deeply disappointed by some of the comments made by President Musharraf, especially his comments on Kargil and the implication that military adventurism of that nature is a legitimate instrument for furthering Pakistan’s designs on Jammu and Kashmir. President Musharraf also totally denied the significance and impact of the universally acknowledged success of the elections in J&K. We have often heard the Pakistani side claim that the issue of J&K is the core issue
between India and Pakistan. This so-called core issue seems to have attained a position of prominence in Pakistani official circles only in the decade of the 90s. I do not wish to delve too much into the background, but it is clear to us that Pakistan would need to deal with its inherently negative approach towards India. If there is any core issue between India and Pakistan, it would have to be Pakistan’s negativity and hostility towards India.

**KT:** But how has this negativity and hostility affected Indo-Pak ties?

**YS:** It is this negativity that has prevented the bilateral relationship from achieving its positive potential despite several initiatives from the Indian side. We have seen comments by Pakistan’s prime minister published in the Pakistani media supporting the idea of a step-by-step approach to rebuilding confidence between the two countries. He has been quoted as saying that we have to pave a way to come to the ‘core issue’. We in India also believe that given the history of bitterness between India and Pakistan, we need to follow an approach that helps develop mutual trust and confidence before addressing the difficult issues.

**KT:** Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee is likely to visit Pakistan to attend SAARC meeting. Do you think an official-level discussion between India and Pakistan is possible during that period?

**YS:** India is a committed member of SAARC. SAARC summits are an integral part of the SAARC process. In fact, summit meetings, at the levels of heads of state and government are at the pinnacle of the SAARC process, which is an ongoing process. Like all members, India looks forward to such events. We are happy at the consensus in the standing committee on SAARC on the entire package of issues including the dates for the next summit. The standing committee has also stressed the urgent need for finalising the draft framework treaty on creating a free trade area i.e. SAFTA, before the next summit. The committee has also agreed as far as SAPTA (South Asia Preferential Trade Agreement) is concerned to recommend the launching of the fifth round of trade negotiations under SAPTA. There was also an agreement to hold a succession of meetings of committee of experts to make sure that both on the SAFTA framework and trade facilitation measures concrete progress is made before the next summit. India looks forward to progress in all these issues before the SAARC summit as decided in the standing committee and also to participating in the summit.
**KT:** What about an official level discussion between India and Pakistan taking place during the Saarc summit in Islamabad?

**YS:** Well, it is too early to speak about the possibility of official level discussions during the summit. We continue to monitor the ground situation vis-a-vis cross-border infiltration and infrastructure of terrorism in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir as also Pakistan’s response to the steps taken by us in pursuit of Mr Vajpayee’s peace initiative. Further steps and developments would depend on our assessment of the ground situation. Unfortunately, infiltration from across the Line of Control and cross-border terrorism from Pakistan continues. There cannot be meaningful dialogue at any level if such attacks continue to take place.

**KT:** How do you rate India’s relations with the United States? Washington has commended Islamabad for their support in the global-war against terrorism. What is India’s stand on this?

**YS:** I believe that we are making good progress towards our shared goal of transforming India-US relations and developing a strategic partnership. Our dialogue is at an unprecedented level and characterised by a high degree of cordiality, warmth and candour. We have developed good political understanding on a range of regional and international issues. Economic and technological relations are showing new dynamism. Defence cooperation is developing well. The US has its own good reasons for its assessment on Pakistan’s cooperation on terrorism. I can only comment on our perception. We believe that Pakistan’s links with terrorism have not ended. Since terrorism is not a divisible commodity, it is difficult to imagine how Pakistan can fully cooperate in the global war on terrorism without ending cross-border terrorism against India and dismantling its infrastructure of support in Pakistan.

**KT:** Pakistan has often talked of third-party mediation on Kashmir? Even UK recently seems to support the stand, saying third-party mediation was not a bad idea after all?

**YS:** India believes in a policy of bilateralism in addressing bilateral issues with Pakistan in keeping with the (spirit of) Shimla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration. It has been our experience that third parties bring along their own agenda to the table. India and Pakistan are well conversant with each other’s positions and views. We do not need any third party mediation.
**KT:** How do you see India’s rise in the new world order? Do you think India is facing a challenge in bringing forth its perspective on terrorism globally? Despite so many countries talking against terrorism, not many are willing to come on one platform and wipe out the scourge.

**YS:** India values diversity and plurality. We believe in efforts towards a multi-polar world with diverse centres of power, influence and also perspectives. India has its role, its aspirations and its own perspectives in such a world order. Our growing engagement with a number of countries and regions of the world is a testimony to this facet. Concerning terrorism, India has been for long a victim of terrorism, particularly cross-border terrorism. After September 11 and other major terrorist incidents in different parts of the world - Russia, Bali, Riyadh, Africa - the world today accords higher priority to counter terrorism, a point that we had been making for some time.

We have put across our view on the menace of terrorism and on the aspect of cross-border terrorism that we face. Today there is a greater appreciation of India’s point of view. It is true that action concerning combating terrorism does not fully match the rhetoric. Nevertheless, we must recognise that there is greater international will to address this issue. It is incumbent on all countries today, without exception, to take resolute action on their own soil to prevent terrorism. No cause can justify it: political, religious, ideological or any other.

**KT:** India has exceptionally good ties with Iran and Afghanistan. What is India’s agenda, and why do you think the region is so important for India?

**YS:** India has nurtured historical ties of friendship and cooperation with Afghanistan and Iran. With Iran, our common cultural affinity and civilisational heritage provides strong impulses for strengthening our cooperation in modern times. India greatly values its relationship with Iran, not only as our extended neighbour but also as an important country in our region, which can play a positive role in ensuring regional peace and stability. We have had regular high level political exchanges between the two countries: Prime Minister Vajpayee visited Iran in April 2001, and President Khatami was the chief guest at India’s Republic Day parade this year.

Several important documents, including a Road Map on Strategic Cooperation and New Delhi Declaration were signed during President Khatami’s visit. Other important areas of bilateral interaction include
cooperation in the field of energy, wide-ranging trade and economic cooperation through the mechanism of the joint commission, and cultural cooperation.

**KT:** What about Afghanistan?

**YS:** India and Afghanistan have also had close and regular contacts through the ebb and flow of history. India has always had a wide ranging cooperation with Afghanistan. In the post-November 2001 phase, India was one of the first countries to have come out with a concrete plan for reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan. The prime minister announced a grant of US$100 million for various reconstruction projects in Afghanistan. Out of this amount, US$31.5 million has already been operational in various projects in the fields of education, health, public transport and civil aviation. We have also committed to supply one million tonnes of wheat as humanitarian assistance. Our assistance has also included, training of 500 Afghans in various fields; supply of 274 buses and gifting of three aircraft. India fully supports the government of President Karzai, who had also visited India in March this year. Our only desire is to see that Afghanistan emerges as a strong, united and independent country in our region.

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018. Address of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the nation on Independence Day-2003. (Extracts)

Delhi, August 15, 2003.

Following is the extract from English rendering of the Address to the Nation by the Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee from the ramparts of Red Fort on the occasion of Independence Day:

"Dear countrymen,

My hearty greetings to all of you on the sacred occasion of our Independence Day.

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The nation’s security is supreme to us. India cannot be dependent on others for her security. Therefore, the first act of my Government five years ago was to make India, for her self-defence, a nuclear weapons state.

The world is changing. New challenges are emerging before us. We have to make India stronger both economically and socially.

In the past five years, India’s prestige in the world has gone up, thanks to our pro-active foreign policy. The international community’s way of looking at us has undergone a big change. The world is now recognizing India:

- As the world’s largest democracy;
- As an emerging global economic power;
- As the confluence of a modern nation and an ancient civilization;
- As a powerful country, dedicated to the ideal of peace.

Sisters and brothers, it is our policy to establish friendly and cooperative relations with all our neighbors. We believe in resolving all disputes peacefully. Our frequent initiatives to normalize relations with Pakistan are not a sign of our weakness; rather, they are an indication of our commitment to peace.

In recent months, there has been some progress in normalizing relations with Pakistan. Nevertheless, terrorist activities are still continuing.
The test of our neighbour’s sincerity lies in whether he is prepared to stop cross-border terrorism totally.

We hope that Pakistan abjures its anti-India outlook. The people of both countries wish to live in peace.

I have been telling our Pakistani friends that we have spent fifty years fighting. How much more blood is yet to be spilt? The two of us need to fight against poverty, against unemployment, and against backwardness.

We should increase trade and economic links between our two countries. When we share a two thousand kilometer long border, it makes no sense for us to trade via a third country.

Let people travel to and fro. Let more and more elected representatives visit each other’s country. Let us expand bilateral cultural relations.

Let us open some new doors, new windows, and new light-holes in the walls that divide us.

The love that the two-year-old girl Noor from Lahore received in India carries a message, which our friends in Pakistan should understand.

On the occasion of Independence Day of both our countries, I invite Pakistan to walk together with India on the road to peace. This road is decidedly bumpy. There are even mines strewn along this path. Yet, once we start walking, we will find the hurdles getting out of our way.

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019. Speech by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore\(^1\).

Singapore, August 26, 2003.

“Asia : A period of Change”

Prof. Jayakumar, Mr. Desker, Ladies & Gentlemen,

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your warm words of welcome.

It is a privilege to be addressing this distinguished gathering here today. Though I have chosen to use the wider term of Asia, the focus of my comments are naturally going to be on this part of the world and on India’s engagement with this region. In the process, I hope to outline the changes taking place in India and to situate in the larger context, her foreign policy as well as domestic economic trends. Speaking a day after India’s premier commercial center, Mumbai has been rocked by a dastardly terrorist attack causing over 50 deaths and over a hundred wounded, I hope to also dwell on the scourge of terrorism and the need for the world to collectively address the problem.

Asia, stretching from the Mediterranean to the Pacific, is witnessing rapid expansion of its role in global economic and security affairs, despite the small setback caused by the financial crisis of the late 1990s. We have seen economic growth on a historic scale, first among the “tiger” economies and then among a wider group, including China and India. Asia is more outward looking and there is growing realization of the importance of regional cooperation in our area which has led to emergence of new institutions like SAARC, ASEAN, and more recently, the Asia Cooperation Dialogue or ACD spearheaded by Thailand. Active

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\(^1\) Apart from addressing the Institute, EAM, while in Singapore was received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Trade and Industry, Minister of Finance and he also called on the Prime Minister of Singapore and Deputy Prime Minister. In all these meetings dignitaries from Singapore expressed their sympathy and condolences to the victims of the blasts in Mumbai and expressed their cooperation with India in countering this scourge of terrorism. The other issues, which came up in the meetings were the continuing discussions on the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. Other areas of discussions were regional cooperation particularly with the ASEAN and the India -ASEAN summit, which took place in Bali later in the year. The Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore in particular mentioned that he was looking forward to his visit to India.
discussions about new concepts such as the Asian Bond market and Asian Rating Agencies are a sign of the increasing self-awareness by Asia of its capabilities and strengths and are indicative of a thirst to regain an older, more glorious heritage and develop independent thinking on major issues affecting the region.

**Asia: basic facts and figures**

Let me give you some facts about Asia collated from various sources that could provide the backdrop to our discussions.

- Home to 60% of the world’s population, Asia encompasses extraordinary diversity in terms of religion, race, ethnicity and culture. Each of its regions, whether they be the Gulf and West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, South East Asia and North East Asia, all have distinctive characteristics that separate them from the others. Yet Asia has civilizational commonalties that seek unity in its diversity.

- Asia accounts for about a quarter of global GDP. It is estimated that by 2025, it will contribute to 57% of the global GDP. Already Japan, China, Korea and India are among the top twelve countries in terms of GDP.

- In 2000, Asian exports accounted for 31% of total global trade.

- Intra-regional trade accounted for 52% of exports and 63% of imports and amounted to 16% of total world trade.

- International reserves of developing countries in Asia accounted for 77.5% of total international reserves of all developing countries of which 21% was mainland China’s, 13.4% Hong Kong’s and 12% South Korea’s. I understand the reserves of Singapore and India also come to around 13% each of the total reserves.

- FDI flows into Asian developing countries amounted to 11 times of those for developing countries in the Americas, 35 times those in Eastern Europe and nearly 200 times those for African countries.

- The labour force in developing countries of Asia Pacific and South Asia totaled 1.1 billion and 600 million respectively, of which over 750 million and 450 million were accounted for by China and India.

- It also accounts for the world’s largest energy resources on which depends the prosperity, not only of the Asian continent but also of
the rest of the world. Of this, the Middle East is the biggest source for global fuels while Central Asia has vast untapped resources. South East Asia too is a significant source of petroleum and natural gas.

• More recently, the Asia Pacific region has become a major information age hub with abundant satellite services, major teleport bases and software programming.

• In general, it has a huge competitive advantage in manufacturing because of the presence of natural and agricultura resources, inexpensive labour - skilled and unskilled, low cost of production, and a diversified market.

• Asia has some of the largest standing armies.

Today, there is a new dynamism in the region as Asian countries acquire an increasing role in global trade and capital flows. Singapore itself is one of the best illustrations of such a dynamic role. With a per capita income of US$ 22,000, it is on par with the older industrialized countries. It attracts US$ 10 billion of FDI annually. Its trade turnover is over US$ 300 billion. Singapore’s success in these fields is a source of inspiration for others in Asia including India.

It is by now widely accepted that the 21st century will be an Asian century. The fulcrum of political and economic activity in the world is clearly shifting towards Asia.

Changes and challenges facing Asia

What are the most important changes that can be noticed in recent times, particularly in this region?

First of all, terrorism stalks Asia as never before. India a long-standing victim of terrorism was hit again yesterday. Mumbai was deliberately chosen because what these terrorists and their sponsors envy the most is India’s success in the economic field. The relative stability that ASEAN enjoyed over the last few decades has also been shattered by the rise of extremist forces in the region. A harsh, militant, puritanical form of Islam brought in by outsiders, preying on a false sense of victimization is threatening to displace South East Asia’s Islamic tradition of syncretism and co-existence. The bombings in Bali and Jakarta and the discovery of expansive networks of terrorist organization in the region have revealed the scale of the new threat to Asia.
Secondly, a new international order has begun to emerge in the region replacing the uncertainties of the post-Cold War era. The region is no longer marked by rivalry between superpowers. Countries of the region have more or less settled into a system where major powers are learning to co-exist peacefully.

Thirdly, the after-effects of the Asian financial crisis have blown over and the region is entering a new trajectory of growth. While globalization and the opportunities and challenges that it presents continue to be debated extensively, integration of the principal economies of the region with the world has proceeded apace.

Fourthly, the remarkable success of the ASEAN experiment has prompted many others of Asia to actively strive for regional cooperation. Persisting poverty and under development, rising population, increase in migration and refugee flows, rapidly depleting natural resources including water, trafficking in small arms and drugs, trans-national crimes etc. - all provide ballast for such cooperation amongst countries.

Finally, proliferation with the attendant risk of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of terrorist groups is now the greatest in Asia. This is particularly so in the immediate neighbourhood of India where it is possible to find the conjunction of authoritarian rule, religious fundamentalism, terrorism, drug trafficking and weapons of mass destruction. Some of the most deliberate and well-documented instances of nuclear and missile transfers have taken place in this region.

Asia’s response

Confronted by such change, what should be Asia’s response? It is a commonly shared conviction that in order to continue the march towards prosperity of our peoples, we must work towards the twin goals of enhancement of peace and security and sustained economic growth and development. While countries will continue to have a national perspective of security arising out of their own geography and history, it is increasingly accepted today that in the realm of security, we are all dealing with global threats and global challenges. It is no longer possible for any country in the world to insulate itself from developments that are taking place in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. The events of September 11, 2001 provide the most telling example of this.

A cooperative approach to security which helps in increasing stakes of members in enduring peace and stability is therefore essential. Such
an approach would be accommodative of the diversity of the region and would also be a reflection of growing strength and confidence amongst countries. The ARF plays an important role in the above regard. But it needs to be strengthened through effective bilateral and other arrangements amongst the countries of the region on issues such as counter terrorism, curbing proliferation and protection of sea-lanes of communication.

To effectively tackle terrorism, there must be clarity on three important issues. There are some in the world who argue that certain ‘root causes’ are responsible for the phenomenon of terrorism and that this menace can only be addressed by dealing with the proclaimed political grievances of those indulging in violence. Others insist on a definition of terrorism before dealing with it. The emphasis on root causes and semantic exercises in defining terrorism, however, tend to play into the hands of those who resort to indiscriminate violence. No grievance and sense of historical injustice can justify the use of violence against innocent civilian populations. Those who emphasize addressing “root causes” such as poverty, absence of political freedom, territorial disputes, religious intolerance, ethnic discrimination etc. are suggesting that we must continue to live with terrorism or rather die at its hands until all these problems are resolved.

It is equally baseless to link terrorism to any particular religion and perceive its recent growth as heralding a ‘clash of civilizations’.

Also important is the issue of double standards in the fight against terrorism. I refer to the tendency by some to condone terrorism in some places while condemning it elsewhere. This is counter-productive. Such leniency will only boomerang on everyone. We collectively owe it to ourselves as well as to the world to push, prod, persuade and mobilize the international community into redoubling efforts aimed at eradicating the phenomenon of terrorism from its very roots.

Changing India

Let me now turn to India and discuss two of the most important changes of recent times, namely the success of India’s economic reform programme which has brought her new confidence and strength as well as the evolution of her foreign policy particularly as it affects this region. India is today at the forefront of the many positive changes that our continent is witnessing. Our GDP growth has averaged around 6% in the
last decade. We are now a US$ 550 billion economy and will be recording close to 7% GDP growth this year. This will bring us within striking distance of the US$ 600 billion mark or a little above the ASEAN GDP combined. We have pre-paid US$ 3 billion of external debt earlier this year.

At the macro level, four chronic problems of the Indian economy, which had dogged us for full 50 years, have been effectively addressed and should not ever reappear. The first is balance of payments. Our foreign exchange reserves have today crossed US$ 85 bn and we are racing towards the US$ 100 bn mark. For the first time in 23 years, the current account of India’s balance of payments recorded a surplus equivalent to 0.3 per cent of GDP in 2001-02. Short-term debt has also declined steadily and this has been achieved in an extremely volatile international situation where country after country have fallen prey to economic crisis caused by the external sector. Today, India is a model of management as far as the external sector is concerned.

The second chronic problem of the Indian economy was perpetual food shortages and its import. Our food stocks were 20 million tones in 1996. Today, they stand at 39.8 million tonnes, even though food grain production last year was sharply affected by the poor monsoon. India has emerged as the seventh largest exporter of food grains in the world today.

The third problem, which has been effectively tackled, is price rise. Inflation over last five years has averaged 4.66%.

The fourth chronic problem of our economy has been infrastructure. In January 1998, the total number of telephones in India was 16.2 million. Today, we have more cell phones than that. In addition, the number of landlines has grown dramatically to 41.3 million as of April 2003. Prices have dropped sharply and vegetable sellers and farmers can be seen sporting mobile phones.

Similar transformations have been taking place in the field of roads, ports and housing. A drop in interest rates has brought home loans within reach of the middle class and the quantum of loans given out for buying homes has gone up by roughly five times in the last five years.

We have also steadfastly worked on bringing India’s financial sector up to world standards of quality and robustness. The insurance sector has been opened up to private competition and we are hence seeing
very rapid growth in the penetration of insurance products. The banking system has been also given a better legal foundation.

Courtesy the software revolution and IT enabled services, India’s image has undergone a qualitative upgradation. After 1995 when we signed the WTO accord, Indian industry has gone through a process of transition, adjustment and change particularly after April 2001 when the last of quantitative restrictions were removed. Indian industry is emerging out of this churning lean, mean and stronger to face the challenge of global competition. This is evident both in terms of the economic recovery at home as well as in our export performance.

India is today recognized not only as one of the most important emerging economies but also as a leader in the field of science and technology, human resources development and provision of services.

All this has happened in a decade that has seen a political transformation in India. After a brief spell of political instability, coalition politics in India has stabilized and the present Government is shortly due to complete its full term of five years. It will achieve the distinction of being the first non-Congress Government in India’s history to do so. There is today growing empowerment of different segments of our population and a thirst for growth that manifests itself across the board. Among all political parties, there is conviction that economic growth and reform must be the mantra to guide us into the future.

The social transformation of India has been even more impressive. Indian culture has gone global. Indian fashion, film and food are now well established in practically every corner of the world. Yoga, meditation and traditional medicine have become part of the life style of Generation X. Overseas Indians and Persons of Indian Origin are moving up in their chosen careers in the countries they live in. Their contribution to the success and prosperity of Singapore is well known and need no elaboration before this audience. In the U.S., Indians now rank first in terms of education and earnings.

India is rapidly breaking out of its traditional stereotype. While we continue to face our share of problems and benefits of rapid economic growth are still to be evenly distributed, these issues are being addressed with all seriousness and with confidence.

India’s Foreign Policy

In terms of foreign policy, our main concern has been to ensure
stability on our borders and in the larger geographical region, which we call our neighbourhood, namely, the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, Indian Ocean region and South East Asia.

In its immediate neighborhood, India continues its approach of building confidence and trust through dialogue. Given India’s size and potential, this engagement imparts stability to India’s extended neighborhood. In this connection, I would like to highlight some recent developments, which are of significance.

- India has placed the utmost importance on improving relations with its immediate neighbourhood. This is an area I took up as a personal priority immediately after assuming office about a year back.

- Reflecting our commitment to the idea of regional economic integration, we have placed the idea of a South Asian Union before our South Asian neighbours.

- Pending conclusion of SAPTA and SAFTA, India has indicated its willingness to conclude bilateral free trade agreements with those countries who are willing to move faster. The bilateral Free Trade Agreement entered into with Sri Lanka has been a big success. Services sector, particularly in the tourism and travel trade, has also witnessed a boom. Indian nationals now constitute the largest number of tourists to Sri Lanka and they are also the biggest spenders. In fact, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka in a speech recently made in Chennai called for the development of the South India – Sri Lanka sub region as a single market.

- India’s relationship with China is changing in response to the dynamics operating in both countries, regionally and globally. In the last few years, we have seen our relationship develop and diversify in many areas and at many levels. The level of mutual understanding which has been achieved is exemplified by our success in maintaining relative peace and tranquility for nearly three decades along a border which extends for about 3500 kilometres and where there are clear differences of perception. Especially noteworthy is the increased emphasis on the economic aspect of our relationship. Our bilateral trade has shot up from around US$ 200 million in the early ‘90s to around US$ 5 billion in 2002, and this year we hope to reach US$ 7 billion. Indian business and industry who used to talk of an invasion of India by Chinese goods
have now overcome their initial cultural and commercial apprehensions of Chinese business and are strengthening linkages in a pro-active manner.

- Japan accounts for 40% of the GDP of all the Asian countries together. Our trade and economic interaction with Japan is of the order of US$ 3.6 billion. We are also developing our political ties and have had exchanges at the level of Prime Ministers within the last three years.

**Phase II of our Look East policy**

India’s ‘Look-East’ policy is now over a decade old. The fact that successive governments in India continued with these policies show the extent of consensus there is within India of the validity and importance of this policy. With the holding of the first India-ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh last November, we have effectively entered **Phase II of our “Look East” policy**. At the Summit, Prime Minister Vajpayee proposed an India-ASEAN Free Trade area within 10 years and task forces are already hard at work to finalize a Framework Agreement by the time we hold the next Summit in October. We are also committed to supporting the Initiative for ASEAN Integration for bridging the developmental gap between old and new ASEAN, through capacity building and infrastructure development. We in fact, have a bilateral agreement with Singapore to cooperate in this sector. Another institutionalized mechanism for India-ASEAN cooperation is the India-ASEAN Business Summit being held once a year. This partnership will help in exploiting the synergies and complementarities between India and the ASEAN. India-ASEAN trade grew by 30% between 1999 and 2001 i.e. from US $ 7.6 billion to nearly US $ 10 billion.

With ASEAN engaged in negotiating free trade arrangements with India, China, Japan and South Korea, we stand for the first time on the threshold of an Asian economic community. This process will be further pushed along by other initiatives at the sub-regional level such as the Mekong Ganga Cooperation as well as a trilateral initiative for a transport network between Thailand, Myanmar and India.

**India and Singapore**

Ladies and gentlemen, in the development of our ties with ASEAN, few countries have been as creative and pro-active as Singapore. We
are grateful to our many friends here, in particular, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, for his vision and leadership in bringing India and ASEAN closer. This has been made possible by virtue of strong bilateral relationship that India and Singapore have built over the years. It was Prime Minister Goh who started the ‘India fever’ back in 1992 when India first embarked on its economic liberalization programme. It is in recognition of his outstanding role that India has this year decided to award the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding to Prime Minister Goh.

We have come a long way since. In April this year, India and Singapore launched negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) during the visit of Prime Minister Goh to India. Three rounds of CECA negotiations have been held and the agreement is expected to be concluded by early 2004. The CECA will lead to far-reaching benefits for both countries in trade and investment flows and in greater exchanges in professional services, especially in the Knowledge Economy. Business communities from both countries will be able to leverage each other’s strengths better while achieving greater competitiveness. It’s a win-win situation for both.

Ladies and Gentlemen, power in the 21st century will flow from the sinews of a well-run economy. I am convinced that the future of Asia rests in expanded economic interaction. The logic of economics is bound to inevitably overwhelm Asia just as it has happened in Europe. The key to enhancing Asian security lies in our collective ability to build mutual economic stakes in each other. This is a process, which is already happening throughout the region. Regional infrastructure linkages in the form of roads, railway lines and pipelines are rapidly becoming a reality. They hold the potential to knit Asia together in a manner never before seen. On its part, India too has been contributing to this process by expanding connectivity with its neighbours towards the east as well as the west.

I would like to conclude by recalling the words of Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong at the first ASEAN-India Summit in Phnom Penh in November 2002 about ASEAN-India relations. He said that ASEAN was building a jumbo jet and one wing was provided by its Plus Three Summit partners to its east (China, Japan and South Korea). But the jumbo needed a second wing to take off and hence, the ASEAN-India partnership. It is a
description I welcome. India would like to see ASEAN and in particular Singapore continue to be the engine of growth and of change in the region. India is happy to be part of a process of increased regional cooperation with ASEAN, China, Japan, Korea and the rest of the region. India is ready to board the jumbo jet towards greater collective security and enhanced prosperity.

Thank you.

020. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with an Israeli paper Ha’Aretz.

New Delhi, September 8, 2003.

Question: India established full-fledged diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992. What were the reasons for taking this decision then? Would it be fair to say that the Indian national movement had reservations against the Zionist movement?

Answer: India recognized Israel in September 1950. We have had an Israeli Consulate in Mumbai for many decades. The establishment of full diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992 followed events widely recognized as a turning point in the history of the Middle East.

The interaction between the people of India and the Jewish diaspora has a long history, dating back to the 1st century A.D. Two communities of the Jewish people in India even trace their roots to the ten ‘lost tribes’ of Israel. The story of the Jewish diaspora in India has been uniformly positive. India is one of very few countries in the world, which has never had a trace of anti-Semitism at any time in its history. The people of India were deeply anguished at the holocaust visited upon the Jewish people during the Second World War. If there were any reservations about the Zionist Movement, they were about some of the means adopted by the movement.

I believe India and Israel should focus on building bilateral relations on the basis of shared perspectives and commonalities between
our two democracies. This has to be a forward-looking exercise, rather than harking back to perceptions of the past.

**Question:** Many people compare India’s struggle against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism with Israel’s struggle against Palestinian terrorism. Is this a valid comparison? Can your position on not negotiating with Pakistan until acts of terror cease be compared to Israel’s decision not to implement the roadmap until Palestinian terrorism ceases?

**Answer:** India has a consistent and well-known position on terrorism. We oppose all acts of terrorism, wherever they occur. We have repeatedly said that no cause can justify violence and destruction, particularly aimed at civilians.

The circumstances under which we in India are tackling the menace of cross-border terrorism are different from the situation prevailing in the Middle East. But we do not really need to make comparisons.

Our objective should be to firmly deal with terrorism and its sponsors, financiers and arms suppliers. At the same time, our doors should always be open for processes which would restore peace, development and progress to societies which have been devastated by terrorism over many generations.

This has been our approach in India. We have said that for us to agree to a substantive dialogue on outstanding bilateral issues, Pakistan needs to show sincerity by ending cross-border terrorism. Meanwhile, we continue to make every effort to promote economic cooperation, cultural exchanges and people-to-people links, so that a conducive climate is created for a fruitful dialogue if and when stoppage of terrorism permits the commencement of the dialogues.

It is well-known that India welcomed the ‘Roadmap’ proposed by the Quartet, in the hope that it would guide the region away from violence and lead to the realization of the vision of two independent states of Israel and Palestine, coexisting in peace, within secure borders. It would, of course, be the actions of the governments and peoples of the region, which would determine how best this roadmap can be implemented.

**Question:** The visit of Prime Minister Sharon is seen in Israel as an opportunity to deepen and expand bilateral cooperation. What
are the priority areas of bilateral cooperation for India? Is defence the only area of interest, or are there other equally important areas?

**Answer:** You have correctly described the visit of Prime Minister Sharon as an opportunity for deepening and expanding bilateral cooperation. We see this first visit to India of a Prime Minister of Israel as a landmark in the history of our bilateral ties.

India-Israel relations have acquired a multi-dimensional character, particularly over the last decade. While our defence cooperation is substantial and growing, we have also a lot to share with each other in agricultural sciences, in high technology - including Information Technology, in peaceful applications of space technologies, etc. India has benefited from Israel’s world famous expertise in agricultural technologies. India is now Israel's second biggest trade partner in Asia, and the largest item of our trade is actually gems and jewellery. Tourism is another area with great potential, as is culture, since both our countries are host to some of mankind’s greatest historic and cultural treasures.

I am confident that the visit of Prime Minister Sharon will raise our bilateral relationship to an entirely new level of cooperation.

**Question:** Israel cooperates in the field of defence with both China and India. There are those who feel that Israel could consider the possibility of defence cooperation with Pakistan. If such cooperation develops, how would India react?

**Answer:** I do not want to address hypothetical questions or presume to advise another country on its cooperation with a third country.

**Question:** What do you think are President Musharraf’s hidden motivations when publicly declaring Pakistan’s eventual readiness to recognize Israel?

**Answer:** You have to address this question to President Musharraf.

**Question:** What is your attitude towards an eventual establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and Pakistan?

**Answer:** Sovereign countries are free to decide where their respective national interests lie.

**Question:** Pakistan claims to have developed weaponised nuclear
capability, both for its national defence and for the Islamic nations. The existence of several extreme fundamentalist and terrorist organizations in Pakistan is well known. In the event that President Musharraf is replaced by an extremist regime, what would the consequences be for the world in general and for your region in particular?

**Answer:** We have long known the reality of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons capability, and the potential for its misuse. We have also been mindful of the depth to which fundamentalism and international terrorism have taken root in our neighbourhood. Political instability and a deficit of democracy in our region should be of great concern, not just to us, but also to the international community. Obviously, the impact of any such instability in our region is the most direct on India.

**Question:** In this connection, it is often argued that the possibility of a nuclear war is ruled out since both India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons. Would this theory of a balance of terror remain valid if extremists, who see the bomb as a means to eliminate “the enemies of God” were to gain control over the nuclear weapons?

**Answer:** I do not want to speculate on nuclear theories or doomsday scenarios. I would only say that India developed its nuclear weapons in response to real concerns about its security environment and to maintain its strategic autonomy. We have acted most responsibly to minimize the possibility of a nuclear conflict in our region. Our nuclear doctrine is based on an explicit no-first-use policy. We have publicly stated our willingness to sign a no-first-use agreement regionally or internationally. Our nuclear deterrent is entirely defensive in nature and, most importantly, it is under firm civilian control.

**Question:** In Israel, Iran is seen as a country governed by fundamentalists, who actively support Islamic terrorist groups while rapidly developing a nuclear capability. Why is India indifferent to the threat from such a regime?

**Answer:** We view our relations with Iran, based on our own historical experiences. We have a tradition of friendly interaction with that country in a variety of fields, including trade and commerce, culture and energy. We believe that our cooperative, mutually beneficial
relations with Iran are a factor of peace, stability and moderation in our region.

**Question:** Over the past few years, the United States has established a physical presence in your region. It has bases in Pakistan now. How does India evaluate the American presence in this part of the world?

**Answer:** Our relationship with USA has undergone a qualitative transformation in recent years. A part of this process is regular and candid discussions on political and security issues of mutual concern in India’s extended neighbourhood, to harmonise our respective approaches, and to remain mindful of each other’s interests. We share many common interests in the region, including combating terrorism, and in the evolution of stable, moderate, prosperous and democratic states in our extended neighbourhood.

**Question:** The US policy of sanctions on arms exports often appears contradictory. Sometimes, it seems as if American restrictions on arms exports from third countries that receive US assistance is not merely motivated by a desire to protect their own industries. At other times, their policy seems restrictive. For instance, while Israel’s efforts to export the Phalcon system to China was stopped, the veto was lifted in favour of India. Yet USA blocked Indian efforts to obtain the Israeli Arrow missile system. How does India react to these developments?

**Answer:** I will not dwell on specific contracts or issues here. After the United States lifted sanctions on India in September 2001, our governments have been addressing this issue of liberalizing the regime for trade in high-technology defence systems. We have made some progress and are hopeful that our regular dialogue will clear up the remaining hurdles in this process.

**Question:** In retrospect, how does India see the war in Iraq now, nearly six months after it started? How do you see the arguments put forward by USA and UK in support of the war? What would India’s reaction be if the Americans were to extend their Iraq policy to countries like Iran, Syria, and even to North Korea?

**Answer:** From the start, India had hoped that the issue would be resolved peacefully through diplomatic efforts and that war would
be avoided. We were therefore disappointed at the outbreak of war. That is behind us now. Iraq now faces enormous challenges, ranging from security to reconstruction to the peaceful restoration of sovereignty to its people. We hope the international community can come together to address those challenges effectively. There must be a central role for the UN in this endeavour. It would be unwise to see parallels of Iraq in other countries of the region.

**Question:** Would India be ready to send troops to assist the Americans in Iraq, if the US obtains U.N. sanction?

**Answer:** We have made our position on this quite clear. Our decision on this would depend, inter alia, on factors involving our national security interests, India’s connections with the region, the role of the United Nations in Iraq and the contours of the political process in that country.

**Question:** At the present pace of population growth, India will soon surpass China to become the world’s most populous country. For years, China has been implementing a very harsh policy of limiting its birth-rate. Could this policy eventually be adopted in India?

**Answer:** In actual fact, India was one of the first countries in the world to launch a national family planning programme. Our population control strategy is based on our belief that durable change can only be achieved when people are themselves convinced of the need for it. Therefore our focus is on spreading literacy, education and awareness - particularly among women - improving maternal and neo-natal health care, and working for the empowerment of women. We still have a long way to go, but we have already achieved significant results in controlling population growth.

**Question:** India’s relations with Israel have developed enormously in the 12 years since diplomatic ties were established. At the same time, India has maintained its profound traditional friendship with the Arab world. Would this unique position inspire India to play a role as a mediator in the Middle East conflict?

**Answer:** As I observed earlier, India has consistently worked for a just and durable peace in the Middle East. We are happy to enjoy traditional ties of friendship with the Arab countries. Our cooperation
with Israel has developed very satisfactorily. While we believe that this can contribute to relationships in the region, we do not believe that this means the role of a mediator.

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021. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Columbia University on “India’s Economic Outlook and Perspectives on International Development”.


Professor Bollinger,
Professor Sachs,
Distinguished Guests,

I am honoured to be here in the oldest institution of higher learning of the State of New York, as it enters its 250th year. I thank Professor Jeffrey Sachs for his invitation to me. When he wrote to me, I was particularly struck by his reference to the Global Development Dialogue, which I have been advocating for the last few years. The Earth Institute, which he heads, has done valuable work on issues of the greatest concern to developing countries. It is now pioneering a major programme of policy research on the Indian economy.

Much has been written and said about the Indian economy in recent years. We have seen positive appraisals of our progress, as well as impatience at the pace of our reforms. Investment Fund managers and credit rating agencies have shown a cyclical pattern of “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” to sectors of our economy over the last decade. Our reforms have often been compared with those of others, with both flattering and critical conclusions.

I would like to focus today on this theme of where the Indian economy is, and where we would like to take it in the foreseeable future.

Since our economic reforms were launched just over a decade ago, the Indian economy has sustained an annual average growth of over 6%. This average actually masks much faster progress in the west and south of India, where the growth in the nineties was comparable to that of the
Southeast and East Asian Tigers in their prime. Even though last year was a drought year, GDP growth exceeded 4%. This year we expect to touch nearly 7%.

Our foreign exchange reserves are nearly US$ 90 billion and fast moving towards the 100 billion mark. The current account deficit turned into a surplus over the last three years. This was achieved through non-debt creating flows, so that our external debt has remained virtually static in nominal terms. The debt servicing and debt GDP ratios have fallen sharply. We are now repaying foreign debt ahead of schedule. This year alone we have prepaid about US$ 3 billion.

From a food deficient country, India has moved to a self-sufficient one. During the current year, close to 7 billion dollars of agricultural produce was exported. India is the world’s largest producer of milk and among the largest producers of sugar, eggs and fish.

Though impressive, these aggregate figures do not fully capture the quiet transformation that is taking place at the level of enterprises and individuals. Indian enterprises are reaching global scales in quality and output. Corporations from all over the world are coming to India for manufacturing or services.

India is becoming a production base and an export hub for diverse goods, from agricultural products to automobile components to high-end services. Indian firms are now part of global production chains - importing sub-assemblies, adding value to them and re-exporting them. Taking advantage of its pool of high-quality scientific talent, international corporations have established large R & D centres in India.

All these strengths have resulted in a greater integration with world trade and our trade has risen from 21 per cent to 33 per cent of our GDP in a decade.

Information technology is transforming rural lives. In a quiet revolution that has linked rural credit with modern technology, 30 million farmer credit cards have been issued in the past five years.

Our strong economic growth is succeeding in bringing people out of poverty. 60 million people emerged from the ranks of the poor in a six year period. We have still a long way to go before we can eradicate poverty in our country. However, it increasingly appears that the ingredients of rapid poverty eradication are falling into place.
From roads to telecommunication, we are seeing the beginning of a qualitative change and growth in infrastructure. In the last three or four months, India has been adding nearly 2 million mobile connections every month. The enormous successes of our IT professionals and the new successes of IT enabled services have been made possible by the fact that the data and voice carrying capacity in India today is 75 thousand times what it was just 4 years ago. We have launched an ambitious project for a highways network, which would link our major metropolitan centres and provide improved connectivity to our rural areas. These roads are already transforming our economy, as your freeways did to your economy many decades ago. Up-gradation of facilities has sharply reduced the turn-around time in Indian ports.

We have taken many steps towards energy security. There have been 7 major finds in 4 areas in India. We have invested in oil fields abroad - in Sakhalin in Russia with an investment of $ 2 billion; in Sudan with an investment of about $ 1 billion; in Vietnam, Libya, Syria and other countries.

In the field of science, India is one of only three countries which have indigenously built super computers and one of the six countries in the world that builds and launches satellites. Two years ago, we launched a satellite into geo-stationary orbit. We plan to send a spacecraft to the moon in the next five years.

Today, India has the confidence that the basic fundamentals of the Indian economy are sounder than they have been for several decades. A young, better-educated, more confident, and increasingly impatient Indian population is driving India’s progress and demanding from government the conditions to fulfil its aspirations.

The biggest challenge that our economy faces is our fiscal deficit. To remedy this, we have embarked on a transformation of the tax regime, improving the tax collection machinery and introducing a simple and rational tax code. We are moving towards implementation of a value added tax. We are working towards more accurately targeted subsidies and full recovery of user charges for infrastructure. To underline our commitment to this endeavour, we recently passed fiscal responsibility legislation, whereby we are required to bring down our revenue deficit to zero within the next five years. This is a daunting task, but we are hopeful of achieving it.
I have dwelt on India’s economic achievements in some detail because many of these do not capture news headlines. These achievements also show that there is no weakening in India’s resolve to continue with the reform process. Expanding the role of market forces is an imperative of globalization and will remain the central theme of our reforms.

Of course, there has been a keen debate in our country on the pace and sequence of reforms. This is both inevitable and desirable. Our effort has consistently been to cushion the impact of reforms on the poorer sections of our society. We have tried to reconcile competing interests and to avoid sudden disruptions in our economy. We believe that reforms following a democratic consensus are enduring, as all constituencies are carried along with us.

It is also my conviction that the new experience of successful coalition governments in India has been ideal for democratic governance, balancing divergent views and accommodating regional and sectoral interests more effectively. India is a rare multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual democracy in the world. We have an open and vibrant press, free and fair elections and an independent judiciary. This imparts stability and consistency to economic policy-making.

Where will the Indian economy go in the future? Looking at opportunities and challenges, I see an ever-brightening horizon.

Our software industry has been growing from strength to strength. The competitive edge of our IT industry will be enhanced by value-addition in software and by our rapid advances in our hardware industry. The balance between volumes and value will add strength to the IT industry.

Opportunities are also multi-fold in biotechnology. Research & Development has opened a wide avenue of growth in health support systems. Clinical research is breaching new frontiers in medicine. Advances in biogenetics reach out into agriculture and food-processing chains, which will provide livelihood security for our masses.

The architecture of our financial institutions is now comparable to the best in the world. The securities markets are a major success story. On-screen trading has brought security and speed to share market transactions. Other products like interest rate derivatives, equity and commodities futures provide a range of trade opportunities, not available
in many countries. Since India is well positioned in the time zone between New York and Tokyo, I see India emerging as a centre of financial transaction and intermediation. We are developing strategies and strengthening structures to enable this. The sound regulatory framework and availability of skilled manpower make this goal achievable.

I have already mentioned that Indian industry is today globally competitive. We will expand the areas of its manufacturing excellence and widen their reach.

Finally, it is my dream that the capabilities of knowledge that India possesses should be converted into products of universal use. To secure positions of excellence through a service-oriented economy and to provide products and solutions for human need would be the growth vision for India.

Distinguished Guests,

While documenting India’s economic achievements and articulating its goals and aspirations, I am conscious that we do not function in a vacuum. As a developing country, India is profoundly affected by trends in international trading and investment regimes, developments in the agenda of globalisation and realisation of the goals of sustainable development.

We were therefore deeply disappointed by the lack of positive outcome on the Doha development agenda at Cancun recently. India has over a half billion people dependent on agriculture for their food security, livelihood security and rural development. Along with other developing countries, we had hoped that the distortions caused by domestic support and export subsidy in developed countries could be corrected. The developing countries are also severely affected by the asymmetries and imbalances of the Uruguay Round which have not been addressed. The headlong march towards market access by the industrialised countries denies the necessary policy space for developing countries seeking to industrialise. At the same time, the developing countries have been denied free access for their trained manpower to the developed economies.

The uneven spread of the benefits of globalisation continues to accentuate disparities. The resources for development available to developing countries remain far short of the needs. The Convention on
Biodiversity has failed to transfer technologies to developing countries in return for their biodiversity resources.

As the Indian economy motors on towards further growth and versatility, India will also work along with developing countries to remedy the inequities of the international economic system. We firmly believe that in the inter-dependent world of today, it is no longer possible to sustain islands of development surrounded by underdevelopment and deprivation. The world needs to recognize this and take corresponding measures.

Thank you.

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022. Statement by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the 27th annual meeting of the Ministers of the Foreign Affairs of G – 77 countries.


I would like to felicitate Morocco for the excellent leadership it has provided since January 2003. Morocco helped us focus on key issues of concern to developing countries and facilitated G-77 solidarity in action.

I also take this opportunity to welcome our incoming Chairman, Qatar. We wish Qatar a productive tenure and look forward to a constructive engagement with it in the pursuit of our common goals and objectives.

The past year has witnessed several challenges for developing countries. The world economy has not yet recovered from its slowdown registered in 2001. The heightened geopolitical uncertainties of late 2002 and early 2003 continue to pose a downside risk to global economic growth. Both world trade and FDI flows lack dynamism, reflecting and contributing to the overall weakness in the world economy. This has exacerbated the difficulties of developing countries by limiting their capacity to meet the development challenges that confront them. Equally the past two years have seen a forceful reassertion of global economic inter-dependence and we need to ensure that the concerns of developing countries are fully taken into account by the international community. In this context I would like to stress the importance of achieving greater
equity in international economic relations and greater voice for the developing countries in the decision-making structures in the international trade, monetary and financial institutions.

We are disappointed that the 5th Ministerial Meeting at Cancun failed to produce an agreement that would have addressed the interests and concerns of the developing countries. A rule-based multilateral trading regime is obviously best for all countries. But this should represent a fair balance of interests of all countries, not just a few. The solidarity, cohesion and determination shown by the developing countries in defending their vital national interests were unprecedented. Of course, we need to be aware that there could be increased pressures on the developing countries to agree to further concessions. The developing countries need to be able to retain their unity of purpose and solidarity that we were able to demonstrate in Cancun, when faced with such pressures.

Against this background, we need to strengthen UNCTAD, which is the focal point for consensus building and trade and development issues, and enhance its capacity to assist developing countries in respect of trade policies, diversification and national strategies and building up international competitiveness, and to enable it to play an important role in integrating the development dimension into the international legal framework and rules on trade.

The challenges posed by globalisation demand a high degree of unity and solidarity among developing countries. The Millennium Development Goals may not by themselves constitute a comprehensive development plan, but they are a measurable set of benchmarks which could provide indications of whether the world is moving towards a more inclusive and equitable globalisation called for in the Declaration. The challenge is to translate the commitments that have been undertaken into concrete actions so that these internationally agreed development goals are achieved. We also need to focus on the implementation of the outcomes for the Monterrey Conference and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. We hope that the follow-up mechanisms put in place would afford us with an opportunity to comprehensively review the implementation of the outcomes. We need to focus on ensuring that the developed countries fulfil their commitments to make available financial and technological resources to the developing countries.

At the Havana Summit, the developing countries had identified broad priorities to map out a better future for our countries. We welcome the
progress made so far in the implementation of the Programme of Action. This agenda, however, needs to be pursued with greater vigour. The upcoming high-level conference on South-South Cooperation to review the progress achieved is timely. This conference should provide an opportunity for reaffirmation of our priorities. We believe that there are a large number of areas in which developing countries can assist each other.

India remains fully committed to extending technical, economic and scientific assistance in substantial measure to developing countries. India’s various technical and economic cooperation programmes, including the ITEC Programme cover 154 countries, and India spends about US$200 million annually on these activities. Over the past five decades, India has provided over US$3 billion worth of technical assistance to developing countries in four broad fields - civil and military training to promote capacity building and human resource development; deputation of experts to work with other governments, setting up of projects; organisation of study tours by senior officials from abroad; and humanitarian and disaster relief, principally through supply of food grains and medicines. Over 6,000 representatives of developing countries undergo training or study in over 250 Indian universities and institutions annually. The scope of the training programmes is very broad, covering subjects such as parliamentary studies, diplomacy, administration, accounting, audit and banking, mass communications, rural development, English language teaching and information technology. India stands ready to expand such programmes and share our experience with fellow-developing countries.

The 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Group of 77, to be commemorated in June 2004, will be an important landmark. The G-77 has rendered valuable service to developing countries. We have to remain engaged in a continuous process to forge common positions and to push the concerns of the developing countries to the forefront of the international economic and trade agenda. I reiterate India’s full support and involvement in this effort.
I am happy to be here and to share my views with you on ‘Resurgent India in Asia’. I propose to cover this subject in four parts - an introductory part, a part on why I think India is resurgent, thirdly, India and Asia and fourthly, a concluding part.

The United States has been heavily invested in Asia, especially since the end of the Second World War. But its deeper engagement with India is of more recent vintage.

According to conventional wisdom prevailing in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Mediterranean was considered the sea of the past, the Atlantic the sea of the present and the Pacific the sea of the future. The Indian Ocean, providing the link between the past and the future, was not in the reckoning, nor was the littoral landmass above it.

During the Cold War years, the strategic dimensions of India-U.S. relations were dictated by John Foster Dulles’s dictum: ‘if you are not with us, you are against us’. India’s refusal to join the anti-communist military alliance systems and commitment to non-alignment set limits to our relationship at that time. This may explain why interest in India in the U.S. had been limited in the past, compared to US interest in other parts of Asia. Happily, all this is changing now. The largest democracy and the most powerful democracy in the world are coming together as never before.

Over the past fifty-six years since our independence in 1947, India has established a sound and stable liberal democracy. It has done so by successfully conducting free and fair elections, by ensuring repeatedly peaceful transfer of political authority, by empowering women and by devolving powers to elected local authorities. The dynamics of coalition
politics that has come to dominate the central government over the past
decade has further strengthened governance by consensus. The manner
in which India has kept the flame Of democracy burning bright is
unparalleled in the developing world.

An independent judiciary and a lively, thriving media buttress
democratic institutions in India. Delhi alone has 25 daily newspapers, 13
published in English and the remaining in Hindi and Urdu, besides ten
24-hour television news channels. Other major cities and states capitals
have their own newspapers and television channels, many of them in
regional languages. This effervescence is reflected also in the development
and blossoming of the Indian arts, including literature, and the energy of
the Indian entertainment industry.

Although a relative latecomer in initiating economic reforms, India
quickly outstripped its traditional 'Hindu rate of growth'. Since 1991, India
has recorded an average growth of over 6%. The size of the economy
had doubled since then, and we hope to re-double it now in less than a
decade, with a target growth rate of 8%. Already, India is the fourth largest
economy in the world in terms of purchasing power parity. Poverty levels
have dramatically declined and the feel-good factor is high, with business
confidence showing the most optimistic outlook since 1995, according to
a July 2003 survey.

The Latin American crisis of the 1980s and the Asian crisis of 1997
taught India the virtue of maintaining healthy foreign exchange reserves.
These currently stand at around US$ 90 billion and are going up by a
billion dollars every two weeks. At 28%, for the five-year period up to
September 2003, India has had the highest cumulative annual growth
rates in reserves accumulation in Asia. This provides India a self-insurance
against the vicissitudes of the international financial systems, as also
flexible options for exchange rate management. Besides, India has a
healthy current account surplus. Short-term debt has declined steadily
during this period. India’s external debt to GDP, at 17%, is substantially
lower than Asia’s average. India has paid back its IMF loans ahead of
schedule and has also prepaid some World Bank and ADB loans. In fact,
India has now become a net lender to IMF. In the last six months, India
contributed US$ 355 million in cash to IMF, which was in turn lent by IMF
to Brazil and Burundi.

The successful management of the external sector has, in turn, led
to the stabilization of the Rupee. Lower inflation, in the low single digit,
has led to a decline in interest rates. From a ‘ship-to-mouth’ existence in
the mid-1960s, India is now a food-grain exporter, with national buffer
stocks at over 30 million tones, despite a bad monsoon year in 2002. We
exported, in the current year, close to US$ 7 billion of agricultural produce
and our assistance to Afghanistan includes a million tones of wheat, being
supplied in part in the form of high-protein biscuits.

It is interesting that Indians are also now investing abroad. We have
invested in oil fields in several countries including Russia, Sudan and
Vietnam. Aggregate Indian investments in the United States in the past
three years, according to some estimates, is close to a billion dollars,
almost keeping pace with U.S. foreign direct investment into India since
the year 2000, which has averaged only about US$ 300-350 million each
year.

Two areas of special concern to India are the fiscal deficit and
elimination of poverty. The consolidated fiscal deficit, at 10% of the GDP,
is unsustainable. The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act
will help government bring down its borrowing in phases and buttress
government efforts to raise tax revenues. The recent gains in poverty
reduction, by pulling up 60 million people from below the poverty line in a
period of six years, requires to be accelerated both by promoting growth
and improving the implementation of special schemes directed towards
poverty elimination.

We are heartened by the optimistic prognostication of two young
Cambridge-based scholars, Yasheng Huang of the Harvard Business
School and Tarun Khanna of MIT, published in Foreign Policy last month,
that while India is not outperforming China overall, it is doing better in
certain key areas, and that such success may enable India to catch up
with and perhaps even overtake China. It is true that a number of Indian
companies compete internationally with best that Europe and the United
States have to offer and that India has the potential of becoming the
world's technology lab. India’s 250 universities, 1500 research institutions
and over 10,000 higher education centres produce 200,000 engineers
and 300,000 non-engineering post graduates every year, including 5,000
doctors of philosophy (PhDs), besides over 2 million undergraduates.

India’s comparative advantage in knowledge-driven areas of
economic activities has made it both attractive for outsourcing of IT enabled
services and an R&D hub. 190 Fortune-500 companies already outsource
to India. The IT segment of the Indian economy is expected to grow from
US$ 1.5 billion in 2002 to US$ 17 billion in 2008, according to a recent NASSCOM-McKinsey study. Export of software services from India grew by 26% last year, and together with electronics hardware exports, account now for 18% of India’s total exports. Efforts are on to replicate this achievement in the areas of biotechnology, biogenetics and pharmaceuticals.

Development of high technology, such as satellite applications, have led to a telecommunications revolution and the establishment of long-distance telephony, TV broadcast, radio networking and bringing connectivity to remote parts of the country. Data and voice carrying capacity in India are increasing exponentially as also are phone and internet-connections. The meteorological cameras on INSAT have helped us monitor cyclones and save lives and property, while the IRS remote-sensing satellites have helped us build a national natural resources management system, including crop monitoring and wasteland mapping for reclamation. Other achievements in high technology include our success in indigenously building super-computers and the complete nuclear fuel-cycle facilities and to placing geo-synchronous satellites in orbit. Prime Minister Vajpayee just announced, during the course of his Independence Day address on 15th August, that we shall send a Spacecraft to the Moon within the next five years.

A similar transformation is taking place in the areas of roads and ports. The turn around time in Indian ports has been halved in the past few years and further improvements are under way by upgrading existing facilities and building new terminals ports. India is now executing the world’s biggest single project, in 13,000 kilometers of four lane roads linking the four corners of India as also its four major cities. The project is already generating daily employment for quarter million construction workers and 10,000 supervisors and engineers. This is supplemented by equally important rural roads development schemes to improve the infrastructure of India’s interior. Another large infrastructure project for the moment at a conceptual stage, is on linking of India’s major rivers as part of an effective long-term strategy to prevent droughts and floods and to better harness India’s fresh water resources for irrigation.

III

Our performance so far has revealed our strengths as well as future areas of growth. It has demonstrated where we can provide leadership and how we can integrate into the global economy. As India’s economic
development accelerates, India’s association with Asia will only widen and deepen further.

Asia’s challenge lies in its immense political, economic and social diversity, as also the seemingly unique dynamics of its different regions. A cooperative future global order will inevitably require full Asian participation. With its increasing weight in world economy, Asia holds the key to collective global prosperity and security. Asia’s contribution to world output has doubled since 1950. Both IMF and the World Bank consider that Asia will continue to power global growth in the coming years. We require, therefore, to advance the principles of democracy, development and dialogue, on the basis of respect for pluralism and national sovereignty, as the guiding principles of Asian and global progress.

The primary impulse for this has to come from within the Asian countries themselves. But others, including the United States, have a strong stake in it too. If all major powers in Asia and beyond work together, in a spirit of cooperation rather than competition, to smoothen its fault lines, combat terrorism, counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and advance free commerce and political freedoms, we would create a basis for a stable and prosperous Asia that will have a salutary effect on the rest of the world. Guided by this vision, India is working vigorously to strengthen its relations with its Asian partners - with China, Japan, Southeast Asia, West Asian countries and Central Asian neighbours. We have a similar vision of South Asia unshackled from historical divisions, and bound together in collective pursuit of peace and prosperity.

India seeks to promote in Asia in general, and in South Asia in particular, its ethos of pluralism, tolerance, democracy and human rights and by promoting the idea of societies that are multiethnic, multilingual, multi-religious and multicultural.

Eighteen years of the existence of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has so far failed to catalyse significant exchanges among its constituents in the social or economic domains. To shake SAARC from this relative torpor, earlier this year I called for a movement toward a South Asian Union. I believe that a South Asia, with one currency, one tariff regime and free movement of goods, services and people, is well within the realm of possibility. South Asia should emerge as a region with comprehensive air, rail, road and sea linkages. Movement in this direction would lead to softer national boundaries, and eventually,
the seven South Asian countries can constitute a single economic space within one system and a single market.

Reaching beyond South Asia, East and Southeast Asia have remained a natural focus of India’s foreign and trade policy. China is a contiguous country and we share land or maritime boundaries, not just with our South Asian neighbours and China, but also with several ASEAN countries such as Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia. Our historical and civilizational ties also extend to Japan.

In the past, India’s engagement with much of Asia, including Southeast and East Asia, was built on an idealistic conception of Asian brotherhood, based on shared experiences of colonialism and of cultural ties. The rhythm of the region today is determined, however, as much by trade, investment and production as by history and culture. That is what motivates our decade-old ‘Look East’ policy. Already, this region accounts for 45% of our external trade.

The first phase of India’s ‘Look East’ policy was ASEAN-centred and focussed primarily on trade and investment linkages. The new phase of this policy is characterised by an expanded definition of ‘East’, extending from Australia to East Asia, with ASEAN at its core. The new phase also marks a shift from trade to wider economic and security issues, including joint efforts to protect the sea-lanes and coordinate counter-terrorism activities.

Last year, the first India-ASEAN Summit was held at Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The Prime Minister of India suggested in this meeting that India and ASEAN should enter into a free trade agreement. It is a matter of great satisfaction to us that the Framework Agreement for this purpose has already been finalized between India and ASEAN and will be signed at the Second India-ASEAN Summit at Bali in a few days from now. This major breakthrough should contribute significantly to an increasing integration of the India-ASEAN economic space over the coming years, including a free trade agreement. India is simultaneously negotiating an FTA with Thailand and a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement with Singapore. Both these negotiations are well advanced. These, along with measures to improve physical connectivity and transportation links such as the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway and the Delhi-Hanoi railway line, as part of the Ganga-Mekong project, will improve India-ASEAN linkages even further. With ASEAN engaged in parallel negotiations on free trade arrangements with India, China, Japan
and South Korea, we are now perhaps at the threshold of an Asian economic community.

India’s relations with China are following a positive course. Both sides have made a steady effort to overcome past differences and build a forward-looking relationship. Our bilateral trade has shot up from under US$ 200 million in the early 1990s to nearly US$ 4.5 billion in 2002, and current trends might carry this figure to US$ 6 billion this year, with the balance of trade markedly in India’s favour, which is not the case with many other of China’s trading partners. The apprehensions of Indian business in dealing with Chinese competition is slowly withering away. Our trade with Japan, a country that accounts for 40% of Asian GDP, is at a disappointing $ 3.6 billion, but the two sides are now taking pro-active steps to spur our commercial and economic interaction.

The Gulf region and the wider Middle East is of great importance to India. It is a major source of our energy supplies. Some 3.5 million Indians are employed in the region, over 1.5 million in Saudi Arabia alone. Iraq in the pre-1990 days once provided 30% of our oil imports and was home to 100,000 Indians. Given the growth trends, India’s dependence on energy supplies from the area is only going to increase.

We also have traditional links with Central Asia and are exploring new trade and transportation connections to provide a strong economic dimension to our relations with countries of the region. The Central Asian republics could be an alternative source for India’s energy supplies. India is actively engaged in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Besides food support, we have provided buses, civilian aircraft and human resource training in a variety of areas through our $270 million assistance programme, which extends also to agriculture, irrigation and the education and health sectors.

**IV**

I have attempted a quick sketch of Indian involvement with Asia as a whole, stretching beyond our extended neighbourhood, from the Gulf of Hormuz to the Straits of Malacca and between West and Central Asia to Southeast and East Asia. While the world economic outlook continues to be fragile, Asia continues to progress. India, by all accounts, is set to post robust growth in the coming decade. As statistics show, the dragons, tigers and elephants within the Asian landmass have begun to move, with the hiccups of the late 1990s behind them.
It is estimated that by 2010, 60% of the world’s population in the 20-35 age group will be Asian, contributing a vast pool of producers of goods and services and driving global demand. Together with strong growth in India and China, and favourable trends in demographics and increasing intra-Asian trade, Asia is set to contribute over 50% of global GDP by 2025, surpassing the GDP of North America and Europe combined. By virtue of their population, size and growth rates, India and China will play a significant role in the demand and use of technology, FDI flows and in the new equilibrium of economic power. Asia will thus be the fulcrum of economic activity in the twenty-first century, which is seen by many now as an Asian century.

This, however, is predicated on an environment of peace, predictability and security. India has, therefore, not only an interest but a stake in the stability of Asia, which is what we share with the United States. It follows that we, therefore, also have a common interest in dealing with any potential threats to Asian security, whether prompted by non-State actors or by adverse political or economic developments in the region.

What are the most important threats facing Asia today? Terrorism continues to stalk Asia as never before. The bombings at Bali and Mumbai testify to that. Terrorist networks have spread across many Asian countries. Al Qaida and Taliban have regrouped in Afghanistan and Pakistan, aided and abetted by elements within the State structure in Pakistan. The intersection between weapons of mass destruction and terrorism is another major threat, again fostered through dangerous and deliberate nuclear and missile transfers in the region.

Peace, thus, is under the greatest threat in Asia. From the stand-off in North Korea to the violence in Philippines and Aceh in Indonesia to the renewed threats to the Karzai regime in Afghanistan and the senseless violence in Iraq and Middle-East. These threats to peace will have to be dealt with and dealt with effectively and quickly so that violence subsides and peace reigns. I have no doubt that this will happen and that Asia shall fulfil its destiny in the 21st century for the betterment of its people and the rest of the world. India will play an ever increasing role in this journey.
024. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with the Thai paper *Matichon*.

New Delhi, October 9, 2003.

Please see Document No. 202

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New Delhi, October 18, 2003.

It is an honour for me to be here today, to mark the Infantry day Anniversary, and to deliver the Ninth Field Marshall Cariappa Memorial Lecture.

Field Marshall Cariappa, a great son of India, straddled two distinct eras; and was for the Indian Army an invaluable bridge between them. He was the first Indian to be commissioned at the age of 19, the first Indian Brigadier, the first Indian to enter the Imperial Defence College in England, the first Indian Officer to enter the Staff College Quetta, the first Indian Major General in 1947 and the first Indian Chief of the Army Staff. His leadership and enduring imprint is evident even now.

At this forum today, I propose to share some of my thoughts with you on the emerging world order in the 21st century and the role of India in it.

Crystal gazing about the world order is at the best of times, a hazardous task. The ebb and flow of international relations has been a given constant, since the modern State system was conceived more than four hundred years ago. Certain tumultuous events, however, have a distinct impact on the contours of the world order and add clarity to our perception of it. At best, we can make comparisons, based on past events and point to discernible trends, which I propose to do today.

The end of the Second World War, the dawn of the atomic age, and the roll back of colonialism, beginning with our independence, was
one major watershed in 20th century history. The victors of that War, sought to create a new world order reflecting their power equations and aiming to ensure collective security through the United Nations. The ensuing international compact lasted for nearly half a century though it struggled to mask major contradictions.

All this has changed now. This system was bound to fail as it was undemocratic and because it was becoming increasingly unrealistic. A bloc-centric paradigm, which informed every aspect of international relations, froze true progress towards the building of a durable world order for over five decades.

The Non-aligned Movement symbolised the articulation of a rational alternative, free from the politics of East-West divide. But the global reach of the Cold War ensnared the non-aligned too and enfeebled them.

The fall of the Berlin Wall symbolised the end of the distortions brought about by the Cold War but failed to usher in the emergence of a genuine global order even in terms of the U.N. Charter conceived 50 years back. Instead, the world slipped into what has been termed, for want of a better phrase, as the post-Cold War period. This post-Cold War phase has been a mixed bag of new opportunities and persistent challenges. It carried on with the habits of Cold War power politics and the institutions continued with the legacies of the past. There was little interest or inclination to redefine or determine the structures that may endure.

Military power, backed by possession of nuclear weapons remained critical determinant of the power of nations. While the Warsaw Pact withered away along with its mentor- the Soviet Union, the slowly expanding NATO has been, for well over a decade, groping for a mandate, which responds to the challenges thrown up by contemporary reality. State sovereignties that were sustained due to the exigencies of the Cold War, came under increasing pressure in the post-Cold War phase and the political map of Europe - which was the main theatre of Cold War-transformed itself, though not altogether peacefully.

By the end of the century, all nations recognised the unprecedented economic, technological and military pre-eminence of the United States — which, as scholars observed, is without a parallel in human history. The sustained expansion and growth in US economy defied prophesies of ‘imperial overstretch’ made popular by one noted historian (Paul
It is important to differentiate between US power and unilateralism. It is not necessary that one leads to the other. Nor is it advisable that US power be countered by outmoded concepts of balance of power through countervailing military strength or confrontation — the Cold War proved the utter futility of such confrontation. The US Secretary of State, Powell, in a recent speech emphasised the need for partnership to replace confrontation, and I have no difficulty in endorsing his view. India’s vision of a multipolar world is one of partnership and not confrontation.

The post-Cold War drift, which has continued so far, has also comprised many dominant trends. First and foremost, it was the malaise afflicting the UN system: lack of democratic functioning, virtual atrophying of the development mandate of UN, fragmentation of its disarmament agenda, subservience of the human rights campaign to political ends, and continued neglect of global imperatives on the environment front. UNSG’s cry for the reform of all of UN’s principal organs at the inaugural of the current session of UNGA gives an eloquent expression to the UN malaise.

What are the current realities?

The all-encompassing process of globalisation is marching on: trans-national linkages have shaped the world — under the onslaught of dispersion and dissemination of technology, particularly information and communication, investments, breaking of barriers to free trade, deregulation of economies, global concerts to meet environmental threats, big increase in movement of peoples across frontiers, pandemic diseases, narcotics and organised crime.

Old sources of trans-national conflicts which had been frozen during the Cold War have also begun to re-surface. Conflicts are being visualised about access to and transit of energy and water resources.
Skewed development in global economy has resulted in distortions too. There is so much food that farmers have to be subsidised for ensuring survival of agriculture in rich countries. On the other hand, famine and starvation are compelling farmers in the developing world to seek subsidies to help them just to exist.

In geo-political terms, there has been a steady diffusion of power and influence to Asia, with all trends pointing to this century being an Asian century.

Whatever the eventual contours of this world order, let me emphasise two points; unlike other eras and epochs, this one will be under far greater compulsion to be reflective of peaceful processes rather than of the victories in wars; second, that India is an indispensable factor in the ensuing global equations, and is poised to making its contribution once again.

In the political and social realm a great schism has come to endure between a near universal norm of democratic governance for sovereign states and a highly discriminatory, exclusive and prescriptive international order inherited from the last century’s wars.

Since September 11, 2001, a global order beset with the trends and contradictions, described above, finds itself starkly confronted by international terrorism and its linkages with weapons of mass destruction. Even leading nations are today struggling to grasp the true dimensions of this threat.

Who is friend and foe in this battle against terrorism is a critical question to answer today. If foes were allowed to masquerade as friends, the forces of global terrorism will never yield.

The battle against global terror has led to compelling review of classical notions of state sovereignty. The international community has to find accepted ways to deal with States, which are incapable — willfully or otherwise — to exercise their sovereign responsibilities and therefore descend to becoming ‘failed States’; to peddle proliferation for their own ends or to advance their collapsibility as the biggest reason to write off all their sins of omission and commission.

Non-democratic regimes, fostering values of intolerance, fundamentalism, extremism and its favourite child-terrorism are certainly not the building blocks of world order. In fact, they are, the biggest roadblocks to its attainment.
Democracies, which are particularly vulnerable to terrorism, also have a natural affinity to work together to eradicate that menace. Democracies also have a unique resilience and strength, which time and again it has been proven, enables them to prevail over forces of terror and disruption.

What is India’s strength today?

India is a microcosm of the globe because of its sub-continental size and a population accounting for nearly one-sixth of humanity.

India has shown to the world that she is conscious of its responsibilities as a Nuclear Weapon State and has refrained from brinkmanship despite the gravest of cross-border provocations.

There is greater understanding of the compulsions behind our nuclear tests and a realisation that a secure and stable India will be an asset to the emerging world order.

India is the world’s largest democracy, and is one of the six fastest growing economies of the world ranking fourth in terms of Purchasing Power Parity. The economy comprises a strong middle class with rapidly increasing purchasing power - expected to be larger than that of the European Union in the future. Areas of strength in our economy are not confined to information technology and biotech but evidence is emerging of world class production in automobile sector, steel-making, space and other cutting edge fields.

There is an abundance of diverse natural resources, sound economic, industrial and market fundamentals with the second largest pool of scientific and technical manpower in almost every area of human endeavour. Our IT professionals create human bonds that are truly global.

India has now become a net creditor to the International Monetary Fund, which has established our credentials as a fiscally responsible State. We have also informed a large group of nations that we no longer require their bilateral aid.

The phase of liberalisation in India has entered its second decade. This is the phase of consolidation, backed by strong domestic consensus. We can take legitimate pride in our achievements thus far, while at the same time renew our determination, as a nation, that we will not allow this momentum to slip.
How does India visualise the world order? It is not easy to answer this question in full in a short time but certain basic points deserve mention.

The world today is different in so many respects to that of fifty years ago, when the United Nations, the GATT- the predecessor of the WTO, the World Bank and the IMF were born. The principal stakeholders in the globalised economy are far too diverse to allow simplistic prescriptions of “one size fits all.”

The methodologies of the Cold War era are passé. A reformed multilateral system would need an enduring spirit of consensus building and collective decision-making.

The concept of multi-polarity sometimes is mistaken for a policy of creating poles in opposition to each other. These are prescriptions that have in them seeds for re-creating the confrontationist model of the Cold War. They do not serve India’s interests.

To combat current threats, there is a clear need to fashion responses that carry rule-based legitimacy, which would allow states to have a clear understanding of the boundaries of inter-state behaviour and norms of intra-state governance.

The internationalisation of domestic politics and economics on the one hand, and the domestication of international issues on the other is now a well-established fact of globalisation. It cannot be rolled back. But its content can be redefined, its processes better managed and its fruits more evenly spread. In assessing the aftermath of Cancun, we must redouble our efforts at reinvigorating the sinew of globalisation, and avoid any loss of momentum.

The conceptual template and institutional structures of managing globalization are themselves in need of reform. The NAM must re-channel its energies to accomplish focused tasks. G-15 or G-77 have to be result-oriented.

There is pressing need for sweeping and comprehensive reform of the international system as represented by the United Nations.

Reconfiguration and reform of the Security Council is essential, not just to reflect changed realities but also to manage the collective security challenges of the future. This needs to be followed by reform of the economic sinews of international relations.
Non-proliferation itself must discard outmoded concepts and redirect efforts on sources of true proliferation concern. Its success as a collective effort would obviate need for regime change to ensure non-proliferation.

If globalisation is the trend, then multilateralism is its life-sustaining mechanism, for no process will survive without a genuine spirit of multilateralism, underlined by the belief that global problems require global solutions globally arrived at. Otherwise, the world faces the risk of repeating the mistakes of the past.

India believes that it is well placed to both contribute to globalisation as well as reap its benefits. If in the last decade, we adjusted our internal reforms to conform to the needs of globalisation, the time has come to seek a reform of globalisation itself. This should be an inclusive process, creating a stake for everyone in its continued progression.

India’s constructive contribution to the globalisation process is well recognized. Our ultimate goal is to create equitable globalisation, which embraces multi-polarity and democracy, creating space for all to live in peace and prosperity. The limitations of unilateralism are all too evident, the latest example we see in events in and around Iraq. There is a yearning for peace and prosperity the world over. Our concepts, our institutions and the manner in which nations relate to each other must change to meet this tide of rising expectations, or we risk being swept away by it.

Friends, I began this speech describing crystal gazing about the world order as a hazardous task. Let me however sum up with an effort to peep into the future.

It is my view that globalization will, in the emerging world order, intensify further. Technology will make the process of globalization even more inevitable. Nations will become more and more inter-dependent. Barriers to trade will gradually erode. Restrictions on the movement of physical persons, especially, skilled labour will ease despite the protests and resistance that we see today in certain parts of the developed world. There will be an information explosion. Nations will become more and more plural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious. The world will truly become a global village, with a high level of people-to-people and cultural contacts between nations.

Along with the emergence of the global village, democracy at the national as well as international level and peace amongst and within nations will be the principal characteristic of the new world order. I am confident
that in the coming years, most nations will embrace democracy reflecting international best practice. Though authoritarian societies may claim to succeed in fulfilling the minimum needs of people, they will fail to take care of their social and intellectual aspirations. Countries will inevitably discover that the expectations amongst their people can be met, physically and intellectually, only through a democratic framework. Similarly, the resistance to a more democratic international order will weaken. The penchant of some to deal with authoritarian regimes for short-term gains will also remain short lived. The promotion of democracy by organizations like the Commonwealth, the African Union, the regional groupings in South America, in ASEAN and through the Community of Democracies is already a reality.

I am equally convinced that peace will have to prevail in the world both in order for Governments to be able to meet the rising expectations of their people and because globalization cannot function in an environment of instability and violence. A day will also come when people realize that possession of weapons of mass destruction has become irrelevant and India’s long standing efforts for advancing towards universally recognized disarmament goals, especially, ridding the world of weapons of mass destruction, will be fulfilled.

I am confident that the menace of terrorism that stalks the world today will end with groups resorting to resolution of their grievances through the democratic framework. Disputes amongst nations will also be settled through dialogue rather than a clash of arms. Finally, a more equitable, international political and economic order, based on genuine equality of nations and their inevitable inter-dependence will emerge.

Friends, the views that I outline above are based on values inherent in the Indian civilization. India has always promoted those values internationally. India will therefore play a key role in the emergence of such a global order and its preservation.
026. Extracts from the speech by Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee at the Combined Commanders’ Conference.

New Delhi, November 1, 2003.

I am happy to be here with senior representatives of the Armed Forces, the civilian defence institutions and the political leadership of the country. On a day-to-day basis, we exchange information and discuss policy on important defence and military issues. This annual exercise provides us an opportunity to exchange strategic and security perspectives. It adds value to the process of governmental consultations.

In the twelve months since we last met, the world has been through some extraordinary experiences. The Iraq war opened up new post-Cold War divisions, with heated debates on the meaning and viability of a cooperative multi-polar world order. We saw the inability of the UN structures to deal with current world realities. A new acrimony developed among members of the P-5. There has also been a steep escalation of violence and terrorism in Asia, Europe and Africa.

We need to understand the true significance of these events and to draw from them the right political and strategic lessons for our long-term security.

Everyone knows that we live in a globalizing world, undergoing many simultaneous technology revolutions. But the evolution of the post-Cold War world and its impact on our political, diplomatic, strategic and security equations are not so well understood.

The end of the Cold War and disintegration of the Soviet Union gave a strong jolt to many of India’s strategic and security assumptions of nearly five decades. The changed circumstances of the Indo-Soviet strategic alliance greatly affected India’s room for diplomatic manoeuvre in the world.

The quality of many of our other relationships and alliances also suffered from the realignment of world forces.

All of you know how badly the collapse of the USSR disrupted our defence cooperation with that country.

Simultaneously, our security environment also deteriorated rapidly. The Russian retreat from Afghanistan released thousands of armed
Mujahideens and Jehadis, whom Pakistan could re-direct into J & K. The present phase of cross-border terrorism began then.

I have mentioned these developments in detail, because I often wonder whether we have really comprehended their implications. The recent national discussions on events in Iraq showed that many in our country are still caught up in the time warp of a Cold War mindset and strategic assumptions of an earlier era.

Of course, we have emerged from these turbulences with many positive achievements. India exploited the fluidities in the emerging World Order to forge new links with democratic societies on the basis of shared values, common objectives, convergent worldviews and - more recently - a coalition against terrorism. We have experienced an economic resurgence by developing and using skills in the knowledge-based technologies, and by pragmatically accepting the consequences of globalization. The opening up of our billion-strong market to imports and investment has put India prominently in the global economic mainstream. The Pokharan nuclear tests and our ambitious missile development programme showed our determination to respond decisively to our security environment, in spite of all external pressures.

Without undue modesty, we can say that the combination of diplomatic repositioning, economic resurgence and military firmness has given India a new importance in the international league. We have re-established our cordiality with USA, while strengthening our strategic partnership with Russia. We have established Summit-level dialogues with the European Union and ASEAN. We have strategic dialogues, counter-terrorism linkages and other political and security interaction mechanisms with a large number of European and Asian countries............ The number of Heads of State and Government visiting India these days can be seen from the regularity with which Vijay Chowk is blocked off to traffic on two or three mornings virtually every week!

We have played an important role in the G-20 efforts at Cancun. We have had discussions on India-Russia-China trilateral cooperation, and - on an entirely different plane - an India-Brazil-South Africa dialogue. We are developing other regional and sub-regional linkages in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Again, the magnitude of these developments is not fully grasped, as our foreign policy debates show. Too many of us are caught up in
limiting ideologies and a limited vision of what India is doing and where it should be going.

As we grow in our international stature, our defence strategies should naturally reflect our political, economic and security concerns, extending well beyond the geographical confines of South Asia. Our security environment ranges from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca across the Indian Ocean, including Central Asia and Afghanistan in the Northwest, China in the Northeast and South East Asia. Our strategic thinking has also to extend to these horizons.

The relentless march of technology drives war-fighting doctrines and defensive strategies today. Information technology, cyber techniques and other elements of ‘no-contact’ war have revolutionized modern day military thinking. Operation Enduring Freedom and the recent war in Iraq again reminded us of this truth. Our defence strategists have to work closely with defence research and development establishments to ensure a smooth two-way interflow between technology and strategy. Since both technologies and strategies mutually transform each other, it is essential that the users of the technology - the field units - should also be in the loop. It is my impression that some streamlining may be required in this area.

Indian scientists and engineers, in India and abroad, are powering much of the technology explosion that the world is witnessing today. Many of them are in research laboratories in the private sector. In today’s competitive world, it would be inefficient for our defence R&D establishments and equipment manufacturers not to make use of the talents and skills available in the private sector. This again is an area on which our defence establishments should focus more intensively.

In the recent past, I have been stressing the need to develop technologies to counter actions of terrorists and insurgent groups. This would also have to include WMD terrorism and cyber terrorism emanating from non-state actors. Given India’s continuous exposure to the proxy war from across our borders, it is important that we evolve a comprehensive counter-terrorism doctrine backed by suitable capabilities of manpower and high technology equipment.

Friends,

We have regular discussions in the Cabinet Committee on Security and in security groups at other levels on the national security situation in
our immediate neighbourhood. I will therefore touch on them only very briefly.

The use of neighbouring countries by various insurgent groups has helped to prolong insurgency in our Northeastern states, retarding their development. Deliberate efforts to inhibit access to these states also create hurdles to rapid economic growth. We have to adopt a two-pronged strategy to counter this:

- **One**, to use various means of persuasion with our neighbouring countries to choke off support to the terrorist groups;
- **Two**, to focus strongly on economic development and improved connectivity of the North East.

The activities of Maoist groups in Nepal cause us considerable concern especially because of their links with ultra leftist groups in India. Again, we need to devise innovative security measures to curb the mobility of Maoists and other insurgent groups across the India-Nepal border without inhibiting the people-to-people and commercial traffic between the two countries.

Our border with China has remained largely peaceful for the last few decades. During my recent visit to China, we agreed to raise our bilateral and other economic cooperation to a qualitatively higher level. The decision of the two Governments to appoint Special Representatives to discuss the boundary question from a political perspective was a particularly significant measure. A final resolution of the boundary question would release considerable military energies and finances for other more purposeful activities. It is therefore a strategic objective. To achieve it, we should be willing to take some pragmatic decisions.

In the larger picture of our regional interests, including energy security, Afghanistan and Central Asia are of great importance to us. We cannot accept Pakistan’s implied claim to Afghanistan as an expansion of its strategic space. We will firmly withstand the crude threats that are being made against our Consulates in Kandahar and Jalalabad. Our economic assistance and other cooperation initiatives with Afghanistan will continue. We will similarly expand our cooperation in all areas with Central Asian countries.

I will also say a few words about our western neighbour, Pakistan. We have yet again announced some measures* a few days ago to
promote greater people-to-people interaction, cultural exchanges and economic cooperation. Our constant effort is to encourage those elements in Pakistan, who recognise the folly of permanent hostility towards India.

By our recent measures, we have also silenced the whispering campaign that the requirements of forthcoming elections dictate a harsh Pakistan policy. The political leadership of this country is well aware that the constituency for peace with Pakistan is much larger than that which favours hostility.

At the same time, we will continue to deal firmly with cross border terrorism and to insist that a meaningful dialogue with Pakistan is only possible when we see sincerity in the effort to stop cross-border infiltration and to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism.

Friends,

We have talked about our security perspectives, specific security threats and the situation in our immediate neighbourhood. In the globalized world of today, every strategy is inter-disciplinary. It is, therefore, imperative to develop a close synergy between our security agencies, our armed forces, our diplomats and our Finance, Commerce, Energy and other Ministries. In the 21st century, war in whatever form can be won only through multiple levers of power.

I will conclude with my best wishes to the Senior Commanders of our Armed Forces present here. Through you, I send good wishes to your officers and men. India will remain proud of your patriotism and professionalism. I also compliment the three Service Chiefs for their exemplary commitment.

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You are shortly paying the second visit to Russia this year. You came to St. Petersburg for its 300th anniversary. What are you planning to discuss now? What is the purpose of your visit? What is the necessity for regular annual meetings between highest leadership of India and Russia?

The nature of India-Russia partnership is such that there are very many subjects on which we consult each other and many areas on which we need to decide on cooperation and collaboration. We have close political and economic links and strong strategic convergences in our region and elsewhere. President Putin and I have agreed that we should have summit-level meetings at least once every year in order to review and constantly upgrade our bilateral relations. My forthcoming visit to Russia will give me a valuable opportunity to discuss with President Putin a wide range of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual concern.

Which are the areas in which Indian-Russian relations are developing most successfully? Could you give specific examples?

India and Russia have substantial ties in a wide range of sectors, including economy and trade, science and technology, culture, defence, space and atomic energy. The depth of our relationship and its politico-strategic nature is reflected by our unique understanding in political as well as economic matters. Indian investment in the oil field at Sakhalin-I and Russian assistance for the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant in India are just two examples of this fruitful cooperation between our countries in the field of energy. India has received Russian assistance in its civilian space programme. Our two countries have jointly developed and produced the supersonic cruise missile ‘Brahmos’. There are many more examples of the successes of India-Russia cooperation.

India became the second motherland for outstanding Russian oriental scientists and artists like Nikolai Roerich and his son Svetaslav Roerich. Russians are very much interested in preserving a good memory about them in India. As it is known, you personally take part in the destiny of their estates in Kulu and Bangalore. What is being done in this regard?
India is proud to share the rich legacy of Nikolai Roerich and his son Svetaslav. As a tribute to their contribution to strengthening cultural relations between India and Russia, we have set aside a substantial sum of money for developing and maintaining the Roerich Estates in Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka. We hope that our efforts to preserve such links will serve as a symbol of Indian-Russian cultural relations and will be reflected in more joint projects to commemorate our shared cultural links.

India, like Russia, is a multinational country. Russian national units are republican and Indian – States. Some of the Indian states have population of over ten million people. What is the reason for national and political unity of India, which has never been an issue since the declaration of Indian independence? Especially considering that neighbouring countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh have military coup d’etat on a regular basis?

Tolerance and pluralism are ingrained in the Indian ethos. It is this ethos, which has nourished and sustained the institution of parliamentary democracy in India our since independence. With our regional, religious, cultural and linguistic diversities, and with widespread illiteracy, poverty and hunger which we inherited at independence, not many thought that India could survive as a democracy for any length of time. The developments in our neighbourhood only added to such doubts. We have proved the skeptics wrong. We have preserved the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious fabric of our society within a democratic and federal framework. The magnitude of this achievement is sometimes not fully appreciated.

At the last session of the UN General Assembly, India along with a number of other countries was for reform of the UN Security Council. How reformed does your country want to see the UNSC?

The existing structures of the UN Security Council were established over 50 years ago. International and regional developments since then have changed the very face of the world. To better reflect present day realities, including the interests of its vastly expanded membership, it is necessary to enlarge and restructure of the UN Security Council.

We feel that the expansion and improvement of the working methods of the Council should constitute integral parts of a comprehensive package on Security Council Reform. Most UN members, including Russia, recognize this need. The Security Council needs to evolve suitable
decision-making mechanisms for enhanced transparency, greater accountability to the membership of the UN and to ensure the right balance between the Security Council, the UN General Assembly and other organs of the UN. In particular, developing countries need to have adequate representation in the Security Council. The expansion in the membership should entail increase in both permanent and non-permanent categories ensuring better representation of the collective will of the international community.

The attitude towards the UN is diverse. Some countries believe that this international organization copes with its task, others don’t. What is India’s position on the role and place of the UN in the modern world?

As a founder member of the United Nations, India has been a firm supporter of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. The challenges of an increasingly dependant world demand a greater role for the UN as the only universal forum for the community of nations. India believes in the vision of a cooperative multilateralism.

Developments in the recent past have exposed the weaknesses in the decision-making processes of the existing multilateral system. We can therefore understand the current mood to revisit the issues of the international world order, the new threats and challenges and the institutions to deal with them and the necessity of reforms in the UN system. A revitalized and strengthened United Nations and a more representative Security Council will enable this unique organization to face the challenges of the 21st century more effectively. What we require is not the displacement of the United Nations and its agencies, but their reform.

Officially the triangle of Delhi-Moscow-Beijing is downplayed. However, politicians and mass media of many countries unofficially discuss the subject. Most agree that the closer the three countries cooperate, the more it will contribute to the creation of multipolar world. What does India think of cooperation of the three capitals on the international arena?

The Foreign Ministers of Russia, China and India have been meeting on the margins of UN General Assembly in New York. They have exchanged views on topical international issues and explored avenues of cooperation. There are several issues on which the three countries share views and can consult each other. The creation of a just, multipolar world
order is one such issue. There are a large number of areas of potential in economic cooperation among the three countries.

The question above raises another question: How are relations between Delhi and Beijing developing? How successfully do your countries manage to overcome territorial disagreements?

Our relations with China have been improving steadily over the years. The momentum of high level visits has been maintained. Various bilateral forums for interaction have been established, covering diverse areas such as trade and investment, policy planning, security and counter-terrorism. The economic content of our relationship has increased substantially. This year, we hope to achieve a bilateral trade turnover of US $7 billion. Exchanges in other areas like science and technology, culture, defence, agriculture and investment have also progressed.

During my visit to China in June this year we agreed to raise our bilateral political and economic cooperation to qualitatively higher levels. As our relationship expands and diversifies, it will increase mutual goodwill and trust, which should facilitate resolution of our differences between us on the border. We have appointed Special Representatives to explore the framework of a boundary settlement from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship. We will proceed along this course, in the conviction that as we intensify and diversify our economic cooperation and people-to-people links, we can develop a climate of understanding and trust in which differences can be resolved from a larger political perspective.

In the recent years the world has faced a new challenge – international terrorism. It is not new for India. Your country has been fighting against international terrorists in the Indian State Jammu and Kashmir for many years now. What do you think is the main reason for appearance of international terrorism? What is it, some kind of appearance of social phenomenon, a relapse from the past, or an expression of old religious animosity in new conditions?

I have repeatedly said that international terrorism is today a global monster, which knows no national boundaries or territorial limits of operation. It exploits the openness and freedoms of democratic societies. It uses modern technologies and unorthodox techniques to achieve its destructive objectives. It can only be countered by global, united and comprehensive effort. We cannot afford selective approaches, which
sacrifice the long-term goal for short-term interests. Differing standards cannot be applied for judging terrorism.

Democratic societies are the most vulnerable to terrorism, which exploits the freedoms and openness that democracy promotes. Ultimately, therefore, it is only through a determined coalition of democratic countries that we can effectively counter terrorism. We should not be cowed down by those who have embraced the cult of violence or extremism. Our two countries can do much to promote the values of tolerance and moderation in an increasingly turbulent world.

As India in Kashmir so does Russia in Chechnya fight against international terrorists who hide under the guise of Islam. Do you think that the current outbreak of terrorism has something to do with Islamic religion?

We totally dismiss the proposition that any religion is a source of terrorism. Such arguments seek to discredit one of the great religions of the world. No religion prescribes violence against innocent people. Our battle is against extremist elements, who misuse and misinterpret religion to justify terrorism and incite violence.

Today your party Bhartiya Janata Party rules the country along with 24 other political parties. How is it possible to manage such multiparty coalition?

Coalition politics in India is an indicator of maturity of India’s democratic traditions. The fact that the current coalition has stayed intact for over 5 years is a tribute to its constituent parties. It is an indicator of what all is possible when politicians decide to come together for the larger interests of the country. I believe that governance by coalition is particularly suited for Indian conditions, since it enables better sensitivity to all shades of sectoral and regional interests.

I happened to work as a correspondent in India. I got the impression that regardless of the leading party of coalition of parties, the course for friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union and now Russia remains the same. Is this impression true?

You are absolutely right. There is indeed an all-Party consensus in India on the need to develop stable and strong relations with Russia. In fact, I do not think there is any other country for which there is such a
groundswell of popular goodwill and such a broad political spectrum of support in India!

In conclusion, tell us a little about yourself. Where and how do you spend your vacation?

Heading the government of a country with the size and complexity of India does not leave me with much time for vacations! But at least once a year, I do try to get away for a few days to Manali, which is in the foothills of Himalayas. The serene surroundings of this hill station enable me to relax and recharge my batteries.

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New Delhi, November 24, 2003.

I remember another such occasion where the speaker was introduced like Sanjeev Goenka introduced me this evening and that speaker said that ‘I don’t believe a word of it unless you give it to me in writing. If you do give it to me in writing I will frame it and keep it’. Another point, which I would like to make in the beginning, is about when should the main speech come. I remember the India-EU Business summit last year in Copenhagen where I suggested may be we need a code of conduct for dinner speeches because last year when I was here for this function, I remember I came between the main course and the dessert. I assured the audience that I was not the replacement for the sweet dish, which was to follow. Today I am sandwiched between the first course and the main course. But I promise you that I will not be too long. But given the subject on which I have been asked to share my thoughts with you, I’ll take my stipulated time.

I remember that last year I had made a plea to you to go out and to recognise your strength. And we had been given a few definitions from where I was asked to choose. One was whether we would describe India as the frog in the well or a calf in the shadow or a cobra in the hole or a lion in the emblem. I responded by saying that India is too big and vast to be put in a neat and tidy definition. But then I went on to say that if I am asked to choose then I will probably settle for the lion in the emblem
because the lion there is looking in all directions. I wanted India to be outward looking in all directions and engaging the rest of the world everywhere. Between last year and this, how will a pessimist look at the world? We have had Iraq; we have the continuing problem in Afghanistan; we had a roadmap for the Middle East peace process which appears to be in disarray; proliferation has become a major issue, both in the case of Iran and North Korea; the Millennium Development Goals set to be achieved by 2050 are still in 2003 very far away; and in our immediate neighbourhood, we have had the same developments which are a little worrisome. But as I told you, despite all these, in India there is a feel-good factor.

Everyone is feeling happy for something and this appears to be in complete contradiction with what is happening all around us. Where is this confidence coming from and why? Is it because we have had a more successful monsoon, more successful summer rains than in previous years? Is it because Indian industry has suddenly come out of the woods and is feeling much more confident now? Is it because the services sector is now facing brighter prospects? Is it because the world economy has turned better? I personally think it is all these and more world which gives India that feel-good factor. And what is that more that gives us confidence? It is a sense of having arrived.

When I was speaking in Lisbon in 2000 in my former capacity, I had said that India is an idea whose time has come. There are not many people who are going to set great store by what I was saying there. But clearly India is much more in the world today than India was perhaps before. And if I were to give you an account of what is happening around us in geopolitical terms, then I will be able to illustrate what I am saying better.

Our Free Trade Agreement with Sri Lanka is a runaway success story for both countries. It is a model for the whole of South Asia. We are now renegotiating that FTA with Sri Lanka because we want to integrate our economies much more deeply than has been the case in the past and it is this experiment which has prompted me to repeat from time to time that India is ready for the South Asian Union. And it is not because we wish to overwhelm the neighbouring countries. I would like to take you back two-and-a-half years.

In 2001, when we were removing the last of the quantitative restrictions on our imports under our obligations under the WTO, there
was a great fear specially amongst business people and that apprehension was not that the US was going to overwhelm us, or the EU was going to overwhelm us, or Japan was going to overwhelm us, or South Asia was going to overwhelm us. The fear that arose was an apprehension of China. There were Chinese goods everywhere and no sooner did we remove our quantitative restrictions, we would be completely overwhelmed by Chinese exports to India. Our industry, our agriculture, everything will be in jeopardy. Two and-a-half years down the line, I was looking at our trade figures with China - in the first nine months of 2003 exports have gone up approximately by 85 per cent. Their exports to India have gone up 30-35 per cent. The balance of trade in favour of India in the first nine months is to the extent of over half-a-billion dollars. It’s not a big deal. But the fact remains that India has not been overwhelmed by China and nobody today is coming to me and saying, please do something to save us because we are threatened by imports. What would that show? India has not overwhelmed Sri Lanka or vice versa. Trade will find its own balance. I will again quote the Sri Lankan Minister for Commerce, Mr. Karuna Nayake, that it will be ideal for any country not to look at the balance of trade with an individual country. You have to look at the global balance of trade and if there are deficiencies, please take efficient steps. It is this healthy attitude that all of us must have in our trading relations.

So in South Asia, we have started to negotiate an FTA with Bangladesh. With Pakistan, we are making progress under the SAARC and we will have another meeting in December where at least on the preferential trading arrangement, we expect to make further progress. And today, we responded to the offer of Prime Minister Jamali in a very, very positive manner and we said that our troops would respond to a ceasefire along the LoC. We are trying to improve our relationship with Pakistan.

Take the ‘Look East’ policy of India. Last year, when we first had our Summit with ASEAN, Prime Minister Vajpayee suggested negotiating a framework agreement for an FTA with ASEAN in a 10-year timeframe, and in 12 months flat, we concluded the negotiations. And then we went to Bali this year for the India-ASEAN Summit, that framework agreement was actually signed. With the kind of trading arrangement that Japan, South Korea, China have with ASEAN, we are perhaps on the threshold of a free trade agreement in South Asia and South-East Asia. In China, during the Prime Minister’s visit in June, we suggested setting up of an Expert Group. This Group would study the economy of the two countries,
India and China, and suggest a roadmap for the future. We are now in the process of setting up this Expert Group. As I was mentioning to you, India-China trade is going up by leaps and bounds. With Singapore, the study is almost complete. We should be having an arrangement with Singapore early next year. With Thailand, we already have a framework on a free trade agreement.

You must be aware of the visit of our Prime Minister to Tajikistan. Earlier this year, I was personally in the Central Asian countries and India’s involvement with those countries is much deeper today than ever in the past. India and the Gulf Cooperation Council had the first political dialogue at the Ministerial level on the margins of the UN General Assembly in September, and the President visited some important countries in the Gulf. Much greater cooperation with the Gulf countries is on the cards. The Prime Minister of Israel was here. Our Prime Minister was in Syria. It’s much more than a balancing act. It is our engagement with West Asia, which has intensified as a result of those visits.

We also have much greater engagement with Latin America. I was in Peru earlier this year and also in Brazil. I remember travelling to the airport in Lima and I came across a junction where I saw in the biggest, boldest letters, ‘Bajaj Motors’. That is India in Peru. I met somebody out of the blue in a most unlikely place. He is a young Indian who is the chief of Nokia in Rio. In Latin America, you meet a large number of Indian professionals who are heading various multinational companies. We have the IBSA Initiative, the Indian-Brazil-South Africa Trilateral that is supposed to intensify cooperation amongst these three countries in three continents. There was a Summit amongst the heads of these three countries on the margins of the UNGA recently.

Similarly, in Africa, we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with COMESA. We are on the verge of negotiating an FTA with Macau. A delegation of foreign ministers of Central American countries is going to visit India early next year. We have the famous Team 9 in Africa and all Heads of State of those nine countries are planning to visit India. I am mentioning all these to emphasise the advice, which I gave to you, to go out. All the above have not fortunately been sterile trips abroad. They have been extremely fruitful because they have clearly established a new relationship between India and those countries. I don’t know how many of you are aware of the Thai initiative, the Asian Cooperation Dialogue. The idea is to set up an Asian Bond. India has committed a billion US dollars. The first fund created for this purpose was able to get a total of
just US$ 1 billion. When my colleague Mr. Arun Shourie went to this meeting in Thailand, he committed a billion dollars and this was something that people there could not believe immediately. So when I met them in New York, I told them that we could improve on the offer because we also expect China and South Korea to make contributions to this fund. India, with a foreign exchange reserve nearing a 100 billion dollars, can commit a billion or two here or there without bothering much about it.

But apart from this, the happening things are - the linkages that are emerging, especially in Asia - road linkages, rail linkages. It is not just that one North-South transport corridor that Iran-India-Russia are seeking to establish. We have a Trilateral now with Myanmar and Thailand. In the Ganga-Mekong cooperation, the countries have agreed to have a railway line from New Delhi to Hanoi. So we are opening up the infrastructure in this area. But has this been achieved by neglecting the traditional ties we had? No. The Prime Minister was in Russia recently. It was part of the ongoing exchange at the Summit level. It was a very productive visit to Russia. With the US, our relationship is moving from strength to strength. There are some who believe that because we have not contributed troops to Iraq, the US is angry with us. I think there is more concern here than in the US itself. In Japan, there have been the highest-level visits. The Japanese Foreign Minister was here earlier this year and we had a very good discussion.

So, I would like to tell you, that India has gone out and engaged the world. Wherever we are going, we are taking the message of India being ready to engage the world even more. We have always gone out with our brotherhood, with our culture and civilization and that is part of our character. You, in business on both sides, in India and outside, have to play a very important role in this because we can only talk, you will conclude the deals.

Therefore, gatherings like this give us the opportunity to engage the world at your level. Despite the uncertainties that cloud the horizons, despite terrorism, I have no doubt in my mind that India and Indian business will not sit back. Try and have a dialogue with everyone, try to work in a manner which will make you contribute to the wealth of India, which will help us to give our people what’s needed at the end of governance - a better quality of life.

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029. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to news channel CNBC-TV 18.

New Delhi, November 24, 2003.

[American antagonism towards India is expected to deepen as more companies in the US announce their intentions to outsource to India. The BPO issue is also likely to dominate during the Presidential election in the United States next year. But, India is unfazed. Stating that the BPO problem is a matter of some concern for India, External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha said that India is confident of finding an amicable solution. Sinha said that India has told the US that American business would become more competitive if it outsources to India, and it is, therefore, in that country’s interest to do so. These arguments and protestation have cut ice with that country, he added.]

Excerpts from the interview:

Q: There is a feeling that continued outsourcing of jobs to India would become a major election issue with George W Bush if the American economy doesn’t pick up. There is a fear that other states may do what New Jersey did, the bill to ban outsourcing. Is that a worry to you and how would you address that?

A: It is a matter of some concern to us. I don’t know whether it will become an election issue in the US presidential elections. But some voices have been raised against outsourcing and loss of jobs that it creates in the local community. Fortunately no damage has yet been done to this business, or this concept. We are trying to do our best. We are reasoning with them that ultimately if they outsource to a country like India, it is in their interest to do so because their business becomes more competitive.

Q: But it is politically difficult, Isn’t it? Because we believe that again these are just numbers that we have got. About three million jobs have been lost in the US since George Bush took over. So if employment is a big issue, it makes a good economic sense for us to privatise, it makes a good economic sense for them to outsource but politically difficult to handle for them as well.

A: But in politics you do face such situations and it is not the responsibility or the duty of the politician always to follow. His responsibility is to lead. If there is a leadership in the US, it is the responsibility of that leadership to explain that it is in the longer-term interest of the US economy. US economy
will not remain globally competitive if outsourcing is not done. And therefore all these three million jobs have not been lost because of India. So this is a competitive world and if we have been able to build a strength in a certain sector, the advantage of that strength should not be denied to India. If we start denying that, then we are entering into a new phase of restrictive global trade regimes in goods and services, which will not augur well.

Q: Is there a worry at all?

A: It is. We have been in touch with Nasscom and other friends. We have discussed this issue. We have a strategy to deal with this and I would like to say that the protestation and the reassurances, and the arguments are cutting ice. It is not that we are up against a wall we cannot pierce.

Q: Is there any call for reciprocity? When Ambassador Blackwill was leaving, he said if the trade surplus remains or trade balance remains so much tilted in favour of India. He said it is going to be difficult for America to convince people back home that outsourcing is good for them. It is almost like he was asking for something back from India, perhaps the Boeing deal. Is there any pressure of that kind?

A: There is no pressure of that kind and I don’t know in what context Ambassador Blackwill had said that. But, if you are looking at trade balance, you are not looking at trade balance with every individual trading partner. You look at overall trade balance, and if trade balance is concerned with India, then I think the US should be more worried about China than India.

Q: What is the status of Indo-US relation now because there is a feeling over the last two months that America is a bit disappointed, They feel that we have gone back on our stand on sending troops to Iraq. They feel that the breakdown of talks in Cancun, India was the chief spoiler. What is the status of Indo-US relationship? Has it taken a dip in the last two month?

A: I wouldn’t say that. I think the Indo-US relationship is as much in the pink of health as it was two months ago, or before that. There is more worry or concern about disappointment in the US... in India... than perhaps in the US itself over the sending of troops to Iraq issue. I don’t think the American administration has not been able to understand from our point of view. They have understood it and this has been communicated at the highest level. So, that is not an issue.

Second, there are reasons why Cancun could not succeed. We are
prepared to deal with those reasons; we are prepared to tackle those reasons. I think it has been established in Cancun that it cannot be, that the concerns of only some countries would be taken care of and the concerns of the others will be ignored. That’s what Cancun has established. And it is not merely India; it is the whole host of developing countries. It is those four African countries, which produce raw cotton, which is a very live issue in the trade talks. So it is not right to blame India alone.

Q: Will that always be a permanent problem in Indo-US relationship? US will expect allies to stick by them without questioning and India cannot do that...

A: I don’t think. I think it is over simplification to say that US expects allies stick to them without asking why. I don’t think relationship between two great nations can be reduced to such simplistic terms. Also let me tell you why has the relationship between Indo-US improved in recent years. It has improved because there has been conscious efforts on the part of both countries not to let single or transient issues define the relationship. We have looked at what is common between us. We have looked at what could be the direction of our relationship in future and we have found that there is a great deal where we can work together. Maybe we will not agree 100%. But that should not be a cause or a reason for not moving on the 70, 80 or 90%, on which we agree.

Q: What will drive it more? Will it be economic interest or will it be geopolitical orientation?

A: It will a combination of both. It will certainly be a geopolitical orientation. It will also be commerce, economics and trade. You mentioned about the balance of trade being in India’s favour. We would like to do whatever we can to make the trade more balanced. That is why we are talking about hi-tech, where is the strength of the US. The strength is in those areas where there are certain restrictions. If those restrictions are removed, than more US imports would start coming to India.

Q: Again there is feeling that, India at times deliberately charting out its foreign policy prerogatives, almost snubbing the US. The Prime Minister’s visit to Syria.. is it because you are somewhat unhappy with their stance on...

A: Not at all. I mentioned this to the press delegation, which was accompanying the Prime Minister, that at times. we are more concerned
about the concerns of other countries than those countries themselves. So when Prime Minister went to Syria, it was considered to be a snub. US did not take it as a snub. Why should we talk about it? We entertain the Israeli Prime Minster here. The Arab world was not so much worried about it as some sections of opinion here. So sometimes you are outshining herod. And this is not a healthy attitude.

Q: The same sections would say perhaps the visit to Syria was to balance the hurt....

A: This is what I am saying that you are forever looking for some other reason than the obvious reason of why somebody is doing something? We don’t really have to go into convoluted logic to find that justification. Every nation conducts its relationship with another nation or another group of nations or globally on the basis of its own national interest, promotion of its national interest. Nobody should really mind as long as that is the basic concern. Unless, the relationship between two nations is impinging directly on our security concerns or our economic concerns or something. Then we will have to take-up those issues with those countries. Otherwise every country in the world is conducting its relationship autonomously with other countries on the basis of globally accepted norms.

Q: The Prime Minister made a 12-point offer to Pakistan just a month after what happened in New York. Some people would say there was shrill rhetoric in New York. What changed in that one month for the Prime Minister to make this offer?

A: I would like to say that New York was misunderstood. The Prime Minister of India had spent exactly two to three minutes in his 15-minute speech on India-Pakistan. That too, was in response to what General Musharraf had said in his speech a day earlier. But, because we are, perhaps so obsessed with Pakistan... I am talking of some sections of opinion in India that whenever something happens between... like you yourself have said, why haven’t we talked about India and Pakistan for so long.

That is not the obsession in government; we are not obsessed with Pakistan. A whole lot of things had happened in New York, but that never got media attention as much as those two to three minutes that the Prime Minister devoted. So, that is not the context in which this offer of 12 points have been made to Pakistan. We have a certain relationship with Pakistan. It has been trouble relationship. It has its problems. It has its issues. But
what is the bottomline? The bottomline is that, India wants to live in peace with Pakistan. India wants to have normal relationship with Pakistan and we will continue to try to establish that kind of a relationship. If there are problems, we would like to deal with those problems. At the current level there are some problems but we are trying to make our efforts and these 12 points have to be seen in the context of those efforts and they are not related to what had happened in New York. If you want to go back, lets go back to the history. Four years ago when the Prime Minister traveled to Lahore in 1999, when the Prime Minister had invited General Musharraf to Agra in 2001, when the Prime Minister had made his third peace offer to Pakistan in Srinagar on April 18. We are trying to take the same process forward and I would like to tell that it will be the effort of India to continue to do so in future.

Q: Even if cross border terrorism...?

A: Cross border terrorism is something that we are tackling seriously. Cross border terrorism is something where we have much more support of the international community. We have said that a comprehensive dialogue with Pakistan cannot be sustained and cannot be fruitful if cross border terrorism goes on, and cross border terrorism has to stop.

Q: Will dialogue continue...?

A: No.. there will be no dialogue. We are saying is that there cannot be a dialogue with cross border terrorism going on. And we are saying it for this reason that there cannot be a meaningful and productive dialogue with Pakistan, if Pakistan carries on with cross border terrorism. Does it make sense? So that is why Pakistan will have to stop cross border terrorism. Cross border terrorism must be stopped because it is evil.

Q: Where does all of this lead to on trade relations with Pakistan?

A: We are trying to develop the trade relationship with Pakistan under the aegis of SAARC. We are prepared to do it bilaterally, but, at this point of time where there is no dialogue with Pakistan, it is difficult to negotiate with them bilaterally. We are doing it under the aegis of SAARC. Unfortunately, things are not moving as fast as they should. We would like it to move faster.

We have had some discussions. We had made an offer of a thousand tariff lines to Pakistan. They have come up with 250.

Q: You said this neither here nor there...
A: It is not. It is peanuts. It is neither here nor there. We are also aware of the fact that we continue to extend to Pakistan most favoured nation treatment, while Pakistan does not extend that treatment to India. So there are disparities here and we will have to wait for a change in mindset of the rulers of the Pakistan in order to be able to promote trade.

Q: In the meantime we have gone ahead, we have signed FTA with almost breakneck speed with the Asian region. We are looking bilateral treaties around that world. You are advocating the policy of look East again now. Is all of this to counter what cannot happen even if SAARC does not take-off, we will still have...?

A: We have over a period of time built certain alliances. The ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations), when you use the word breakneck speed.. it is remarkable and I think it is an achievement which should be applauded that Prime Minister made this offer to the ASEAN summit last year and within twelve months we have a framework agreement with ASEAN... But ASEAN is a separate entity. We have SAARC. We would like SAARC to make progress and that is why we are laying so much emphasis on PTA and FTA within SAARC. SAPTA (South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement), and SAFTA (South Asian Free Trade Area), and I have gone to the extent of saying that India is ready to conclude a South Asian Union arrangement with all our neighbours. We are ready to discuss this evening, tomorrow morning, whenever our partners/neighbours are ready,..

Q: But if cross border terrorism stops on this side?

A: We are not putting that as a condition. That is a bilateral issue. Here we are talking multilaterally of SAARC and I am saying that European union has been able to do it. ASEAN has been able to do it. There are countries in Latin America. Africa which have done it...

Q: So this can be discussed in January in SAARC, if the conditions are...

A: In order to be able to form a South Asian Union, we must be able to show progress for SAPTA/SAFTA. If are so niggardly in our approach to, even PTA where we are saying 250, 100, 78 out of 7000 tariff lines, then we are not being liberal about it and that is why when the Pakistani trade delegation was here, I said we have to get rid of this mindset that the Pakistani economy is going to be overwhelmed by Indian economy. If Pakistan economy has not been overwhelmed by Chinese economy, if Indian economy has not been overwhelmed by the Chinese economy,
there is no reason to suspect that Pakistani economy will be overwhelmed by Indian economy.

**Q:** But are they thinking of this? Are they thinking trade?

**A:** I don’t know to what extent they are thinking of it? When we talk to them under the aegis of SAARC, we have come across this kind of mindset where they want to make progress but want to make progress very slowly on limited scale and that does not take us very far, unfortunately.

**Q:** You have said that we are not obsessed with Pakistan.. the media the thinks that we are obsessed with Pakistan. Unfortunately the world also seem to thinks that we are obsessed with Pakistan. Every time there is terrorist attack in India, it becomes a bilateral issue... there is terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia or anywhere, it is terrorist attack. Is there something wrong in the way we are communicating to the world?

**A:** There is nothing wrong in the way we are communicating and when we had the bomb blast in the Mumbai, I can’t think of any responsible country in the world which did not condemned that. There have been other terrorist incidents, which have been condemned as terrorist incidents by the rest of the international community. So there is no problem there because after all today there is a global coalition against terrorism. There is Security Council Resolution number 1373, which enjoins upon States their responsibility to check cross-border or terrorist activity generally. So there is no misunderstanding there and also I don’t think there is any more misunderstanding that terrorist organisations are all linked with each other that it is a same terrorist who is operating in Afgnistan, perhaps operating in Turkey, in Saudi Arab, in East Asia, who is operating here in India. So we cannot compartmentalize that the Indian fight against terrorism is in different class and somebody else’s fight against terrorism is in a different class.

**Q:** Have been able to convince the world that our fight against terrorism is a part of the global fight? If that is the case why we haven’t been able to convince America?

**A:** I think there is no deficit of conviction. There could be a deficit of tactics but there is no deficit of conviction.

**Q:** Russia - we have had the Prime minister’s visit there. How important is it now? Are we still living in the past? Trade between us is only about $1.5 billion. Clearly their interest, Russia’s prerogatives would be to come back
in the economic power, would largely depend on the West developing as oil fields, how important is India to Russia, how important Russia to India?

A: Very important and I think it has been realised by both governments, by both countries that our economic and trade relationship is not at all commensurate with the strategic relationship in other areas that we have been able to forge and it is a matter of some regret that we have not taken so much interest in the Russian market, Russian economy. They have not taken so much interest in recent years in our market, in our economy. I think that deficiency was sought to be made up when almost 100 members, business delegations travelled with the Prime Minister this time to Moscow and it was a very good business interaction, which has taken place. We are trying to build banking relationships. We are trying to move away from the limited Rupee-Ruble trade to free currency trade.

Q: Isn’t there too much of legacy there? Can we move away without...

A: I can tell you that the Rupee Ruble or the Rupee balances, which are left, are fast dwindling and therefore we have to shift to free currency trade. We cannot just depend on that mindset. But I will agree with you that at old mindset in trading with Russia unfortunately is still there and that is exactly what we have to shed in order to be able to deal with Russia like every other country is dealing with Russia. But the investment that we have made for Sakhalin, is $2 billion. The Investment that they have made in the Kudankulam nuclear energy power plant, all this augur well for the future.

Q: But strategically are you slightly disappointed because they haven’t come out in support of our demand for a seat in the Security Council. They have not like, unlike in the past when the Soviet Union recognised J&K, the part of India..

A: I don’t think there is any change. I think Russia is very supportive of India’s case in the Security Council.

Q: Have they articulated that?

A: It is articulated.

Q: And on J&K.. do they articulate that it is a part of India?

A: Absolutely. There is no doubt on those issues.
Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to the New Delhi based *Financial Express.*

New Delhi, November 24, 2003.

[Lunch with Bill Clinton and dinner with Paul Berenger. One day in Brazil and another in South Africa. A call from Colin Powell and a tete-a-tete with Ranil Wikramasinghe. Clearly external affairs minister Yashwant Sinha is a busy man.

“India has acquired an international dimension,” he says with visible satisfaction. “The world is recognising India’s economic strength. We are in a position to commit resources to the world,” says Mr. Sinha, referring to India’s rising budget for external aid and technical assistance to countries in need and seeking them.

“We must reduce our tariffs to ASEAN levels, a commitment that all finance ministers, Manmohan Singh, P Chidambaram, Jaswant Singh, and I have made in our budget speeches, to increase our economic interaction with the world.”

Clearly he is proud to be associated with the emergence of a new element in global politics, the India-Brazil-South Africa trilateral, dubbed IBSA. As India’s first foreign minister to visit Brazil, Mr Sinha is pleased that the Brazilian President will be the chief guest at next year’s Republic Day parade. Relations with the United States and Russia are on an even keel, and there is satisfaction that the US “understands, perhaps even appreciates, at the highest level” India’s decision not to send troops to Iraq.

With China there is a “paradigm shift” in relations, for the better.

In South Asia, opportunity knocks for the creation of a South Asian Economic Union.

While it is the PM who, like all previous PMs, still manages the “big picture” of strategic relations with major powers, Mr Sinha has tried hard and with some success to move South Block to the centre-stage of economic diplomacy. “The success of G-20 at Cancun was made possible by the IBSA trilateral we helped build,” says Mr Sinha, underscoring his ministry’s growing relevance to India’s external economic relations.
On the weekend before addressing the India Summit of the World Economic Forum (WEF), Mr Sinha spoke to Sanjaya Baru and Rohit Bansal of FE. ]

You’ve spent enough time here in South Block to have acquired a view of the world and of the policy you need to pursue to improve India’s relations with it. Where do you see our relationships going? What are your priorities? Has the Iraq crisis been a defining moment for our foreign policy? How important is the IBSA trilateral process that you have initiated? May be we could invite you to start with a broad brush of the big picture.

The first point we have to bear in mind is the continuity in our foreign policy. Foreign ministers change, governments change, but a special feature of our foreign policy has been its consensual nature, a national consensus. But foreign policy has also to adjust to a developing situation, its emphasis and nuances. In the 16 months I’ve been here the world has changed a great deal. There’ve been, as you say, defining moments. Iraq was a defining moment. We’ve responded to that situation and the global situation. In the meanwhile there have been efforts in the direction of more proactive economic diplomacy, as part of foreign policy. Not that it is something entirely new. Then, with our neighbours there’ve been some initiatives. With what can be called “distant lands”, like in the African continent and Latin America, we’ve been doing something.

The initiative with Brazil and South Africa?

Yes, if we look at it in totality the IBSA initiative is, I should think, a very important initiative. It has brought together three major countries of three different continents. It has clearly demonstrated in the brief period since it was created — in June this year when I signed the Brasilia Declaration — its impact. We’ve been able to put our act together.

At the WTO meeting in Cancun, for example?

In Cancun if this “core” had not been there probably others would not have coalesced into the G-20 as they did. The core is strong enough to hold together in the future. Further, trilaterally we are trying to intensify our relationship. The visit of the South African President, along with his foreign minister, the visit of the Brazilian
foreign minister, the visit of the Brazilian president to South Africa, the visit of the Brazilian president in January to India, as chief guest at the Republic Day parade, all this and more will go to show that we’re now interacting much more with each other in various fields.

We are planning to set up a Trilateral Commission of the three foreign ministers, which is a very unusual body. It will meet next March in India. The foreign ministers have already met on the margins of the UN General Assembly. The three heads of government also met there. Before next March at least half a dozen ministers on the three sides will get together: ministers for defence, health, shipping, civil aviation, education, science and technology, planning.

So IBSA is cooperating at the multilateral, trilateral and bilateral levels. It has created a great deal of interest. Russia, China, the US, have all made enquiries. They want to know what is happening. We want to do something together before we deal together with the outside world. I regard this as a very important development in the 16 months that I’ve been foreign minister.

**What about the other trilateral of China, India and Russia?**

That’s also important. We had our meeting again in New York. The foreign minister of Russia invited us to meet separately so that it isn’t just a 1-2 hour meeting but we spend more time together. Now he’s planning a meeting in Russia. Here again we are co-ordinating our approach to global issues through a trilateral engagement. This isn’t aimed at anyone. For all three of us our relations with the US are important.

*There has been a paradigm shift. India isn’t going out as a supplicant asking for investment.*

We’re engaging many countries today to improve our relations. At the UN, while the media focussed on the spat with Pakistan, I had for the first time a political dialogue with the Gulf Cooperation Council. I had a meeting with the Rio group, which includes all of Latin America, and separate meetings with about 20 other foreign ministers.

I’m saying this because in all these meetings I saw there was a feeling that India has arrived. I am saying this very genuinely. I’ve
been travelling quite a bit during this period, and there’s hardly been a day here when someone or the other is not visiting us. Whenever the PM is in town we have some head of state, some head of government here. If I’m in town there’s a visiting foreign minister, sometimes two. Yesterday (Friday) we had the Mauritius PM and we had former (US) President Clinton. So one ate lunch with one and dinner with the other! This is the intensity of the diplomatic activity.

The world is now recognising our economic strength: India’s strength in science and tech, in human resources and the potential of the future. This is a paradigm shift in the image of India. The other day Colette Mathur of WEF told me that the number of sponsors that they’ve got for the India Summit this year has increased — 15 or 16 compared to the 2 or 3 they used to get with great difficulty earlier. India has clearly acquired an international dimension. There’s much greater respect for India. I find when I’m talking to a foreign minister 60-70 per cent of my time is spent on discussing economic issues. 30-40 per cent may be terrorism, political issues, security issues. In fact I say jokingly, that as far as bilateral and multilateral relations of India are concerned I’m doing more economic work here than I was doing in the finance ministry (laughs).

What kind of...

For example, we’re trying to give assistance to developing countries. With the developed countries we’re now talking with greater equality. It’s a two-way street. That if you transfer technology, make investment, we’re also in a position to transfer technology, make investments. We can go out to a country like Germany and tell them that your tax laws are regressive or this is not right for foreign investment. You will notice that there has been a paradigm shift. India isn’t going out as a supplicant asking for investment. We’re saying that we are also in a position to make a contribution. For instance, when the PM met (British PM) Tony Blair he said there are 350 to 400 Indo-British joint ventures. Economic diplomacy flowing out of this economic strength of India was inevitable. I wouldn’t like to take credit for all this. Economic diplomacy has assumed a new dimension not because I am here but because India has evolved, because of our economic performance and liberalisation that we’ve pursued over the past decade.
Has our decision on Iraq upset our relations with the US?

Not at all. There is an understanding, perhaps even an appreciation, at the highest level in the US of our position. This issue has been an important challenge for our foreign policy. Afghanistan and Iraq stand in some contrast to each other. The international community followed one model in Afghanistan and didn’t follow that in Iraq. Only now we’re talking in terms of the Afghan model for Iraq. Everyone is complimenting us for taking a very wise decision in not committing our troops.

Today even Japan and Korea are hesitating...

True. But (remember) the debate was fierce in our country and people thought we were being foolish in not accepting the US offer. There were naturally quite a few voices for and against. I remember telling people that all that I have to do is to produce a copy of The Indian Express and The Financial Express on the one hand and The Hindu on the other hand, to show how the media itself was divided.

*When I’m talking to a foreign minister 60-70 per cent of my time is spent on discussing economic issues. 30-40 per cent may be terrorism, political issues, security issues.*

But there were compelling arguments both for and against?

Yes, but in retrospect our decision was wise because things would have been very different for us had we committed our troops. I don’t think we are missing an economic opportunity in Iraq for that reason. Our companies are there, our products are there, and whenever Iraq becomes more stable more companies will be there for business. We’ve been able to maintain excellent relations with the Iraqis. To be frank, when I met representatives of the present government, they said Indian troops would be welcome. But the point remains that there are elements there which are targeting installations which in the normal course would’ve been regarded as sacrosanct: the UN, the Red Cross. Therefore one doesn’t know whether our troops wouldn’t have been targeted. Not by the Iraqis, but by these elements. I’m happy that we continue to enjoy the goodwill of the Iraqi people. When the opportunities arise we will have our fair share. So we haven’t missed out...
Will troops still be sent if there’s a UN cover or if there’s a request from the Iraqis?

I don’t think the Iraqi governing council responded to the offer of Turkish troops for Iraq. This is the other point of view that they feel they’re capable of managing the situation...

Is it that or they didn’t want Turkish troops?

They didn’t want Turkish troops, they didn’t want neighbouring troops, but they’ve also gone on record that they don’t want foreign troops. So, the question that you’re asking is in the realm of the unlikely.

You said 70 per cent of your time is spent on economic diplomacy. Do Indian ambassadors spend that kind of time too? Is the ministry across the Raisina Hill (the ministry of finance)...and the commerce ministry involving MEA sufficiently? Is there an impulse within government in general and the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) in particular that they should be spending 70 per cent of their time in economic areas? Your ministry seems marginalised most of the time.

No, I don’t think so. I mentioned the inevitability, the compelling logic. That compelling logic applies to all wings of the government and all our missions abroad. Even if there is lack of interest there is pressure to act. There’s pressure from here, there’s pressure from the business constituency. If you have 95 businessmen travelling with the PM to Moscow it is the (Indian diplomatic) mission which looks after things.

I can say quite safely that Indian missions are far more oriented to doing economic work than perhaps was the case in the past. There’s much more coordination between the government: I mean commerce and external affairs are closely working together. It’s not merely SAPTA and SAFTA and SAARC. We now have the ASEAN framework agreement. The PM mentioned it one year ago. In twelve months flat we’ve been able to negotiate it at par with China and Japan who were miles ahead of us.

We have now the FTA framework agreement with Thailand. We have comprehensive economic cooperation agreements being negotiated with Singapore, with Sri Lanka. Now Mauritius. We’re in
the process of appointing such a group with China. We have a framework agreement with Mercosur. We have signed a memorandum of understanding with the ANDEAN community, COMESA, SADEC (Southern African Development Community). We are negotiating one with ECOAS (Economic Community of West African States), with SACU (Southern African Customs Union). There’s a Caricom delegation coming here led by the Jamaican foreign minister. We are going to sign a MoU with them. We are doing all this because every country is now part of some regional grouping or the other. and you need to establish some kind of institutional dialogue. The dialogue as we’ve noticed in the European Union (EU) will not remain purely economic. It will also become political.

So with the EU now when we have the summit (in end-November) we shall discuss political issues, we discuss economics also. That’s the case with all these bodies we are interacting with now.

India is in a position to commit resources. India can commit $200 million for The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) in Africa, apart from what we do bilaterally. India can give $100 million to Mauritius, another $100 million to Sri Lanka. We’ve committed $170 million in cash to Afghanistan. We’ve remitted loans. We’ve forgiven debts to some developing countries. This is being done because this is how the world expects India to behave. We go to them and say we are giving you $5 million and we won’t ask for it (back). They come to us (and say) can you consider this. They expect this from India and that’s what India is doing.

I went to Mauritius 3-4 months ago. They said we have this UN conference coming up. What can you do to help us with the convention centre? I said we’ll build it for you. And we are doing it. $12 million or whatever is going to be spent.

In recent days there’s been some attention given to our engagement with Central Asia... a very important strategic area. When I went to Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan I was the first Indian foreign minister to visit these countries. Then I went to Uzbekistan. PM went to Tajikistan. Defence Minister went. Our engagement with the Central Asian Republics is much more than ever. So, things are happening. Things are happening because India is regarded as a happening place. And therefore people are interested.
The picture you’ve painted, one of a multipolar world, the trilaterals, the special relationships...how important is the US? We were in a unipolar world a decade back. Much of our foreign policy was based on that. When your government first came into power, (there was) the Strobe Talbott-Jaswant Singh dialogue: the US was the central element of our foreign policy. So when we are moving....

(interjects)...Without, without detracting from the focus on the US. One is not at all, not in any way, at the cost of the other.

**The Iraq decision (not to send troops) don’t you think...**

(interjects): There is, there is understanding at the topmost level in the US for the Indian decision. I’m aware that with certain elements there’s some doubt or some misunderstanding. But we have interacted at the highest level and we have a feeling that there’s no misunderstanding. The Indian position is clearly understood. Not only understood, but even appreciated. The relationship has progressed extremely well. In no manner has our engagement with the rest of the world or our policy in Iraq impacted on our relationship. We’re interested in continuing to build on this and we feel there has been equal response.

Then our relationship with Russia has become much more dynamic than it was after the break up of the Soviet Union.

(With) China, there is a clear shift.

**Would you define this as a clear shift after the PM went there?**

Absolutely. After the visit there’s been a paradigm shift with China. So, none of the major powers have been...

**You haven’t mentioned Japan. The Japanese have a feeling that we’ve not engaged them seriously. But we also have a feeling that they’re not serious about India. You’ve had some experience in dealing with Japan even in your earlier stint as the FM.**

I would tend to agree with you that the kind of interest that Japanese business should’ve taken in India hasn’t happened. The kind of response that we see elsewhere we haven’t noticed in the case of
Japan. At the political level the Japanese foreign minister was here and we had a very good meeting. It was after nearly a decade or something that a Japanese foreign minister had come. I’ll make the other point. After the nuclear tests one country which took it most to heart was Japan. It took us much longer to engage Japan once again. But PM (Yoshiro) Mori came. Our PM travelled to Japan. Our foreign minister went to Japan. I haven’t been to Japan as finance minister or foreign minister, but I hope to respond soon...

You went as FM in 1990.

Right. So, I hope to respond to their invitation. In the meanwhile, you know, Japan has had its own share of economic problems. Then they had elections. Things have (now) settled down. I think we’ll pick up the pieces once again. India doesn’t underestimate the importance of Japan either in Asia or worldwide. We’re aware that they have the capability to make large investments. We certainly want to achieve higher levels of political understanding with Japan. Things have changed. But I wouldn’t be able to confirm that we’ve reached the pinnacle of the relationship.

Economic diplomacy has assumed a new dimension not because I am here but because India has evolved.

Then there’s renewed interest in South Korea. Their foreign minister will be here in the third week of December. The Korean president had a meeting with the PM in Bali.

The other country is Australia. If I could shift from Japan to Canada and Australia, both had responded very adversely to the (nuclear) tests. But look at the comprehensive engagement we have now: the Canadian PM and the Canadian foreign minister coming here within a gap of 15 days from each other. Both went back extremely gung-ho. I went to Australia, I travelled to various cities. The PM made his personal plane available to me. So, there’s clearly a new swing in our relationship.

So, while we are continuing with the focus with respect to US, Russia, and many other countries, without detracting from the engagement we have expanded the engagement with other countries also.
What about Pakistan?

Like I said for the others, the compelling logic of an economic engagement is going to drive this as well. It’s inevitable. India and Pakistan cannot continue to stultify trade between them and continue to trade through Colombo, Singapore, Dubai or whatever. Direct trade will have to come. From meetings with Pakistani CEOs, the way the Pakistanis are participating in the (India International) Trade Fair, it appears that the realisation is dawning among the Pakistani business class. It may not have dawned upon the Pakistani rulers. The fear that India will overwhelm Pakistan has been misplaced. If China hasn’t been able to overwhelm Pakistan there’s no way India would be able to. I see economic engagement progressing further. We’d like it to happen in a bilateral framework. But at the moment it’s happening under the aegis of SAARC.

One criticism is that we’re not doing enough to promote trade within the region. We have tariff barriers. Then there are non-tariff barriers that, for example, Bangladesh has been complaining about. Do we need to do more?

We do. Our tariffs are still high. That’s why we are saying that we should have these preferential free trade arrangements (FTAs). Sri Lanka is an example we quote. Trade has increased. Balance has narrowed in favour of Sri Lanka. These are the arguments we gave to Bangladesh and these are the arguments we used to persuade them to start negotiating an FTA. As for non-tariff barriers, I told Bangladesh that let’s put together everything. There are non-tariff barriers on both sides. I’ve also said that India is ready to enter into negotiations for a South Asian (Economic) Union. That’s much beyond trade in goods. It could include trade in services, investment, technology. It could include everything.

Do you have a timetable?

We’ll certainly say this in the SAARC summit. We could enter into a framework arrangement. The arrangement, as in the case of other countries, can establish a time frame. We’re not looking for symmetrical arrangement, We’ll be prepared to look at an asymmetrical arrangement where both in terms of time and the depth of the tariff cuts there could be asymmetry.

Would there be support for this within the government?
I won’t have spoken about it if there was no support.

**Do you feel frustrated that economic initiatives that you might like to take you can’t take because of some elements in government or outside?**

I don’t think there’s any difference in approach within the government. I can say that quite confidently. The only difficulty is that there are interests here within this country — which might be interests of an industry, which might be interests of an industrial house or one manufacturing unit — which say something big shouldn’t happen because their particular unit is going to be affected. This is unacceptable. You win some, you lose some. This is how you make progress. Our units will have to learn to adjust.

**The Budget exercise has started. How far will this message from your ministry be drilled into the end result?**

The finance ministry has been committed to lower tariffs since I was FM and even before. Repeatedly Manmohan Singh, (P) Chidambaram, Jaswant Singh, and I now...we’ve all talked of reducing the tariffs and bringing them down to ASEAN levels. That’s one movement or trend. The other trend is in respect to a particular country or a group of countries. There you have a separate PTA. We have a PTA with Afghanistan, for instance. We quickly negotiated it when I was in Kandahar. The fruit traders said India is our market and we must have a PTA. We talked to the commerce ministry. Negotiations were held. And in two rounds or so we were able to conclude negotiations.

So, this will have to be a two-track approach.

**Can we wait till there’s consensus down to the last manufacturing unit about the inevitability of lower tariffs?**

No. We’ll have to take into account their point of view. But ultimately we’ll take a view which is in national interest.

**In terms of what all this has meant to your ministry: what are the organisational changes that have been required?**

We have to ensure that the mindset of Indian diplomacy remains conducive. We need to provide, perhaps, better training so that they are sensitive to economic diplomacy from the very beginning.
We’ll have to have better monitoring and supervision so that all this is implemented and cases of neglect are taken care of and wherever we feel there is a weak link we are able to tackle that weak link.

**Don’t you find resistance?**

No, by and large the IFS not only realise this they are fully in agreement with this.

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**New Delhi, December 12, 2003.**

When the Hindustan Times Leadership Initiative invited me to this Conference, what really attracted me was the powerful imagery of the peace dividend as the engine of progress in our region. At the same time, I must confess to some sadness that – over half a century after all the countries of our region attained independence – this truth still needs to be emphasized.

The peace dividend for South Asia is the creation of new hope and opportunity for its billion and a half people. We need no stronger justification for peace than this simple statement. The investment inputs required to reap this dividend are pragmatic policies, rational economics and popular participation.

There can be no argument about our inherent advantages, common interests and complementary strengths, which present a tremendous opportunity for our region to realize its full potential:

- First and foremost, our rich and varied human resources. Our citizens have created waves around the world with their technical, financial and managerial expertise. Their energies and talents can find greater application in regional cooperative enterprises.
Second, our populations are younger than the world average, and will therefore constitute an increasing proportion of the global workforce in the future.

Third, our technological advances have put us at the vanguard of today’s Knowledge Economy, enabling us to accelerate our development process.

Fourth, the size and increasing purchasing power of our collective market create economies of scale for cost-effective production.

Fifth, efficient exploitation of our synergies can vastly enhance intra-regional trade, even as we work towards a rule-based international trading regime.

Sixth, the region has massive untapped capacities for hydropower and unexploited hydrocarbons, which can more than meet its huge energy deficit.

Seventh, the rich diversity of our bio-resources – in the Himalayan region and elsewhere – are yet to be exploited for our common benefit.

Eighth, our combined political weight and economic strength can give us considerable leverage in pursuing our shared objective for a cooperative multi-polar world order.

The peace dividend lies in converting this exciting potential into vibrant reality. Our region is heir to a centuries old tradition of tolerance, pluralism and creative interaction. We need to recapture this ethos in the modern context.

In the post-Cold War world of globalisation, countries around the world are increasingly focusing on regional economics. Political disputes have been resolved diplomatically or quietly deferred for tackling at a more opportune time. Conflict has given way to cooperation; dialogue moderates differences. There is a clear recognition that hostility only stunts economies, inhibits trade and retards progress.

This realization has dawned not only in the developed world, but also in developing regions that have experienced bitter differences and violent conflicts in the past. It encompasses Mercosur and the Andean Pact, COMESA and SADC, NAFTA and APEC. Nearer home, we have the outstanding example of ASEAN. South Asia needs the wisdom to heed these lessons.
By most estimates trade within regions accounts for nearly three-fourths of global trade. Yet in spite of our geographical proximity, shared economic characteristics and similar development infrastructure intra-South Asia trade is under 5% of our total foreign trade.

We must discard the myth that, because of the asymmetries in our economies, the smaller countries do not benefit from closer economic integration within South Asia. Our free trade agreements with Nepal and Sri Lanka have resulted in narrowing the trade deficit of both these countries with India. In fact the success of the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement has inspired us to expand its scope to cover services and investment in a comprehensive economic partnership agreement.

Energy is one area with the greatest promise of mutually enriching partnerships. Nepal and Bhutan today have an estimated potential of 100,000 MW of environmentally clean hydro-power. Bangladesh has similarly promising reserves of natural gas. They need to sell these energy sources. India is the only viable buyer and its energy demands are expanding exponentially. There is obvious scope for win-win arrangements. The hydroelectric projects in Bhutan illustrate this dramatically. Bhutan’s per capita income of $600 today is expected to double by the end of 2005, when the 1020 Megawatt Tala power plant is completed.

The optimum management of our regional water resources for irrigation, navigation and flood control can have a multiplier effect on infrastructure, development and growth in our entire region. This requires not only financial investments, but also maturity of policy. We should recognise that an enduring partnership can only be built on the basis of each country wisely exercising the rights of a lower riparian, and responsibly fulfilling the obligations of an upper riparian.

Our region sits astride the land routes and sea lanes that connect the worlds’ big energy sources of the Middle East to the expanding energy markets of East and Southeast Asia. With our extended neighbourhood of Iran and Afghanistan, our land mass also links the new energy sources of Central Asia with the warm water ports of the Indian Ocean in the South. It does not require much imagination to envisage how close regional cooperation can cash in on the strategic importance of our location.

Our most important common war today is against poverty, disease, hunger and under-development. We can share experiences and promote
intra-regional linkages for economic and social development. A small, but significant, beginning has been made by our SAARC Experts Group on Poverty Alleviation. The Group, drawn from all SAARC countries, has extensively documented best practices in poverty alleviation programmes across the region. It has made detailed recommendations for regional dissemination of information on these practices and for regional capacity building. We have to show dedication in implementation of these recommendations and multiply such examples of regional experience sharing.

As we develop greater economic stakes in each other, we can put aside mistrust and dispel unwarranted suspicions. We will also develop mutual sensitivity to each others' concerns and promote more of our common interests. If we provide legitimate avenues of free commercial interaction, we can eradicate the black market and underground trade. We could jointly tackle smuggling, drug trafficking, money laundering and other trans-national crimes, which today flourish in our region because of our mutual rivalries and inadequate coordination. Once we reach that stage, we would not be far from mutual security cooperation, open borders and even a single currency.

If this seems unrealistic and utopian, perhaps we are being unnecessarily cynical. Let us remember that the world did not anticipate the sudden end to the Cold War or the collapse of the Berlin Wall. No one thought Apartheid South Africa could be transformed bloodlessly into Mandela's Rainbow Country. Not many political analysts would have predicted that the hostile suspicion between Russia and China could be converted in such a short time into a strategic partnership.

Each one of these developments flowed from objective factors in the global environment, but actually occurred because of some enlightened and responsible decisions by people at the helm of affairs.

I would suggest that the demands of globalisation and the aspirations of our people provide the objective bases for our energetic pursuit of a harmoniously integrated South Asia. Our people, businesses and organisations are waiting to interact more closely with each other. This includes producers and consumers, investors and markets, doctors and patients, artists and audiences, students and universities. They are all part of the supply and demand dynamics of a vast sub-continent. They see the unexploited potential in their own neighbourhood. They have
waited for over an half-century for its fulfilment and are now impatient to move ahead.

We can sense this impatience in the outpouring of popular sentiment after our initiatives. The increased travel between India and Pakistan of Parliamentarians, businessmen, artists and sportsmen show the intense desire for amity and goodwill. We have to respond to this desire by seeking every possible way to banish hostility and promote peace.

If we in South Asia look back objectively at the experiences of our freedom struggles and of our nation-building, the one stark lesson that stands out is the imperative of forging a unity based on our commonalities. Whenever we have dissipated our energies in internal squabbling, external forces have come in to sort out our differences and stayed on to exploit our resources. We should never create the possibility of reliving these historical experiences in new forms and on different fronts.

All these are aspects, which your conference could discuss as it exchanges ideas on the economic, strategic and geopolitical future of India and South Asia, ahead of the forthcoming SAARC Summit. Our search for pragmatism, maturity and wisdom will have to involve both governments and civil society. It will also require a widespread understanding that in today’s context, collective regional interest is an expression of enlightened self-interest.

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Q. What is the main message that you delivered in this visit?

A. The main message is one of friendship, good will and sincerity. As you know I came here for the joint economic commission and most issues are economic. Therefore in this visit and in the visit with your Min. of Foreign Affairs, economic co-operations, trade and co-operations in energy and agriculture were discussed. Also there were discussions on defense and other issues. We have given a credit of $200 million to Iran which was announced last year during the visit of President Khatami to India. We discussed using this credit which is mainly for substructure projects. A group of rail roads is present in my delegation. They negotiated on renovation of Iranian rail roads with their counterparts. In the energy sector there are two issues of interest for us: participation in oil production in Iran and participation in renovation of refineries in which we have the technical know-how. The gas pipeline was also discussed.

Q. Were there any developments in its constructions?

A. Presently we have a feasibility study regarding sub-sea route of the pipeline and it has not finished yet. There is a working group which regularly holds meetings on the project. The group will propose its findings for decision-making. In our negotiations with Mr. Rafsanjani and Kamal Kharazi, I proposed that we are interested in organizing activities that would ultimately facilitate a free trade zone with Iran. But this zone will not be complete without the presence of Pakistan. So my proposal was that we can think of a free trade zone with Iran, India and Pakistan, in other words a free zone modeled on similar zones in other countries. India has entered such mechanism with other countries including ASEAN, countries, Thailand and Sri Lanka. We are also working on the same with Singapore. Primary negotiations have started with SARC and Mauritius.

Q. Doesn’t the presence of Pakistan make formation of this zone more difficult having in mind current sensitivities of Islamabad and New Delhi toward one another?

A. It should not be so. Trade should not be sacrificed for politics. Economic
issues should have their own rhythm, and not the bargaining chip for political disputes. This is our approach. I have proposed this thought and I hope Iranian officials will consider it. We also decided to form smaller groups including ambassadors of the two countries, relevant DGs and ministries of foreign affairs and interior to speed up progress on some vital issues. This 4-member group will meet once in a while to study progress and development of affairs and will inform us of any obstacles so that we can make proper decisions.

Q.Apparently your country has decided to send troops to Afghanistan

A. No, it is not true.

Q. How about Iraq?

A. No, we have announced to them that it was not possible for us to sent troops there.

Q. Even if you are removed from the list of countries that can have opportunities in Iraqi reconstruction?

A. In our view, the decision is theirs because it is their money. If it was our money we had the right to decide. Therefore they have the right to choose who will do the work.

Q. I think that you announced that if the U.S. had the right to confront Iraq in its preemptive policy, India had the right to confront Pakistan based on the same policy because Pakistan supports terrorism and has WMD.

A. I said this in a different context and conditions. I said that if the criterion for military intervention is having WMD, its distribution and export of terrorism, the U.S. should intervene in Pakistan since the case of Pakistan was more justified than that of Iraq. At the time I felt that between Iraq and Pakistan, there are better justifications for American intervention in Pakistan than in Iraq not Indian military intervention.

Q. You are quoted to say that Pakistan only thinks of Kashmir. What consequences has this preoccupation of Pakistan with Kashmir had on its policy on India? It also seems that Indians are preoccupied with Kashmir just like Pakistan.

A. This is true. I said that. Whenever we talk with Pakistanis about trade,
culture, maritime borders, relations among people or other issues they bring in the Kashmir issue. They are very concerned over Kashmir. For us, Pakistan is but one of the issues of our foreign policy, and not the main issue either. But from their reactions we understand that India, especially the Jammu and Kashmir issue is their main foreign policy issue. I think that they have a kind of hatred toward India. India is fast progressing on all fronts but unfortunately this is not the case for Pakistan. If Pakistan leaves this unnatural enmity behind it will be to the benefit of its people.

Q. Last winter president Khatami visited India. At the end of his trip there was the Delhi Declaration which emphasized on strategic co-operation of the two countries in order to have a safer, more stable and more developed region. What effect did this declaration have for the development in relations of the two countries?

A. This was the road map that Mr. Kharazi and I signed. Issues that need mutual considerations are included in it. Some major issues that I mentioned before like co-operation on technology, energy, agriculture, trade and investment are included in that.

Q. India is one of the founders of NAM. In the past your country was looked upon as one that would take a leading role in the world. But it seems that these hopes have recently vanished. Do you favor policies of this and that side?

A. The issue is not the policies of others. It is not even the leading role. The world today has changed. No country wants to be led by another country. So if you say that I want to lead you no one will listen to you. Leadership in national level and on international level is due to fundamental policies that are taken regarding different regional and world issues. Those days India was one of the first countries that became independent. We then helped others do so. For example we started our struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Now these struggles are over and there is no apartheid there any more. The world today is more engaged in economic issues than before because there are more talks of people’s welfare now. This was the axis of our negotiations here and India will do whatever it can in this regard. India is an emerging country in another scene. Leadership and importance of India is due to the fact that our economy is one the fastest growing ones among developing countries. We have great achievements in human resources development. In technology, we are a leader in information technology and fundamental research. These are the fields in which India’s leadership is recognized.
Q. India is an atomic power. How do you assess the way Iran was treated regarding its nuclear activities?

A. The difference between Iran and India is that we were armed with nuclear weapons in 1998. We did not sign NPT. Iran has. Therefore it has some obligations. We decided to have nuclear weapons because of our security worries and now we have our nuclear weapons policy according to which India will not use its nuclear weapons against countries without nuclear arms. Also India will not be the first country that will use it.

Q. Your treatment of Kashmir is interpreted as an enmity of New Delhi toward Muslims. Is this true? What are your policies about Muslims?

A. This is what Pakistan accuses us of and certainly it is baseless. Our official policy is what is said in the constitution of India. According to this law, India is a secular state. In this democracy everyone is free to choose his religion and to practice it. Islam is one of the religions like other religions.

Q. There are worries in Iran about development of India-Israel relations. How can you assure Iran?

A. India has its own independent policy on different issues including foreign policy. Our relations with Israel are within this context. I should mention that India will never establish or strengthen relations with any country for the purpose of threat.

Q. How do you predict future Iran-India relations?

A. Very well. You mentioned the Delhi Declaration that was signed at the end of President Khatami’s visit to India. The Declaration specifies the main guidelines of relations between the two countries which are in fact limitless. Specifically, on economic side, they can potentially expand. I think that we can achieve new strategic heights in these relations.
Q1. What are the high and low points of the foreign policy front in 2003? If you were to name one major single achievement this year, what would it be? What is Indian foreign policy’s goal for the year 2004? What is the biggest foreign policy achievement you want to go out to the people with before general elections next year?

Ans: The most important high point of 2003 has been India reaching out to the world comprehensively.

Bearing testimony to the success of our endeavours are the present candour and warmth of our interaction with the US and our strategic partnership with Russia. There is also the closer engagement with the European Union, our diversified exchanges with China, a strong Look East policy underpinned by important economic considerations, and our growing contacts with countries of the Asia Pacific, Latin America, Africa, Central Asia and the Gulf.

Our fight against terrorism remains unrelenting, and has priority in all our bilateral and multilateral exchanges. In addition, the new sense of optimism and hope in our subcontinent has its basis in India’s determined peace and development initiatives vis-à-vis all her neighbours.

Our interaction with Africa is helping raise awareness of India as a dependable nation of diverse capabilities that is willing to provide a broad range of competitive goods and services of value to the region’s development. India’s relationship with Latin American countries is being strengthened through deeper economic ties. Our engagement with this continent is supporting Indian business to benefit from emerging opportunities in pharmaceutical and biomedical industries, in education, energy, space, agriculture, IT, etc.

The Caribbean countries are our natural allies in many respects. We, therefore, embarked on a structured dialogue with the CARICOM since we have several issues of common interest, including the fight against HIV/AIDS, combating global terrorism, WTO’s Doha Development Agenda, UN reform and the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Representative of these alliances that India has embarked upon is
IBSA, the India-Brazil-South Africa initiative that will allow the three countries to effectively consult with each other and speak in one voice to global audiences of the interests and needs of the developing countries of our three continents.

The goals of India’s international diplomacy are very broad. We wish to expand our political engagement, build on economic complementarities, and develop strategic convergences with every country and region. Whatever happens in India’s immediate and extended neighbourhood is obviously of deep concern to us. So, for us, peace and stability in our neighbourhood is of primary importance, and by natural extension, so are, global peace and stability.

We also view our constructive contribution to the globalization process as a vital area of foreign relations since it impinges directly on our economic growth and development.

Our foreign policy represents the country’s sustained commitment to strengthen and expand our international alliances and, therefore, it cannot and will not falter. It has to help guarantee the security and the economic well-being of the billion people of India. This will be our guiding principle in the coming year as it was in 2003.

Q2. The developments in Iraq required some tightrope walking on the part of New Delhi. Now that Saddam Hussein has been captured are there likely to be any changes in India’s policies, particularly with regard to sending troops to stabilize the situation in Iraq that is India’s goal?

Ans: Earlier, careful consideration had been given to the question of sending Indian troops to Iraq, keeping in mind our longer-term national interest, our concern for the people of Iraq, our long-standing ties with the Gulf region as well as our growing dialogue and strengthened relations with the United States. India has taken note of Mr. Hussein’s arrest. India hopes that the security situation in Iraq will stabilize, so that the much needed rehabilitation and reconstruction work can begin. India’s approach takes into account a number of relevant factors such as the ground realities, the political roadmap for Iraq, the role of the U.N., public perceptions in Iraq and the national sentiment.

While expressing our commitment to the reconstruction of Iraq, we are not considering the question of contribution of troops.

We are, of course, ready to contribute to the requirements of the
Iraqi people like health care, training of personnel etc. We have already announced a contribution of US$ 30 million for Iraq's reconstruction.

Q3. How do you see Indo-US relations developing in the coming months? Do you think Washington continues with its policy of tilt towards Pakistan?

Ans: India-US relations are undergoing an unprecedented qualitative transformation given our shared values and common strategic interests in Asia and beyond. There is a new level of understanding between the two countries both in the bilateral and the global context, marked by a high degree of cordiality, warmth and candour. I am confident that the bilateral relations between our nations would continue to attain new strength across the full spectrum, something to which the leadership of the two countries has committed itself. India-US relations are not predicated on the relations that the United States has with Pakistan or any other country.

Q4. The Prime Minister travels to Islamabad in the first week of January for the SAARC summit. This has raised a lot of expectations not only in the two countries but in the region and the entire world. What are India's expectations from the visit? Will he meet Gen. Musharraf?

Ans: Our expectations from the visit are manifold. First and foremost, we hope that the Prime Minister's visit to Islamabad for the forthcoming SAARC Summit will be able to inject a sense of realism and dynamism in this organization. It is unfortunate that even after 18 years of the setting up of SAARC, the progress of regional cooperation in South Asia has not been satisfactory. We hope that the visit will set in motion the process wherein the simple logic of mutual economic benefit can begin to triumph over politics. Conflict is giving way to cooperation in different regions of the world but South Asia has remained an exception to this trend. If the momentum of our regional cooperation can be increased, the winners will be not just one or two but all the SAARC nations. If not, then the people of our region will continue to be deprived of the benefits that would accrue through increased trade, economic ties, investments and people to people exchanges.

On the political side, we feel that the most important challenge for all member countries of SAARC is to combat and defeat terrorism in South Asia. We expect that member countries of SAARC who are part of the international coalition for counter terrorism efforts will deem it important
to also form a regional coalition and formulate a well thought out plan at the regional level to counter terrorism. SAARC countries had signed a Convention for Combating Terrorism in 1987 and there is a need for putting in place mechanisms and measures to take care of all the gaps which prevent the implementation of that Convention. We expect, therefore, that there will be a new dynamism imparted towards finalization of an Additional Protocol on Terrorism so that SAARC member countries will be duty bound to take necessary domestic measures and enact enabling legislation to prevent the financing and supporting of terrorist activities. South Asia has to be free of terrorism and we hope that the Prime Minister’s visit to Islamabad would be a step in that direction.

Q5. The ceasefire along Kashmir’s frontiers appears to be holding? What can the two countries do to make it permanent?

Ans: We are very glad that the cease-fire extending from the International Border through the LoC and up to the Actual Ground Position Line, is holding. We genuinely want to make it a permanent one. However, for this to happen, Pakistan must cease its support to cross border infiltration and dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism.

Q6. How important is energy security in India’s foreign policy calculus and what are your achievements and aspirations on that front?

Ans: In the economic diplomacy of the Ministry of External Affairs, energy security is one of the important components. Since India is facing shortage of energy resources and is dependent upon imports of crude oil to a large extent, it has been our constant endeavour to achieve energy security. We have been pursuing the following course of action with growing success:-

i. We would like to diversify sources of supply of crude oil and reduce the dependence on any particular region. With our encouragement, our companies have been successful in buying crude oil from countries in Africa and even Latin America. Venezuela, Brazil and Mexico are latest sources of supply of crude oil to India.

ii. We have been working with ONGC Videsh in acquiring foreign oil assets for exploration and production. ONGC Videsh Ltd. has already successfully purchased shares in oil production ventures in Sakhalin in Russia (investment USD1.74bn), the Greater Nile Oil Project, Sudan (Investment over USD700bn). Apart from these, ONGC Videsh has entered into ventures in oil and gas in Vietnam,
Myanmar and Libya. We are now encouraging ONGC Videsh to enter into similar ventures in Venezuela, Angola and West Africa.

iii. We are exploring possibilities of importing natural gas from countries such as Qatar and Iran.

iv. We are working with the Department of Non-Conventional Energy sources, Planning Commission and NGOs such as TERI for commercialisation of non-conventional energy resources. For example, there is an active programme for introduction of fuel cell using hydrogen energy for automobiles in the experimental stage. We encourage collaboration of our research institutions with foreign organizations and countries to get the latest technologies in this sector.

(These are the written replies to the written questions submitted to the Minister of External Affairs)
INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003

Section - II

NONALIGNED SUMMIT
034. Special media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the visit of Prime Minister to Kuala Lumpur to attend the NAM Summit.

New Delhi, February 18, 2003.

Also Present: Shri Rajiv Sikri, Additional Secretary, Economic Division, Ministry of External Affairs.

SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: This is a somewhat hurriedly organised briefing on the forthcoming NAM Summit. Hurriedly because I shall be leaving tonight to be in time for the senior officials meeting, which would be followed by the Foreign Ministers meeting, and then of course the Heads of Government and the Heads of State. If I did not do it today, I would not be able to do it at all.

I think you know what the dates are. So, I do not have to tell you the basic details. The last Summit, as you know, was held in August 1998 in Durban. The Kuala Lumpur Summit takes place after four and a half years. The normal periodicity is three years, but the Summit was postponed due to the inability, first of Bangladesh and then of Jordan to host it. It is South Africa that has led the Movement in the intervening period.

There is, of course, general introspection about NAM, its future, how it can continue to be relevant through the fundamental concerns of the international community today. So, in addition to the normal agenda on the review of the international political and economic situation, the theme of the Summit would be the revitalization of NAM. The Ministerial level segment of the meeting will see interactive sessions on the theme, which is also expected to be deliberated upon at the Summit level.

In this connection you are aware that South Africa had held two meetings on this whole subject of revitalization of the Movement and, therefore, determining new priorities of the Movement. The External Affairs Minister had played a key role in these two meetings, which are known as Zimbali process, in South Africa and the last one was in Cape Town in December. Many of the ideas that he had projected were accepted. These would totally form the subject matter of other discussions.

One broad theme would be the promotion of multilateralism, which in terms of its content would be a commitment to multilateralism, respect for an alternative perspective that promotes tolerance, democratization
of the international institutions including the reform of the UN system, of the better modes financial system, and also its addressing the inequities of the multilateral trading system, as for example the WTO.

The second broad theme would be global security threats which will include terrorism, non-adherence to international law, the whole issue of intervention and unilateral action etc., etc.

The third broad theme would be development with focus on poverty alleviation, human resource development, capacity-building in the areas of health and education - in this regard the emphasis should be placed on achievements of the millennium development goals - and at the outcomes and commitments of the other major conferences such as the WSSD, FSD, WCAR should be used to the advantage of the developing countries.

Then the other issues which are currently on the economic agenda on which the developing countries are more at the receiving end of these ideas rather than themselves proactively contributing to the relevance of these ideas to the international community as a whole. These are issues like respect for human rights, good governance, transparency, democratic practices. It is increasingly felt that these are issues which NAM should internalize and promote and that these should be promoted, projected and used as a framework within which NAM operates.

Then there is the objective of globalisation and promotion of South-South cooperation, to look upon globalisation not only as a challenge but also as an opportunity with NAM countries pooling their resources and expertise gained over the years to assist member-countries and improve and forge closer cooperation, challenges that face developing countries as a result of technological advances, and the digital divide that further marginalizes developing countries. That cooperation should include concrete actions as outlined in the outcomes of the SAARC Summit and should result in a series of projects. Some of these areas can be that of human resources, health, food security, access to water, coordination amongst Government think tanks, Central Banks etc., to share knowledge and expertise.

The developing countries should be equipped with the necessary tools to manage the consequences of globalisation and develop a strategy to address the consequences of the unequal global trading system and financial system. The feeling is that special meetings of relevant Ministers involved should be convened. And focus on the imbalances within the
international trading system, and promoting cooperation and acts of solidarity and support of countries affected by specific crises like food crisis, economic crisis, natural disasters.

The fifth broad theme is solidarity among Non-Aligned countries and member-states. Developing countries have been further marginalized as a result of advances in technology - only a few countries predominantly from Asia have the resources, skill and expertise to rise to the new challenges - and that resources should be pooled to assist those countries that do not as yet have the necessary skills, tools and expertise. In this regard the African countries are the most marginalized. Therefore, in terms of South-South cooperation NAM has a responsibility in particular to assist with the NEPAD programmes.

All of you are aware that the Summit will result in a Kuala Lumpur Declaration which is expected to focus primarily on the revitalization of NAM. There will be a standard communique with political, disarmament, economic and social sections. I need not mention that that is news part and the rest is all background. In the negotiations on the communique so far, issues relating to democracy, constitutional order, terrorism, religious tolerance etc., etc., are the ones that are attracting the most debate. Then, of course, there will be the usual reference to regional situations which would include Middle-East, Africa, DPRK and more surely Iraq given the fact that the Non-Aligned Movement is taking place at a time when the situation in Iraq is heading in a certain direction.

It is a fact that in a Movement with 115 countries, inevitably there are differences and even conflicts of view. India’s view is that NAM must focus essentially on global issues on which there is a commonality of interest. Any attempt to steer NAM away from the global agenda in which everybody has a stake to intra-NAM conflict resolution or ideas like that, cannot be to the good of the Movement.

On the issue of terrorism there is a very large international consensus. But there are some countries which risked assumption of their responsibility in dealing with this issue on the basis of what is now accepted as international commitments. Therefore, they tend to raise red herrings across the issue of terrorism by speaking about the root causes of terrorism. An attempt to bring in the concept of root causes of terrorism, is very clearly an attempt to justify terrorism. There are so many resolutions of the international community which clearly state that terrorism cannot be justified on any ground, political, religious, economic or ideological.
Once you have that position, you cannot seek to find some moral justification for terrorism by speaking about the root causes. If the root cause is poverty, then poverty is not going to go away, perhaps for another century. If the root cause is religious extremism, that is also not about to go away any time soon. If the root cause is territorial conflict, territorial conflicts will not disappear either. So, does this mean, therefore, until poverty is removed and territorial conflicts are ended and religious extremism is wiped out terrorism should continue because it will have root causes?

I did mention to you about the intra-NAM conflict resolution which, as I mentioned, would detract from the unity and cohesion of the Non-Aligned Movement and steer the Movement in the wrong direction whereas the common interest of everybody lies in dealing with the multiple international challenges that face the entire NAM community.

There is also the old debate going on whether NAM should have a secretariat or should not have a secretariat. We are also of the view that we should not try and go in for new institution building because that will only create more problems than solving them. Certainly there is need for better coordination and those mechanisms can be found under the Chairman.

Finally I would say that our focus at NAM would considerably be on the economic issues of the 21st century. I think that is the direction in which NAM should be steered. The opportunities and challenges of globalisation, common positions on crucial issues in organizations like WTO, democratization of the financial institutions, poverty alleviation, meeting the millennium development goals, the challenge of HIV AIDS, and the attention to the problems in Africa. We are supportive of concrete ideas and initiatives, the initiatives for economic and technical cooperation among NAM members.

This is by way of general introduction, more than a general introduction about what the NAM Summit in Kuala Lumpur is going to be about. If you have any questions, I will be happy to answer.

**QUESTION:** You referred to terrorism and regional issues. Is it the Kashmir issue that is bothering us as it has been raised even in the UN many times by countries like Pakistan?

Secondly, how does this communique work? Is it adopted by a consensus sort of opinion or is it the opinion of the Chair with the sense of the House?
SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: I do not think we need to be worried very much about this because you have seen also in the UN General Assembly that there is only one country that mentions Kashmir and that is the country whose name I will give you a million dollars to guess. Maybe another country here and there, but nobody else ever mentions the Kashmir issue. That particular country will also be there at Kuala Lumpur. I think they must act true to form and, I suppose, must refer to their pet theme. But as you know that is the only country.

There are other issues involving NAM countries. When there is talk about intra-NAM conflict resolution, it is not simply intended for India-Pakistan issues. The African countries, for example, Africa is currently facing a lot of conflict situations and you know that the African countries themselves have mechanisms to deal with some of these problems. So, the African countries, some of them, do look favourably upon some efforts within the Non-Aligned Movement to deal with the internal problems. So, our view is that while this experience may or may not be working happily in Africa. The current conflict situations in Africa including in Ivory Coast demonstrate this.

If there was no global agenda which you have to contend with, I can understand that you are looking for a role. But then there is some difficult and complex and vast agenda which is stacked against you. There is a lot that these Non-Aligned countries can and must do together because their only force is their collective strength. There is nothing else. Their force is their numbers. If they do not act in a united and coherent manner, even the force of numbers would not be effective.

QUESTION: Can you please answer my other question as to how the communique is worked out? Is it by consensus?

SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: It is always by consensus. It has to be by consensus.

QUESTION: General Musharraf is also visiting Kuala Lumpur. Is there going to be a meeting between Prime Minister Vajpayee and General Musharraf?

SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: No.

QUESTION: What will happen when they run into each other.

SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: They are not going to meet. It is as simple as that. We do not have to do any choreography.
QUESTION: You also talked about the Cape Town meeting on revitalization of NAM and said that EAM’s suggestions were accepted by NAM. Can you share a few of those suggestions with us?

SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: In fact all that I read out here were EAM’s ideas. This was a paper he had presented and that got incorporated lock, stock and barrel more or less. Everybody found that he had come with the best done homework and his were the best ideas on the table. Those have been incorporated. But mind you, these are simply recommendations. Zimbali process is not an integral part of the NAM process in the sense, because only a limited number of countries attended. Whatever it is, it is not binding. Other countries are not committed to anything that was developed during the Zimbali process. So, these recommendations are only recommendatory in nature. But they are good ideas. Surely, many countries would find them useful.

QUESTION: Is Iraq issue going to come up for discussion during the Summit? Is NAM going to take a position on Iraq at this Summit?

SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: Inevitably NAM will be focused upon it. It will require a huge leap of imagination to forget Iraq.

QUESTION: How is the difference of opinion in NAM on Iraq going to affect NAM?

SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: You know how much the issue of Iraq is divisive in any case, even in New York, pitting the members of the Security Council against each other, creating rifts, divisions in Europe, in NATO. Then beyond that, there are concerns that the regional countries have about the situation in Iraq and the consequences of military action there. There is the whole question of oil, and what happens to the price of oil and the security of oil supply which is a global concern, and the other questions about the integrity of Iraq as to how it impacts on the neighbourhood, what neighbouring countries may or may not do, how the situation in Iraq will be handled should there be military action. Then the whole debate that is taking place in the West, and of course the matter of concern to the international community about the role of the United Nations, unilateralism versus multilateralism. So, clearly NAM countries will not be able to escape addressing the Iraq issue and all that the Iraq issue implies in terms of the functioning of the international system.

QUESTION: Mine is a basic question. NAM came into being when the world was divided into two blocs. That is no longer the case now. What is the relevance of NAM now?
SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: Well, I think one can pose a different question. NATO was born as a result of the cold war and conflict between the power blocs especially the United States and Russia. Now there is no cold war. Soviet Union is no more. In fact, communism is no more. Yet NATO is going from strength to strength. Its membership is getting enlarged, its area of operation is getting extended. In fact there is peace in Europe currently. So, what is the relevance of NATO? And if NATO was a product of the East-West divide and the bloc situation, and if Non-Aligned Movement was also a part of the same divide, then can one rationally argue that it is all right for NATO to exist and not for the Non-Aligned Movement to exist?

That is the fundamental question that has to be put. But other than that I think it has always been maintained by us at least, that we never looked upon the Non-Aligned Movement as simply a question of placing yourself in the middle of the two blocs. For us, it was essentially to maintain for ourselves, preserve for ourselves some independence of judgement and independence of action in terms of our own policies and our own interests rather than have our interests and our policies being determined by one or the other blocs. Our promotion of the Non-Aligned Movement was a direct product of our emergence as an independent nation. There was no point in us, after having struggled so hard for our independence and sacrificed so much for our independence, becoming, the day after we gained our independence, followers of one or the other bloc and mortgaging our independence to them. That was clear.

That motivation and that objective remains today that even if it is a globalising world, even if the margin for independence of any individual country globally is getting more and more reduced, yet there are broad areas in which countries must maintain their individual identity, their individual approach to international affairs to bring to bear their own ideas and their own conscience and then be counted for something. That is where the Non-Aligned Movement crux comes in. That is where it should come in for everybody else.

QUESTION: Is NAM an alliance of developing countries against the developed countries?

SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: Well, aligning is a wrong word to use. If you were to say that there are issues which involved developed countries and developing countries, yes. The new sense of NAM is there that there are whole host of issues not simply on the economic front but also on the
political front whether it is the crusade for the universalisation of democracy or certain set of values or the concepts of good governance which again are based on certain kind of political and social values or environmental debate and, of course, the economic issues. On that there is a clear conflict on many areas of interest between the developed and developing countries, though there are areas of convergence too.

Now how does the weaker partner in this debate protect its interests? That is only where they can do since they only have the power of numbers. So, if they are together they count for something. Therefore, in that sense the Non-Aligned Movement can be seen as a mechanism for the developing countries to be able to bargain better with the developed countries on issues on which there is hard bargaining going on in any case.

**QUESTION:** Do you foresee any serious attempt by Pakistan to give a new twist to the definition of terrorism?

**SHRI KANWAL SIBAL:** I do not know what that new twist would be. One thing which General Musharraf has been saying is, ‘Let there be a definition of terrorism by the United Nations.’ The implicit message is that once the United Nations has defined what terrorism is, he will abide by that and then he will end that kind of terrorism which has been defined by the international community. This is not only the position that General Musharraf takes but some other countries also who do not want to commit themselves to the fight against international terrorism, and who make distinctions between terrorism and freedom struggle. They are the ones who promote this kind of logic. These are all escape clauses not to give up terrorism. There is nothing more than that.

One last thing which I should mention is, that along with the NAM Summit, there is the NAM Business Forum which is not an integral part of NAM Summit. This is for the first that a Business Forum meeting is being held in conjunction with the NAM Summit. Our Prime Minister is arriving a day earlier than otherwise, to be able to participate in this Business Forum meeting. He will address it along with the Presidents of South Africa, Indonesia and the Prime Minister of Thailand, and of course the host the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

This NAM Business Forum will have sessions on a range of issues dealing with trade and investment, bridging the developmental trade and digital divide, sustaining economic growth, a future model for cooperation
and development, fostering smart partnerships and effective strategic alliances amongst the business communities of south countries, workshops on important issues like energy, infrastructure and others. This NAM Business Forum is being jointly led by FICCI and CII.

The fact that our Prime Minister is making it a special point to go and address this is also indicative of what I said earlier that our desire would be to give a prominent thrust to the business and economic agenda of NAM.

QUESTION: Against the backdrop of recent events over Iraq, do you not think the credibility of the authority of the United Nations itself is in question? US seems determined to go ahead with or without the approval of United Nations. In these circumstances, what is the relevance of NAM, which is a much smaller and less powerful organization?

SHRI KANWAL SIBAL: Well your logic is then, democracy is only for the rich; the poor people should not have a voice. Of course, we must have a voice. Whatever it is, we should be able to express our viewpoint. So, the fact that the United Nations may or may not be excluded from vital decision-making on issues of war and peace is no reason why the Non-Aligned Movement cannot give its views and address the issue. After all, there are 115 countries. I do not think the two are interconnected. You cannot have the logic that the liberty to voice opinions should only be limited to a certain organizations or certain countries and not to others.
035. Declaration on “Continuing The Revitalisation of the Non-Aligned Movement” adopted at the XIII Summit meeting of the Nonaligned countries.


We, the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, gathered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 24 – 25 February 2003 for the XIII Summit Conference, reaffirmed our abiding faith in, and strong commitment to, the ideals, principles and purposes of the Movement, as laid out at the Bandung Conference of 1955, and the Charter of the United Nations, in our common and continuing pursuit of establishing a peaceful, prosperous, and a more just and equitable world order.

The Movement had played an active, even central role, over the years, on the issues of concern and vital importance to its members, such as decolonisation, apartheid, the situation in Palestine and the Middle East, disarmament, poverty eradication and socio-economic development, among others. After more than forty years of its founding, and having undergone many challenges and vicissitudes, it is timely and appropriate to comprehensively review the role, structure and work methods of our Movement in keeping with the times and the new realities, aimed at the further strengthening of our Movement. With the end of the Cold War, the emergence of unipolarity, the trend towards unilateralism and the rise of new challenges and threats, such as international terrorism, it is imperative for the Movement to promote multilateralism, better defend the interests of developing countries and prevent their marginalisation.

With increased globalisation and the rapid advance of science and technology, the world has changed dramatically. The rich and powerful countries exercise an inordinate influence in determining the nature and direction of international relations, including economic and trade relations, as well as the rules governing these relations, many of which are at the expense of the developing countries. It is imperative, therefore, that the Movement respond in ways that will ensure its continued relevance and usefulness to its members.

Globalisation presents many challenges and opportunities to the future and viability of all states. In its present form, it perpetuates or even increases the marginalisation of developing countries. We must ensure that globalisation will be a positive force for change for all peoples and
will benefit the largest number of countries and not just a few. Globalisation should lead to the prospering and empowering of the developing countries, not their continued impoverishment and dependence on the wealthy and developed world.

The revolution in the Information and Communications Technology is changing the world at a rapid speed and in a fundamental way, and is already creating a vast and widening digital divide between the developed and developing countries, which must be bridged if the latter are to benefit from the globalisation process. This new technological innovation must be made more easily available to the developing countries in their efforts to modernise and revitalise their economies in pursuit of their developmental goals.

The achievement of these developmental goals requires an enabling international environment and the honouring of commitments and pledges made by states, including our partners in the developed world.

The future presents as many challenges and opportunities as the past and the Movement must continue to remain strong, cohesive and resilient. The continued relevance of the Movement will depend, in large measure, on the unity and solidarity of its members as well as its ability to adapt to these changes. In this regard, the process of the revitalisation of the Movement, begun at its previous Summit Meetings, must be given further impetus.

Consistent with our desire to translate our rhetoric into action, and in rededicating ourselves to the fundamental principles, purposes and goals of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, we resolve to make every effort to:

Enhance our unity, based on our common interests and history of shared struggles, and persevere with our efforts to ensure that these interests are continuously promoted and our concerns are fully addressed.

Uphold and adhere to the fundamental principles of the Movement and the Charter of the United Nations in the preservation and promotion of world peace through dialogue and diplomacy among states and the avoidance of the use of force to resolve conflicts.

Promote and strengthen the multilateral process as an indispensable vehicle in safeguarding the interests of member states of the Movement as well as those of the United Nations.
Promote the democratisation of the system of international governance in order to increase the participation of developing countries in international decision making.

Be pro-active, rather than reactive, to international developments, especially those that impact on the members of the Movement, so as to ensure that the Movement is not sidelined but be at the forefront of the international decision making processes.

Strengthen our national capacities in order to enhance our individual and collective resilience.

Enhance South-South Cooperation in all areas of our relations, particularly in the political, social, cultural, economic and scientific fields.

Promote a more dynamic and cooperative relationship with the developed and industrialised countries, based on constructive engagement, broad partnership and mutuality of benefits.

Promote closer interaction and cooperation with organisations of our civil society, the private sector and parliamentarians on the recognition that they can play a constructive role towards the attainment of our common goals.

In pursuit of these goals, Member States of the Movement shall strive to implement the following concrete measures:-

• Undertake a sound review and analysis of the positions of the Movement on international issues, with a view to consolidating the common denominators among member states by focusing on issues that unite rather than divide us, thereby strengthening the unity and cohesion of the Movement.

• Review and redefine the role of the Movement and improve its structure and methodology, including the need for a more focused and concise documentation, in order to make it more effective and efficient.

• Enhance our coordination and cooperation through regular meetings of the Coordinating Bureau in New York, as well as in Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and other centres, if necessary, with a view to responding, on a timely basis, to international developments affecting the Movement and its members.
• Utilise fully and effectively all existing mechanisms and institutions, such as the Troika, the Coordinating Bureau and all existing working groups, committees, the Non-Aligned Caucus of the Security Council, and establish new ones, as appropriate.

• Utilise more effectively the regular NAM Foreign Ministers Meetings through more interactive sessions as well as encourage the interaction and involvement of other relevant Ministers towards enhancing the effectiveness and profile of the Movement.

• Strengthen the role of the Chair, as spokesman of the Movement, through the establishment of appropriate mechanisms as part of the necessary backup system.

• Strengthen coordination and cooperation, and formulate common strategies on socio-economic and development-related issues, with the Group of 77 through regular and more frequent meetings of the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC).

• Follow up on decisions made at the United Nations Millennium Assembly and other international fora, such as the Doha Meeting on international trade, the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development and the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development as imperatives in addressing the urgent concerns of developing countries, such as poverty eradication, debt relief, capacity building and HIV/AIDS.

• Expand, deepen and enrich South-South cooperation through enhanced regional and inter-regional cooperation, undertaking concrete projects and programmes, pooling of resources, and tapping the contributions of eminent personalities and institutions of the South.

• Promote and develop mechanisms, including at relevant conferences, for international cooperation and solidarity in efforts to bridge the digital divide based on a partnership involving states, civil society and the private sector.

• Continue to strongly support international programmes for Africa, particularly through NEPAD, as well as the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing Countries.
Promote constructive dialogue and interaction with our development partners, particularly the G-8, through existing and appropriate new mechanisms, including institutionalised contacts, so as to bring about greater understanding between the North and South and to ensure that the views of the Movement are fully taken into account before important decisions affecting developing countries are made.

In realising our goal of revitalising the Non-Aligned Movement, we must exert every effort towards the promotion of a multipolar world through the strengthening of the United Nations, as an indispensable international organisation for the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion of human rights, social and economic development and respect for international law, as enshrined in its Charter.

036. Points made by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Interactive Ministerial Session on the Revitalisation of NAM.


It is appropriate that the theme of this summit is the ‘continued revitalization of NAM. It is not only a new century, but also a new international environment, both political and economic and it is essential that we squarely face the challenges.

The beginnings of NAM lie in the Bandung principles. We must remember and uphold them. We must also take note of our achievements: the process of decolonization, dismantling the apartheid, the focus on development. NAM has contributed to all this. We have a past going back to Bandung and a future if we address the current challenges constructively. Let us decide that to continue to talk about the relevance of the movement is no longer relevant.

India participated actively, energetically and constructively in the Zimbali process initiated by South Africa. I was one of the Foreign Ministers present at the Cape Town meeting. It shows our commitment to NAM and interest in revitalization.
The Zimbali document identifies a number of priorities for the NAM agenda based on suggestions made by me and others. Listening to others we may need an even more selective priority listing. We suggest three areas: multilateralism, development and poverty eradication and terrorism. A number of specific issues come under these. Of course there will also be a topical agenda based on developments such as Iraq, Palestine and other issues of the day.

India firmly believes that if NAM is to be revitalized, it has to focus on issues that unite us rather than those that divide us. Not only is unity important, it is imperative to avoid getting lost in the thickets of problems among NAM countries, inevitable in any organization with 116 countries. There is no place in NAM for any mechanism, institution or creating any grouping to look at intra NAM issues or differences.

Global terrorism is undoubtedly an important issue for NAM. How can NAM be revitalized unless we take a clear and unequivocal line on the killing of innocents. And yet, we see signs of divisiveness among us.

India believes that the revitalization of NAM should involve greater effort and initiatives on the economic and social agenda that affects all of us. We should take collective positions and decisions on issues such as democratizing the Brettonwoods institutions, the debt related problems, sustainable development and support to African countries.

Some suggest that a Secretariat is needed to revitalize NAM. We do not agree. If NAM has managed during the difficult years and decades without a secretariat, does it need one now? We do not think so. Any idea of a secretariat will immediately invoke intractable question on where it should be located, who will be the S.G, his/her relationship with the chair, the burden sharing on the expenditure etc. The role of the troika and consultations in the Coordinating Bureau of the NAM could be strengthened.

We must match our deeds with words. We see a lot of rhetoric but very little action. Some use strong language against ‘aggression against Iraq’, but then offer bases for such action. This gap between rhetoric and reality must narrow.

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Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the XIII NAM Summit.


Mr. Chairman,
Your Majesties,
Your Royal Highnesses,
Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a number of distinguished colleagues before me have already done, I congratulate Malaysia on its assumption of the Chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement. We are at a critical point in international relations. Perhaps we are also at a defining moment in the life of this Movement itself. We are seeking to revitalize its agenda in a global environment profoundly different from that in which it was created.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has presided over the destinies of Malaysia, as it transformed itself from underdevelopment into an economic powerhouse of South East Asia. We hope he will bring the same sure hand and deft touch to the transformation of NAM.

I would also like to warmly compliment South Africa for chairing the Movement with such distinction during a period of flux in international relations. President Mbeki has invested considerable energy in guiding the Movement towards a new equilibrium between the interests of developed and developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The tectonic shifts in international relations over the last decade have challenged NAM to adapt itself to effectively tackle the new contemporary challenges. Even while preserving independence of judgement and autonomy of action – which are its defining characteristics – NAM should take a close, hard look at the realities of today.

India has participated in the various deliberations within our Movement on the theme of its revitalisation. We believe that certain principles are fundamental to this process:

One, NAM should have a clear consensus on key issues of common concern to all of us. Multilateralism, combating global terrorism and reform
of the UN system would be the political elements of this agenda. Developmental issues, democratisation of international financial institutions, constructive North-South engagement and South-South cooperation would be its main economic planks.

**Two**, NAM should concentrate on issues that unite, rather than divide us. In a Movement of one hundred and sixteen members, it is inevitable that there are some differences or even disputes among us. We would be losing time, energy and focus if we involved ourselves in these issues. This principle is accepted in the Charters and practice of successful organizations like the OIC and ASEAN. NAM's outlook and its agenda have to be global.

**Three**, in projecting our view on global issues, our tone has to be objective and pragmatic. We should position NAM as a major pole in a multi-polar configuration.

**Four**, we should use cooperation between ourselves as an effective tool to promote our national development. South-South cooperation has to move from the political lectern to the economic marketplace.

**Five**, NAM should develop a progressive agenda on the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and multiculturism. The preservation and consolidation of democracy throughout our membership is a major challenge.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The threat of global terrorism presents our Movement with an immediate test of its commitment to its core principles. It is imperative that we take a clear and unequivocal stand on this scourge. There can be no double standards, no confusion between terrorism and freedom struggles, and no implicit condoning of terrorism through an investigation of its ‘root causes’. There can be no justification for terrorism. No political, ideological, religious or ethnic grounds can justify the shedding of the blood of innocent people.

We should finally conclude the negotiations at the UN on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. It is a matter of the greatest shame to all of us that while terrorism continues to claim its victims with one brutal act after another, we cannot conclude an international agreement because we cannot find a universally acceptable definition of terrorism!
Mr. Chairman,

The world's attention - like that of this Summit - is riveted on Iraq. Like every other non-aligned country, India fervently wishes for a peaceful resolution. We also support the multilateral route of the United Nations to address this issue.

But objectivity – and not rhetoric – should govern our actions. Weapons of mass destruction do need to be eliminated. It is essential that Iraq complies fully with the obligations it has accepted, including disarmament, and that it cooperates fully in implementing Security Council Resolution 1441. As a fellow member of NAM, this is our sincere advice to Iraq. We also expect that if Iraq fully complies, the sanctions against that country should be lifted.

We should also not lose sight of the humanitarian dimension of the suffering of the Iraqi people. Apart from the immediate consequences of military action, there are long-term implications for stability and security in an already volatile region.

Mr. Chairman,

NAM is at a historic moment in a new century. We need to introspect, take stock of our achievements as well as our failures and take concrete steps to revitalise our Movement. India is ready to play its part in this effort.

Mr. Chairman,

I had never intended to mention such matters at this forum, but I am constrained to respond to some allegations against India.

President Musharraf has referred to my country a little while ago. His strange logic masks Pakistan’s territorial designs on an integral part of India. He justifies terrorism against India by talking of root causes.

Does he go into the root causes of sectarian terrorism in his country? Or does he take stern action against the perpetrators of that terrorism? He talks of the “oppressed people of Kashmir”. These same people very recently cast their ballots in an election universally recognized as free and fair. They defied the bullets of the terrorists, aided and abetted by Pakistan.

Those very terrorists assassinated candidates and political activists
in the elections and killed women and children because they refused to provide them food and shelter. These terrorists continue to perpetrate violence against innocent civilians every day. Yet General Musharraf talks of an international humanitarian order!

Thank you.
INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003

Section - III

PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS
038. Welcome Speech by External Affairs Minister at the inaugural function of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

New Delhi, January 9, 2003.

Honourable Prime Minister Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji;

His Excellency, Rt. Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius;

Honourable Deputy Prime Minister Sri L.K. Advaniji;

Sri L.M. Singhviji, Chairman of the Organising Committee of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas;

My Cabinet colleagues; Distinguished Members of Parliament from India and other countries;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasant duty to welcome all of you gathered here for the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

January 9 is a very special day. It is on this day that Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa. The choice of this date for the celebration of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is therefore most appropriate. Just as the Mahatma changed the course of Indian history after his return, I am certain overseas Indians will play a major role in the building of a glorious future for India and the world.

An eminent predecessor of mine had outlined India’s vision towards overseas Indians. He declared at a seminar in New Delhi and I quote “the subject of overseas Indians is one which is very dear to our hearts. Everyone of Indian origin overseas is a representative of India and retains many aspects of our cultural traditions and civilization. Though our sons and daughters have gone abroad to work or to reside there, India will never disown them or fail to appreciate and respect their essential loyalty to the culture and heritage of the mother country”. Unquote.

These words were spoken 25 years ago by none else than our respected Prime Minister Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. It is his inspiring leadership which has made this event possible today. If the concerns and
interests of NRIs and PIOs are currently on the top of the national agenda, it is entirely due to the direction provided by our Prime Minister. I thank you, Sir, for the inspiration, guidance and support you have provided for the organization of this event and the realization of your dream of twenty five years ago.

We have amidst us today entrepreneurs, scientists, economists, scholars, writers, social workers, public figures and national leaders. The Indian diaspora has made a distinctive impact on every one of the countries in which they live by virtue of their loyalty, dedication, hard work and success. Each one of you have at the same time by maintaining your commitment to Bharatiyata or Indianness done India proud.

Everyone of you here is an ‘achiever’ in your own right and as you succeed, India succeeds with you.

The love and affection with which the Indian diaspora regards India, its people, its culture, and its concerns is something which strikes everyone who comes into contact with members of the diaspora. To quote the words of Jawaharlal Nehru on India and her children “but she is very loveable and none of her children can forget her wherever they go or whatever strange fate befalls them. For, she is part of them in her greatness as well as her failings”.

I believe we have every reason to be optimistic about India, the Indian diaspora and our partnership. Today is only the beginning. We will in future organize many more such events. With each year, the activities for and involving overseas Indians will grow bigger and better. The Indian diaspora has today come into its own. Similarly, India too has arrived on the world stage.

I pay tribute to all the people who have made Pravasi Bharatiya Divas possible. A large number of you have made your way from distant parts of the globe to attend this event. We are extremely encouraged by the response and we hope that the discussions will benefit all of you as well as India.

I also congratulate Dr. L.M. Singhvi and other Members of the Organizing Committee as well as the High-level Committee on the Diaspora for all that they have done to make this event possible.

Let me extend a warm welcome to all eminent Indians who have gathered here today from abroad and from India, in particular the
Honourable Prime Minister Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, His Excellency Right Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius and Honourable Deputy Prime Minister Sri L.K. Advaniji.

To conclude, the colour of our passports are different, the religions we profess are not the same, our mother tongues vary and the regions from which our ancestors came are far apart, phir bhi dil hai Hindustani.

We stand united by our Indianness.

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039. Inaugural Speech\(^1\) of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on the occasion of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Celebrations.

New Delhi, January 9, 2003.

My simple greeting to all of you here today is: Welcome home.

Many of you are citizens of your adopted countries. Over 20 million of you have set up home in scores of countries, near and far. But each one of you shares a common identity – your Indianness – and a common origin – this Motherland of your forefathers. Therefore, this great gathering, which is the first of its kind, is truly a homecoming.

It is also a grand occasion for the country to pay tribute to its sons and daughters who have succeeded in reaching the pinnacle in so many diverse fields of human endeavour all over the world.

There is yet another important aspect of this unique celebration of the Pravasi Bharatiya’s association with his land of origin. Many of you – or your forefathers – left India in search of fortune for a better livelihood. Today, India has itself become a land of opportunity. We want to share with our extended family our achievements, hopes, concerns, aspirations

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\(^1\) The Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee inaugurated the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations. The President of Mauritius, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Deputy Prime Minister, Shri L.K. Advani, External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, President of FICCI, Shri A.C. Muthaiah and Shri L.M. Singhvi, the Organiser of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Celebrations, were among the distinguished guests present on the occasion.
and goals. Your awareness of our current national course and understanding of our perspectives would enrich your bonds with India and heighten your sense of belonging to the global Indian family.

The odyssey of our people to the four corners of the globe has been a saga of courage, enterprise and character. In ancient times, our forefathers went to distant lands as traders, monks, teachers and temple builders. A century and a half ago, Indian indentured labour was sent forth to sugar, tea and rubber plantations in near and far-flung parts of the British Empire. They worked on lands as far apart as Fiji and Mauritius, Suriname and Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Burma, Guyana and Malaysia.

The next wave of emigration was of entrepreneurs and traders who sailed intrepidly into uncharted waters for unknown countries. Since the 70’s, young Indian professionals have been migrating abroad to corporate boardrooms, research laboratories, engineering workshops and university faculties. The emigration of doctors, nurses, engineers, managers, plumbers, and electricians to West Asia and the Gulf, has been a steady growth.

Today, the success of every category of these emigrants all over the world testifies to the indomitable spirit, which they carried from Indian soil. It is a tribute to their patience and forbearance in the face of hardship, rebuke and denial. It speaks of their dedication to their chosen professions, overcoming various trials and tribulations.

On this day, 88 years ago, Mahatma Gandhi returned to India after nearly 20 years as a Pravasi Bharatiya in South Africa. His struggle against discrimination, deprivation and exploitation of Indians in South Africa not only fired the imagination of Indian patriots, it also inspired a spate of freedom movements right across the African continent. Out of those freedom movements emerged Pravasi Bharatiya heroes like Seewoosagar Ramgoolam of Mauritius; Yusuf Dadoo and Monty Naicker of South Africa; Cheddi Jagan of Guyana; Jagennath Lachmon of Surinam and many others.

Not many people today remember the painful Kamagatamaru episode of the early 20th century, when a boatload of Sikhs from India were most brutally left to fend for themselves on the high seas off the coast of Canada. Today, Sikhs are among the most prosperous Canadians and are increasingly influential in Canadian politics. In Ujjal Dossanj, we have honoured one such prominent Canadian figure.
Even the illiterate indentured plantation labourers empowered succeeding generations through a determined pursuit of education. Sir Vidia Naipaul, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Dato Samy Vellu and millions of others are living symbols of the transformation of an oppressed community to leaders of society in the space of a few generations.

Let us remember that, unlike the British, the French, the Dutch and the Germans, India was never a maritime power. All the same, Indians ventured forth across the seas to set up new homes in new lands. They went in peace, often with nothing more than faith in their destiny. No country can claim that Indians entered its territory in the spirit of colonialism. This also is a glorious tribute to you and your forefathers. Few people who entered foreign lands can claim such a testimony.

Pandit Nehru once remarked that wherever there is an Indian, a bit of India goes with him. Pravasi Indians have truly taken India abroad – Indian culture, Indian society and Indian traditions, not to mention Indian films and Indian cuisine!

The outside world has also attracted the best Indian talents, skills, brains and abilities – like Amartya Sen and Jagdish Bhagwati; E.C.G. Sudarshan and S. Chandrashekhar; Hargobind Khorana and Zubin Mehta. The Pravasi Bharatiya family today also includes:

- Indian writers in English with an international readership;
- Entrepreneurs and industrialists with a global reach of operations;
- Management and lifestyle gurus with a huge following; and,
- Filmmakers, sportspersons, artists and performers of great popularity.

They have dramatically changed the world’s perception of Indians, and hence of India. They have provoked a new appreciation of this land, which has produced and exported so many achievers. They have built bridges of understanding between the international community and India.

The benchmarks for success, which the Pravasi community has set, are a challenge for us in India. They make us examine why the Indian is so much more innovative, productive and successful abroad than in his own country. They prod us to create a business, investment and economic climate, which is as conducive to success as anywhere else in the world.
I assure you that we are fully committed to creating such an environment in India.

We are modernizing our infrastructure. Our telecom facilities are already as good as anywhere in the world. The combination of India-based IT companies and Indian professionals abroad, have made India a premier software power. We are building world-class highways through our National Highway Development Project. Our rural roads network is being upgraded. We have ambitious plans for airports, ports, and railways. Housing construction has acquired an unprecedented speed. Literacy, especially women’s literacy, has registered a marked rise over the last decade.

We are aware of the slow progress in several areas of our social sector development, but we are determined to move faster than before. All in all, we are guided by the ambitious goal of making India a Developed Nation by 2020, free from all vestiges of poverty and full of opportunities for all our one billion people.

We would like to create an environment in India which will make you want to return, not just for sentimental or emotional reasons, but in the conviction that you can excel in this country as much as you could anywhere else in the world.

I believe that the Pravasi Bharatiya can be a catalyst for rapid change in this direction. Each of you, through your network of friends, relatives and acquaintances can create a strong urge for change in India. Our collective attention needs to be rescued from the sterile controversies and trivial issues that dominate the headlines, and focused on the real tasks to be accomplished, so that India can catch up with the developed world.

At the same time, you can project the truth about India to the world in a credible and effective manner. Misleading, one-sided and negative pictures are often put out due to bias, ignorance or design. Your familiarity with the Indian reality and with the perspectives of your adopted society equips you to correct such misrepresentations. You could project a positive image of India — not as propaganda, but as a true reflection of the reality on the ground.

For example,

India continues to have one of the fastest growing economies, at a
time when most developed economies have slowed down. Our exports grew by 19 per cent, in spite of a global slowdown and a strong rupee.

Till recently, India needed to import food grain to feed its population. Last year, we exported food grain worth over 60 billion rupees to 25 countries.

About a decade ago, we had to mortgage our gold to tide over a difficult Balance of Payments crisis. Today, we have record foreign exchange reserves of nearly 70 billion dollars.

How often have we seen such facts quoted outside the country? It is far more likely that mindless political gossip or isolated acts of crime and violence would dominate the headlines around the world.

India has been deeply appreciative of the support of the Pravasi Bharatiya community, at times of need. Whenever India has faced a challenge to its security or to its territorial integrity, you have tirelessly championed its cause. When there was an effort to isolate India after our nuclear tests of 1998, you came forward to stand by India. Your enthusiastic response to our Resurgent India Bonds in 1998 helped us raise over 4 billion dollars, when we needed it most.

Many of you have been generously helping the schools, colleges, IITs and universities, as their grateful alumni. I commend this gesture of Guru Dakshina. Some of you have met me with interesting suggestions on how to expand the scope of Pravasi Bharatiya involvement in the development of India’s educational infrastructure. The Ministry of Human Resource Development has also taken some initiatives in this direction. Since education is going to be one of the main competitive strengths of India in the emerging Knowledge Society, let us work together to seize the opportunity.

In this context, I will take the luxury of offering a word of advice. The Indian community abroad often reflects the diversity, which is the hallmark of our society here. We are proud of this diversity - whether it is linguistic, religious or regional. Groupings like the Telugu, Tamil, Punjabi and Marathi associations serve a useful purpose in preserving linguistic skills and regional cultures. But it is also necessary to strengthen the broader Indian identity in the country of your residence. When you are united as Indians, your voice carries greater weight: both for highlighting issues of your concern in your host country, and for promoting Indian
causes. This is a truth of great long-term significance for Indian communities everywhere.

I have always been conscious of the need for India to be sensitive to the hopes, aspirations and concerns of its vast diaspora. It is like a parental charge. It is also an obligation derived from our civilizational heritage.

It was with this perspective that we set up a High Level Committee, headed by Dr Laxmi Mall Singhvi, to examine all matters relating to the interaction of the community with India. I would like to congratulate Dr Singhvi and his colleagues for the thorough and exhaustive nature of their report.

The idea of celebrating the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas annually flows from the recommendations of the Committee. The revised and improved scheme for PIO Cards is also based on the ideas of the Committee.

Indians who have chosen to settle in foreign lands should be loyal to their country of adoption. The biggest challenge facing every immigrant community is to integrate harmoniously into the political, economic and social life of the host society, while preserving and cherishing its civilizational heritage. Over the years, Indians have achieved this delicate balance virtually everywhere, without a contradiction between their adopted citizenship and their original Indian identity.

It is in this background that my government has decided to accept the High-level Committee’s recommendation to permit dual citizenship for People of Indian Origin living in certain countries. We are now working on the administrative regulations and procedures governing dual citizenship. We will introduce the necessary legislation during the Budget Session of Parliament.

The NRI of today is the Pravasi Bharatiya of tomorrow. The welfare of NRIs in the Gulf region is of utmost concern to us. A compulsory insurance scheme for Indian workers migrating to this region will be unveiled shortly. Parliament is already considering a bill to establish a welfare fund for the overseas Indian workers. To meet the educational needs of children of workers in the Gulf, we plan to reserve a certain proportion of seats in our academic institutions for the children of the Gulf NRIs.

Our preparations for this first Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, and the
encouraging response to it, have convinced us of the fruitfulness of this event. We will continue to engage closely with the communities of Indian origin. For this, we are setting up an Advisory Committee, which will meet periodically to suggest new initiatives to the Minister of External Affairs.

We are prepared to respond to your expectations from India. We invite you, not only to share our vision of India in the new millennium, but also to help us shape its contours. We do not want only your investment. We also want your ideas. We do not want your riches, we want the richness of your experience. We can gain from the breadth of vision that your global exposure has given you.

When you left the country, you carried with you the primary colours of the Indian ethos. A cross-fertilization of cultures over time has added new shades to those vibrant hues. Today we invite you to brush in some of these new colours into the ever-evolving canvas of India’s development.

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040. Keynote address by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Plenary Session of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

New Delhi, January 9, 2003.

Theme : India and Diaspora - forging a constructive relationship

Dr. L.M. Singhvi, Sir Sridath Ramphal, Lord Bhikhu Parekh, His Excellency Dato Samy Vellu, Shri Mewa Ramgobind and friends,

I am extremely happy to have this opportunity to deliver the keynote address at this first Plenary Session being organized as part of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations.

The subject of this session is “India and the Diaspora - forging a constructive relationship.” I would like to open my address with the comment that relations between India and its diaspora has over the last 55 years been in a process of transformation and evolution.

From the time of independence, concerns of the Indian diaspora
were foremost in the minds of our national leaders. The issue of Indian migration abroad, citizenship for Indians overseas, relationship between overseas Indians and their host communities etc. figured in the Constituent Assembly as well as the Parliament.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of India’s foreign policy believed that overseas Indians should give primary consideration to the interests of people of countries to which they migrated. They should not exploit the people of those countries. They must be friendly to the local people, cooperate with them and help them. Nehru felt this was not only a correct policy but also a practical policy.

He said when any unfair treatment is given to our countrymen, we should protest. But, protest in a friendly way. India should protect the interests of Indians abroad. It should not however protect vested interests which injure the cause of the country in which overseas Indians live. According to Nehru, India should do its best to protect all legitimate interests. India has to be and should be deeply interested in Indians being able to live their lives abroad with self-respect and decency.

Many of these principles formulated by Nehru continue to remain valid and relevant. However, the world has changed since then. Today there is a new India and a diaspora whose character is very different from what obtained during the early years of independence.

To address the issue of how we can forge a constructive relationship, we need to first understand what are the difficulties which have hindered the development of such a relationship. In my view, the following factors are relevant in this regard:

(i) Like India, the Indian diaspora is characterised by a high level of diversity. The diversity of the diaspora has resulted in the emergence of different social groupings within the diaspora based on culture, language, religion and region. This has prevented the establishment of a pan-Indian unity amongst NRIs and PIOs.

(ii) Earlier, neither the numerical strength nor the economic resources of the diaspora was what it is today. Moreover, the ‘license-quota-permit’ Raj which India practiced till the end eighties was based not only on a distrust of Indians in India but also of members of the diaspora. Likewise, the diaspora’s approach towards India and the Indian Government also tended to be negative.
(iii) Our earlier attitude towards taking up concerns of Indian communities with Governments of host countries was one of utmost caution. We feared that such advocacy might provoke a backlash upon the Indian community.

(iv) Finally, India had limitations in what it could do for its diaspora in far-flung quarters of the world at a time when it had few instruments of power at its disposal.

This brings me to the question of how India can forge a constructive relationship with the diaspora. Seated in front of an audience as distinguished as this, I claim to have no conclusive views. What I intend to do is engage in some loud thinking, and put forward the following perspectives:

(a) The material circumstances of India as well as the Indian diaspora has substantially changed over the last 55 years. India is now a strong and powerful nation rapidly emerging onto the world stage. In fact, the pace and intensity of diplomatic activity that India is engaged in is itself a good indicator of our status in the world. In the last six months, I have interacted with over 80 Foreign Ministers. The list of high level visitors to India in 2002 fill over three pages and include all important nations of the world. For example, Zhu Rongji came in January 2002, Putin in December 2002 and a large number of senior visitors came from the U.S., EU and our extended neighbourhood. We are now awaiting the arrival of President Khatami of Iran. Similarly, we have today built significant national strength in every sense of the term. We have averaged 6% growth rate over the last decade and are targeting 8% for the next five years. Inflation has been at a record low. Our foreign exchange reserves are nearly US$ 70 billion. From a food shortage country, we have become an exporter and donor of food grains. Our software industry is the envy of the world. We are a nuclear power. We also possess significant conventional military capabilities and we have an advanced defence production industry. Our space, nuclear science, bio-tech and other high-tech capabilities are a matter of pride. Most of all, it is widely acknowledged that our human resources are among the best in the world.

(b) The Indian diaspora is also more organised and influential than any time before. I would like to draw a distinction between the migration which took place from India in the 18th century (persons who went as indentured labour, plantation workers etc.) which was a process based on ‘compulsion’ with the migration post independence in the direction of
Western countries and the Gulf. In the former case, the attainment of freedom from the shackles of colonialism by a large number of countries such as Mauritius, Malaysia etc. and the dawn of democracy resulted in the Indian diaspora becoming a political force in their respective countries. Thus were born leaders like Anerood Jugnauth and Samy Vellu. The post independence diaspora to Western countries in contrast comprised of highly qualified intellectuals who through their hard work and dedication rapidly ascended heights of economic prosperity. As a result today, the Indian diaspora can boast of political prowess, economic prosperity and not to mention, intellectual achievements of world calibre. I believe that this changed circumstance of the diaspora as well as India provides the basis for a new and close partnership between us.

(c) India has completely shed whatever ambivalence it might have had towards its diaspora. There is today wide recognition of the important contribution the diaspora has made to India and the role it can play in the advancing of India’s interests. The organization of this Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is in itself is a clear demonstration of the shedding of such ambivalence. The same can also be said of the willingness of the Indian Government to address issues such as dual citizenship, institute awards for distinguished members of the diaspora etc. Further, support for a close partnership with the diaspora transcends political barriers. It is worthwhile to note that India’s economic reforms of the nineties as well as the remarkable role played by the Chinese diaspora in the economic transformation of China has contributed to changing the mindsets in India.

(d) Members of our diaspora have perhaps always contributed to humanitarian causes within India. But, there is greater realization now that much more can be done by them. The diaspora is at present investing in the development of education and health in our country. It is investing in industries. It is bringing ideas and modern management practices from the rest of the world to India. Members of the diaspora are even adopting villages and changing the face of the land from which their ancestors came. India too recognizes the need to do much more both for its own citizens and for our friends who visit from abroad. We need to bring our major airports to world class standards. We need to upgrade greater connectivity within the country. Customs and immigration procedures need to be improved. We need to upgrade a variety of services that affect the lives of the common man.

(e) The size of the diaspora as well as its reach is steadily growing. Today, there is probably no part of the world where we cannot find at
least a small Indian community. Simultaneously, the world is becoming increasingly multi-cultural and plural. While racism and xenophobia continue to pose problems in many parts of the world, there is also a large constituency of support for ethnic diversity. The growing popularity of Indian music, dance, cuisine, religion and philosophy in different parts of the world is a good example of this phenomenon. Within India too, the moan of ‘brain drain’ has given way to the claim of ‘brain gain’.

(f) One thing the Indian diaspora must do, if it has to make a better impact on its host communities as well as on India is that it should get better organized. The enthusiasm of individual groups and organizations for maintaining their own leadership, distinctive traditions and practice is understandable. But, there also must be systematic efforts to bring all organizations under one roof so that they can work towards a common goal. Here, we must try and emulate the Jewish diaspora. This is a process which must primarily emerge from within the community. I, therefore, appeal to all community leaders within Indian diaspora to try and do their utmost to organize themselves under a single umbrella so that their collective voice can be effectively heard.

(g) Even as the above tasks are undertaken, it is important that both India and members of the diaspora remain sensitive to the concerns of host communities and host Governments. There should be no doubt or misunderstanding with regard to the nature and role of Indian communities in the countries they live in. As our Prime Minister has stated, there cannot be “dual loyalties.”

(h) Finally, India is today an important player in the world community. There is significant influence we can bring to bear on issues and situations. However, we should be attuned to the complexities of international relations. It needs to be kept in mind that often quiet diplomacy, backdoor intervention and collective efforts on the part of a group of countries bring better results than a ‘sledge-hammer’ approach. The collective good of the silent majority should be always kept in mind. Pursuit of vested interests by individuals or groups should not lead to the safety and vital economic interests of entire communities being jeopardised.

To conclude, the Indian diaspora is, in every sense of the term, a celebration of India. It is vibrant, motivated, hard working, highly talented and passionate about India. The diaspora has a vital role to play in taking the best of India to the world and in bringing the best of the world back to India.
India has always been known as a nation of exceptional individuals. A society which has produced greats like Buddha, Ashoka and the Mahatma. Our shortcoming though has been an inability to forge individual talents into collective endeavour. This inability is not an immutable rule or principle. India displayed extraordinary unity during its national movement. It stood together as one nation and vanquished an empire on which the sun would not set. Each time India was threatened with war, the people of the nation joined hands and rallied together in defence of the motherland. We together overcame the financial crisis of 1991 and post 1998 economic sanctions. India’s software industry has won praise from the entire world thanks to its collective efforts.

Indians, whether from within the country or of the diaspora, need not be epitomized by individual excellence and collective failure. The challenge before India and the diaspora is the same. How do we knit together exceptional individual talents and forge them into a collective will that works for the benefit of the diaspora, that works for the benefit of host communities in which the diaspora live, that works for benefit of India and most important of all, works for world peace, stability and progress.

I am confident that India and the Indian diaspora will accept this challenge and in the process forge a close and constructive partnership in the years to come.

Thank you.
INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003
Section - IV
COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING (CHOGM)
041. Special media briefing by Foreign Secretary Shashank in connection with Prime Minister’s visit to Nigeria to attend the CHOGM.

New Delhi, December 2, 2003.

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN (SHRI NAVTEJ SARNA): Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I have great pleasure in welcoming the Foreign Secretary here on his first briefing as Foreign Secretary. The subject of the briefing is Prime Minister’s visit to Nigeria for the CHOGM. May I now request the Foreign Secretary to kindly address the media.

FOREIGN SECRETARY (SHRI SHASHANK): Well, I am meeting you as the Foreign Secretary for the first time in this room. But, if you recall, some of you were present a few months ago when I came for a briefing on what later on became the IBSA Dialogue Forum, that is the Trilateral Forum of India, Brazil and South Africa. Therefore, I must say that this room comes up with initiatives which not only turn out to be fruitful but which are also important. So, we are hoping that with your support my tenure as the Foreign Secretary would be able to give the same amount of cohesiveness, dynamism that we have always hoped to be the part of the Indian Foreign Office.

The Prime Minister would be attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, which will take place in Abuja. As you know, India has a special place in the Commonwealth as its largest member, fourth largest financial contributor, and an active promoter of the Commonwealth’s fundamental values and principles, that is for developing international understanding and world peace. India’s contribution to the Commonwealth efforts to mobilize the international community in the struggle against apartheid was particularly significant. Now in the present globalised world, the Commonwealth has a special role and it is concentrating on democracy and development. India is regarded as a standing example of pluralism and democratic institutions in a developing country.

As you know, in recent years we had Prime Ministerial participation at the CHOGMs in Edinburgh in 1997 and in Durban in 1999. We have had active participation in deliberations of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG); earlier in the Commonwealth High-Level Review Group, the Expert Group on IT, Youth For The Future Initiatives, as well

1. He took over as Foreign Secretary on December 1.
as we hosted the Commonwealth Meeting of Ministers responsible for women’s affairs in April 2000 in New Delhi. These have reinforced our interest in the association. The most recent success of our participation in Commonwealth was the bid to host the 2010 Commonwealth Games, which is also an articulation of our interest in the Commonwealth. At the last CHOGM in Coolum - the Prime Minister was not able to go but - we were represented by our External Affairs Minister.

Coming to some facts about the Indian financial contribution to the Commonwealth Secretariat, in 2003-2004 India made an annual contribution of £ 394,187. It has also contributed £ 720,000 to the CFTC; £ 92,318 to the Commonwealth Youth Programme.

£ 85,759 to the Commonwealth Science Council; £ 123,490 to the Commonwealth Foundation; and $30,000 to the Commonwealth Media Development Fund. This is basically the Indian approach to the Commonwealth, which I wanted to give you as the starting position from our side.

We are, of course, interested in all the programmes that would be considered at the CHOGM. Specially the interest would be in looking at the report of the High Level Group which was chaired by Dr. Manmohan Singh. This Group was set up at the Coolum CHOGM in March 2003. The mandate of the Group was to find ways in which democracies could best be supported in combating poverty. The Group was chaired by Dr. Manmohan Singh and included several other leading economists and financial experts - I can give you two or three names – like Mr. Martin Khor, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, and Mr. Richard Jolly. Representatives of the IMF and the World Bank had also participated in the meetings of the Group which met thrice - in November 2002, May 2003 and July 2003.

This report which is entitled ‘Making Democracy Work for Pro-Poor Development’, would be under consideration by the Heads of State and Heads of Government at the Abuja CHOGM. This report has highlighted nine areas. It feels that the following need to be emphasised in the context of pro-poor development and democracy underpinned by accountable institutions and democratic culture. These are:

1. Commitment to core democratic institutions
2. Protecting a strong democratic culture
3. Tackling corruption
4. Ensure democratic accountability of Government revenue and expenditure

5. To promote free and fair trade

6. Financing for development, that is, increases in quantity and quality of financial resources

7. The role of international organisations, which the report feels should pursue these goals in ways that reinforce and strengthen democratic decision making and democratic cultures within countries

8. Peace and security

9. Monitoring of progress towards development and democracy, where the report has called for a definite, measurable monitoring framework to be developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat for providing progress reports to CHOGM.

I think I will leave it at that. If there are any questions, I can take them on the basis of the Commonwealth Summit. There are one or two other important things which I would like to tell you later after the CHOGM part is over.

**QUESTION:** What are the bilateral meetings for the Prime Minister on the sidelines of the Summit?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** We have not yet identified the meetings. I presume our delegation would be there and then we would come to know as to what all meetings would be organised during the visit. From our side we have not yet prepared any specific meetings.

**QUESTION:** Is the Prime Minister expected to meet Mr. Blair?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** We will see depending on the programme that is available. Normally, the CHOGM meetings are very very busy because the Heads of State, Heads of Government themselves take part in most of the deliberations. So, there always is very limited time available for bilaterals. In any case, they are meeting all the time with each other.

**QUESTION:** Yesterday, President Musharraf gave an interview to the BBC where he said that Pakistan is prepared to withdraw troops from Pak-Occupied Kashmir if India is willing to do so. Is India going to do that? Could you consider that statement? Could you consider that step?
FOREIGN SECRETARY: I do not think we are giving reactions to each and every single statement which is being made. We are taking confidence-building measures. Technical level talks are going on. They are making progress. More such talks are envisaged. I think you are forcing me to give you the details of some talks which I would have given you a little later. Maybe, I will give them to you now. I can share with you that today we have proposed to Pakistan the dates of 18th and 19th of December for holding the technical level talks in New Delhi for the resumption of the Samjhauta Express.

QUESTION: Given what is happening between India and Pakistan - the peace moves – is that going to reflect on our stand with regard to Pakistan’s continued expulsion from the Commonwealth? What is our stand going to be in the CMAG, for instance?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: In CMAG decisions are taken by consensus. CMAG has certain criteria. I can read out the decision taken at the last meeting of CMAG on Pakistan which will give you a clear-cut idea as to what are the criteria which are going to be observed with reference to Pakistan’s case. As far as I can see, it is really the question of the LFO, the Legal Framework Order, which is relevant there, and the satisfaction about any changes which are brought about by the democratic opposition. So, what has happened is that on 26th and 27th September 2003, the CMAG had its 22nd meeting where it received a report from the Secretary-General on recent developments in Pakistan. CMAG noted that Parliament had remained deadlocked over the Legal Framework Order which was an obstacle to Pakistan’s full return to democracy. CMAG hoped that the ongoing negotiations between the Government and the Opposition would continue and lead to an agreement on outstanding issues in the spirit of Commonwealth Parliamentary practice and process. CMAG agreed that Pakistan’s suspension could only be reviewed if the negotiations between the Government and the political parties on the outstanding issues in the LFO were concluded successfully, and a comprehensive package were passed in Parliament in accordance with the Constitution. So, CMAG requested the Secretary-General to remain engaged and continue to monitor the situation in Pakistan. The Group also requested the Secretary-General to offer and make available to the appropriate authority such technical assistance as might be requested. The next meeting of CMAG will be on 4th December 2003.

This being the decision, I think we are looking at the process. So, let us see how it develops.
QUESTION: President Musharraf has reportedly offered to confer Nishan-e-Pakistan on Prime Minister Vajpayee, should he successfully resolve the Kashmir problem. Do you have anything to say in this regard?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: My answer is the same that we do not have to respond, we can take into account all the proposals that are coming from Pakistan, or rather counter proposals to the initiatives taken and the far-reaching peace proposals made by our Prime Minister. So, we will take them into account, we will carry forward the process, it is a laborious task. We have to see it in the totality of the things. Technical level talks are taking place right now. We move on further, based on the progress to be made in the technical level talks.

QUESTION: Pakistan has said that after these two goodwill gestures, they want India to resume composite dialogue on all issues including the core issue of Kashmir. How do you respond to that? Secondly, why was Ghana dropped from Prime Minister’s itinerary?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: The answer to the first question is the same that we have to go through the whole process of technical level talks which are going on. Certain proposals were made. The Prime Minister had made very far-reaching proposals from the Indian side. Incomplete, inadequate responses were received initially. Now, we are finding that more positive responses are coming. So, we are carrying forward the process of technical level talks. We hope that we would be able to make progress so that at a suitable stage we would be able to reach the dialogue process also.

As regards the dropping of Ghana, this is really the Prime Minister’s wish to concentrate more on the Parliamentary work in Delhi. It is because of our obligations as a Commonwealth member – that is why I had told you the importance of India to the Commonwealth – that it was decided that at least this Commonwealth part should be kept up, and because of the Parliamentary obligations it should be necessary for the Prime Minister to come back.

QUESTION: Do you foresee any difficulties on the Zimbabwe question during CHOGM considering that our stand has more or less been similar to that of UK, Australia, New Zealand, etc?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Consultations have been going on. As far as we know, an invitation has not been given to President Mugabe of
Zimbabwe. So, that remains the present position. President Obasanjo has been holding consultations and, as you know, the Indian position is that it would be good if the Africans could come up with a solution so that the Commonwealth does not get divided on racial lines and at the same time the principles of democracy are kept up which are enshrined in the Commonwealth Member-Governments. There is some talk of President Obasanjo feeling that this Troika mechanism also has not been able to help very much, and so, perhaps the issue should be left to the Chairman of the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth Secretary-General to see. Any way, these are the various issues, various thoughts which are there. We will have to go there and see as to what final decision is arrived at.

**QUESTION:** Has there been any formal proposal to name Mr. Laxman Kadirgamar as the next Secretary-General of the Commonwealth?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** I do not know exactly the formality required for a formal proposal. But, the President of Sri Lanka has written to Commonwealth members strongly supporting the candidature of Mr. Laxman Kadirgamar. The point is that this candidature has come just on the eve of the Commonwealth Summit, whereas the candidature of Mr. Don McKinnon for continuation for second term as the Secretary-General has been in the air for quite some time and he has been meeting the Commonwealth leaders. So, it was expected that his renomination would be more or less unanimous. But let us see. After all, Sri Lanka is a close neighbour, close friend. We will have to go and see as to how the Commonwealth members take to this nomination at a late stage and what would be the consensus within the Commonwealth on this issue.

**QUESTION:** You spoke of the last CMAG meeting on the 26th and 27th of September, in New York in which Mr. Yashwant Sinha participated. At that time, the relations between India and Pakistan were not so good. Now that things have become much better – you spoke of LFO and the stand within Pakistan – now that the relations with Pakistan have become much better, if the other countries in the CMAG are willing to drop the suspension, will India go along with that?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** In CMAG, we are discussing not only Pakistan. There are also other issues which are under consideration like Fiji. Earlier, Zimbabwe was in the mandate of CMAG and later on it was taken over by Troika. So, the point is that it is the democratic nature of the Government which is being looked at. Application of Commonwealth principles - that is what is important. We will still have to see the question of improved
relations between India and Pakistan because only technical level talks are going on at this stage. There was the Milbrook Commonwealth Action Programme. The CMAG will have to see whether this action programme is being met in the case of Pakistan or not.

**QUESTION:** President Musharraf has said that he is prepared to meet Prime Minister Vajpayee on the sidelines of SAARC. Is there any decision taken from our side on such a meeting on the sidelines of SAARC?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** From our side the position is that the Prime Minister will attend the SAARC Summit. So, some meeting will take place. What meeting will take place and how will it take place are issues to be seen based on the progress that would be made in the technical level talks. It has to be seen as to how Pakistan will meet the unfulfilled SAARC agenda on its side.

Thank you.

*(The text in italics is a translation from Hindi)*

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Expanding International Trade : Key to Sustainable Development

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the audience,

1. I would like to commend the Commonwealth Business Council for having chosen this topical theme of “Sustainable Development”. As I see it, sustainable development encompasses important cross-cutting issues of trade, investment, technology, good governance and responsible market behaviour. All these impact on development and therefore a comprehensive discussion of these issues by the Government and business leaders assembled here will contribute significantly to our deeper understanding of these issues.

2. Sustainable development has been defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The concept of ‘sustainability’ must transcend the limited horizon of environmental or ecological dimensions and encompass development in a much wider perspective. From the perspective of sustainable development, the laudable goals of liberalization and privatization are incomplete without specific initiatives to ensure that the entire society benefits from it. For this to be so, their consequences must be socially acceptable. Sustainable development implies continued economic growth, with business and industry acknowledging and taking responsibility for the impact that development creates on society and the environment.

3. Free and fair trade is a far more effective tool for poverty eradication and economic development than foreign aid. Export earnings worth a million dollars will have a multiplier effect on national income and this effect is twice or three times greater than a similar amount of aid. According to recent World Bank estimates, a truly liberalized international trading regime will take around 150 million people in various parts of the developing world out of poverty by 2015.

4. The factors that make free and fair trade such an important tool of development are not far to seek. Free trade encourages productivity and creates jobs. Trade also acts as a stimulant to institutional reforms that
encourage development. Trade creates opportunities for technology transfers and last, but not the least, it acts as a conduit for new ideas and innovations on a global scale. But development resulting from any expansion of international trade, if it is to be ‘sustainable’, implies continued and accelerated development that is enduring. Thus expansion of international trade cannot be an end in itself, nor a means towards greater economic growth alone. It has to be seen as a means for human development. Liberalization of trade must therefore include policies that address societal needs and integrate the development dimension of developing countries into its framework.

5. Hence, it is imperative that the international community should create a fair, equitable, rule-based multilateral trading system, which is responsive to the needs of developing countries. A rule-based system is particularly important for the weaker participants for without it, the stronger ones can simply use their economic power to achieve their ends. The World Trade Organization, which is the forum to administer such a system, is unique in combining a set of binding rules with a powerful mechanism for dispute settlement and the possibility of imposing economic sanctions to enforce compliance. This explains the strong support for the WTO – and especially for its core principles of non-discrimination, predictability, stability and transparency – among developing countries and economies in transition. Countries are willing to pay a heavy initial price in order to become members of the WTO because they see long-term benefits from such membership.

6. The developed world, comprising nations who are richer and have the lion’s share of global trade, has a major role to play in sustaining global growth and sustainable development through trade. Rich nations must take the lead in making global trade fairer. Greater market access for developing countries in areas such as agriculture and labour-intensive manufacturing and services are critical to achieving and sustaining higher levels of growth in their economies. It is believed that a liberal trade regime in agriculture that allows greater market access for developing countries will result in gains of more than US$ 80 billion for such economies. The corresponding figure for all merchandise trade is US$ 130 billion. Protectionist tendencies in the developed countries are bad for everyone, as they will only impede global growth. It is estimated that one job lost in the developed countries due to trade flows from developing countries, creates 35 new jobs in the developing economies accessing the benefits of such increased trade. Sustained levels of growth through trade in
developing economies will create new demand for goods and services that will benefit rich developed economies, thus making trade and sustainable growth a virtuous circle.

7. It is important in this connection to note that developing countries are not free riders of the multilateral trading system. They have significantly contributed to expansion of international trade. In 1973, at the start of the Tokyo Round, developing countries accounted for 18 per cent of world trade. This figure had gone up to 22 per cent by 1986, at the start of the Uruguay Round and to 30 per cent in 2001, at the start of the Doha round. Developing country imports increased almost twenty fold between 1973 and 2001. Moreover, what these figures do not reveal is that the benefits derived from this process by developing countries in terms of greater economic growth and development have not been commensurate with the onerous obligations that they have been made to assume. International trade can lead to sustainable development only if human development is put at the center of the existing multilateral trade regime. A human development-oriented trade regime would give governments the space to design policies that embody these principles. Such a regime would also help developing countries build their capacity to gain from trade.

8. Friends. All countries, developed and developing, have a vital interest in the success of the Doha round of trade negotiations. Our response to the developments at Cancun should not be desponding or cynicism. Instead, we need to redouble our efforts in pushing forward the process of trade liberalization. There is a need to strengthen and revitalize the Geneva process where discussions take place at the technical level. Nothing can be gained by apportioning blame. The way forward now is to listen to one another, to appreciate and take on board our mutual concerns, and to find solutions that are multilaterally acceptable in conformity with the Doha mandate. We need to draw the right lessons from the mistakes of the past or there is the danger that we may not only repeat them but also compound them. The negotiating process requires sustained determination, greater realism and considerable political will by everyone to ensure the success of the Doha Development Agenda.

9. It is not coincidental or inconsequential that the concept of development figures so prominently even in the nomenclature of the current round of multilateral trade negotiations. Civil society everywhere, especially in developing countries, has come to realize the huge stakes
involved in multilateral trade negotiations. The involvement of civil society both from the North and the South has come to stay. The emergence of the G-21 at Cancun also showed that it is no longer possible to ignore the voice of those whom the decisions will affect.

10. To conclude, expanding international trade is a critical element in ensuring economic growth, prosperity and sustainable development. It is important that trade agreements are driven not merely by the desirability, but by the need, to ensure sustainable development for all countries. Sustainable development should mean overall improvement in the economy of all countries and not just pockets of growth confined to a few sectors. Sustainable development should also mean that trade and investment do not put a strain on the natural resources of countries but help use them well and sustain them for the generations to follow. Sustainable development is about recognizing the need to develop all parts of the globe and working to improve the lot of the people at large all over the world, for only development on a world wide scale will lead to peace, prosperity, security and stability. That is the ineluctable logic that we must follow in an increasingly inter-dependent world and it is this vision which animates India’s approach to international trade and sustainable development.

Thank you
INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003

043. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his departure for Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Abuja (Nigeria).


I leave today for Abuja to attend the Summit meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government.

The Commonwealth is a group of countries which share political values of democracy, human freedoms and rule of law. Most Commonwealth members are also developing countries with common concerns about development and the promotion of rule-based international trading and investment regimes. As democracies, we face similar transnational threats from terrorism, drug trafficking, arms smuggling and money laundering, all of which are closely interrelated.

Commonwealth leaders will exchange views on these issues at the Summit. The special theme of the Abuja Summit – Democracy and Development – provides an opportunity for the Commonwealth to ponder on the important developmental questions which today engage developing democracies as they grapple with the challenges of globalization.

A Summit of this nature also provides occasion for formal and informal bilateral discussions with a number of other world leaders. Though I will not be in Abuja for the entire duration of the Summit, I expect to have the opportunity to interact with a fairly wide cross-section of Commonwealth leaders.

I am happy that Nigeria is hosting the Commonwealth Summit, and look forward to meeting President Obasanjo in Abuja. Nigeria is one of India’s most important friends in Africa, besides being our largest trading partner in the continent. We have had a long-standing association in the Non Aligned Movement and in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid in the second half of the twentieth century.

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044. Briefing for Indian media by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference.


EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): …

a restricted session of Heads of State, Heads of Government and Heads of Delegation. This was explained by the Chairman of the Conference President Obasanjo, when he said that he would like to take up two issues in the restricted session and deal with them in as cordial an atmosphere as possible. The first was the issue of Zimbabwe, and the second was the election to the post of the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

On the first issue, after some discussion, President Obasanjo announced the constitution of a six-nation group to look afresh at the question of Zimbabwe and report back to the plenary by tomorrow so that the leaders who will go into retreat tomorrow afternoon could then discuss the report of this Group.

I must also mention to you that before he made this announcement, President Obasanjo did a very special courtesy of walking up to our Prime Minister and telling him about this in advance and informing him that he would like India to be in this Group.

So, the Group consists of, apart from India, Jamaica, South Africa, Mozambique, Australia and Canada. These are the six countries which will meet later today and discuss the issue of Zimbabwe and then hopefully by tomorrow present their report to the plenary.

On the question of Secretary-General there was some discussion and it was decided that the matter would be taken up again later today when the Heads meet in the afternoon session.

Apart from this, the Prime Minister had a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of Australia - that is one of the reasons why I got delayed in coming to you. It was a very cordial meeting. There was a lot of discussion on the test match which is going on. The Prime Minister of Australia did not have the latest score, so we told him what it was. He was a little surprised that the Australians were 332 for 9. He said, ‘Oh! My God!’

Basically what the Australian Prime Minister told the Indian Prime
Minister was that he thought of touching base with him here in order to reiterate his invitation to the Prime Minister to visit Australia. As you are aware, Prime Minister was supposed to visit Australia for the Coolum summit of the Commonwealth in March 2002 but he could not make it. So, he was very keen that the Prime Minister should visit Australia. The Prime Minister has already accepted the invitation; the dates have to be fixed.

India-Australia relationship is doing very well. In trade, in culture, in defence cooperation, our relationship is making progress. He was particularly keen to compliment the Prime Minister of India on the performance of the Indian economy. He also congratulated the Prime Minister for the recent initiative that India has taken and the progress which has been made in our relationship with Pakistan. He said that he had the fullest understanding of the issue of cross-border terrorism. He agreed that this had to come to an end before relations became fully normal between the two countries. But there was happiness on his part on the progress in our bilateral relationship with Pakistan. As I said, he complimented the Prime Minister today.

On his part, Mr. Vajpayee said that it was not merely a question of infiltration from across the Line of Control, that the terrorist infrastructure had to be dealt with effectively - because we know from experience that camps shift, we know from experience that names change - and that is not enough. He also simultaneously expressed his determination to carry forward the peace process with Pakistan from our side. He also expressed his satisfaction at the way our bilateral relationship with Australia was progressing. I have already mentioned to you that the invitation of the Australian Prime Minister is accepted.

The Prime Minister will be having some more bilateral meetings before he leaves, prominently with the Prime Minister of UK, Tony Blair. He will have a meeting with the host President Mr. Obasanjo, and also a bilateral with the President of Ghana. As you know, his trip has been cut short and he is not able to visit Ghana. So, he will have a bilateral with the President of Ghana here. I had a brief chat with the Foreign Minister of Ghana where he told me how disappointed Ghana was with the fact that the Prime Minister is not able to visit Ghana.

So, this is the summing up of whatever I thought was newsworthy from our side. Now I will be open to your questions.

**QUESTION:** ...(Inaudible)
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: About the things which have happened in the past – this is my third day here – you already have information about the fact that I addressed the Commonwealth Business Forum on the first day. Then I attended a meeting of the Small States yesterday, and the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: We had discussed the issue of Pakistan in the CMAG in September in New York. The meeting felt this time that since there has been no progress on the question of resolution of the issue of Legal Framework Order, and they have not been approved by the Parliament of Pakistan, the matter remained where they were in September. Therefore, the decision also remained what it was in September, namely, the continued suspension of Pakistan from the Councils of Commonwealth.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: The CMAG meets every six months. In this particular case let me tell you the last three meetings, including the one held here, have taken place in quick succession because we had a meeting in May, we had a meeting in September, and then we had a meeting here in December because of the CHOGM.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: We have a position on Zimbabwe. Our position consistently has been (1) that we would not like Commonwealth to be divided on this issue, and certainly not along ethnic or racial lines; (2) that the Commonwealth values as enshrined in the Harare principles must be safeguarded, protected, and therefore, whatever is needed to be done by Zimbabwe should be done in order to be able to abide by these principles; (3) that we need a great deal of flexibility on everyone’s part in order to be able to sort out this issue. When we get into discussions in the Group these are the basic issues that we would like to espouse.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Here in the Commonwealth our effort will be, whenever this issue comes up for discussion, to reiterate the views that India has been expressing from time to time on the Doha Development Agenda and emphasize the point that we are in favour of a
multilateral rule-based trading system where the rules apply equally to the big and the small, the powerful and the weak, and protect the vital interests of the developing countries and of India, and ensure that the developed countries see our point of view in this regard.

As far as further progress on Cancun is concerned, we have clearly said that we would like to engage ourselves in such a process because we did not go to Cancun with the objective of ensuring its failure. We went with the object of making it succeed. But, if the principles which are enshrined in the Declaration of Doha are sought to be compromised in any manner, then India will stand up for those principles.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: No, there is no racial issue involved in Pakistan. The racial issue in Zimbabwe is basically that it should not become Africa versus the so-called white members or Anglo-Saxon Members of the Commonwealth. Therefore, countries like India have a major role to play in preventing that from arising. I say this because if, let us say, the African countries take a position and the ABC countries, as they are known, take a position, then it clearly divides the Commonwealth.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: No, it is not true. Nobody is linking it up, to the best of my knowledge.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: It slightly disturbs me when we try and look at the issues that come up in CMAG, like the issue of India and Pakistan, also from a bilateral point of view. It is not a bilateral issue. We are a member of CMAG because we are a member of the Commonwealth. We were not a member earlier. We have been a member for two years. Commonwealth had formulated its philosophy and its values much before that. Harare Declaration is of 1991 and the Milbrook Action Plan is of 1995. All this had happened before the issue of Pakistan came up. Therefore, it is not at all a bilateral issue. This is an issue for the Commonwealth in which all the members of the CMAG examine it together. In this, it is not important as to which country has what point of view. What is important is, what decision is taken by CMAG based on consensus.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: We said right in the beginning that India is committed to the Harare principles. We are not discussing any particular country in that. Let me tell you one fact about the Commonwealth. This is a unique organization not only because it has emerged out of history and the former colonies of Great Britain are members of the Commonwealth, but also because Commonwealth’s geographical spread is absolutely without parallel.

Secondly, Commonwealth is such an organization which is promoting the values of democracy, good governance, human rights, rule of law. Commonwealth adopted these values and said that we will always keep promoting these values among our member-countries continuously. To promote these values various schemes are going on. From that point of view also you can say that Commonwealth in itself as a unique organization. Therefore, these principles are applied to whoever comes within the purview of Harare principles - whether it is Pakistan, whether it is Zimbabwe, whether it is Fiji, whether it is Solomon Islands, whether it is Nigeria prior to this. There are many such examples; Pakistan is not the only example. These principles have always been applied.

QUESTION: … (Inaudible)…

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: You have put several questions in one go. I will try to remember all of them. You asked three questions.

As far as the question on Commonwealth Secretary-General is concerned, we will see what situation will emerge. I do not think stating any position on that now is proper.

Secondly, on the Zimbabwe question, the summit meeting which was held in Coolum in Australia, they had appointed this Troika which consisted of South Africa, Nigeria and Australia. The Troika was supposed to take a decision about Zimbabwe. Subsequently, it was the Troika which took the decision that Zimbabwe should be suspended from the Councils of Commonwealth for one year. Because the Troika, which consisted of the Heads of Government of these three countries, were engaged with this, CMAG, which is the ministerial body, could not take charge of the Zimbabwe issue. I should say that it was considered important enough to be taken up by the Troika. That is how Zimbabwe went to that Troika. Though it is still on the agenda of CMAG, we are not discussing the merits and demerits of it because it was with the Troika. Now, let us see what decision the Heads take in this meeting and then whatever decision is taken will be followed up.
QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: In response to that, I would only like to say that we would continue to work for consensus. Commonwealth takes decisions on the basis of consensus and we will continue to work for consensus.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Let us see.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: No, there is no contradiction between the two. You would remember that when we called Gen. Musharraf to Agra, he was not even the President. He became President just before he came to Agra. Therefore, as far as our bilateral relations are concerned, we will discuss with the ruler of Pakistan. But the stand of Commonwealth is different. Therefore, as I said a little while ago, it would not be proper to link this with the bilateral relations of India and Pakistan. Here, in the light of a different set of principles discussions take place on issues and a decision is taken. In CMAG, India is one among the eight nations.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: There is a Commonwealth Group on Terrorism which meets from time to time. Its last meeting was held in New York on the margins of the UNGA. Its report is coming up. Crimes, international crimes, drug-trafficking are all issues which are discussed in the Commonwealth.

QUESTION: ...(Inaudible)...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I will have to check up if they have a bilateral. Navtej will inform you, if there is a decision.

Thank you.

(The text in italics is a translation from Hindi)

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Commonwealth Heads of Government met in Abuja, from 5-8 December 2003, at the invitation of President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, the host Head of Government and Chairman of CHOGM. Of the 51 countries that attended the Meeting, 38 were represented by their Heads of State or Government.

2. The Opening Ceremony of the Meeting included an address by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth.

3. Heads of Government conveyed their deep appreciation to the Government and people of Nigeria for the warm hospitality extended to them and for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting. They also congratulated President Obasanjo for his leadership in chairing their Meeting.


6. Heads of Government adopted the Aso Rock Declaration on the CHOGM Theme and also issued the Aso Rock Statement on Multilateral Trade, which is attached to the Declaration.

Fundamental Political Values

7. Heads of Government re-affirmed their commitment to the fundamental political values of the Commonwealth as set out in the Singapore and Harare Declarations and subsequent CHOGM Communiques, and reinforced by the Millbrook Action Programme. They reiterated their commitment to non-racism, international peace and security, democracy, good governance, human rights, rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, freedom of expression, and a political culture that promotes transparency, accountability and economic development.
8. Heads of Government endorsed the recommendations of their Law Ministers on Commonwealth Principles on the accountability of and relationship between the three branches of Government. They acknowledged that judicial independence and delivery of efficient justice services were important for maintaining the balance of power between the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary.

9. Heads of Government expressed their full support for the good office role of the Secretary-General in conflict prevention and resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction and development. They also expressed their continuing support for the Commonwealth Secretariat’s work for strengthening democratic institutions, processes and culture. They acknowledged the value of election observation, provision of technical assistance and training and other activities. They welcomed the Secretariat’s collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and other relevant organizations to promote best democratic practice.

**Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group on the Harare Declaration (CMAG)**


11. Heads of Government welcomed the commitment of the Government of Fiji Islands to abide by the decision of the Fiji Supreme Court on the constitutionality of the formation of Government and in this context looked forward to the Court’s Session scheduled for May 2004. They requested the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the situation in Fiji Islands and provide appropriate technical assistance, as required, in pursuance of his good offices role.

12. Heads of Government welcomed the continuing progress in the development and growth of democratic institutions in Pakistan, as evident by the election of the National Assembly, the Senate and Provincial Assemblies, and the formation of Democratic Governments at the National and Provincial levels. They also
welcomed the positive measures taken for women’s representation in Parliament, the representation of minorities and the determination to enhance public accountability and to end corruption. They noted that the outstanding issues in the Legal Framework Orders (LFOs) were an obstacle to Pakistan’s full return to democracy.

13. Heads of Government hoped that the negotiations between the Government and the political parties on the outstanding issues in the LFOs would be concluded successfully in the spirit of Commonwealth Parliamentary practice and process and a comprehensive package would be passed in Parliament in accordance with the Constitution, thus leading to the full restoration of democracy and enabling the lifting of Pakistan’s suspension from the Councils of the Commonwealth. They requested the Secretary-General to continue to monitor developments and provide technical assistance, as might be required, to strengthen democratic institutions.

14. Heads of Government endorsed CMAG’s decision to remove Solomon Islands from its agenda but continue to receive Reports from the Secretary-General on developments in that country.

15. Heads of Government re-constituted the membership of CMAG for the next biennium as follows: The Bahamas, Canada, India, Lesotho, Malta, Samoa, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. They further agreed that Nigeria would continue to be a member of CMAG in its capacity as the representative of the Chairperson in Office, as its ninth member.

Zimbabwe

16. Heads of Government adopted a CHOGM Statement on Zimbabwe on 7 December 2003, which is attached.

Belize

17. Heads of Government welcomed the Agreement to establish a Transition Process and Confidence-Building Measures of February 2003, signed by Belize, Guatemala and the Organisation of American States (OAS). They called on all parties involved to honour their commitments under the Agreement, in particular taking the proposals for a just and definitive resolution of the territorial dispute to popular referenda in both countries.
18. Heads of Government reiterated their full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize. They commended the Group of Friends of the Process and expressed appreciation for the constructive role played by the OAS in facilitating a peaceful settlement of the dispute. They noted that the proposals for a final settlement contain a provision for the establishment of a development fund to be used for the benefit of both countries and urged member States to contribute to it generously.

19. They mandated the Secretary-General to convene the Ministerial Committee on Belize whenever necessary.

Cyprus

20. Heads of Government welcomed the signing by the Republic of Cyprus of the Accession Treaty to the European Union on 16 April, 2003 and expressed the wish that a solution of the Cyprus problem would be found before 1 May 2004 that would allow a re-united Cyprus to become a member of the European Union.

21. Heads of Government re-affirmed their support for the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Cyprus.

22. They regretted that the latest effort of the United Nations Secretary-General under his mission of Good Offices in Cyprus collapsed at The Hague meeting on 10 March 2003 due to the negative approach taken by the Turkish Cypriot leader.

23. They further regretted that the Turkish Cypriot leader continues to maintain the same negative approach, thus hindering the resumption of negotiations based on the Annan Plan.

24. Recalling and re-affirming previous UN Security Council Resolutions and re-affirming their previous Communiques on Cyprus, Heads of Government called upon all parties concerned and in particular Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership to cooperate fully with the UN Secretary-General so as to enable the early resumption of substantive negotiations based on the UN Secretary-General’s proposals, aimed at the conclusion of a just, lasting and functional settlement consistent with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

Guyana

25. Heads of Government re-affirmed their support for the maintenance
by Guyana of its territorial integrity and sovereignty and the unimpeded development by Guyana of the natural resources of its entire territory. They noted that the Commonwealth Ministerial Group on Guyana met in September 2003 and recognised the important role of this Group in support of Guyana.

26. Heads of Government expressed satisfaction at the recent meeting between the Foreign Ministers of Guyana and Venezuela with the UN Secretary-General noting that it was a positive indication of the continued commitment by both Guyana and Venezuela to discussions under the aegis of the UN Secretary-General aimed at the peaceful solution of the controversy.

**Small Arms and Light Weapons**

27. Heads of Government expressed concern at the continued destabilising accumulation and proliferation of small arms, ammunition and light weapons, which had contributed to the intensity and duration of armed conflicts as well as to international terrorism. They noted that many Commonwealth Governments were adversely affected by the uncontrolled flow and misuse of these lethal weapons. They expressed concern that the spread of small arms threatens national, regional and global security and impedes basic social and economic development. They also noted that the challenge posed by the proliferation of small arms involves security, humanitarian, health and development dimensions.

28. Heads of Government supported the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light weapons in all its Aspects that emerged from the 2001 UN Conference on Small Arms. They urged member States to support further implementation of the programme at the International, State and Regional levels to curb and prevent their illicit production, trafficking and isuse.

**Landmines**

29. Heads of Government recalled the progress made in addressing the global landmines problem through the Comprehensive Framework for Mine Action provided by the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their destruction. They urged all countries that are in position to do so to accede to the Convention.
International Criminal Court

30. Heads of Government of those member countries that have ratified the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC) urged other States, which have not yet done so, to accede to the Rome Statute in a timely manner.

Terrorism

31. Heads of Government received the Report of the Commonwealth Committee on Terrorism (CCT) and endorsed its recommendations. They recalled their Statement on Terrorism of 25 October 2001 and reiterated their strong condemnation of all acts of terrorism, with the consequent tragic loss of human life and damage to political, economic and social stability. They emphasised that terrorism can never be justified and continues to constitute a threat to all countries and peoples, irrespective of religion, nationality, tradition or ideology. They greed that the war against terrorism cannot be won by military force and that comprehensive measures against terrorism require building bridges within and across communities of diverse faiths and cultures as well as addressing economic and social disparities and injustice. They agreed that the Commonwealth is ideally positioned to encourage activities to address these issues.

32. Heads of Government decided to work together as a diverse community of nations to individually and collectively take concerted and resolute action to eradicate terrorism.

33. They called upon member States to increase cooperation and assistance through consultation, information sharing, training and capacity building in counter-terrorism activities and to implement measures to prevent the financing of terrorist acts. They also called upon member States to support the early conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention Against International Terrorism.

34. Heads of Government encouraged all member Governments to continue to follow steps outlined in the Commonwealth Plan of Action and to implement the UNSCR 1373. In this context they also commended the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat in assisting member countries. They agreed that the CCT be maintained as a Standing Committee, which could be convened by the Secretary-General or at the request of member Governments, as and when required.
35. Heads of Government recognized that travel advisories associated with the threat of terrorism have a negative impact on the economies of a number of member States, including the loss of tourism revenue and the burden of increased costs of implementing new security measures. Noting that national travel advisories are issued by certain countries for the protection of their citizens, they urged that the information about the perceived threat should be conveyed in advance to the countries concerned and in cooperation with them, measures should be taken to counteract the threat of terrorism. They noted that those countries, which issue such advisories indicate that it is not always possible to consult in advance.

World Economic Situation

36. Heads of Government noted that the global economic recovery continues to be fragile and subject to many risks. In view of the fact that one-third of the Commonwealth’s nearly 2 billion people live on less than US$1 per day and nearly two-thirds on under US$2 per day, they stressed that a concerted effort is required for sustainable broad-based growth in all areas to enable countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and cope with the challenges of poverty reduction and investment in human development. They underlined the importance of nationally owned poverty reduction strategies and urged that policy action in developing countries be matched by developed countries providing more effective development assistance.

37. In order to support the necessary monitoring of progress and removing impediments to the achievement of the MDGs, Heads of Government stressed the need for action to implement all the elements of the Monterrey Consensus and the related Commonwealth Action Plan, as well as the need to examine constructively all proposals for securing a further increase in aid commitments. In particular, Heads of Government welcomed further elaboration of the initiative for an International Finance Facility (IFF) and looked forward to the consideration of this or other similar options.

38. Heads of Government called for the timely implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for the Decade 2001-2010 adopted at the Third UN Conference on LDCs in May 2001.
Multilateral Trade Issues

39. Heads of Government re-affirmed their commitment to a transparent, rules-based multilateral trading system and called for an immediate resumption of the WTO multilateral trade negotiations. They urged all parties to show the flexibility and political will necessary to achieve positive results in the areas of agriculture, non-agricultural market access, special and differential treatment and all other areas mandated in the Doha Development Agenda. They reiterated the need to build up the capacity of developing, and particularly the least developed, small and vulnerable WTO members to negotiate more effectively and to implement their obligations within the WTO system.

Debt Relief

40. Heads of Government called on International Financial Institutions to adopt a broader and more flexible approach to debt relief designed to achieve long-term debt sustainability and release resources particularly for health and education.

41. Heads of Government re-affirmed their commitment to a successful HIPC Initiative, and recognised that some HIPCs, particularly conflict-affected countries, face a continued challenge in reaching decision-point and require a flexible approach to address their special problems. They called on all non-Paris Club creditors that are not yet participating in this initiative to do so. Heads of Government also called for topping up to be applied so that HIPCs achieve a sustainable exit from their debt burden at their completion points.

42. Heads of Government stressed that long-term debt sustainability for poor countries requires sound debt management, improved market access, more financing in the form of grants and consideration of new arrangements for concessionary contingency finance.

Investment

43. Heads of Government stressed the importance of developing the capacity to produce internationally competitive goods and services to take advantage of the opportunities generated by globalisation. They recognised the importance of private capital flows in promoting the development of such capacity and expressed disappointment
at the difficulties that poor and vulnerable economies were experiencing in attracting such flows, even when they had implemented wide ranging reform programmes. They called for innovative and cost effective ways of utilising official resources to promote private capital flows to pre-emerging markets.

44. In this connection, Heads of Government noted the progress made by the Commonwealth Secretariat in examining the feasibility of proposals to address the special difficulties faced by small, vulnerable economies and LDCs in attracting investment and welcomed the interest expressed by commercial banks, International Financial Institutions, regional development banks and other development partners in exploring more effective ways to promote domestic and foreign investment in such economies, and in developing a new “Small and Vulnerable Economies Facility”, to be launched initially in the Pacific region. They called upon the Secretariat to continue to work towards developing similar cost effective facilities for other regions of the Commonwealth.

**Strengthening Financial Systems**

45. Heads of Government welcomed the fact that the recent meeting of the OECD Global Forum focused on the issue of a level playing field and stressed that the way forward required a satisfactory resolution of this issue. They emphasised the importance of tax and fiscal sovereignty, transparency and inclusiveness in the dialogue between OECD and international financial centres in non-OECD jurisdictions. They urged the Commonwealth to remain engaged on this issue and requested the Secretariat to support the affected jurisdictions to mobilize assistance to meet international standards, strengthen and deepen their financial sectors and diversify their economies.

**Combating Corruption**

46. Heads of Government welcomed the recent adoption of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption and requested member states to sign and ratify it. They noted that systemic corruption, extortion and bribery undermine good governance. They called for enhanced mutual cooperation in the repatriation of illegally acquired public funds and assets to the countries of their origin in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.
International Economic Cooperation

47. Heads of Government appreciated the need for constructive dialogue and cooperation to achieve sustainable development. They welcomed the outcomes of the International Conference on Financing for Development and urged implementation and follow up to the outcomes of this Conference.

New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)

48. Heads of Government re-affirmed their strong support for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), which was internationally accepted as a socio-economic and political framework to support the development efforts of countries in Africa. They requested the Secretariat to bring its various programmes in Africa within the NEPAD framework and strengthen its partnership with NEPAD, both in the delivery and implementation of its Action Plan for the benefit of African member countries and specifically to promote the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Sustainable Development

49. Heads of Government welcomed the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and pledged to work towards the full and effective implementation of Agenda 21, and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

50. Heads of Government stressed that Climate Change is one of the greatest challenges facing Commonwealth member States and the wider international community. They undertook to continue efforts towards the conclusion of effective international approaches to climate change mitigation and re-affirmed Commonwealth support through technical assistance to address the adaptation concerns of small island and other States that are particularly vulnerable to global warming and sea level rise. They also supported the efforts under the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to address climate and drought concerns, particularly in Africa.

HIV/AIDS

51. Heads of Government highlighted the devastating impact of HTV/AIDS and the fundamental importance of confronting it in order to
meet the Millennium Development Goals. They noted there were promising signs of a reduction in new cases in some countries and welcomed the political commitment and called for increased financial resources including the Global Fund to combat HIV/AIDS and other funds to combat malaria, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases.

52. Heads of Government acknowledged that many developing countries and particularly LDCs, small and vulnerable economies could not provide universal treatment to victims of HIV/AIDS without further access to concessionary financing. They also acknowledged that this goal will only be achieved if a broad range of partners accelerate and co-ordinate their efforts, and pledge to play their role in these efforts. They welcomed the recent Agreement in the WTO on the manufacturing of life saving generic drugs in the developing countries under certain conditions and circumstances to help ensure the provision and availability of affordable drugs at low cost to poor developing countries.

53. Heads of Government re-emphasised the importance of a broad based and balanced response to HIV/AIDS integrating prevention, care and treatment and impact mitigation. They agreed that progress in fighting the global HIV/AIDS pandemic requires enhanced international effort and co-ordination.

Small States

54. Heads of Government received the Report of the Ministerial Group on Small States (MGSS) and endorsed its recommendations.

55. Heads of Government reaffirmed the Doha Mandate to integrate special and differential treatment into the International Trading System. They emphasised the need for access to International Development Finance on concessionary terms to assist the sustainable development programmes of vulnerable and small States. They noted in this regard that there were also other countries that were not small States but whose proportion of world trade was similarly small and with whom small states could seek to find common cause and build partnership.

56. Heads of Government noted further that terrorism and its consequences had placed additional burdens on small States in the form of high costs of security and possible loss of tourism
revenue, including the impact on their national budgets in the form of diversion of funds away from the critical areas of development. They cautioned that the current efforts in dealing with terrorism and the significant level of resources, which are being allocated to fight it should not derail their development agenda. Heads of Government, therefore, called on the international community to assist with appropriate additional resources in the context of supporting the global development agenda.

57. Heads of Government noted that small states were increasingly vulnerable to the spread of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases. They called on the international community to provide assistance in these areas.

58. Heads of Government stressed the importance of capacity building and its retention in critical areas such as trade-related technical assistance in small States.

59. Heads of Government noted that global warming and climate change were life threatening to small island States, and other low-lying areas. They confirmed their full support for the Barbados Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island States and looked forward to the contribution of the Commonwealth, the World Bank and other members of the UN system and other regional organisations to the preparations for the Review of Implementation of the Plan of Action to take place at the International Meeting in Mauritius in August 2004. They urged Commonwealth members and other states to prepare for and participate in this Conference.

60. Heads of Government commended the Commonwealth Secretariat for the work done on small States, particularly in implementing the recommendations of the 2000 Commonwealth Secretariat/World Bank Joint Task Force on Small States and the new Agenda for Commonwealth Work on Small States, which was endorsed by them at their last meeting in Coolum in 2002. They called on the Secretariat to continue to strengthen small States’ representation in the WTO and continue its work on the OECD initiative. They also called on the Secretariat to strengthen Commonwealth’s partnerships and collaboration with individual organisations and institutions to advance the small States’ agenda.

61. Heads of Government stressed the importance of market access
for the traditional products of small and vulnerable states to enhance their export earnings. In this context they noted the concern of South Pacific States on the economic implications of a ban on KAVA imports by some developed countries and urged that this issue be resolved expeditiously.

Role of Business


63. Heads of Government commended the work of the CBC in mobilizing investment, removing barriers to trade, promoting good corporate governance, creating a good environment for business and investment, and bridging the digital divide. They particularly welcomed the CBC initiatives for developing an investment index to contribute to significant investment flows to developing countries on a fully commercial and Sustainable basis; supporting multilateral trade negotiations on the progressive liberalisation of trade in goods and services in both developed and developing countries; and establishing and developing common standards and codes of ethics for governance and accountability in Government, the private sector and civil society.

Commonwealth Functional Cooperation

64. Heads of Government considered the various aspects of Commonwealth functional cooperation and endorsed the Report of the Committee of the Whole. They also acknowledged the valuable work of other Commonwealth Organisations, which report to them through the COW.

65. They requested the Secretary-General to submit a Report to the 2005 CHOGM on the respective roles of the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management (CPTM) and the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC), reaffirming the linkages between CPTM, GBC and me Commonwealth.
66. Heads of Government noted that the role of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) in providing technical assistance to member countries was crucial in the delivery of Secretariat’s programmes. They stressed that any diminution in the CFTC below £20 million could seriously undermine the Fund.

**Commonwealth of Learning**

67. Heads of Government received with appreciation the Report of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and accepted its recommendations, in particular, the proposal of the Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers for a Commonwealth Virtual University for Small States. They noted COL’s request for resources to finance its three-year Strategic Plan.

**Commonwealth Foundation**

68. Heads of Government received the Report of the Commonwealth Foundation and commended its work in developing civil society’s engagement and partnerships with Governments in the Commonwealth. They expressed appreciation for the positive contribution of civil society in advocacy and capacity building for democracy and sustainable development in member countries. They noted the Foundation’s request to review the level of assessed contributions to finance the increasing programme of activities undertaken by the Foundation.

**High Level Review Group Recommendations**

69. Heads of Government endorsed the report of the Commonwealth Intergovernmental Committee to Review the Mandates of the Commonwealth Organisations (CIC) and urged member countries to implement its various recommendations. With regard to the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management (CPTM), Heads of Governments noted CPTM’s successful activities in fulfilment of its mandate and its preferred mode of delivery through advisory country-tasks and smart partnership national and international dialogues in enhancing development, democracy, and prosperity. They recognized CPTM’s initiatives in establishing the Endowment Fund and contributions to this Fund from Commonwealth governments and the private sector to enable it to undertake enhanced activities that benefit the Commonwealth.
Meeting of Commonwealth Tourism Ministers

70. Heads of Government encouraged member countries to attend the Meeting of Commonwealth Tourism Ministers in Malaysia from 18-21 March 2004.

Election of the Secretary-General


Next Meeting

72. Heads of Government accepted the offer of Malta to host the next CHOGM in 2005. They also agreed that the 2007 CHOGM would be hosted by Uganda.

Abuja
8 December 2003

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INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003
Section - V
G - 8 EXTENDED DIALOGUE
046. Statement of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at G-8 Extended Dialogue.

Paris, June 1, 2003.

Mr. President, first of all I thank you for launching this excellent initiative for a forum of discussions between the developed and developing countries. For some time now, I have been calling for a Global Dialogue on Development, and this meeting is major first step in that direction.

The French government’s most gracious hospitality and excellent arrangements for such a large and high-level gathering deserves the highest appreciation. I should also thank the Government of Switzerland for the arrangements on that side of the border.

Mr. President, I will make a few observations touching on some themes already mentioned during this meeting.

It is quite clear that developing countries are deeply disappointed by the progress so far on the Millennium Development Round since the Doha meeting nearly two years ago.

I think that we need to set some benchmarks for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the Doha round, in terms of concrete progress towards a global trading regime, which would promote development. Some areas in which we need such benchmarks are:

- The rapid elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to developing country exports.

- The phase-out of trade-distorting agricultural subsidies, and removal of barriers to agricultural exports, while ensuring the livelihood security of billions of farmers in developing countries.

- Removal of visa and non-visa obstructions to the free movement of natural persons for providing services.

- Broader access of developing countries to pharmaceuticals.

I am happy that special attention is being focussed in these meetings on measures to help African countries. We welcome this. These facilities should also be extended to other similarly placed developing countries. Poverty, disease, malnutrition and hunger do not distinguish between
continent country colour and creed. Their counteraction also should not make such distinctions.

The huge resources required for poverty alleviation and economic growth in developing countries cannot be raised purely through the savings of developing countries. External augmentation is required.

I hope the commitments of Monterrey and Johannesburg will be fully discharged. We must also enhance and widen the debt forgiveness initiative for highly indebted poor countries.

We have to look at measures beyond these to generate additional financial resources for development. We also have to address the problem of unrestrained resource flows, which can as the East Asia crisis showed - shatter the economy of developing countries.

I believe the time has come for us to seriously consider the idea of a small levy on international capital flows, to be credited to funds for global development. This would both dampen volatile capital movements, and generate appreciable resources for development. I know that various technical problems have been advanced to dismiss this idea as impractical. But its potential is so great that special efforts should be made to create a practical regime for its implementation.

We should carefully consider the recent British proposal for an international Finance Facility and the Asian Bonds initiative of the Prime Minister of Thailand. Both are forms of guarantee systems to make capital available for developmental projects. Such mechanisms can substantially enhance access to resources by developing countries. However, we should also ensure that the sound regimes for multilateral development finance built up carefully over the decades are not discarded in the process.

Non-ratification of Kyoto Protocol has unfortunately stalled the Clean Development Mechanism for investment and technology flows to developing countries in exchange for carbon credits. This has seriously impeded many developing country programmes for renewable energy and energy conservation to reduce the Green House Gas intensities of their economies. We have to find ways of implementing the Clean Development Mechanism, even if the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol is delayed.

Similarly, the convention on Biological Diversity has failed to transfer technologies to developing countries in return for their biodiversity
resources. I believe we need to seriously examine the concept of adequate user fees to developing countries for access to their biodiversity resources. Similarly, the traditional knowledge of communities should be acknowledged as valuable intellectual property. They could charge a fee from commercial users as compensation for the development and conservation of such knowledge over millennia.

Perhaps we should develop a broader approach to the system of user fees on global environmental resources, which would contribute to their conservation, while simultaneously generating funds for development. Conservation of the global environment, and resource generation for economic growth can be fully consistent.

I do not want to take up more of your time. I would just like to say that we have often stated these goals before, but there is now an imperative urgency for their realization. If we do not act quickly to realize these goals, it is going to become impossible in most developing countries to secure political support for any further trade liberalization or environmental measures.

Thank you

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047. Suo Motu statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the Lok Sabha on his visit to France for the G-8 Extended Dialogue and some other countries

New Delhi, July 23, 2003

Please see Document No. 388

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048. Question in the Rajya Sabha: “Prime Minister’s G-8 Summit at France”.

New Delhi, July 24, 2003

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:-

(a) Whether the Prime Minister attended the G-8 Summit at France held on June 1, 2003;

(b) If so, the subjects discussed thereat and decisions arrived;

(c) Whether the Prime Minister advocated phasing out of trade-distorting movement of personnel for providing services, elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to exports of developing countries and monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the Doha round of WTO negotiations; and

(d) If so, the reaction of the summit on these issues?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs: Shri Vinod Khanna:

(a)-(d) A statement is attached.

Statement

Prime Minister participated in the G-8 Enlarged Dialogue in Evian on 1st June 2003 at the invitation of President Chirac. There was a free and frank exchange of views on development assistance to developing countries, transfer of technologies, environment related issues and trade barriers that affect developing countries. The Enlarged Dialogue was the first of its kind and was not intended to produce a formal Summit document. Its intention was to articulate concerns of developing countries and exchange views with developed countries on the above issues. PM expressed disappointment at the lack of progress so far on the Millennium Development Round since the Doha meeting. PM underlined the need to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers, especially phasing out all trade distorting agricultural subsidies, removal of restrictions on the free movement of natural persons for providing services and broader access of developing countries to pharmaceuticals.

The issues raised by PM were also reflected in the statements of some of the other developing country participants in the Enlarged
Dialogue. While there was no formal comment by the G8 on the issues raised in the dialogue the G8 Declaration adopted on 3rd June did reflect some of the concerns of developing countries. It reiterated the importance of improved market access for all WTO members, especially for developing countries to ensure their integration into the multilateral system and expressed commitment for their general development.

**Shri Murli Deora:** Mr. Chairman, Sir, as per the hon. Minister’s reply, the very purpose of the G-8 Summit was, and I quote, “Exchange of views on development assistance to developing countries...” The G-8 Summit was held at Evian, France which the Prime Minister just attended. There is also a news, ‘India wins G-8 support on terror. Vajpayee gets assurance from high and mighty on cross-border terrorism.’

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister, especially the Prime Minister, who is present here, to this. Recently, at a meeting in Camp David in U.S.A., where President George Bush and President Musharraf met, President Bush announced an assistance of three billion U.S. dollars to Pakistan. Out of that three billion U.S. dollars, he himself announced 1.5 billion dollars, i.e. 50 per cent of that total assistance for military end use. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government of India has cared to find out as to what is the component of that 1.5 billion dollars military assistance. I would like to remind the hon. Minister that when Dwight Eisenhower was the President of the United States of America and when John Foster Dallas was the Secretary of State, at that time, they had given an assurance to India that any military assistance to Pakistan would never be used against India. And you know what happened. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has ascertained the details of it. Have you got any response from them? Why are they suddenly giving 1.5 billion dollars’ military assistance to Pakistan?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Sir, I can get out of this question by saying that this does not arise from the original question.

**Shri Murli Deora:** That is why I read your reply. The question is very clear. It is about exchange of views on development assistance to developing countries. Pakistan is a developing country like ours, and this is the assistance they have got.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Sir, the G-8 Summit, as the hon. Member has very rightly said, in the Enlarged G-8 Summit, where apart from the eight members of the so-called G-8, 14 developing countries, along with the
Secretary-General of the U.N. and the President of the World Bank and the Managing Director of the IMF were invited by President Chirac to participate in this Enlarged Summit. The Prime Minister of India was invited to this Summit, and in his intervention in the meeting, the Prime Minister emphasised - because this was the main issue, which was being discussed in this Enlarged Summit — the following points. I would like to mention it to the House, though they are repeated here: Need to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers, especially phasing out all trade distorting agricultural subsidies, removal of visa and non-visa restrictions, broader access to developing countries for pharmaceuticals, ways of implementing the clean development mechanism for investment and technology flows, consideration of recent British proposal for an international financial facility and consideration of the Asian Bonds Initiative of the Prime Minister of Thailand. These were the points relating to the international developmental and trade matters that the Prime Minister emphasised in that meeting. Some of it, as we have said in the reply was reflected separately when the G-8 Summit actually held their own Summit and issued a statement because after the Enlarged Summit, no statement was issued. But, G-8 issued a statement after their meeting, and in that some of these things were reflected. Now, if you want to shift the entire focus of this question to Pakistan and the recent developments in Pakistan-US relations, Sir, I am in your hands, and I can reply to that.

Mr. Chairman: No need.

Shri Murli Deora: I am sorry, I don’t want to drag the Minister and the hon. Prime Minister on this. I have a folder, which describes the same thing you have replied. It covers topics such as “G-8 talks of world economy and terrorism”. Terrorism was a subject, and I congratulate the Prime Minister for taking up that subject over there, and he got the support also. Why is the Government shying away from saying that $1.5 billion American assistance is being given to Pakistan? Why are you shying away on this? Why are you taking technical camouflage on this?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Sir, I am not taking shelter. As I said, I am in your hands. If you permit me to answer this question, Sir, I will reply to this. (Interruptions)

Shri Murli Deora: When the U.S. Government is giving a military assistance of $1.5 billion to Pakistan, is it not our responsibility to know what is the component of that?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Nobody is denying that. Sir, it is a fact that President
of Pakistan, General Musharraf, traveled to the U.S. He had a meeting with President Bush at Camp David. When they emerged from the meeting, they both addressed the media and we have all heard that. It is also a fact that in that meeting, the U.S. Administration has promised Pakistan an assistance of $3 billion spread over five years, starting from 1st October 2004. This is subject to Pakistan's performance with regard to three criteria they have fixed. This whole matter is supposed to go to the U.S. legislature and the U.S. legislature would debate upon it and then decide upon it. At the moment, there are no details except for the fact that $1.5 billion, 50% of the total package, would be the developmental assistance and the other half would be the military assistance. This is all the information. The details are not available.

Shri Ashwani Kumar: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the question asked of the hon. Minister for External Affairs is in the context of hon. Prime Minister's discussions in Evian, regarding post-Doha WTO negotiations and the follow up. The question that arises from the reply and which I am now putting to the hon. External Affairs Minister is: Whether the Government is prepared and formalized a position paper for negotiation in WTO in consultation with other developing countries so that the interests of the developing countries, with reference to market access, is actually protected, and that India, as in the past, takes a leadership position in articulating the interests of the developing countries; and, whether the stalemate resulting from the linkage of trade in services with open access, etc., is going to be resolved.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Sir, in his intervention the hon. Prime Minister said at the large meeting of the G-8 and I quote, “It is quite clear that the developing countries are deeply disappointed by the progress so far on the Millennium Development Round since Doha meeting nearly two years ago. I think that we need to set some benchmarks for monitoring and evaluating the outcome of Doha Round in terms of concrete progress towards a global trading regime, which would promote development. Some areas where we need these benchmarks.” And he then went to describe these benchmarks.

Though the WTO is not the subject which falls according to the Rules of Business within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of External Affair, but I would like to say before this House, Sir, through you, that the Commerce and Industry Minister is continuously in touch with his colleagues in other developing countries and, in fact, with some of the colleagues in the industrialized countries also. There is going to be another Ministerial
Meeting in Montreal where he will participate before the Ministerial Meeting in Cancun. India has always, I mean India has formulated its views, India is coordinating its views with other developing countries and wherever it is necessary for us to emphasise our point of view, we are doing that. I would like to inform the House that we have a large measure of support as a result of the efforts of the Prime Minister, as a result of the efforts of the rest of the members of the Government with regard to the issues of concern to India and to the developing countries.

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049. Press release of the Government of India on the review of the operationalization of India’s Nuclear Doctrine by the Cabinet Committee on Security.


Please see Document No. 002

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Dr. Santhanam, Ambassador Bhutani, distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

I am happy to be here today to inaugurate this fifth Asian Security Conference being organized by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA). I commend the IDSA for organising this seminar on an annual basis. It is important that we look at the big picture in Asia and decipher long-term trends and their implications for the world as well as for us. I am delighted that a large, diverse and distinguished panel of scholars from India and abroad are joining this effort and I am certain these discussions will prove fruitful for all those gathered here today as well as for the Governments of the region.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is widely accepted that the 21st century will be an Asian century. Let me therefore begin by asking what is it that makes Asia special. What makes Asia unique?

Asia is the largest continent in the world both in terms of population as well as territory. It encompasses extraordinary diversity in terms of religion, race, ethnicity and culture. Each of its regions, whether they be the Gulf and West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, South East Asia and North East Asia, all have distinctive characteristics that separate them from the others. Yet Asia has civilizational commonalties that seeks unity in its diversity.
In 1940, Asia accounted for 60% of the world’s population and 19 percent of the world’s GDP. This changed to 57% of the world’s population and 37% of the world’s GDP by 1995. It is estimated that the Asian population will account for 55% of the world population and 57% of global GDP by 2025. Asia accounts for the world’s largest energy resources. The world’s fastest growing economies and markets are also within Asia.

It is evident therefore that the fulcrum of political and economic activity is shifting in an inexorable manner towards Asia and away from the traditional centers of North America and Europe.

What are the challenges which confront Asia today? Which of those are likely to persist in the coming decade?

Poverty and disparity among and within nations is the fundamental challenge faced by Asia. Asian diversity is most acutely reflected in these differences in economic development within countries and in different parts of the continent. Nearly two thirds of the world’s poor live in Asia. Yet several Asian countries have become middle income or even developed countries in terms of per capita income. How to overcome economic backwardness and remove disparities remains the primary concern of most Asian countries.

Similarly, the need to stem the overall rate of population growth and manage demographic changes, particularly phenomena such as migration and refugee flows is a priority for many countries. Some scholars have pointed out that the battles of the future may be battles over water. How to harness the water resources of the region to meet the requirements of its huge population is another issue of concern.

Terrorism, as all of us are aware today is a global phenomenon. Its roots, however, lie in Asia and there is virtually no corner of Asia unaffected by this scourge. Asia is the only part of the world which has been the victim of a nuclear attack. Yet, there are nations in Asia who resort to nuclear blackmail and openly brandish threats that they will use nuclear weapons. Proliferation is another major challenge that Asia confronts. Some of the most deliberate and well documented instances of nuclear and missile transfers have taken place in this region. It could be said that the risk of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of terrorist groups is the greatest in Asia, particularly in the immediate neighbourhood of India where it is possible to find the conjunction of authoritarian rule, religious fundamentalism, terrorism, drug trafficking and weapons of mass destruction.
In much of the world, war between states has been replaced by war within states. Asia too mirrors this broad trend. Intra-state conflicts and proxy war has taken the place of open war and inter-state conflict. Non state actors, some with the direct backing of states and some operating on their own form important figures on Asia’s security landscape. By spreading violence and terror, they actively seek to undermine democracy, civil society and rule of law. Narco terrorism and trafficking in small arms is also a rapidly spreading and disturbing phenomenon.

The Asian Security Conference this year focuses on China which carries the world’s largest population and is India’s biggest neighbour. The timing of this conference is particularly opportune for it follows the convening of the 16th Party Congress in China last November and the publication thereafter of the fourth Chinese White Paper on national defence last December. The distinguished scholars present here today will no doubt carefully assess the import of the deliberations of the Party Congress and analyse the contents of the White Paper.

The rise of China is a phenomenon which has engaged the attention of scholars in many parts of world. There have been negative scenarios as well as positive scenarios outlined and I am sure that these will be discussed in the next few days. Often the conclusions drawn reflect personal convictions of the scholars concerned. In general, academics of the Realist school tend to see China as a potential hegemon in Asia - a country which seeks to throw the United States out of the region and declare a new Monroe Doctrine. Liberal scholars on the other hand see China as a positive force within Asia - a China which through its economic strength and constructive diplomacy contributes to the overall peace and stability of the region.

The rise of India is similarly an issue which has attracted academic debate. There are many who see the emergence of India on the world stage as part of an inevitable and inexorable process of history. They look to India’s history and tradition of commitment to peace and non-violence, her success in institutionalizing democracy in the face of unparalleled challenges, her commitment to fostering a secular, diverse and plural society even as she strengthens her national unity, her rapidly growing economy, world class human resources and her leadership of developing countries as positive factors which would contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the world. There are, however, others who see India as an ambitious and non status quo power seeking to break into the private club of major powers.
Some analysts foresee in Asia a coming battle for supremacy between India and China. They talk of the inevitability of conflict owing to overlapping areas of influence between India and China and the determination of both countries to emerge as major powers on the world stage. Let me debunk these theories completely and state with full conviction that India neither pursues nor makes policy towards China based on the belief that conflict between the two is inevitable.

It is true that there are important differences between India and China. Some of the wounds inflicted by the conflict of 1962 have been slow to heal and the scars have not fully disappeared. Reliable and widespread reports of Chinese nuclear and missile proliferation to Pakistan cause deep concern. The Chinese position on issues such as Sikkim and India’s candidature to a permanent seat in the UN Security Council sows doubts. There is also a sense of disappointment over the pace of improvement in the relationship.

Let me however assure everyone gathered here that India’s approach to relations with China is and will remain forward looking and infused with a sense of optimism. India’s policies will not be based on fear of Chinese power nor envy of China’s economic achievements. They will be based on the conviction that a prosperous India is inevitable. So is a strong and prosperous China. It is, therefore, logical, reasonable and in the enlightened self-interest of both that the two countries learn not just to live with each other but also address differences and build on what is common. Further, both India and China are too large and too strong to be contained or cowed down by any country, including each other.

A substantial measure of success has been achieved by now in the endeavour to establish mutual understanding between India and China. Despite the fact that the India-China border spans thousands of kilometers of territory and there exist material differences in perception, the two countries have been successful in maintaining relative peace and tranquility for over twenty-five years. This achievement should in no way be underestimated. Moreover, the process of clarifying the Line of Actual Control along the India-China border based on the institutional framework provided by the important agreements of 1993 and 1996 is making progress.

India-China relations have diversified and a series of dialogue mechanisms are in place including on subjects such as counter terrorism, security issues, policy planning and the boundary question. Functional
delegations to learn from each other’s experiences are crisscrossing each other’s countries. High level visits are also being regularly exchanged. Premier Zhu Rongji visited India early last year and Prime Minister Vajpayee will visit China this year. Both countries realize, however, that much more ground remains to be traversed.

The civilisational and cultural ties between the two countries provide India and China with the foundation to build a strong relationship. India seeks to develop relations with China on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, mutual sensitivity to each other’s concerns and equality. We have agreed at the highest level to move ahead in diverse areas of cooperation while simultaneously finding ways and means of addressing our differences through dialogue and peaceful means.

An important consequence of the above has been the remarkable transformation that has taken place in India – China economic relations. Trade and economic cooperation between India and China has grown rapidly in the last decade from US$ 264.8 million in 1991 to US$ 4.3 billion for the period January-November, 2002.

Many of you will recall the fact that in 2001 when India removed the last of its quantitative restrictions, there was great fear of cheaper Chinese goods swamping the Indian market. A popular news magazine even described it as a second invasion by China. However, producers and manufacturers in India over the last two years have more than stood their ground. Far from being swamped by imports, India-China trade figures reflect a relative balance in India’s exports and imports. There is an important lesson to be learnt here. India can be globally competitive if it continues to strengthen its efforts in this regard. The Indian business community should face the world as well as China with confidence.

I am convinced that the future of Asia rests in expanded economic interaction. The logic of economics is bound to inevitably overwhelm Asia just as it has happened in Europe. The key to enhancing Asian security lies in our collective ability to build mutual economic stakes in each other. This is a process which is already happening throughout the region. Regional infrastructure linkages in the form of roads, railway lines and pipelines are rapidly becoming a reality. They hold the potential to knit Asia together in a manner never before seen. On its part, India too has been contributing to this process by expanding connectivity with its neighbours towards the east as well as the west.

Ladies and Gentlemen, power in the 21st century will flow from the
pores of a well run economy. India and China have shown the wisdom to move ahead in their bilateral relations even as contentious issues such as the border dispute are separately addressed. Economic integration and an overall improvement in relations has not been held hostage to differences over specific issues, however important those issues are. The wisdom of adopting such an approach to India-Pakistan relations is self evident. I hope our neighbour will not keep its eyes forever shut to this truth.

To conclude, Asian security can be visualized in terms of concentric circles comprising West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, South East Asia and North East Asia. India is part of them all. Each one affects India’s security and India proposes to play an active role in promoting security within Asia in collaboration with fellow Asian countries.

Asia is today and will continue to be the most dynamic, rapidly changing and modernizing region of the world. Asian countries have already begun to apply themselves to addressing the whole array of security issues of concern to the continent ranging from arms control, terrorism, confidence building mechanisms, security of sea-lanes, greater economic integration, security of energy supplies, greater connectivity. As these efforts develop and coalesce, we will have established a cooperative architecture that guarantees peace, security, stability not only in Asia but also in the whole world.

A strong and confident India is ready to contribute to this process.

Thank you

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Please see Document No. 287

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New Delhi, February 3, 2003.

Please see Document No. 297

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I thank you for this opportunity to be here once again, to participate and share my views in this Conference.

In this same forum, we discussed last year the threat to democratic societies from the globalisation of terror. That was a few months after the gruesome terrorist attacks of September 11, when the world was still coming to terms with their implications for all of humanity.

Nearly a year and a half later, it is worthwhile to assess where we have reached in the global war against terrorism, which we declared through an international coalition and codified through UN Security Council Resolution 1373.

One truth, which is now generally accepted, is that global terrorism did not start on September 11, 2001. That date does, however, mark the dawn of a global recognition of this monster of international terrorism. It also heralded the declaration of the global war against terrorism. The international coalition against terrorism is the broadest group of countries outside of the United Nations and the Nonaligned Movement.

One knows when a war begins but it is more difficult to know where or when it ends. After 16 months of the global fight against terrorism, we
can only be certain about the fact that it is far from over. The headquarters of Al-Qaeda may have been destroyed, but its leaders are still at large. Its patron, the Taliban government has been ousted from Kabul, but we already see a regrouping of Taliban elements in areas of southern and South-eastern Afghanistan.

In any case, we should have grasped by now that international terrorism will not die with the Al-Qaeda. As the variety and scale of incidents over the past year in Bali, Moscow and many other places indicate, its networks are still operational, and a very large number of Al-Qaeda’s allied, subordinate and “like-minded” organizations are flourishing. Arrests in different parts of UK, France, Spain, Italy and Germany, repeatedly remind us of the extensive nature of the linkages. There is also today the real danger that terrorists might get access to weapons of mass destruction and high technology in the pursuit of their endeavours.

An important lesson to us from the past 16 months, therefore, is that the fight against terrorism is a long haul, and not a swift surgical operation. The instrument of this fight has to be an internally self-consistent international regime, with the broadest possible participation and genuine cooperation in its strict compliance.

In this global cooperative effort, the international community is still at the beginning of the learning curve. In Security Council Resolution 1373, we have a comprehensive and powerful statement of intent, which has been further reinforced in the recent Resolution 1456. But we have not as yet translated their provisions into effective mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing compliance.

So far, the Counter-Terrorism Committee has restricted itself to scrutinizing reports of Member States and helping them to identify gaps in their national anti-terrorist legislation. However, it is also crucially important to fully implement the provisions for punishing those who finance, sponsor and harbour terrorists. We have to seriously consider how to give more teeth to the Counter-Terrorism Committee to enforce implementation and to deal with non-compliance.

It is most unfortunate that some diversionary arguments are still blocking a consensus on important anti-terrorist conventions and continue to impede efforts for a united and coherent international anti-terrorist strategy.

Sixteen months after the worst terrorist actions in the world, an
agreed definition of terrorism still eludes the international community. Distinctions between freedom fighters and terrorists propagate a bizarre logic, which glorifies massacres of one set of innocent civilians, while condemning killings of others. We have to settle this argument, once and for all, on the civilised principle that the right to life of innocent people cannot be superseded by a right to kill them for some political cause, or to redress some real or imagined historical wrong.

Another red herring is the fallacy that terrorism can only be eradicated by addressing its “root causes”. This is nonsense. Terrorism is defined by the act, not by the attributes or the description of its perpetrators. Moreover, democratic societies, which address the root causes of alienation and anger, through pluralism, tolerance and socio-economic justice, are precisely the targets of terrorism.

While we indulge in such tortured searches for definitions and first causes, we gravely risk condoning—and even promoting—the destruction of the political harmony, economic structure and social balance of our societies by terrorism.

These are views and concerns, which India has repeatedly expressed, but I am recalling them because they are of vital significance to us. We see a contradiction in attempts to insulate developments across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border from the cross-border terrorism we face. If the perpetrators of the latter are different from the Al-Qaeda groups, which targeted the World Trade Centres, it is only in their names and bank account numbers—not in their ideology, objectives or sponsors. The novel version of democracy, which Pakistan recently unveiled, has brought in more religious extremist forces into the polity, particularly on the Afghanistan border. The safe havens for Al-Qaeda and Taliban elements may expand in consequence. If you also remember that Pakistan’s nuclear assets are believed to be stored in tunnels and caves in the Chagai Hills of Baluchistan, our concerns should be obvious. Persistent reports of the freelance activities of some Pakistani nuclear scientists only add to our disquiet.

A larger-than-life obsession with the “global” Al-Qaeda group results in inadequate political consultations and selective intelligence sharing on the global terrorist threat. This has led to some costly gaps in the campaign against international terrorism. The international terrorist today has a network of wide geographical spread, instant communications through the internet, and a well-oiled machinery for movement of his lethal
equipment, evading national customs, tariffs and non-tariff barriers. He can only be thwarted by international counter-terrorist coordination.

I had drawn attention to this in my presentation here last year. What we have to recognise is that in terrorism, the democratic world today faces the greatest existential threat to its ideology and its way of life. Compartmentalised national approaches cannot deal with the seamless web of international linkages which terrorism has developed. Real-time information sharing and operational intelligence co-operation can help to integrate diversely collected bits of data into an interlocking coherent jigsaw. Analysis of data can be enriched by involving those who are familiar with the cultural subtleties and the local idiom of its origin.

If we look back over the development of a global response to international terrorism, it is a mixed picture. Obviously, September 11, 2001 shocked the world out of complacency and jolted it into a series of immediate and strong actions—seeking a broad-based international coalition, passing a Security Council Resolution, militarily pursuing the Al-Qaeda, etc. It was a process during which the world gradually absorbed the ugly reality of global terrorism, and responded as it went along, groping for the right answers.

If we agree—as I think most would today—that the fight against terrorism is a long haul, we then need a coherent conceptual framework within which its objectives can be defined and pursued. That is what I meant when I said earlier that we need an internally self-consistent regime.

During the Cold War, the Western countries had fashioned grand strategy to counter and roll back communism. Of course, India did not subscribe to that strategy. I am using the analogy here only to highlight that the objective of countering and rolling back terrorism requires the same level of single-minded commitment and conceptual clarity. As you did during the Cold War days, we need to understand the nature of the adversary, build a homogeneous alliance to counter it, determine the doctrine of engagement and plan for the required instruments of that engagement.

International terrorism is neither definable within geographical boundaries nor within the traditional moulds of rationality. The global terrorist does not owe loyalty to a national flag, does not defend a people, claims innocent lives as legitimate victims and seeks martyrdom in suicide missions. The threat from him is magnified by the very real prospect of
non-state actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction. It is a situation of asymmetry in which normal deterrence—which is predicated on rational behaviour—is unlikely to be credible. Defences against such an adversary are necessarily imperfect; hence pragmatic justification can be advanced for counter-attack and even pre-emption.

We have recognised that the targets of international terrorism are democratic societies. There is, therefore, no conceptual ambiguity in identifying a group of democratic countries in the world as a viable alliance against terrorism.

In the immediate aftermath of September 11, there was the understandable urge to form as broad a coalition against terrorism as possible to display overwhelming superiority and to impose a decisive defeat on the adversary. This immediate expediency necessarily meant that the coalition can only be a short-term alliance to deal with a particular manifestation of terrorism. If international terrorism is denned as the adversary, the coalition contains members who are part of the problem.

To define the component elements of a natural alliance against terrorism, we recognise that three core principles define the strategic paradigm of the 21st century world: peaceful co-existence and dialogue as the basis of relations between countries and resolution of differences; democracy as the optimal means of organizing internal affairs of countries; and liberal market structures to harness the forces of globalisation for economic development. Countries subscribing to these principles form a natural alliance with the shared aspirations to safeguard peace, promote pluralism and maximise economic growth with social justice. These are the very objectives which global terrorism attacks—by spreading disorder, generating fear, promoting exclusivism and intolerance, rejecting modernity and diminishing human life.

Such a group of like-minded countries with a genuine commitment to democracy would also more naturally develop the multi-lateral institutions and the multi-national coordination required to counter terrorism. They would not get bogged down in definitional and causal arguments of the kind we witness today. Blocking financial supplies, disrupting networks, sharing intelligence, simplifying extradition procedures—these are preventive measures which can only be effective through international cooperation based on trust and shared values.

It is an alliance of this nature, which will have the political will and moral authority to take bold decisions on pre-emption and retribution,
which may be required in extreme cases of terrorist provocation. Multilateral legitimisation of such pre-emption would carry a special validity.

I am not ignoring the fact that any strategy in the real world requires a balance between values and interests. Excessive realism produces untenable quick-fixes; excessive idealism leads to crusades and disillusionment. My point is that while we work within a coalition against international terrorism with a heterogeneous composition pursuing differing and even clashing objectives, a core has to gradually emerge within this coalition which exerts a persistent pressure for creation of an eventual alliance which will take on international terrorism in a holistic, focused manner. The partners in that alliance would be those countries, which have a stake in defending the core principles of the 21st century. Regimes promoting policies which breed radicalism and extremism can never be long-term allies in this battle. It is the liberal, progressive and moderate societies, which can qualify.

The balance between values and realpolitik has to shift more towards values, if this has to happen. Short-term pragmatism should not obscure a long-term vision.

Thank you.
I am pleased to be with you this morning. I have attended many conferences in which the issue of terrorism is discussed. But today I am particularly happy. For it is the first conference that I have attended which is for the youth and by the youth.

However, you have committed one anomaly. You have invited a not-so-young man to inaugurate your conference.

When I was looking at the theme of the conference, it pleased me to know that it is not only against something negative, but it is also for something positive. It is against terrorism. But it is also for a Global Dialogue for Peace.

It is this combination of determination to fight the wrong, and an equally firm resolve to pursue a constructive agenda, which the world needs today.

It is natural for young people to take such a two-pronged approach. Young hearts have an instinctive attraction to high ideals – of peace, voluntary service, and adventurous pursuit of progress. At the same time, their minds have an inborn abhorrence for the wrong and the unjust.

Youth is the spring of life. It is the age of discovery and dreams.

When they dream, they dream not only for a good future for themselves, but also a good future for their Nation and the entire humanity. Their dreams take them to stars and galaxies, to the far corners of the Unknown. And some of them, like our own Kalpana Chawla, pursue their dream till they realise it and even die for it in the process.

If any section of society, in any country, is most impatient for change, it is the youth. Patriotism comes naturally to young people. But they also easily respond to the call of internationalism. In today’s shrinking and inter-dependent world, they reach out, with an open mind, to what other cultures have to offer, what different streams of thought have to offer, what new technologies have to offer. And if they have to compete, they like doing so with a sporting spirit. Just look at the spirit of internationalism.
that today pervades the cricketing world, with the start of the World Cup Tournament in South Africa.

No matter which team wins, cricket will win. Youthfulness will win. The spirit of oneness will win Of course, we in India would very much like our Boys in Blue to win! The point I am making is that there is something common, something profoundly life-nourishing, that unites young men and women of all countries and all cultures, all creeds and all classes. It is their hope and their strong urge to see a better world.

a. A world free of poverty, unemployment, inequality and exploitation of man by man.
b. A world free of discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, language and gender.
c. A world full of creative challenges and opportunities to conquer them.

These are not empty hopes. Modern science and technology, and the increasing vistas of socio-economic cooperation among nations, have brought these hopes within the reach of realisation.

However, there is one condition. These hopes of young people in Delhi and Durban, Colombo and Kabul, Jakarta and Havana, can be fulfilled only in conditions of peace, only in a civilised and cooperative world order.

In recent times, terrorism has emerged as one of the gravest threats to peace and a democratic polity. The threat to peace-loving societies from the globalisation of terror is an ugly reality of today’s world. We in India grasped this reality many years ago. We have lost more than 60,000 of our innocent men, women and children, and security personnel to cross-border terrorism in Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir and other parts of our country during the past two decades.

But it took September 11 to dramatically bring the global reach of terrorism into the collective consciousness of the world. What has happened later in Bali, Moscow, Mombassa has further reinforced this truth.

Globalisation of terror has another dimension today. Increasingly, a common ideological inspiration – that of religious extremism — is exporting it around the world. Thus, jehadi terrorism has today become the principal form of terrorism all over the world.
This is not because Islam justifies terrorism. No it does not justify. No religion preaches hatred or sanctions killing of innocent human beings. Rather, terrorists have chosen to cover their campaign of killings with the cloak of jehad to gain two benefits. One, they seek some kind of popular legitimacy. Secondly, it helps them to recruit misguided youth and impart to them suicidal levels of motivation.

It is through such misuse of religion that jehadi terrorism is trying to violently impose its own rigid, intolerant social order uniformly around the world. The murderous campaign has not spared even Muslim populations, as was evident from what the Taliban did in Afghanistan.

It has not hidden its goals and objectives from anyone. In pursuit of its objectives, it has given sufficient indication of its readiness to resort to any means and to attack any target. The December 13 attack on our Parliament illustrates this. Hence, international community has to be vigilant against the real possibility of chemical and biological weapons, and weapons of mass annihilation, falling into the hands of terrorist organisations.

However, we should never allow ourselves to be frightened by terrorism. We should have the conviction that the defeat of terrorism is certain. Human nature cannot bow before intolerance and violence. It also rejects any attempt to cast the entire humanity in a uniform mould. As in Nature, mankind likes, nurtures and protects diversity. Which is why, freedom of faith and thought is a fundamental human right; and tolerance of other’s religion, customs and political beliefs is a fundamental duty of everyone. This is the basis of democracy. It is also the basis of secularism.

It is today a self-evident truth that democratic, secular and multicultural societies are the prime targets of terrorism. These have become the most vulnerable to its attacks. Terrorists exploit the civil liberties, religious tolerance and cultural diversity in our countries. They seek to destroy our democratic fabric by fomenting sectarian divisions and cultural tensions and ultimately deprive us of that very freedom which they have exploited.

It is also a fact, often ignored, that the sponsorship, bases and finances for terrorism come from totalitarian military regimes. They nurture and support extremist terrorist groups to further their own political agenda. In turn, these groups make themselves indispensable to these regimes
by maintaining the focus on external campaigns and diverting attention from the inadequacies of their internal systems.

Democracies are more vulnerable to terrorism for yet another reason. Our values inhibit effective anti-terrorist action. Intrusive surveillance, curtailment of liberties, restrictions on movement, and other such tedious security procedures often become unpopular because they affect the quality of our life. Today we have to reconcile ourselves to some infringement of our rights and freedoms, so that we can counter the far more destructive threat from terrorism. We have to take decisive, tough and forceful action against terrorists, which is both punitive and deterrent.

Even while demanding restraint and fairness from our police and security agencies, we should recognize that extraordinary circumstances call for effective responses. The human rights of terrorists cannot override those of their victims – not only those hit by their actions, but also the generations which are denied normal life and economic progress by the prevalence of terrorism. I call upon youth organisations to create proper awareness about these imperatives.

My young friends, distinctions are sometimes drawn between different acts of terrorism. In some cases, we are told, it is not really terrorism, but a freedom struggle. This is how our neighbour has been trying to justify its policy of cross-border terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir.

Sometimes, double standards are used to justify terrorism. It is asserted that Osama bin Laden’s associates are freedom fighters when they act in one country and terrorists when they act elsewhere. Jehadi groups have been given shelter and support using this dubious logic.

Similarly, some countries have a tendency to condone terrorism somewhere, while condemning it elsewhere. This is counter-productive, because such lenience will boomerang on all of us.

Youth organisations should carry out an awareness campaign to expose justification or condoning of terrorism anywhere and under whatever pretext.

While the fight against international terrorism is principally the responsibility of governments, youth organisations can play a vital supportive role. It is well known that extremist and fundamentalist groups draw their sustenance from, and often their fresh recruits from, an
underground as well as overground ideological campaign among the general population, with a specific focus on students and youth. It is necessary to foil such efforts.

No organisation, irrespective of whether it claims to espouse the cause of the majority or the minority community, can be allowed to inflame passions, spread hatred and incite violence. Young people should work actively to isolate such organisations and individuals.

And just as extremist groups have created a global network of organisations bearing different names, it is necessary for student and youth organisations opposed to terrorism and extremism also to work in close international cooperation.

With these words, I inaugurate your conference and wish it all success.

Thank you.

New Delhi, February 17, 2003.

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056. Statement by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN and Representative on the ad hoc Committee established by General Assembly Resolution No. 51/210 of December 17, 1996 in the 6th Committee of the UN General Assembly on ‘Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism’.


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058. Speech by National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra on “India, United States and the New World Order: Prospects for Cooperation” at the Council of Foreign Relations.


It is a privilege to be here today with you to exchange views on India-US relations.

At the same time, you have put me in a bit of a spot by asking me to talk about the New World Order! Frankly I think it is still very much an evolving process. Are recent events a continuation of the post-Cold War readjustment of the world order, or do they signal a re-ordered “post-9/11” world order? The jury is still out on this, and the verdict will emerge only in the future.

I will, therefore, make some brief remarks on what I see as elements of the emerging world order and then talk about the India-US relationship in that framework.

History tells us that after a great war, the victorious forces seek to redesign the world order. But history also warns us that unexpected events and the interplay of diverse forces can divert or derail this effort.

Just look at the previous world order. At the end of World War II, the victorious Allies sought to guarantee collective security through the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

This blueprint for a New World Order did not last for even a decade. The UN Security Council was paralysed by the confrontation between the Eastern and Western blocs. Instead of multilateral cooperation within the UN, the Cold War became the world’s strategic paradigm for four decades after World War II.

With the fall of the Berlin wall came the next quest for a New World Order. Political leaders across the globe spoke about a new window of opportunity for peace and cooperation.

But optimistic hopes for the end of conflict were soon belied. Countries disintegrated under the onslaught of ethnic nationalism and religious extremism. The myth of self-correcting market forces was exploded by the East Asian financial crisis and similar afflictions in parts of Europe and Latin America. Conflicts claimed more casualties during
the decade of the 1990’s than during the entire Cold War. Terrorism was beginning to announce itself on the world stage as a non-state actor of worrying proportions.

And then came September 11 2001, demonstrating the reach of global terrorism and its ability to bridge the asymmetry in power and strength between the terrorist and his victims. The coalition, formed to fight this scourge, achieved its immediate purpose of restoring a popular government in Afghanistan, but its composition does not enable it to tackle global terrorism comprehensively since not all its members have a firm commitment to this objective. The military action in Iraq involved another “coalition of the willing”, and in the process opened up divisions within the UN Security Council, European Union and NATO.

Today, we hear two prognostications of the evolving new world order. The first is of a unipolar world with the United States taking the principal decisions on international political and economic issues. According to this theory, the dominance of U.S. power would drive the impulse to unilaterally shape the world in its image, brushing aside any dissenting opinion. The other model is one of a world comprising multiple political poles, suggesting that a certain level of tension between the poles will maintain an equilibrium in which the dominant pole can be kept in some check.

While pondering on the viability of the model of a unipolar world, we need to recognize that the post Cold War order has been profoundly influenced by globalisation. Inspired by – and now itself driving – the technologies of the information age, it affects every aspect of human and group activity – political, economic and social. No country or society has remained immune from this phenomenon. The consequences of globalisation cannot be localised within national boundaries.

Demographic changes and migration patterns; the movement of natural resources – particularly energy and water; and issues like climate change pose challenges transcending national boundaries. Even States with the most advanced technical means are increasingly unable to fully control international flows of disease, illicit drugs, funds and weapons. The international information networks of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction among its state and non-state practitioners can only be countered by close cooperation between democratic societies through regular information exchanges and intelligence sharing.
Today, a regional epidemic like SARS becomes a global problem overnight. The ongoing arguments about whether more real-time information might have halted its spread prove the point of global interdependence.

Such global inter-dependence means that even a unipolar power needs cooperative action in pursuit of its various objectives. The current crisis over North Korea is an example.

The question is also one of resources. If a terrorist network is smashed in a failed or failing state – as Afghanistan was under the Taliban – there would obviously be costs for the reconstruction of the state. The external assistance for Afghanistan’s reconstruction is now about $250 million a year; it would need to be increased and sustained over many years. The cost of restoration after the last Gulf War was higher, and that of Iraq’s reconstruction is expected to be much, much higher. No single world power, however rich, would want to take on this kind of financial burden, at the expense of its taxpayers.

On the second model, we should realize that in the real world, an arrangement not in conformity with geopolitical realities cannot be sustained. It is an unquestionable fact that USA is the pre-eminent power in the world today. The American commentator, Fareed Zakaria, recently pointed out that USA spends as much on defence as the entire rest of the world put together; and this amount is only 4% of its GDP. The US economy is as large as those of Japan, Germany and Britain put together.

It would make poor political or economic sense for a country – or a group of countries – to set itself up as an alternate pole in opposition to USA. Most countries advocating a multi-polar world also affirm that they attach great importance to relations with USA. What they seek is an ethic of plurality and consensus which would ensure that collective decisions give due weightage to their legitimate interests and concerns. It is a non-confrontationist model, not based on outmoded concepts of balance of power, spheres of interest and military blocs.

Nearly sixty years ago, after the end of World War II, America was in a similar position of political, military and economic pre-eminence. Then, a mature American communitarian impulse inspired the creation of a multilateral global architecture. The United Nations, the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank and the IMF are all products of this internationalism.
The challenge today is not to demolish these edifices, but to address their shortcomings, some of which are serious. The United Nations system of collective security has not always functioned effectively. It needs reform. The Security Council needs reconfiguration. But we should not throw out the baby with the bathwater. As I pointed out earlier, even a powerful unipolar power requires multilateral agencies, which can maintain political, financial and economic order.

A reform is also required in the current non-proliferation architecture to make it serve the real purpose for which it was created. Restrictive regimes deny access of several countries to dual-purpose goods and technologies, without either rewarding responsible behaviour or punishing irresponsible proliferators.

Deterrence, prevention and defence are accepted elements of a national security strategy. But today, the international terrorist is often an irrational individual, ready to sacrifice his and innocent lives for an extremist cause, acquiring weapons of mass destruction and using unorthodox techniques to overcome asymmetries of strength. There can be no deterrence against irrational behaviour. Prevention and defence are also almost impossible. In such cases, extraordinary measures have to be taken in the interests of security. This is where a smoothly operating world order with a functioning consultative mechanism can help to provide legitimacy.

It is from these strands that a new world order would be woven. What we need is a constructive and continuing dialogue on the management of global inter-dependence.

In the world order defined by the Cold War, India and US were not really allies though, to be fair, nor were they enemies. India-US relations reflected a lack of engagement, coupled with wariness and a periodically recurring suspicion whenever the shadow of the Cold War fell over our region.

In the post-Cold War world (and even in the post-9/11 world order), the situation is dramatically different. We have shared geo-political interests and economic opportunities, which can bind an enduring partnership. This was the perception that led Prime Minister Vajpayee to declare, nearly five years ago, that the two countries could be “natural allies”, which have yet to fulfil the promise of their cooperation.

We know that President Bush fully shares this vision for an enduring India-US partnership. The US National Security Strategy released by the
President last September states, “The United States has undertaken a transformation in its bilateral relationship with India based on a conviction that US interests require a strong relationship with India. We are the two largest democracies, committed to political freedom protected by representative governments. India is moving towards greater economic freedom as well. We have a common interest in the free flow of commerce, including through the sea-lanes of the Indian Ocean. Finally, we share an interest in fighting terrorism and in creating a strategically stable Asia.” This is a succinct statement of our complementarities and convergences.

It is particularly refreshing that our two countries are now looking at the full scope and breadth of the Indo-US relationship. To speak very frankly, what really stunted the growth of our bilateral relations in past years was the tendency to look at India’s role only within a South Asian canvas and to see South Asia solely as the theatre of an India-Pakistan zero sum game.

India has broken free of these limiting confines, which the Cold War ideologies sought to impose. It has land borders of well over 3000 km with China and Southeast Asia. It has maritime borders with Indonesia and Thailand. Its exclusive economic zone spans the waters almost from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca. As your National Security Strategy recognizes, it straddles the commercial sealanes and the oil routes from the West to all of East Asia.

Our cultural and trade connections have historically extended along the Silk Route through Central Asia into Europe; and along what could be termed the Buddhist trail through Myanmar, Indochina, China and Southeast Asia to Japan.

Today, India has a population of over a billion people, upwardly mobile on the economic ladder. In terms of purchasing power parity, it is the world’s fourth largest economy, averaging an annual growth rate of over 5% since 1980 – the highest ever achieved over a comparable period by any democracy in the world. I might also mention that this growth rate was maintained through the turbulent period a few years ago when the so-called “Asian crisis” seized a few Asian economies.

Our economic fundamentals remain strong. Inflation is within the reasonably low single digits. Over the last few years, India has been attracting foreign direct investment at an annual rate of nearly 1.7% of GDP. American companies in India sometimes complain about operating conditions, but statistics show that they all have very healthy balance
sheets. The inflow of American investments into India has grown significantly in the last few years. The case of Enron’s Dabhol Project is sui generis. It is not so well known that the financial exposure of Indian entities exceeds the foreign funds deployed in the project. It is more a case of an economically unviable project than a foreign investment venture turned sour.

I have set out these facts in some detail, illustrating India’s wider political, economic, security and strategic interests, to reiterate that to view India solely through a South Asian prism would be an analytical error. In our view, the world made this mistake in May 1998, in its reactions to India’s nuclear tests. Our security concerns, which prompted that decision, are better understood today.

We must acknowledge that USA was among the first countries to temper its reservations about our nuclear tests with an understanding of the larger picture of India’s political concerns and economic potential. The visit of President Clinton to India in March 2000 – less than two years after the tests – was in that sense a landmark event. After this opening, President Bush has personally led the effort for a complete transformation in relations.

Given its past history, the Indo-US relationship needs to liberate itself from a number of misconceptions and prejudices of past years. I think we have made considerable headway on this path with good impact on our relations. Our leaders are in regular touch with each other on the phone and through letters. Regular exchanges of visits at the political and senior official levels have resulted in a harmonisation of our position on a number of issues.

Nowhere is this engagement more visible than in defence and security. Indian naval vessels took on the responsibility of escorting US vessels through the Malacca Straits last year. Joint exercises involving US Special forces and Indian paratroopers in India and Alaska, largest ever combined naval exercise in the Malabar series, institutional linkages between civilian, military and defence institutions of our Ministries of Defence, discussions on missile defence, purchase of defence equipment etc are some new developments. Working groups have been set up on counter-terrorism, the Defence Policy Group has been revived and a joint forum on cyber-terrorism established to pursue defence and infrastructure protection projects.

India was one of the first countries to declare support to the USA in
its global war against terrorism after the horrendous events of September 11, 2001. We extended unwavering support to operation ‘Enduring Freedom’. We worked closely with our American and other colleagues in the Bonn process for restoration of representative government in Afghanistan and continue to participate in Afghan reconstruction efforts. On a diverse range of other subjects, India’s interactions with USA and its reactions to US statements or actions have been governed by a pragmatic understanding of realities, rather than doctrinaire ideologies. I might mention our prompt and positive reaction to the New Strategic Framework unveiled by President Bush in May 2001, our support to the many welcome elements in the energy and climate change policies enunciated by the President and our convergent positions on the International Criminal Court. There are a number of other areas where we have been able to find common ground for joint action.

This does not imply that there are no longer any differences between our two countries, but there is certainly a realisation that there is far more that unites us than divides us. We have had differences including over issues like our nuclear programmes, but a sustained bilateral dialogue with a frank exchange of concerns has led to a far better mutual understanding on these issues.

I have been saying very candidly that a trinity of issues – high technology commerce, civilian nuclear energy cooperation and collaboration in space can take the Indo-US relationship to a qualitatively new level of partnership. India has consistently followed responsible policies on non-proliferation of nuclear and missile technologies and has strict export control regimes for dual-use technologies. The sharp contrast with others in our near and extended neighbourhood is evident for all to see. We believe that our discussions with our American partners on this subject are on the right path and hope that the road to free high technology commerce will soon be cleared of the hurdles of misconceptions.

We have to cover the same path for civilian nuclear cooperation and collaboration in space. Here again, I have to say that the obstacles come from remnants of cold war thinking and are not in consonance with our mutual interests. India has repeatedly asserted – and this is acknowledged internationally – that its nuclear and missile development programmes are entirely indigenous. We have not violated any of our bilateral commitments or international obligations. We will continue to restrict the development of these programmes to the minimum levels required for our national security.
When the world has recognized this reality, it defies logic to place obstacles on civilian applications of our nuclear programme and developmental projects of our space programme. These are areas where there are huge commercial possibilities for American companies (and companies from other countries).

We have, of course, undertaken that we would put all nuclear power projects of foreign collaboration under safeguards. I am aware that some US regulations and laws are constraining factors, but rules and legislation can be amended to respond to changed situations.

Let me also put the nuclear energy issue in an environmental perspective. If the huge additional power required for India's ambitious development plans is to be generated from fossil fuels, the consequent drastic increase in carbon dioxide emissions could have disastrous effects on the global environment. This is, in fact, the logic for our decision to increase the percentage of nuclear power in our energy output.

In sum, therefore, the political leadership in both countries sees value in building upon the natural links between our two democracies in a globalising world. The India-U.S. relationship is not a single-issue relationship. Our friendship is based on a broad range of shared values, beliefs and interests. Societies of this size and complexity, by their very nature, cannot agree on all issues. Our disagreements are now increasingly discussed with the candour and confidence injected by the recent transformation of our bilateral relationship. Both combating terrorism and forging a new world order demand close and solid partnerships among democratic societies, which value freedom, pluralism and entrepreneurship. These are the values that unite India and the United States.

To fulfil this potential, we have to ensure that the firm broom of cold logic decisively sweeps out the cobwebs of Cold War misconceptions and blinkered mindsets. We are working hard at it.

Thank you.


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062. Joint declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism between the Republic of India and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Bali, Indonesia, October 8, 2003.

Please see Document No. 162

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063. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on Dawood Ibrahim\(^1\) being declared by the USA a Specially Designated Global Terrorist.

New Delhi, October 17, 2003.

We welcome the step taken by the United States declaring Dawood Ibrahim as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. The designation recognizes Dawood Ibrahim's underworld and terrorist connections, his efforts to destabilise India, his involvement in the 1993 Mumbai bombings and his support to LeT. This would automatically trigger a request for his inclusion in the United Nations listing as well.

We renew our demand to the Government of Pakistan to hand over Dawood Ibrahim to India so that he can be prosecuted for the crimes committed by him. We also appeal to other States to disallow him transit or relocation from his current residence.

In this connection I would like to add that this afternoon there was a meeting in the Ministry of External Affairs between Mr. Arun Singh, Joint Secretary(Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran) and Mr. Munnawar Bhatti, Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan in New Delhi. Drawing attention to the fact that India had repeatedly sought that Pakistan hand over Dawood Ibrahim to India, Mr. Arun Singh once again reiterated this demand in the light of further developments.

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\(^1\) Dawood Ibrahim is a fugitive from Indian law and a declared terrorist who was involved in serial bomb blasts cases in the financial capital of India Mumbai in 1993.
064. Statement by Saleem Iqbal Shervani, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Agenda Item 73(W): Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction.


Please see Document No. 486

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065. Statement by K. Kalavenkta Rao, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN in the Sixth Committee on Agenda Item 156: Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism.


Please see Document No. 474

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Please see Document No. 476

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Friends,

1. I welcome this opportunity to share some thoughts with you on India’s national security perspectives. What I would like to do is to spell out some broad considerations; I can then respond to any specific questions you may have.

2. Today, it is well recognized that the traditional concept of national security as signified by large armies and potent weapons is incomplete. Of course, the military dimension of security remains important. But it is not a complete picture. The 9/11 attacks showed that the citizens of even the most powerful nation in the world are not secure. Today, the threat posed by non-State actors - particularly terrorist groups with access to modern technology and weapons of mass destruction - is the most pervasive threat to individual nations and to world peace. Democratic societies are the most vulnerable to this threat, since terrorists exploit the freedoms and openness of our societies. The spate of recent terrorist attacks - from our Parliament in Delhi, to a nightclub in Bali, synagogues in Istanbul, a threat in Moscow and against targets in many other countries - proves this point.

3. Another consequence of the relentless march of globalization and the rapid spread of democracy is the vastly increased emphasis on the security of the individual, as a factor of national security. Therefore, issues such as economic security, energy security, food security, clean environment, decent healthcare, protection of individual life and property, etc. have become extremely important. More people die in internal conflicts around the world than in military confrontation. Civil wars, ethnic conflicts, religious extremism, poverty, disease, organized crime, and narco-trafficking create more insecurity than enemy attacks. Good governance and equitable economic development make almost as great a contribution to security as military weapons.

4. Technology is a major determinant of security. In the modern world,
technology drives multiple socio-economic revolutions, which together constitute globalization. It has empowered the individual and made our lives better. But it is a double-edged weapon. Technology accelerates the pace of change to a level where it can create new disparities within and among nations. The denial of technology, through discriminatory international technology control regimes, can accentuate disparities by slowing down development. Non-state actors – including terrorists and organized crime - can misuse technology to victimize societies. A more enlightened regime of equal access to, and equitable dissemination of technology would enhance the comprehensive security of nations.

5. Some countries have harnessed technology to integrate land, oceans, air and space in their battle plans. Others have been unable to keep pace with new revolutions in military affairs. Overwhelming technological superiority of a single country - or a group of countries - would naturally strengthen the trend towards unilateralism of action.

6. Demography is yet another dimension of national security. Population growth; trans-border migrations; regional, ethnic and religious differentiation are all key issues impinging on security. Human resource development and balanced regional development are issues getting increasing attention in national security debates.

7. No security policy can be crafted in a vacuum. The extraordinary developments of the last few years have transformed the strategic environment in the world. The end of the bi-polar world, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, has ushered in an era of extraordinary flux and transition.

8. The unipolar world naturally raises the specter of Unilateralism of the dominant power. But the complexities of today’s security challenges, and their trans-national character, make it practically difficult and unacceptably expensive for even the most powerful to dictate global events unilaterally. At the same time, the United Nations structures have been found wanting in dealing with the contemporary security challenges. An equally disturbing recent manifestation was the absence of consensus in the international community on major security issues of today. The establishment of a cooperative multi-polar world order, in which he interests and aspirations of the various poles would be harmoniously accommodated and decision-making by broad consensus would
be institutionalized, is the major security challenge before the world today. India’s security interests also lie in realization of this objective.

9. This is the broad context in which we see the security of India. I will deal with some specific security challenges before us.

10. Since India’s nuclear tests in 1998, and the Kargil war in 1999, India’s security environment has changed significantly. India faces the modern day threats from WMD proliferation, religious extremism, ethnic conflicts, proliferation of small arms, narco-terrorism and environmental degradation. These pose challenges to the Indian endeavour to build and sustain a modern, democratic, plural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural State comprising more than one billion people. It is incumbent upon us to ensure that we succeed against all such threats.

11. The instability in our neighbourhood naturally has an obvious impact on our security. India is linked with its neighbours through intimate historical, cultural, economic and political ties. Our borders with neighbours are porous.

12. With Nepal, we have an open border, which can be traversed by citizens of Nepal and India without visa requirements. A large number of Nepali citizens work in India; many Indian citizens have business in Nepal. Therefore, instability in Nepal caused by the activities of Maoist groups, causes us great concern. It has upset the equilibrium between constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy in Nepal. Maoists also have links with violent ultra-left groups in India. We maintain close contacts with the King, the Government and the political parties in Nepal on the restoration of stability and calm.

13. We also have a long and porous border with Bangladesh. We face the problem of illegal immigration from Bangladesh. Indian insurgent groups have also been using Bangladeshi territory to carry out their activities in our Northeast. We have been in constant touch with the Bangladesh government on the peaceful management of our borders and on the wider question of bilateral economic cooperation, which will - in the medium to long term - tackle the problem of economic migration.

14. The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka has also affected us deeply over the last twenty years. It was a fall-out of the conflict, which resulted
in the tragic assassination of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991. India, therefore, welcomed the peace process, which promised a negotiated settlement acceptable to all sections of Sri Lankan society, while preserving the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. Our concern about recent developments in Sri Lanka is that this process should not be derailed by internal political differences. We hope the differences will be resolved and that solutions to the impasse will emerge through internal political processes.

15. With our western neighbour, Pakistan, we have made every effort to establish a peaceful and cooperative relationship. We have done so in the face of sustained State-sponsored cross-border terrorism over the last two decades, which has taken thousands of lives in Jammu & Kashmir alone. This terrorism has spread to other parts of India and seeks to impede our economic development.

16. Our Prime Minister has frequently reiterated that we are willing to resolve all our bilateral differences with Pakistan through peaceful discussions, but only when cross border terrorism ends. Unfortunately, we are up against an obsessive anti-India mindset, which promotes Jehadi fundamentalism and justifies its export to India in terms of a so-called freedom struggle in Kashmir. This cannot be the basis of peaceful and durable ties with India.

17. We have taken initiatives to promote economic cooperation, cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts with Pakistan. By this, our consistent effort is to encourage those elements in Pakistan who recognize the folly of permanent hostility towards India. They will eventually have to counter those, who see their political future as depending on confrontation with India. In the long run, peace and friendship between India and Pakistan has to be based on an objective realization that current global trends are moving towards economic integration, rather than political and military confrontation.

18. It is this realization, which also drives India’s commitment to SAARC. SAARC was conceived as a forum to promote multifaceted cooperation among South Asian countries, irrespective of political differences. Unfortunately, the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) and South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangements (SAPTA) have not made sufficient headway, because irrelevant political obstacles have been put in the way. We remain committed to SAARC, but simultaneously we have also pursued economic
cooperation measures sub-regionally in South Asia and with other regions. By 2010, India would have a free trade area with ASEAN. We are actively participating in sub-regional co-operation initiatives like BIMSTEC, Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, and other linkages with Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia. These economic integration measures should contribute to peace and stability and hence to enhanced security. As our Prime Minister said recently at a SAARC Information Ministers’ Conference, if SAARC cannot organize itself, it will simply miss the boat, because we will move ahead with alternative arrangements.

19. In the larger picture of our regional interests, including energy security, Afghanistan and Central Asia are of great importance to us. We have invested considerable resources in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Reports of the regrouping of Taliban and resurgence of Al-Qaida in Afghanistan are of fundamental security consequence for us. We work closely with the Government of Afghanistan to counter such trends, which threaten the unity and territorial integrity of Afghanistan. Similarly, we are expanding and intensifying our cooperation with Central Asian countries to promote stability in our common neighbourhood.

20. Conflict, tension and instability in the Gulf region and West Asia affect India’s interests. We have committed financial assistance for re-construction activities in Iraq, but we have also been emphasizing that re-construction can only go hand in hand with a political process, leading to an early return of sovereignty to the Iraqi people. Millions of Indians live and work in West Asia. They remit about US$6 to 7 billion to India annually. We source about 80% of our oil from the region. It is, therefore, obvious that we maintain a close engagement with all courtiers of the region.

21. China is our largest neighbour. Sino-Indian relations have seen tensions in the past and we continue to have differences over our boundary. But over the past 15 years or so, India and China have taken measured steps to reduce tensions and to make their borders peaceful and tranquil. We have strengthened our political ties and deepened our economic cooperation. We have agreed to tackle all contentious issues in a pragmatic manner. During our Prime Minister’s recent visit to China, we agreed to raise our economic and other bilateral co-operation to a qualitatively higher level. The decision of the two Governments to appoint Special
Representatives, to discuss the boundary question from a political perspective, was a particularly significant measure. A final resolution of the boundary question would release considerable military energies and finances for other more purposeful activities. We consider this a strategic objective and are willing to take pragmatic steps to achieve it.

22. On a global scale, our broad-based foreign policy is aimed at integrating India into the global political and economic mainstream. As a country of one billion plus people, located in a critical geo-strategic region of the world, India’s foreign policy has to reflect its multi-dimensional security concerns. Our strategic partnership with Russia, based on close political understanding, traditional cultural bonds and intensive defence cooperation, has a strong geopolitical logic. It is also an important element in our efforts for a cooperative multi-polar world order. In recent years, our relations with USA have developed into a mature engagement, with a healthy dialogue on all issues and an increasingly diverse cooperation. We have also strengthened our ties with the EU countries, emphasizing our shared values of democracy and pluralism. The combating of international terrorism and the strengthening of multilateral trade regimes are common strands in our engagement with all these countries. The articulation and pursuit of developmental concerns of the developing countries in an element, which in parallel cements our relationship with countries of the South. We, therefore, have an abiding interest in the emergence of a rule based, non-discriminatory international order. This requires a fundamental reform of the UN system to make it more representative of contemporary relativities and responsive to modern needs.

23. India is conscious of the fact that the road map to better security incorporates faster economic growth and enhancement of technological capability. The Indian economy is now largely integrated into the global mainstream. The knowledge-based economy, which has emerged in India, will create beneficial linkages between India and other countries. Our competitiveness will be enhanced. Our effort is now focused on leveraging our economic, technological and human assets to enhance our security.

24. A few years ago, we undertook a detailed review of our security structures. A Group of Ministers presented its report to the Government on Reforming the National Security System. This was
the first time in independent India’s history that comprehensive review of the national security system in its entirety was undertaken. The recommendations looked at the challenges to the management of national security and made suggestions with regard to the overhaul of our intelligence apparatus, internal security structures, border management and the management of defence. The Government is at present involved in implementing these recommendations, and we hope that as a result of this overhaul, India will have the necessary structures to meet modern-day challenges to security. As a result of this review not only will the management of security improve, we also hope to have a better civil-military interface, better information dissemination and better media relations.

25. To sum up, therefore, India faces multiple challenges to its security but it is fully prepared to meet them. While we maintain adequate military force to safeguard our borders, our primary thrust in improving our security environment is through balanced and rapid economic growth, good governance and strengthening our network of international relations.
INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003

Section - VII

ASIA

(i) SOUTH ASIA
Inaugural Address by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Seminar on South Asian Cooperation organised by the South Asian Centre for Policy Studies, Dhaka.


Thank you Mr. Vohra, Shri Gujral, Dr. Sobhan, Shri Dubey, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am very grateful to the organizers for having invited me to this function this morning. Mr. Vohra was quite right in saying that I had been approached some time in December, I don’t remember the exact date, to be present here today. The programme was uncertain at that point of time and I hope it has been noted, I said the programme was ‘uncertain’. I had said that I will try and come if we don’t go to Islamabad. Unfortunately, the Summit has been postponed. But just as there is a silver lining to every cloud, it has given me an opportunity to be present here today.

I have listened very carefully to what Mr. Vohra and Dr. Sobhan had to say. I note that both of them referred with a degree of both nostalgia and regret to an occasion 20 years ago led by Trilok Singhji in which Dr. Sobhan was also present. As we sit here today and discuss issues, we have to perhaps look at those 20 years and why we have not reached where we should have reached during this period.

The Seminar being organised today is from the point of view of policy extremely important. That is the reason why I am here. I shall look forward to a report of the day long discussions which is going to take place and the conclusions which you will be arriving at. I am sure that not only in India but in all countries of South Asia they will become an important input for policy.

Dr. Sobhan was referring to the festival of People of Indian Origin which is going on in Delhi and which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister yesterday. He is quite right in saying that there is a great deal of similarity between what is happening there and what we are trying to do here. We have a shared history. We have so much in common. We are joined together by geography and, therefore, there is no way we can either ignore each other or not afford to be friendly and cooperative. We must live with each other.
But there is an element of geography which is beyond our control - the element that India is a large country and that we have a billion or over a billion people. Just as there is a reality of seven sovereign countries in South Asia, similarly, there is a reality of the size and population of India. Therefore, my first point is that our size and our population need not be held against us. There is nothing we can do about it. It is there. I notice that it arouses some suspicions. It arouses some apprehensions. I hasten to add that these suspicions and apprehensions are not well founded. We have no other desire or intention than to be able to live in peace and friendship with our neighbours and join in the common task of improving the quality of life of our people.

It is with that desire and it is not a new desire that our Prime Minister Mr. Vajpayee when he was the Foreign Minister in 77-79 made a conscious effort to evolve a good neighbourhood policy. He is the one who encouraged me to follow this policy when I took my present assignment. We are lucky today that we have Mr. Gujral amidst us. It was in 1996 in a Chatham House speech that we heard of the famous Gujral Doctrine. India remains committed to the good neighbourhood policy of Mr. Vajpayee. India remains committed to the Gujral Doctrine and today, I would like to say that we are prepared to move further ahead also in the direction of peace, friendship and prosperity with all our neighbours.

I am going to make some suggestions today which I hope SACEPS will take notice of. SAARC was created in 1985 if I am not mistaken. Under the leadership of people like Trilok Singhji, we have been discussing this for over two decades. But unfortunately, we have not been able to make progress under SAARC, the kind of progress which was perhaps necessary, desirable, even inevitable.

Now, when we think of the future, we perhaps have to forget the past. If you want to pick anything from the past, it is perhaps the mistakes that we have made and how we can avoid making those mistakes in future. I am extremely disappointed that after having come formally into existence 17 years ago, SAARC has not been able to move or make progress with regard to its primary objective of economic cooperation between the members of SAARC. With Pakistan, we have a list of only 18 items where we give each other preferential tariff. Just 18 items out of over 7000 tariff lines. With Bangladesh, we have 2672 items where India gives preferential tariff to Bangladesh and we have 484 items where we get preferential tariff from Bangladesh. And as we all know, this is not good enough.
So what should we do? My specific suggestions are India is ready to enter into a free trade arrangement in SAARC, in South Asia tomorrow. I am aware of what happened in Kathmandu at the end of December when we all met to discuss the framework arrangement for a free trade area. Let us make the preferential tariff arrangement irrelevant. There is no point in discussing SAPTA which we have gone on discussing without making any progress. Let us look in concrete terms at a free trade arrangement in South Asia. And, as I said, we will be more than willing to do it tomorrow.

There is a consultant who is going to advice on this matter. The report will be available some time in March. I think there are too many reports and too many Committees which have gone into this in the past. What we need is not another consultant’s report. What we need is political will to be able to move forward. And I am trying to demonstrate that political will on behalf of the Government of India here. We are for a free trade arrangement.

Now there can be two approaches to this: one is the ‘positive’ list approach and the other is the ‘negative’ list approach. I am suggesting the negative list approach. We will not tell each other these are the items or these are the tariff lines where we shall give you a free trade arrangement or a preferential tariff arrangement. I am advocating a ‘negative’ list approach where we shall cover all items except those items where we have reasons to worry about the injury aspects of the domestic industry. If there are any such items, then let us sit down and exchange details of those items on the negative list. I think discussions should be about the negative list. We could look at it as carefully as possible in as I said, a spirit of friendship and accommodation. We should try and keep the negative list as limited as possible. Even within the negative list, we could think in terms of the ‘tariff rate quota’ which is a term well understood in WTO. We can only have so much imports and not anymore until we are able to move forward and remove the ‘tariff rate quotas’. Along with a free trade arrangement for goods and merchandise, we should also have free flow of investment and services within the SAARC area. We cannot have a full-fledged free trade arrangement without free flow of investment and free flow of services. We are making that offer. We are prepared to enter into an arrangement where services and investments will be allowed to move freely. We also need to work carefully on the concept of ‘value added’. We are prepared. On behalf of India, let me tell you that we are prepared to work at a reasonable level of ‘value added’ which will be
uniform for all countries in South Asia. The next step will be the harmonization of tariffs where we could sit down. It is going to take time. It cannot happen overnight but harmonization of tariffs is an essential aspect of a free trade area so that we don’t create disadvantages for each other through a discriminatory tariff regime for imports from third countries from outside the free trade area.

You have already suggested that we work together in the World Trade Organization. This is very important if we are knit together as a trading bloc. Then, we should have a commonality of approach to international trade issues and let us work seriously. I share your optimism that when the Trade Ministers meet during the course of this month, they will be able to evolve a common position for the Cancun meeting in Mexico. I am also suggesting that we move forward from SAARC and think of a South Asian Union. If Africa can think in terms of a Union, if the Economic Community in Europe could become an European Union, if ASEAN could make progress, if the countries in Latin America could make progress, there is no reason why we in South Asia cannot become a Union of South Asian states. So, I am putting this idea on table. We will be interested in negotiating a new agreement which will create a South Asian Union and in course of time, the South Asian Union - the SAU will not merely be an economic entity. It will acquire a political dimension in the same manner which the European Union has come to acquire a political and strategic dimension. That is the direction in which I suggest we move. I am not suggesting an end to SAARC but an upgradation of SAARC into a South Asian Union.

All this, as I said, could become possible if were to give up, suspecting each other’s intentions all the time. When I was in Dhaka, I noticed a feeling with regard to the natural gas which Bangladesh has. There is a view that India wants to exploit Bangladesh by asking for that gas. Now, I am referring to it because it appeared to me as an outstanding example of misunderstanding. What is the situation today? We are discovering gas within our own territory. We have offers of gas from the Gulf and from Central Asia. The Indian market will not remain static. There is a dynamics to market forces. Therefore, if we establish trade in gas, it need not necessarily mean exploitation. It will be exploitation of natural resources and not exploitation of one country by another. When I was in Dhaka and when I was meeting with Editors, someone pointed out to me how we could even think in terms of importing Bangladesh gas and sending it back in cylinders to them. Gas is not merely cooking gas as we all know,
and it is not merely packaged in cylinders. It has large industrial use and this was envisaged as a major area of cooperation. Something has held it up.

The final point which I would like to make in all humility is the second point of the Gujral Doctrine. We have to be aware and sensitive to each other’s security concerns. We have to be sensitive to the security concerns of South Asia as a whole. But within the overall approach to the security concerns of South Asia, we have to be aware and sensitive to the security concerns of each other. Quite clearly, this is one of the least of friendly things that one would expect. Bangladesh will expect that from India. India will expect that from Bangladesh, and similarly from all our neighbours. And it is quite clear that if those security concerns become overpowering, then many other areas of cooperation are lost sight of temporarily or in the long run. So, sensitivity to each other’s security concerns is an issue which we have to keep in mind.

We must promote people to people contact. But once trade starts moving in the manner in which I am envisaging, then people to people contact will become easier. Connectivity is an extremely important aspect of trade exchanges. You cannot have trade flourishing between nations if there is no connectivity. Therefore, the land route, the sea route, the air route, telecommunications, all these are aspects of connectivity which have to be looked at. On behalf of India, let me tell you that whatever strengths we have built over the years in terms of technology, in terms of human resource development and in terms of capacities, we are prepared to put at the disposal of our neighbours in South Asia. Whatever we have, can be yours, just for asking.

I am quite sure that if we take this road and I am talking of the whole of South Asia. I am not making any distinction between the countries of South Asia. If we take this road, I am quite sure, the misunderstandings of the past will automatically vanish and it will be possible for us to move ahead on the road to prosperity and a good quality of life for our people.

Thank you very much.
069. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the postponement of the second SAARC Communication Ministers’ Conference.


Pakistan has announced postponement of the Second SAARC Communication Ministers Conference on 1st March 2003, and blamed India for the postponement. The Conference was to be held on 7th and 8th March 2003.

The postponement was announced on a Saturday, a week-end in India, when offices are normally closed.

Prior to this postponement, the participation of India was under the consideration of the Government of India as part of the normal process for deputation of ministers and officials to travel abroad. Pakistan has pre-empted and announced a postponement. They did the same for the summit, announcing a postponement a month before the event. It obviously serves their narrow political interest to make these moves and blame India for them. We understand that there were other SAARC members who had expressed their inability to send a ministerial level delegation to this Conference.

India strongly denies that it is causing any obstructions in the SAARC process. India’s commitment to the SAARC process is well known. It is Pakistan’s commitment that has always been in doubt1.

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1. On March 4 the Official Spokesperson answering questions at a Press briefing was asked what would he consider a reasonable time limit for India to confirm participation in the SAARC Communication Ministers’ conference, and he answered:

“There is certain reasonableness in these interactions and communications, which doesn’t have to be defined. But we still have almost a week before the event was to take place when you take it from the date of the announcement of the postponement which was on a Saturday. Certainly in this case we know that our processes were underway which are required to be gone through whenever a Minister or officials have to travel abroad and before these processes could be completed the entire issue was pre-empted by the announcement of the postponement.”

When asked whether the conference was to be preceded by officials meeting, the Spokesperson replied: “Yes it was to be preceded by a one-day official level discussion on 6th March. The entire process was still underway. That’s how delegations are defined and approvals taken before travel abroad.” Answering another question whether India was in principle ready to attend the conference he said: “Well, when I say that the entire process was underway it was clear that there was an intention to go. But the entire process has been short-circuited by the announcement of this postponement.”
070. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting of the Consultative Committee of Parliament attached to the Ministry of External Affairs on South Asia.

New Delhi, August 11, 2003.

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen

Inter session meeting of the Consultative Committee on External Affairs Ministry was held today. The External Affairs Minister briefed the meeting on India’s relations with South Asia and the extended neighborhood, which includes Myanmar and Afghanistan. On Pakistan, he mentioned the follow up of the Prime Minister’s initiative, the people to people exchanges and step-by-step movement. On Bangladesh, the External Affairs Minister referred to the recently held Joint Economic Commission meeting and the necessity to have these meetings at regular intervals despite the fact that this meeting was held after some time. He briefed the committee on the excellent relations with Sri Lanka and informed them of the Joint Commission which is being held sometime next week for which the External Affairs Minister is going to Colombo. On Nepal, EAM expressed the hope that the dialogue will succeed and peace would prevail. On Myanmar EAM mentioned that the relations were progressing well and India has a number of economic projects in Myanmar. He mentioned that Myanmar’s Foreign Minister had come twice to India this year in January and then in July. The visit in July was as an Special Envoy. Our policy remains that national reconciliation should be carried forward as should the movement towards democracy. We have called for the early release of Aung Sang Sui Kyi, who has been recognized by the world as a leader of the democratic movement and our concerns have been made known without interfering in the internal affairs of Myanmar. Our belief was also reiterated that democracy should be home grown and not imposed or encouraged from outside. On Afghanistan, EAM mentioned that there is enormous goodwill for India in Afghanistan. The preferential trade arrangement and the reconstruction efforts which we have made have improved our standing. There is continuing insecurity in the Pashtoon belt and that is a matter of concern. EAM also mentioned in general terms the concept of the South Asian Union and that is the general direction in which we would like to take our relations with our neighbors, not just within SAARC but also in the extended neighborhood, which includes Afghanistan and Myanmar. Another point mentioned on Bangladesh particularly in the context of people to people relations was
that half a million visas are issued in Bangladesh every year and amongst the projects taken up between the two countries of particular importance are those that favor people to people exchanges in the field of transportation and tourism. These are the details of this mornings meeting.

**Question:** This South Asian Union, you said that Afghanistan and Myanmar are included.....

**Answer:** This is the general direction of the improvement of relations and we are talking in very general terms about the improvement of relations amongst neighbors and close economic integration. When we talk about economic integration there is an area beyond SAARC. With Myanmar we are making close economic linkages. With Afghanistan, as you are well aware, there are several important economic projects.

**Question:** Basically you are talking about close economic linkages?

**Answer:** Correct.

071. **Keynote address by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha on Inauguration of the South Asia Forum.**

**New Delhi, September 5, 2003.**

Shri Eduardo Faleiro, Chairman, South Asia Forum,

Friends,

1. Permit me to begin by expressing happiness over the creation of this Forum. The Forum is a welcome initiative and I am particularly glad that it has adopted as its frame of reference the whole of South Asia and not just one or two of its constituent units. I am honoured to be invited to inaugurate this Forum and I would like to use this occasion to call upon its members to marshall the best talents we have in our Parliament and civil society in the cause of greater regional cooperation and interaction within South Asia.

2. Despite centuries of rivalry and warfare, countries of Europe have submerged differences and reconciled with their past. They now live as good neighbours and cooperate with each other. Similarly,
the nations of South-East Asia have overcome tremendous hurdles and created a regional grouping which is the envy of the rest of us. If South Asia remains an exception to this trend, the losers will be none other than the people of this region – the great multitude of around 1.3 billion, who continue to be deprived of the benefits that could have accrued through increased trade, economic ties, investments and cultural exchanges etc.

3. My simple message to all of you gathered here today and through you, to the people of our region, is therefore – ‘Let the simple logic of mutual economic benefit triumph over politics’. Friends, let us think big. Let us act and let us act today. Let us act now, for the costs of continued inaction is too large.

4. In a public address in Delhi early this year, I called for movement towards a South Asian Union. I pointed out that if Europe and Africa can think in terms of a Union, if ASEAN and Latin America can make progress in this direction, there is no reason why South Asia should be left behind. Let me use this occasion to renew that call and to outline my vision for the future.

5. I believe that a South Asia with one currency, one tariff regime and free movement of goods, services and people is well within the realm of possibility. South Asia should emerge as a region with comprehensive transport linkages by air, rail, road and sea. It must become a region where pluralism, tolerance, democracy and human rights flourish. I believe that movement in the above direction will inevitably lead to softer national boundaries and eventually, South Asia can and will become a single economic area or one system/one market/seven countries.

6. Friends, there have been some who have wondered if the proposal for a South Asian Union is aimed at bypassing SAARC. Let me assert and clarify that India’s commitment to the SAARC process remains undiluted and undiminished in any manner. In fact, the idea of creating a South Asian Economic Union on the lines of the European Union was formally proposed by a Group of Eminent Persons appointed by the SAARC Summit of 1997 to draw up a vision for SAARC beyond the year 2000. This Group proposed a step-by-step approach to create a South Asian Free Trade Area which should be fully operational by 2010, a South Asian Customs Union by 2015 and ultimately, a South Asian Economic Union by 2020.
7. The Group envisaged, among other things, the creation of a single market; harmonization of macro-economic policies, particularly exchange and interest rates; common norms for fiscal discipline; a single monetary system, including a common currency; pooling of resources for investment in science and technology etc. Given the far-reaching implications of moving towards a South Asian Economic Union, the Group of Eminent Persons also suggested that Governments, the academic community and the civil society should initiate research and discussion at the national and regional levels on various aspects of this proposal. India has called on SAARC to initiate action to achieve this goal and as a first step, we have been pushing for the early creation of a free trade area in South Asia through SAFTA. I hope my public advocacy of the cause of South Asian Union will also contribute to greater interest in this regard and that the South Asia Forum will join me in advancing this goal.

8. Friends, according to some estimates, intra-regional trade between ASEAN countries is over 40 per cent of its total trade. The European Union too trades over 65 per cent within itself. Intra-SAARC trade at the same time is a disappointing 4% or 5% of the total trade of the region. The volume of unofficial trade exchanges and of trade through third countries is at the same time estimated to be several times the official exchanges. Sadly, while Europe has moved from a multiple to a single currency regime, South Asia has moved in the opposite direction from one currency to multiple currencies.

9. Countries of South Asia have the advantages of geographical contiguity; shared economic, social and cultural characteristics; an inherited development infrastructure and a huge potential market. There is also today increasing convergence in economic policy regimes with all countries embarking upon the path of economic liberalization and evolving a common approach to global issues.

10. There is much that countries of South Asia can achieve together. Our representatives coordinate successfully and productively in international fora including the WTO, and on discussions in UN fora on issues of poverty alleviation, access to better healthcare, ensuring education for all, and solutions to problems of environmental degradation. The time is now opportune for us to take a major step forward in the direction of greater economic integration.

11. The most important objective that India seeks to achieve in the
next decade or so is to provide our people with a better quality of life through all round prosperity. This objective would naturally benefit from peaceful and cooperative relations in the region and the rest of the world. My intention is not in any way to wish away or to underplay the differences that exist among us. But, I am convinced that exploiting the potential for economic cooperation will increase the political space to deal with our differences.

12. India, ladies and gentlemen, is proud of her achievements and confident of the future. At the same time, we are also clear that if we want to secure this future, our neighbours must become full partners in this endeavour and make equal if not more economic progress. We wish to celebrate together as we purposefully move forward. India therefore invites its SAARC neighbours to tap India’s economic strength for their own benefit. Our country offers a market of over a billion people, with more than three hundred million middle class with growing purchasing power. Regional integration is one of the most effective means of meeting the challenges of globalization and harnessing emerging opportunities for the benefit of member states. Enhanced regional cooperation, including regional integration is thus imperative and unavoidable if South Asian countries are to strengthen their positions, individually and as a group.

13. Bilateral trade between India and other SAARC countries has not been to the disadvantage of other SAARC countries nor has it been to the sole advantage of India. For example, there has been a remarkable increase in the level of trade with Sri Lanka following the operationalization of the Free Trade Agreement in 2001. In 2002 alone, exports of Sri Lanka to India grew by around 137%. Consequently, we have now created a Joint Study Group which is studying how to take us into the next generation of economic partnership with a focus on trade, services and investments in each other’s countries. Many of you would have also noted that in a recent speech at Chennai, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister called for the development of the South India – Sri Lanka sub region as a single market. Bangladesh and India have also agreed to commence negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement very soon.

14. Friends, cooperation in South Asia should not be confined to joint economic and trade relations, but should also extend to other areas. Today, smuggling substitutes for normal trade and business
interaction. Illegal immigration substitutes for the legal movement of people. This situation must change. There is need for joint efforts against terrorism, drug trafficking, money-laundering, smuggling and other trans-national crimes. South Asian countries must address problems such as cross-border infiltration and illegal immigration with seriousness and determination. It is tragic that instead of opening our borders, we are being forced to erect barbed wire fences.

15. Nations can change friends but they cannot change geography. The need to strive for good neighbourliness and friendship amongst countries of South Asia is a reality that none of us can escape. Our national interests are inescapably intertwined with each other. Any effort to advance the interests of one country at the expense of the other will only prove to be futile and self defeating. India’s approach to its SAARC neighbours has been and will continue to be based on the philosophy of Vasudeiva Kutubakam. We approach our neighbours in a spirit of fraternity. We will always be willing to give much more than we receive. We will continue to extend our hands in friendship even in the face of repeated rebuffs from our interlocutors.

16. It is, however, my fervent wish that our neighbours will also realize that there is little India can do about its size and its strength. India has no desire or intention other than to live in peace and friendship with its neighbours. Any apprehension to the contrary is entirely without basis. To hold India’s size and strength against us is meaningless and futile. There is need for a mindset change in this regard. It should also be recognized that attempts to nibble at India or to undermine her security are doomed to fail. Sooner such efforts are given up, the better it will be for the whole of South Asia.

17. Friends, a good neighbourhood policy was initiated towards South Asia by Prime Minister Vajpayee when he was Foreign Minister in 1977-79. India is today prepared to move even further ahead. We are willing to go to any length in the search for peace and friendship with all our neighbours. All we ask in return is that our neighbours be sensitive to our security concerns and take no action that undermines our security. It is in the collective interest of the people of South Asia that the Governments of the region work to strengthen each other’s security rather than undermine it.
18. India is willing to move forward rapidly with a South Asia strategy that has as its primary focus the economic integration of the subcontinent. We would like to create in collaboration with our neighbours South Asia a growth alliance which will be a compact for an affluent sub-continent. By fragmenting our markets in the past, we have become poorer. By integrating our markets, we can all prosper together. Let us trade together for peace and prosperity.

19. Ladies and Gentlemen, in recent days we have seen many human stories that have touched our hearts. Baby Noor and recent exchange of Parliamentary as well as media delegations with Pakistan are symbols of what is possible and what should be the situation in our mutual relationships in this region. We need to have such exchanges many times over and not just with Pakistan but with all countries of South Asia. There is an overwhelming desire for peace at the level of ordinary people of the region. The peace constituencies have to grow and we need to convince all concerned that policies of confrontation are out of sync with the general mood in the region.

20. I would like to conclude by offering my best wishes to the South Asia Forum and assuring the Forum of the wholehearted support of my Ministry in its efforts. Let SAF emerge as a strong lobby for friendship and cooperation. I congratulate Mr. Faleiro for having taken the lead in this regard. His abiding interest in foreign affairs and in India’s relations with South Asia is well known. He has brought together an array of luminaries to form part of the Forum and I am certain that it will contribute in a significant way to greater cooperation and people to people contacts within the region.

21. I hereby formally inaugurate the Forum and wish it all the very best.

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072. Inaugural speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the 3rd SAARC Information Ministers’ Conference.

New Delhi, November 11, 2003.

“It is a great pleasure to be here with you. As our Information & Broadcasting Minister has just said, I have somewhat delayed my departure for my tour abroad to share some thoughts with you on this important occasion.

Meetings of SAARC forums are welcome opportunities for exchange of views and perspectives among various strata of our societies, contributing to greater mutual awareness and better understanding. A Conference of Information Ministers is particularly valuable, since they frame our national policies on dissemination of news, views and perceptions through our mass media.

I have recently returned from an India-ASEAN Summit meeting in Bali, where we took many momentous decisions about closer integration between India and ASEAN. We concluded a framework agreement on comprehensive economic cooperation – including free trade – barely a year after commencement of negotiations. We advanced towards an open skies policy for passenger traffic and for cargo services. We also discussed some significant sub-regional cooperation initiatives for BIMSTEC and the Mekong Ganga Initiative. Later this month, we will host an India-European Union Summit in Delhi, where similarly many new proposals for economic cooperation are on the anvil. In Moscow this week, I will also be discussing the multi-modal North-South transport corridor linking India, Iran and Central Asia with Russia.

I am mentioning all this, because such experiences in regional and sub-regional cooperation hold a lesson for SAARC.

Since its inception in 1985, SAARC has been struggling to emerge from the concept to the practical reality of close regional cooperation. The concept is to harness our abundant natural resources, our talented human energies and our industrial synergies to accelerate growth and development in our countries. We are yet to achieve this.

Post Cold War alignments and the technology revolution, have set in motion trends which we can ignore only at our peril. ASEAN is, of course, an old example of the triumph of economic organization over political differences. We can also see how post Cold War Europe has forgotten its
former political divisions and accepted differential economic development, while expanding the European Union. Innovative regional and sub-regional arrangements are being launched in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean region – including countries, which have a history of bitter hostility towards each other.

This is a dominant trend in today’s globalising world. It is time that we recognize what it means for all of us in South Asia. If SAARC cannot organize itself, it will simply miss the boat. Other alignments will develop, to seize the economic opportunities offered by closer integration. We cannot forever be challenging logic and mocking economics.

I would like to take this opportunity to re-affirm that India is fully committed to the effort to build on our commonalities and shared aspirations for equitable development. I often hear the argument that our unequal physical sizes and economic strengths inhibit equal cooperation. I believe these very factors can be turned to mutual economic advantage by creating inter-linkages, which can enhance confidence and trust. The collective size of our markets creates economies of scale with obvious impact on costs of production and competitiveness.

We invite all our SAARC neighbours to participate in India’s economy, rather than be apprehensive about it. We have repeatedly expressed our willingness to enter into preferential trading arrangements and free trade agreements within the SAARC framework. We are equally willing to do so with SAARC countries individually. With Nepal and Bhutan, we have had such special trading arrangements for decades. With Sri Lanka, we have gone a considerable distance down that road. We are making a beginning with Bangladesh also. As I said at the Kathmandu SAARC Summit, we are also willing to have special and differential treatment for the least developed SAARC countries.

All this has immediate relevance to Information Ministers, since the media today plays a crucial role in moulding opinions and shaping public attitudes. Technology changes have today led to an explosive expansion in media platforms – including newspapers and magazines, TV channels and radio stations, and the Internet. The mass media can no longer remain the monopoly of governments. Private initiative has permeated every sphere of media activity. There is a surge in the flow of information, education, entertainment and culture among the peoples of the world. At the same time, it has become economically viable to develop platforms for dissemination of programmes of special interest to specific communities.
This revolution in communications presents great opportunities to SAARC countries. We need to use the technologies, rather than try to suppress them. We should try to ensure that our populations have free access to all the media platforms in our region, so that they remain completely up-to-date, not only about major political events, but also economic, cultural and sociological trends in all our countries. In this way, the media can be a powerful force for information rather than propaganda, for education rather than prejudice, for awareness rather than misinformation. We can carry regular SAARC news programmes on national TV and radio channels. We should properly publicise and project SAARC activities within and outside the region. Information on developmental programmes and cultural events in individual SAARC countries should be aired in all the other countries of the region. This free flow of information, news, views and perspectives can do more for regional cooperation than any political exhortation. Since we are committed to SAARC, let us try this method.

For this Information Ministers’ Conference, you have a rich agenda. It includes the evolution of a SAARC-recognised Regional Media Forum, annual conferences of editors from SAARC countries, training facilities for media persons and a SAARC Media Development Fund. I hope you will also consider constructively India’s suggested guidelines on Trans-national Satellite Broadcasting in our region. I hope you will approach this agenda with the objective of genuinely strengthening all-round regional cooperation in information and media. To show India’s commitment to this process, we would be willing to offer—under our technical and economic assistance programme—12 seats to SAARC countries in training institutions for various media disciplines.

I will conclude by extending my best wishes for your discussions at this Conference. Your deliberations should open new windows of cooperation. There is an overwhelming desire for friendship and cooperation at the level of the people of our region. We, as politicians, should respond to this demand.”
073. Statement by Official Spokesperson regarding the acceptance by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee the invitation of Pakistan to attend the SAARC Summit.


Prime Minister Vajpayee in a letter to Prime Minister Jamali of Pakistan confirmed his participation at the SAARC Summit. This letter was delivered to Pakistan Foreign Office this morning. Prime Minister’s letter was in response to a letter of invitation of August 6 from Prime Minister Jamali.

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074. Press briefing by Foreign Secretary Shashank on the SAARC Summit.

New Delhi, December 27, 2003.

Spokesperson: Good Afternoon Ladies and Gentleman

Let me welcome you this afternoon to the curtain raiser briefing on the forthcoming SAARC summit. We are privileged to have the Foreign Secretary here. He is accompanied by Mr. S.S. Kapoor, Joint Secretary from the Ministry of Commerce and Mr. Arun Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs. After the FS’ address we will take questions from the press.

FS: Thank You, Navtej.

I thank you all for showing so much interest in this briefing on SAARC summit. As is usual for the Indian delegation to share its position with the journalists before we go for important meetings, I am happy to share our thoughts with you on the SAARC summit and what are our expectations.

Mr Kapoor, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce returned from Islamabad day before yesterday along with the Commerce Secretary.

1. The 12th SAARC Summit took place in Islamabad from January 4 to 6, 2004. For the Documents on the Summit please see pp. 477 – 554 of this editor’s publication “India’s Foreign Relation – 2004”.

They have been negotiating on the SAFTA agreement. We still have a few points, which are left to be discussed. They will be taken up now in the Standing Committee of the Foreign Secretaries and the Council of Ministers. We have persuaded Mr. Kapoor to join us so that we will be able to carry forward the dialogue process which was started at the level of the Commerce Secretaries.

Mr. Arun Singh is with us; he would be able to fill in on the host facilities and other arrangements which would be there in Pakistan because I presume that most of you would be travelling with us. I would be there before you but I think you will be there very soon after I reach there.

By and large I will say that after a long gap there is tremendous amount of anticipation that SAARC summit will produce at least one or two results. One is the Social Charter on which an agreement has already been reached and so it should be possible to sign the Social Charter. The second agreement we are finding progress on is the Free Trade Area agreement which essentially means that you move towards a Free Trade Area within a given time frame and from the positive list approach which was the hallmark of the Preferential Trade Arrangement you move to a negative list approach, that is sensitive items are put in a negative list and rest are gradually expanded and in between you build up some special features for the least developed countries of the region, so that all the countries can benefit with the arrangement. The details will be given by Mr. Kapoor.

I thought I would share with you that this is the importance of the SAFTA agreement and we have seen that some progress has been registered during the course of the negotiations. First, in the Kathmandu at the Expert level and then at the Committee of the Commerce Secretaries recently in Islamabad. Some angles have remained but I think Mr. Kapoor should be able to give an idea on these. We would also like to build up further because these declarations of SAARC will cover the concerns of the countries in the region; both concerns as well as the visions. We have a vision whereby the SAARC countries would be able to move forward in the same way as countries in other parts of Asia have been doing or countries in other regions like Europe and America are moving towards closer economic cooperation. This is our vision.

Some statements have been given by the Prime Minister some time ago expressing this vision for SAARC. On the other hand there are some ongoing concerns like cross border terrorism, on the activities of the Indian
insurgent groups and their training facilities etc in the neighbouring countries. In the context of curbing terrorism, as a commitment of the SAARC countries this will also form a part of the SAARC declaration, so we hope that there will be a strong message from the SAARC summit on this issue, where even the United Nations and most of the developed countries have also been sensitised ever since 9/11 and there are UNSC resolutions and there are various other bilateral arrangements which are being worked out on mutual legal assistance on criminal matters. I think here also we should be able to further strengthen whatever arrangements have been made in 1987 to curb terrorism. There have been negotiations going on an additional protocol on curbing terrorism. That will perhaps come up for discussion. There will be possibility of adding on to the declaration on this important issue of terrorism. Various reports will be submitted to the SAARC. There will be the Information Ministers’ report; the meeting took place recently, the report from the Health Ministers and similarly there would be also reports from the various SAARC regional centres, which operate in different countries in the SAARC region.

Generally this is the scenario for the SAARC summit. I would like Mr. Kapoor to add something more on SAFTA, which will fill in more details as we are expecting if we can sign the agreement this will be a major achievement of the SAARC summit.

Mr. Kapoor

Thank You Sir.

This SAFTA agreement has been under negotiations for a very long time. The COE (Committee of Experts) was set up by the virtue of mandate given by the Tenth SAARC summit held in 1988 and the Committee of Experts was mandated to complete the agreement by December 2001. First meeting of the committee took place in 1999 at the SAARC headquarters. Thereafter nothing much happened for three years and in 2002 there were three meetings. Again issues remained unresolved. During the current year there have been two more meetings, so in all the Committee has met for six times and it has made very good progress. Some issues remain outstanding.

Since all countries were keen that this agreement should be finalised during the summit is Islamabad, a special meeting of the committee of economic cooperation of SAARC was convened in Islamabad on 23rd and 24th December and as the Foreign Secretary mentioned the Commerce Secretary of India was there and I accompanied him. Further
progress has been made. Notwithstanding all these efforts, few issues remain and these issues in some way are the core of the agreement. In any free trade agreement, as Foreign Secretary mentioned, what happens is that you have a small negative list from the domestic sensitivity and the rest of the products are put on liberalization list, a time frame is agreed for free trade in terms of bringing the duties down to 0 to 5% and then things move on; of course there are number of other enabling provisions in the agreement.

In respect of the SAFTA treaty what has remained pending initially is most importantly is the issue of time frame; there is a demand from the least developing countries, primarily articulated by Bangladesh but others also are keen that the three developing countries of the SAARC should open up there markets for LDC products over a period of three years. We have not been able to reach an agreement on this. India doesn’t have any problem with that formulation but some discomfort is there. So at the last meeting of the Commerce Secretaries we had two sets of dates in mind - 3/5 years. We expect further discussion on this at the Foreign Secretaries meeting in Islamabad on 31st and 1st and if all goes well we should be able to reach some agreement on that, provided there is goodwill on all sides to conclude this agreement.

Then the matter of sensitive list: initially the demand was that the LDC product should be completely exempted from the sensitive list, which means there should be no sensitive list operating for the LDC exports. That was a difficult demand to accept because in any country you have some sensitive products from the domestic angle and you have to keep them out of the list at least in the beginning till you are comfortable with. With Sri Lanka we have a sensitive list, which is smaller for us, larger for Sri Lanka, but you have to have it. Every agreement has a sensitive list. Now we have negotiated this demand over time and we have come closer. We have agreed to provide some kind of derogation for the LDCs which means if India has a negative list of 500 items it could operate for the developing countries across the border in SAARC but for the Least Developed Countries in SAARC we could take into account there export interests and make that list shorter for them. Instead of 500 we could make it to 250 or 300, these numbers could be decided subsequently. That could be one way to accommodate their export interests because LDCs claim that they have a very narrow export base.

The second way could be to accommodate their interests by way of allowing them the so-called TRQ (Tariff Rate Quota). An example is
that between India and Sri Lanka you have this TRQ for tea. Tea is in the sensitive list of India but we allow tea to come from Sri Lanka up to a particular limit, in this case it is 15 million kilos at a preferential rate of duty of 7.5%. We are quiet prepared that the LDCs need not have the reciprocity principle in terms of having a negative list, there is going to be a ceiling of the list, the 10% of the total line. LDCs can have a longer list of their own because their domestic industry is weaker and they would like to protect this industry. I am glad that there was a good progress in the last meeting and now it is only a matter of formulating the language acceptable to all. In principle we are agreeable to something like this, we have the support of others also, and we believe this is something again which can be sorted out if goodwill is on all sides.

There is another issue which is relating to demand that there should be no anti dumping against the products of LDCs, anti dumping and counter vailing investigations. On that surely there is a problem because anti dumping action is taken against unfair trade practices and we cannot have a situation where you say there is no anti dumping. There is no such provision anywhere in any of the agreements and you have a national legislation which is supposed to be consistent with the WTO agreement on anti dumping and it is the right of the domestic firms also to complain if they feel that there is an anti dumping taking place, they approach the anti dumping authorities. We are prepared to concede, we meaning most of us especially the developing countries because the demand is on the developing countries. So we can provide certain dispensation, which will make it procedurally easy, less difficult for LDC exporters such as providing for consultation during the investigations, allowing price undertakings, which are instruments accepted elsewhere.

We are prepared to formalise it in the agreement itself. But on that there has been no agreement as such, and the discussions are still going on. There is no compromise beyond a point. As far as we are concerned, we have to take into account the interest of our own domestic stakeholders and our commitments in the WTO agreement, because we our action has to be in consistency with that. Same position holds good for the safeguards action which is an action taken with a view to avoid surge. When a surge happens you have to take an action on a temporary basis. On that also there is some language problem. We hope to sort it out at the next session of the standing committee. These are the main issues that are outstanding. Generally there is a feeling that South Asia needs to move on. Elsewhere the world is getting into blocks and we also know that we have also taken number of initiative in a last year and a half. So
there is a feeling around that we should do something about it and we are all hoping and expecting that something good will happen in this summit.

Thank You

**Question:** I want to ask whether any bilateral meeting between PM and his counterpart at SAARC summit have been fixed?

**FS:** No meeting has been fixed with Pakistan. We have received proposals from Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka for meetings and these are being worked out.

**Question:** Today the Defence Minister said that infiltration is going at the same rate like last year. What is the assessment of Foreign Office in this regard?

**FS:** This has been our feeling also that the cross border infiltration has not stopped. It had only slowed down, partly because of winter months and therefore the feeling was that we have to see it over a period of time and it should be also the dismantling of the infrastructure and training and other roots that need to be totally blocked.

**Question:** Does that mean that no substantial dialogue can take place?

**FS:** I would only say that no meeting has been fixed.

**Question:** Given the recent assassination attempts on General Musharraf, how safe is it for the Prime Minister to travel to Islamabad?

**FS:** I would request my colleague to give the information that he has received about the blast today.

**Question:** inaudible………………

**FS:** Naturally everybody has to be concerned about the safety of the leaders and SAARC summit is an important occasion. We also have a commitment to carry forward the SAARC process. President Musharraf has himself said that he is the target, not the other leaders and therefore there should be no threat to any other leader and they are making foolproof arrangements.

**Question:**…..inaudible

**FS:** They are making foolproof arrangements and so we are going on that basis that there should be foolproof arrangements and PM is a
respected leader in SAARC and Asia and therefore the Prime minister would go there and attend the SAARC summit.

**Question:** According to published reports, the talks held in Islamabad on December 23 and 24 were virtually stalled by Bangladesh. Could you please clarify?

**Mr. Kapoor:** Yes, as I said already on these issues there have been difficulties but our own assessment is that it is an ongoing process. Negotiations are very slow. We believe that these issues are not something which cannot be solved. There has to be accommodation on both sides and I must assure you that we have been very reasonable and very flexible and we have tried the best we could have in order to meet this objective.

**Question:** Are you satisfied with security arrangements in Islamabad?

**FS:** We’ll tell you when we come back about the level of satisfaction.

**Question:** There has been a draft circulated by Pakistan for SAARC summit, which contains only one para on resolution on terrorism as against five paras in the Kathmandu summit resolution. Don’t you think that it is ironic that the host country is not trying.....

**FS:** Well you know all countries of SAARC have joined the coalition against terrorism so that is the starting point. They are all members of the SAARC Convention on Terrorism of 1987. There are certain monitoring mechanisms which have been put in place by the UNSC, the committee on monitoring terrorism and under UNSC resolution 1373 periodic reports are required to be submitted. So that is going on. All the SAARC countries have been giving the reports. They are being monitored and wherever there are weaknesses they are pointed out and then more details are sought. It always happens that whenever a draft is submitted its only a draft, and then as all the members countries come together they put their ideas and ultimately a document emerges which is the consensus document and what you are referring to previous documents are the consensus documents and this one is a draft. Naturally, they will have to go through this cycle of negotiations. The basic point is that all of them are committed to it and its a drafting exercise. I am sure we should be able to take care of that part.

**Question:** In the last meeting of experts on the protocol there was a difference between India and Pakistan even on the definition of terrorism.......
FS: Well that is a difference which has gone on for a long time. The Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism which has been sponsored by India and has been co-sponsored by a very large number of countries in the world in the UN General Assembly has not been able to make progress because of the issue of definitions. We feel that there might be a particular issue that is in reference to Palestine, which can be attempted for a different type of solution without really stopping progress on the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism. Same view has been taken by us even on the additional protocol that if there is an issue which is separate like Palestine, that need not block the progress and adopting an additional protocol which is really bringing together once again the obligations which are undertaken by the countries in the UN context or in the bilateral context they are setting it up with various other countries.

Question: The Prime Minister has said that he is willing to meet anyone at SAARC without hesitation. Why then are we so shy about saying that we are going to meet someone? Is it like “Pehle Aap Pehle Aap.”?

FS: I was very clear in my enunciation earlier that requests have been received from Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka and we are working on those meetings. No meeting has been fixed for Pakistan but obviously there would be occasions when the leaders would be together during the conference, during the retreat and along with other leaders also. So those occasions would be there.

Question: Do we have Indian security arrangements for PM in Islamabad or are we relying on Pakistan? You seem to imply that all countries in the region are complying with UNSCR 1373. Are we satisfied with Pakistan’s response on this?

FS: First issue: I would not respond to that because security aspects we have to take care but not discuss them. Second part: 1373, I did not say that we are satisfied. I only said that they are all complying in sending the monitoring reports and wherever there are deficiencies they are being pointed out and Indians have been pointing out these deficiencies in the Pakistani reports. But you wanted a specific answer so I have given it to you.

Question: Following the blast, did PM write a letter to Musharraf?

FS: The official spokesperson had made a statement and that takes care of the decision at the highest level.
Question: PM is going to Pakistan after two assassination attempts on President Musharraf in less than two weeks. Is there a message to Pakistan and the wider world in this?

FS: As I said earlier there is a commitment to the SAARC process which has to be carried forward. As you know the SAARC meeting is taking place after a certain gap and there is no doubt that the incidents of terrorism have increased within Pakistan itself because what was happening earlier in Middle East moved gradually to Afghanistan and now to Pakistan. Pakistan has become the epicentre for terrorism all over the world and it is suffering itself also. But that does not mean that security cannot be taken care of and President Musharraf has offered full security for the visiting leaders from SAARC.

Question: How important is President Musharraf as an individual to ongoing efforts to normalize relations between India and Pakistan?

FS: As you know we have made considerable progress in the technical level talks. Airlinks are due to start from January 1, Samjhauta Express from January 15, so the process is going on and it is making good progress. In the course of SAFTA negotiations, we have seen positive attitude on the part of Pakistani delegation as also we have seen certain sense of enthusiasm for making success of the SAARC summit, partly, as I have mentioned that he has offered full security to all the visiting leaders and visiting delegations for the SAARC.

Question: There are so many places of historical importance in Pakistan, which Indians want to visit. Are we doing something to make them more accessible to Indians?

Mr. Arun Singh: There is already a bilateral protocol between the two countries which regulates the movement of pilgrims from both sides. So, at the moment the aim is to implement that protocol.

Question: Is PM going to make a customary call on President Musharraf or the Prime Minister (Jamali) as is the protocol for SAARC?

FS: Whatever programmes have been developed for the SAARC summit would be followed and I presume that as per the programme that we have seen so far there is a dinner engagement to be hosted by President Musharraf.

Question: A small clarification, you have said that you have received
requests for meetings from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka but not from Pakistan. What if you receive it in another hour or so?

**FS:** As regards Pakistan I have already said that no meeting has been fixed. You can draw your own conclusions on that.

**Question:** India has been doing fencing along LoC for past some time. At the same time Pakistan also announced ceasefire along the LoC. Is that an indication to make LoC as the International border which was the unwritten understanding of the Simla Agreement.

**FS:** Everyone knows about the Simla Agreement. As for any unwritten part of the agreement, I am not aware of that. But if the composite dialogue is to begin, it has to be carried on the basis of Simla Agreement and Lahore process.

**Question:** P.N. Dhar, the secretary of the Ex-PM, has mentioned in his book about this unwritten part of the Shimla Agreement between Bhutto and Indira Gandhi.

**FS:** I am not aware of any such unwritten or unsaid agreement. I am only aware of some of the interviews published in Pakistan - Bhutto had said that he had come with a very good agreement for a losing nation which even defeated Europeans were not able to get. As far as fencing on the LoC is concerned, that is an operational requirement. India's position on the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir being part of India remains.

**Question:** Will India be making an example of Bhutan's action and will it be trying to make it a part of SAARC draft declaration?

**FS:** Definitely it will form part of the discussions and if there is a consensus we can include it in the portions relating to activities against terrorists.

**Question:** You have just referred to composite dialogue. What is the likelihood of it taking off at the SAARC summit? What is the possibility of India making LoC a soft border?

**FS:** As far as composite dialogue is concerned the government has said very clearly that we need to have assessment on a longer term basis of the process of stopping of cross border infiltration and the real action against the infrastructure of the terrorists. So that will lead to the composite dialogue to be started and that will be done at the right time. In the meantime as you know progress has been made on the technical negotiations and that is going on.
We already have some proposals on the table. We have proposed the bus link between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad.

**Question:** Are you implying that once the bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad starts, it will make LoC a soft border?

**FS:** What I mean is that we are trying to encourage people-to-people contacts. That is the exercise which is going on at the technical level. We are encouraging air links, bus links, steamer links, train links in different parts. That process is going on right now.

**Question:** Do you think that India–Pakistan issues would derail the agenda of SAARC summit - a multilateral summit?

**FS:** Very rightly so. That is why we are going to concentrate on the SAARC Summit, on the agenda of the Summit and in making the Summit a success.

**Question:** And not distracted by India and Pakistan issues......

**FS:** All these issues are there. The leaders are meeting. They will be exchanging views. I am not saying that they will not be meeting in retreat and on various social occasions which will be there. But the point is that emphasis of everyone is on SAARC. That is the important objective that we must all come together and what other regions, like some regions of Asia, have been able to achieve, we should also be able to achieve and make progress on the economic cooperation.

**Question:** You have said that no meeting has been fixed (between India and Pakistan). Was any meeting sought by either side?

**FS:** I can only repeat once again that no meeting has been fixed.

**Question:** Any meeting at Foreign Ministers’ level?

**FS:** No meeting means no meeting.

**Question:** Under 1997 agreement of Foreign Secretary’s J & K and security issues......(inaudible). Do you think it is time to discuss these issues?

**FS:** As I said Pakistan is a member of coalition against terrorism. India has already offered several times that if they are not able to take care of the terrorists coming across to the Indian side, India would be willing to
cooperate with them. Our Foreign Minister has made that offer several times.

**Question:** Do you think bilateral mechanisms are necessary at this stage?

**FS:** We will wait for a response from the Pakistani side. The offer has been made.

**Question:** Without the resolution of intractable problems between India and Pakistan, do you think there can be progress on regional trade issues? My second question is to Mr. Kapoor: Was there any discussion on Rules of Origin issue?

**Mr. Kapoor:** No, our sense is that on the trade issues there has been a very significant movement in the last one-year or so between India and Pakistan because you focus your attention on that aspect. As you would have heard in the fourth round of SAFTA there is preferential trading arrangement. That has been a very meaningful exchange. In the third round of SAFTA, which was concluded in 1999, the exchange of concessions between India and Pakistan was limited precisely to 18 tariff lines each. It was nothing but tokenism, but in the fourth round which was concluded earlier this month in Kathmandu the exchange has been expanded to 485 lines - 262 from our sides and 223 from their side. This by itself is significant and our sense is that Pakistan is also equally keen to conclude SAFTA. Elsewhere the world is moving and I think everyone is watching us. We feel that SAFTA should be something which can lead to better trade between us.

On the Rules of Origin, yes, there has been some discussion, in fact India proposed Rules of Origin as we were asked to do so by the committee. But because we have not been able to conclude our discussions, this is one of the issues like the discussion on the sensitive product coverage list that will be carried out. After the signing we need about a year/year-and-half to conclude those discussions. It is for this reason that we have agreed that if the SAFTA is signed at the summit then it will become operational from 1.1.2006. So that’s how we stand.

**Question:** You have said that no bilateral meeting has been fixed with Pakistan. If you are meeting Bangladesh, why has India not taken initiative with Pakistan? Why shy away from meeting bilaterally? Is there lack of confidence? What is the point stopping you?
Our positions are already very clear on the ground and we are going in for the SAARC summit. So, as far as we are concerned our main focus is on the SAARC summit. Of course if some leaders have expressed interest in meeting Prime Minister for some issues, we are working out those meetings. As far as other occasions when there would be interactions with the other leaders, I have already said that yes with the Pakistan Prime Minister and also other leaders there will be occasions at various functions.

Why shy away? Why cannot India take initiative?

I am saying that we have already taken very far-reaching initiatives, so we are waiting for the response. On the issue relating to cross border terrorism as we become more assured over a longer period, we should be able to move forward on the composite dialogue.

Do you think you are optimistic about Pakistan on SAFTA? Are some LDCs acting on behest of others? What is your reading of Bangladesh?

I don’t think I should be commenting on that. I can say on the basis of my experience of negotiations - I have been leading the delegation of India in the COE - on most issues we have had common stand and we feel that they are keen to finalise this. As regards the issue of whether some LDCs are acting at their behest, I think it is only speculation. I don’t think it is true. I don’t think that we can come to that kind of conclusion.

You have said that Pakistan is equally keen to implement SAFTA and it will come into effect on 1.1.2006. Will India–Pakistan trade start before that? Will Pakistan grant MFN status?

Trade is already there, only restricted in the sense that Pakistan doesn’t give us MFN and maintains a list of products which can be freely imported from India. That goes on. On the MFN there has not been much movement. We believe that once SAFTA happens, MFN has to happen automatically even without declaring it formally. The whole approach is, as the Foreign Secretary said, a negative list approach. Only a small list of products will be kept in the list on which there will be no concessions.

Pakistan has also agreed lately that whatever items appeared on their banned lists for import from India would be immediately opened.
For example, there were 85 lines out of the 223 lines which were banned for imports. They will automatically get opened for free import.

**Question:** I have a question on Iran. Any reaction on earthquake, any condolence messages exchanged?

**FS:** Yes, messages of condolences have gone from the President and Prime Minister to their counterparts in Iran with the expression of their grief over the tragic incident and also offering our support and whatever help we can give by way of medicines, tents, blankets etc.

**Question:** If you could give some idea of agendas that would be discussed at FS and FM level talks?

**FS:** All these various documents, which are coming before, specially the Social Charter and the SAFTA drafts, will have to be looked at and spruced up. Wherever there are differences still outstanding we will have to work on those differences. The Foreign Secretaries will be assisted by the Expert Group. We hope Mr. Kapoor will be with us as also the Joint Secretary who deals with SAARC and who has been working on various SAARC documents will be with us. Then we will submit the report to Foreign Ministers and these documents will then go to get the approval of the Council of Ministers. At the same time the draft declaration of SAARC will have to examined and we will have to see how we can give it greater consensus and our concerns which are there can get full reflection in the document.

**Question:** India and Iran have been traditional allies. How do you react to the recently exposed Iran- Pakistan nuclear cooperation?

**Answer:** We have always been talking about the behaviour of Pakistan with reference to exchange of nuclear technology in return of missile technology from North Korea. Also, the Indian media had in the past commented on their offer to make their nuclear weapon as the Islamic weapon. All these issues have been there. What is going on right now is very specific, detailed probe by the inspectors of IAEA and by the various experts. Therefore, I have nothing more to say to that part because that is really IAEA related investigation, which is an ongoing process. I don’t think India has to comment on a process, which is still going on.

**Question:** What will be the highlights of the Social Charter?

**FS:** We can share the details with you because these have been negotiated already and there is complete agreement. We have already
requested for an additional chapter to be added or strengthening of the chapter on the health cooperation. As you know that India has made considerable progress in the field of pharmaceuticals, and on HIV/AIDS and anti-retroviral drugs. Indian companies are regarded as the best in the world and they are able to produce very competitive capsules or the cocktails, which have also been accepted by President Clinton for his own aid programme for the HIV/AIDS patients throughout the world. India is also making rapid progress in the development of the HIV vaccine. As you know the SAARC people have similar virus strains, therefore, once these vaccines are developed they will be of great advantage to the whole SAARC region. These are the various issues. Of course, there is question of removal of poverty. Most of the countries in SAARC region are doing much faster growth rates. Pakistan has also been able to have a foreign exchange reserve of $11 billion. We have a foreign exchange reserve of $100 billion. New possibilities have opened up. That has given rise to this vision. We can take advantage of what other countries have done in other parts of the world of removing poverty through a rapid economic growth process.

**Question:** You have indicated that SAFTA would most probably be signed in Islamabad. What impact will it have?

**FS:** Firstly, it is our hope that it will get signed. Secondly, it will definitely have a great impact because the road map has been developed sometime ago by the Eminent Persons Group. From the Indian side we had Prof. Muchkund Dubey as a member of the group. They have given this roadmap that how we can move towards a SAARC Economic Union. We can have before that a Customs Union, a Free Trade Area. We can have cooperation among the banking organisations and may be some kind of a common currency. All these are various elements of this road map. Once we have SAFTA in place, so it is not immediately that we can get the MFN treatment, that road map gets strengthened and then gradually you move towards MFN. That is the importance of SAFTA in this whole process.

**Spokesperson:** I thank the Foreign Secretary and our colleagues for spending so much time with us.

**Thank you.**

*(Text in italics is a translation from Hindi)*
(ii) COUNTRIES OF THE SAARC
Bangladesh

075. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the demarche made by the Ministry of External Affairs to the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi on the illegal entry of Bangladeshis into India.


An aide memoire was handed over to the Minister (Political, Information and Cultural) of the High Commission of Bangladesh Mr. Shahdat Hussain this morning conveying the Government of India’s concern over the illegal immigration of Bangladesh citizens running into millions into India. This is a concern, which has been conveyed several times and reiterated even during the last Joint Working Group meeting in Dhaka in the 3rd week of January 2003. It was conveyed that this issue needs to be recognised by Bangladesh and suitably addressed. Bangladesh Government needs to recognise the gravity of the situation and to address it in a pragmatic manner with sincerity and with a spirit of cooperation.

1. The occasion for the demarche was the sudden appearance of a group of 213 snake charmers across the Cooch Behar border wanting to enter into India without valid travel documents. The Border Security Force refused them entry since they were declared illegal Bangladeshi immigrants while the Bangladesh security force insisted they were Indians. When asked what efforts were being taken to sort out the present situation the Spokesperson Navtej Sarna said on February 5: “The efforts are that we have had a discussion with the Bangladesh High Commissioner, as you know day before yesterday. We have given the names and details of the people; we have given all the details available with us to them and urged that they should take them back as soon as possible on the agreed modalities. At the field level I understand there has been an offer to have a joint verification one by one of each of the persons. Unfortunately this was not agreed to by the BDR and the stranded Bangladesh citizens are saying that they have ration cards in the village in Purbari and they are asking people to go and verify them. As I had mentioned to you that some of them are offering their electricity bills and saying that these could be checked up with the Palli Vidhyut Samiti at which they are paying their bills. Evidently some of them have borrowed money and are giving the addresses of money lenders in the Purbari police station area and saying that these details can be verified from there. But as I said the joint verification by the BSF/BDR or by the press from both sides was not agreed to by Dhaka. Mr Sarna, when told that the Bangladesh High Commissioner had said to the Star News (T.V news channel) that they were Indian citizens, observed: “I have repeated our position on this several times that there is no question of pushing Indian citizens into Bangladesh. The people involved themselves are claiming that they are Bangladesh citizens and are offering their proof.” Please also see Document No. 76
Question: But Bangladesh Government has alleged India for pushing Indian citizen to Bangladesh?

Answer: There is no question of any Indian citizen being pushed back into Bangladesh. Any such allegation or any such implication of allegation to that end is baseless. It is absurd.

Question: You said that this has been taken up with Bangladesh in the past meetings. What is their response?

Answer: This has been taken up repeatedly at the highest level and at all levels. But what we need is a response, which recognises that this is a problem. This is not a problem which will simply vanish if we do not address it, this is not a problem which will cease to exist if we do not recognise it. So this needs to be recognised as a grave problem. This needs to be addressed in a spirit of cooperation. It needs to be addressed in a pragmatic manner and with sincerity to solve it as befits to the neighbouring countries.

Question: Was there any increase of inflow in recent times or it remains the same?

Answer: This is certainly a problem, which has been going on and on. There have been incidents in recent days and certainly this leads us to a point where you need to recognise this problem with all seriousness that it demands.

Question: How many of them are here approximately?

Answer: I don’t have any exact figure. But it does run into millions.
076. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the question of some illegal Bangladeshi immigrants trying to enter India.

New Delhi, February 3, 2003.

Question: How is Government trying to resolve diplomatically the issue of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants stranded at the border? Is it true that Bangladesh High Commissioner was summoned to MEA today?

Answer: If you are referring to the matter of 213 Bangladeshis, there was a meeting today between the High Commissioner of Bangladesh and Mrs. Meera Shankar, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. At this meeting the case was discussed. It was pointed out that this detention of the 213 Bangladesh citizens at the zero line is a humanitarian issue. There are number of children and women in the group. The fact that they are not getting humanitarian assistance is something which is causing a lot of problems. It was pointed out to the High Commissioner that the agreed modalities for accepting people back when they are detained when crossing the border, should be implemented.

As far as the agreed modalities are concerned, these were agreed upon in several meetings. The relevant modality for this purpose, I can read out to you, is that the persons apprehended in the process of inadvertent or deliberate crossing over of the border would be accepted immediately based on the disclosures made by them. However, when verification becomes necessary, the apprehended persons would be accepted within three days. These people have been there since the morning of January 31. Three flag meetings have been held between BSF and BDR and that has not resolved the situation.

Question: What is their exact status?

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1. The incident arose when on the night of January 31 the Indian Border Security Force discovered that there was a group of 213 snake charmers wanting to cross into India across the Cooch Behar sector of the India – Bangladesh border. The BSF sought to block the entry of these people by force if necessary since the Bangladesh Rifles insisted that these people were Indian and hence must return to India. In the grim situation that developed the two border-security forces confronted each other eyeball-to-eyeball. The statement of the Deputy Prime Minister L.K Advani after consultation with the Chief Minister of the State of West Bengal on February 5 did the trick. He said “illegal immigration cannot be accepted,” and that the Bangladeshis had “no right” of permanent residence in India. Suddenly in the darkness of the night of 5 – 6 February the snake charmers vanished in the thin air providing a providential solution to the problem.
**Answer:** Well, they are Bangladesh citizens, they have documentary proof. Several of them have electricity bills, etc. These are the details that I understand were discussed in the flag meetings.

**Question:** What is the response of the Bangladesh High Commissioner?

**Answer:** He said that he would get back to his Government.

**Question:** There are some reports that there is tension along the border. BSF seems to have warned people near the border that there could be some skirmishes. Can you confirm that?

**Answer:** Is there any specific incident that you are asking about?

**Question:** BSF seems to have told local people that there could be skirmishes?

**Answer:** The problem really is that illegal immigration must stop. I think everything else that you are reading about is arising out of that simple fact.

**Question:** But who are these people?

**Answer:** The details that we have is that they were coming from Bangladesh.

**Question:** What’s the status of these people now?

**Answer:** They are stranded on the zero line because they have to be accepted back into Bangladesh. I understand that the BDR is detaining them.

**Question:** Inaudible

**Answer:** I do not have a comment on that. I do know that there was a transit halt during which there was a meeting.

**Question:** Inaudible

**Answer:** They are not in custody. They are sitting on the zero line. They have to be accepted back and that is not being allowed.

**Question:** You said that it is becoming a humanitarian issue....

**Answer:** The extension of humanitarian assistance is being prevented.
**Question:** Where exactly is this place. The Place where they are detained now?

**Answer:** It is the zero line near BP No.867/8-S in the Coochbehar area.

**Question:** Why are they detained?

**Answer:** I think you should address that to the Bangladesh Government.

**Question:** You said humanitarian assistance is prevented.....

**Answer:** I said humanitarian assistance is not being allowed to be given to them. The fact is that these people came from Bangladesh, they were intercepted when crossing over the Indian border. Now the issue is that they have to be accepted back into Bangladesh. For that the two countries have got joint modalities which I have just read out to you. These are agreed modalities. They have been reiterated on several occasions, including in the third week of January this year in Dhaka at the Joint Working Group.

**Question:** Bangladesh is saying that India is pushing its citizen into Bangladesh?

**Answer:** The question of any Indian citizen being pushed into Bangladesh is baseless. It is an absurd allegation.

**Question:** But these people came from India?

**Answer:** No. These people are not Indian citizens.

**Question:** Inaudible

**Answer:** The Border Security Force has a mandate that it has to protect the sanctity of India’s borders. If there is any illegal immigration then the Border Security Force is duty bound to do what it is charged to do.

**Question:** Inaudible

**Answer:** I would not like to make sweeping statements on generalities.

**Question:** You said that humanitarian assistance is being prevented. Is India trying to provide and BDR is preventing? And secondly in case of disputed citizen what are the modalities?

**Answer:** As far as the first part of your question is concerned, they are on the zero line. If India is allowed to give them humanitarian assistance
they will be given humanitarian assistance but the fact is that they are at a point where they are in a way, detained by BDR. So they do not have access to humanitarian assistance. As far as the second point you asked, when verification become necessary the apprehended person would be accepted within three days.

**Question:** But in case of dispute how do you solve it?

**Answer:** It has to be sorted out by mutual discussions. That’s why you hold the flag meetings and you see the documentary proof.

**Question:** How are we saying that BDR is preventing to give humanitarian assistance? Is the BDR firing on the people who is trying to give assistance?

**Answer:** Let me clarify once again. The issue is that they are being detained by BDR and not accepted back into Bangladesh. It is becoming a humanitarian issue. The fact remains that if they are in need of humanitarian assistance they should be given humanitarian assistance. I have not heard of any firing on this issue.

**Question:** What is the solution now?

**Answer:** Well, they have to be accepted back into Bangladesh. If they are not accepted back then they would remain on the zero line.

**Question:** Bangladesh Govt. is saying that it …

**Answer:** As far as we are concerned it is not an issue. They came from Bangladesh, they have got documentary proof, they have produced a documentary proof like electricity bills and other documents showing their places of residence.

**Question:** But illegal immigrants generally carry like Indian ration card and why should they carry electricity bills from Bangladesh?

**Answer:** The question speaks for itself. I don’t see how illegal immigrants into India could have Indian ration cards given by Indian authorities.

**Question:** If Bangladesh refuses to accept them how are we going to solve it?

**Answer:** I am giving you the facts of the case and I don’t think it’s helpful to discuss speculative cases.

**Question:** Was Bangladesh High Commission summoned to MEA?
There was a meeting between the two officials in which an aide memoire was handed over to the High Commissioner essentially encompassing the points that I have made.

Were these people intercepted on the border on the Bangladesh side?

Yes on the morning of 31 January at 0745 hrs at this point.

Are these people only one group?

They are together so I presumably it is one group.

Could you repeat the point again?

It’s BP No. 867/8-S in the Coochbehar area. Let me give you one clarification this 8-S is where they are currently detained and where they were caught was 867/8-C.

If they are on the zero line how can you say that they are detained by BDR?

They are detained in the sense that they are not being accepted back into their own country.

But Bangladesh is saying that they have come from India?

No. I have reiterated that they have come from Bangladesh.

Inaudible

I can’t comment on how things happen in some other country.

Thank You.

On February 6 at the press briefing the Spokesperson was again queried about these people:

So the 213 Bangladeshi citizens have gone back to Bangladesh. Will there still be a visit (of the Bangladesh Foreign Minister)?

Yes, we are aware that the 213 Bangladeshi citizens who were stranded on the zero line have been able to return to Bangladesh....

Did this happen today morning?

I understand it happened early this morning.
Question: Is there any procedure for checking the nationality.....

Answer: Well, every country has a system by which nationality is defined and citizenship is defined. Where there are problems, then there are agreed modalities for verification.

Question: Why is BDR is denying that these 213 people have gone back to Bangladesh?

Answer: No, it is my understanding that they have all returned home in Bangladesh and not a single person has entered India.

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077. Joint statement issued at the end of the visit of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal to Dhaka.


The Foreign Secretary of India Mr. Kanwal Sibal visited Dhaka, Bangladesh from 28-30 April 2003 at the invitation of the Bangladesh Foreign Secretary, Mr. Shamsher M. Chowdhury, BB for Foreign Office consultations. During his stay in Dhaka the Foreign Secretary of India called on H.E. Begum Khaleda Zia, Hon’ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Mr. M. Saifur Rahman, MP, the Finance Minister, Mr. M. Morshed Khan, MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Mr. Reaz Rahman, State Minister for Foreign Affairs. While receiving the Indian Foreign Secretary, the Bangladesh leaders reaffirmed the importance attached by the people and the Government of Bangladesh to close ties with India. They stressed their keen desire and commitment to continue to work with India and to further strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries.

During the consultations, the Indian Foreign Secretary was accompanied by H.E. Mr. Manilal Tripathi, High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh, Ms. Neelam Deo, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs of India and other officials of the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the High Commission of India in Dhaka. The Bangladesh Foreign Secretary was assisted by the Bangladesh High Commissioner to India, H.E. Mr. Tufail Karim Haider, Mr. Liaquat Ali Chowdhury, Director General (South Asia) and representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Land. The two sides extensively discussed all issues of common
interest in a candid and frank manner covering the entire gamut of their bilateral relations and important regional issues including SAARC.

Issues relating to the completion of demarcation of the Indo-Bangladesh land boundary, exchange of enclaves and of territories in adverse possession, peaceful management of the borders, cross-border illegal movement of people and specific security concerns of both India and Bangladesh and the larger question of economic cooperation between the two countries were discussed by the two Foreign Secretaries.

It was agreed that the Joint Boundary Working Groups would be revived and would meet soon to work towards early resolution of border demarcation and related issues. It was also agreed to strengthen and fully implement the existing agreed procedures to stop cross border illegal movement of people.

In response to Indian concerns regarding the activities of Indian insurgent groups in Bangladesh, the Bangladesh side reaffirmed the commitment not to allow its territory to be used for any activities inimical to the interests of India.

On the economic side, it was agreed to hold the sixth meeting of the Joint Economic Commission, co-chaired by the respective Foreign Ministers, in July 2003, where all areas of economic interest to the two countries would be comprehensively discussed. The two sides discussed issues relating to enhancement of rail and road connectivity. They expressed the hope that the Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement and Agreement on Cooperation for preventing Illicit Trafficking in Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances, finalisation of which are at an advanced stage, will be signed soon marking a significant forward movement in the close relations between India and Bangladesh.

The Indian Foreign Secretary reiterated the importance of crafting innovative trading relationships such as a Free Trade Agreement in tune with global trends and which are working successfully in regional contexts.

The two Foreign Secretaries also welcomed the prospect of a visit by the Finance Minister of Bangladesh to India at a mutually agreed date in May 2003.

The Indian Foreign Secretary proposed cooperation in the IT sector through a project to provide Bangladesh with 650 computers for district schools and the training of 250 teachers in IT applications in India. He
also proposed the commissioning of a Joint Storm Surge Disaster Reduction Project which can benefit both India and Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Foreign Secretary thanked the Indian Foreign Secretary for the offer.

The Indian Foreign Secretary invited the Bangladesh Foreign Secretary to visit New Delhi early next year for the next Foreign Office consultations which was accepted with thanks. The meeting concluded with an expression of desire by both the Foreign Secretaries to carry on constructive engagement and discussions at all levels to further enrich Indo-Bangladesh relations.

1. On May 1 at a media briefing in New Delhi the Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Navtej Sarna answering a question whether the question of illegal entry of Bangladeshis into India was discussed, said: “Yes, certainly the entire issue of cross border illegal movement of people which we have been discussing with the Bangladeshi authorities in the past particularly in February when their Foreign Minister came here was also taken up.” On May 2 at the Parliamentary Consultative Committee meeting which essentially was devoted to discussing India – Africa relations, a question on Bangladesh was raised and Foreign Secretary replying had said: “When the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh visited here, all the important issues concerning the Indo-Bangladesh relations were discussed. It was decided that this would be followed up with another FS level meeting in a more detailed manner. This was the context of my visit. I was received quite well. I was received by PM, FM, MOS and of course I met my counterpart. The discussions were held very openly and without any inhibition at least from our side, namely, the issue of illegal migration, the issue of ISI activities, economic cooperation in the context of free trade agreement which we have proposed and the issue of transit. Many of these were raised by PM herself. I sensed a desire on the Bangladesh side to show greater sensitivity to our concern and the attitude of denial as if some of these problems simply do not exist. I tried to explain that these problems do exist......On the issue of illegal migrants, they of course contested our figures. There was a desire to limit the scope of the issue of movement across the border......We in 1992 had agreed with Bangladesh side, when the current PM visited India that there was a problem of large scale illegal migration and ...”
Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting of India-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission.


Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen

The sixth meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Economic commission has concluded in Dhaka, held on July 14-15, 2003 and during the visit the External Affairs Minister, who also led the Indian delegation to Dhaka also called on the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Begum Khaleda Zia as well as the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina. He also addressed a luncheon meeting hosted by the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Dhaka.

Some of the high points of the discussions - as you know the meeting was held after an interval of several years, the last one having been held in 1997. While noting the fact that substantial increase in trade and commerce had taken place between the two countries, the two sides resolved to address several other issues. They agreed to begin negotiations on a Bilateral Free Trade Agreement by the middle of October this year with a view to concluding it as early as possible. They also agreed to an early finalization of the Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement. The Indian side agreed to examine the request from the Bangladesh side for a fresh credit line for a few designated projects. This is to be a US dollar line of credit. It has been decided that the Dhaka – Agartala bus service will begin from the first week of August. The agreement for this was signed about two years back. The customs groups from both sides are to meet. Besides these developments, the other areas covered include education and culture, agriculture, para-tariff and non-tariff barriers, opening of new land customs stations, enhanced investment, science and technology, communications and services including railways, civil aviation etc. As far as the bus service between Dhaka and Kolkata is concerned the two sides agreed to resolve outstanding issues to the mutual satisfaction as early as possible.

* * * * *

1. On July 14 the Official Spokesperson had told the media briefing that the last such Joint Economic Commission was held in 1997. It is a different matter that Article V of the Joint Commission Agreement signed on October 7, 1982 mandated that “The Commission shall hold its meetings not less than once a year.”
Question: What is the problem in Dhaka-Kolkata bus service?

Answer: I don’t think there is any problem. There are six-service operating and there is a demand for more. I think you should look at what has been achieved. It’s a constant dialogue. This commission has met after six years, so naturally, all the issues of the dialogue cannot reach a final conclusion and they have been discussed and its been agreed to continue to discuss this so that we can come to an early conclusion. On transport the important thing is that the Dhaka-Agartala bus service is to be flagged off in the first week of August.

Question: You said outstanding issues. What are the outstanding issues?

Answer: I am not aware of the technical details. I am sure there is a technical issue between sorting out various things between the two transport services. (Clarified later) I can also add to this that as far as the train service is concerned, the two sides discussed the need for early commencement of the Selda-Joydevpurl passenger train service and the Indian side proposed that a meeting of senior railway officials be held to discuss the modalities for that purpose. On containerization -I had mentioned on the first day that multi modal transport is also going to be discussed- the Indian side proposed an early meeting between the Container Corporation of India and Bangladesh Railway for discussing the possibilities of conducting feasibility studies.

Question: What happened to the India- Bangladesh Bilateral Trade Agreement?

Answer: On Bilateral Trade Agreement, the position is it has been extended from time to time and the last extension was for six months upto December 2003. The Indian side proposed this time that since the protocol on inland water transport is derived from this trade agreement it should be extended for one year at a time until the revised agreement is concluded. The Bangladesh side has noted the proposal and has responded that the revised trade agreement should be finalized at an early date.

Thank you.
Bhutan


New Delhi, August 29, 2003

The Government of India (GOI) and the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB);

Bearing in mind the traditionally close ties of friendship, understanding and cooperation between the two countries;

Inspired by a common desire to enrich and expand the scope of these ties through mutually agreed activities;

Have agreed to conclude this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for establishing the India-Bhutan Foundation.

Article I

There shall be established the India- Bhutan Foundation to be governed by the terms of this MOU. Its objective shall be to enhance exchange and interaction among the peoples of Bhutan and India through activities in mutually agreed areas, in particular, in the educational, cultural, scientific and technical fields.

Article II

The Foundation shall be financed through revenues from a Trust Fund, which shall be established principally through grants made available by the two parties. It may also accept contributions from other agencies, both public and private, upon consent of both Governments. The Fund shall be managed by a Board of Directors set up by the Foundation.

Article III

The revenues from the Trust Fund, within the conditions and limitations hereinafter set forth, shall be used by the Foundation for the purpose of financing the following:
1) Studies, research and other educational activities and in-service training for citizens of Bhutan and India at institutions of learning located in each other’s countries;

2) visits and exchanges of scholars, poets, writers, journalists, artists, and other professionals both in general field of education and in the fields of agriculture, environment, public health, science and technology and other fields as may be mutually agreed upon by GOI and RG OB;

3) other related programmes and activities such as seminars, symposia, workshops, etc., on subjects of common interest; and

4) support to non-Governmental organizations in the two countries whose work contributes to achieving objectives of the Foundation.

**Article IV**

The Foundation may, subject to the provisions of the present MOU, exercise all the powers necessary for pursuing its purposes including the following:

(1) receive funds;

(2) open and operate bank accounts in the name of the Foundation;

(3) disburse funds and make payments for activities in accordance with the purposes of the present MOU; and

(4) Provide for annual audit of the accounts of the Foundation by auditors selected by GOI and RG OB.

**Article V**

All commitments, obligations and expenditures by the Foundation shall be made pursuant to an annual budget approved by GOI and RG OB.

**Article VI**

The Foundation shall be administered by a 10-member Board of Directors (hereafter designated as ‘the Board’). The Ambassador of Bhutan to India and the Ambassador of India to Bhutan shall be the Co-Chairpersons of the Board. GOI and RG OB shall each nominate four other members of the Board. Respective Embassy officials designated by the concerned
Ambassadors shall act jointly as Secretary of the Foundation.

**Article VII**

The Board shall adopt guidelines and procedures, as it shall deem necessary for the conduct of the affairs of the Foundation.

**Article VIII**

A report on the activities of the Foundation shall be presented annually by the Board to the GOI and the RGOB.

**Article IX**

The Co-Chairpersons of the Board shall be responsible for the direction and supervision of the programmes and activities in accordance with the Board’s resolutions and directives and the provisions of this Memorandum.

**Article X**

Meetings of the Board shall be held twice a year alternately in India and Bhutan.

**Article XI**

Wherever, in the present Memorandum, the terms of GOI and RGGB are used, it shall be understood to mean the Foreign Ministries of the two Governments.

**Article XII**

The present Memorandum may be amended by exchange of diplomatic notes between the two Governments.

**Article XIII**

The GOI and the RGOB shall resolve any problem, which may arise in the operation of this MOU through bilateral discussions.

**Article XIV**

The present Memorandum shall come into force upon the date of signature.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present Memorandum.
of Understanding.

**Done** at New Delhi, in duplicate, on the Twenty-Ninth day of August, 2003.

**Kannwal Sibal**  
*(Foreign Secretary)*  
_on behalf of the Government*  
_of the Republic of India*

**Dago Tshering**  
*Ambassador of Bhutan to India*  
_on behalf of the Royal Government*  
_of Bhutan*

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**080. Speech by President Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of Bhutanese King Jigme Singye Wangchuk.**

**New Delhi, September 15, 2003.**

Your Majesty, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you and your delegation to India. We welcome you as the Monarch of the friendly neighbouring country of Bhutan and as a dear friend. The people of India have great admiration for Your Majesty, your wisdom and leadership in guiding the destiny of your people in pursuit of happiness and harmony with a focus on material progress, spiritual well-being and preservation of the environment.

Our relationship is based on the firm foundations of shared historical and cultural linkages. It is also a dynamic and progressive relationship constantly searching for new avenues of cooperation, new complementarities and new opportunities to strengthen itself. Cooperation in the field of water resources between our two countries sets an example which other countries would do well to emulate. Harnessing our rivers to mutual benefit is a good economic proposition. Bhutan has harnessed and managed nature’s bounty well. While protecting the fragile ecology of the Himalayas by judiciously using the vast potential for generation of hydro-electricity, you have contributed to the well being of your people. India has benefited from this cooperation with an assured supply of power.
Indeed, this is a win-win situation for both countries. Chukha, Kurichu and Tala are symbols of Indian assistance, friendship and partnership for mutual benefit. Today, we have added Punatsangchu to this list and we look forward to undertaking several more such projects in the future. Bhutan also has a rich bio-diversity. We could cooperate in the field of traditional medicine by adding value to the rare and varied herbal medicines and convert them into marketable drugs.

Open borders and free trade provide the backdrop for our mutual relationship. The Festival of India in Bhutan, which began in June this year is an opportunity for the Bhutanese people to get a glimpse of the varied culture of India. I am glad that the celebrations are not limited to Thimpu alone but are being held in other towns as well. India is always happy to host the many Bhutanese pilgrims who visit major sites of Buddhist heritage in different parts of India. The India-Bhutan Foundation, which has been recently established, will contribute to a greater degree of people-to-people contact as well as civil society interaction. I am glad that the Crown Prince, as a patron of the India-Bhutan Friendship Association is taking keen interest in promoting an ever-closer friendship amongst our two peoples. It is a pleasure to see his commitment to the cause of India-Bhutan friendship.

Your Majesty, we are happy to note that the institutions and processes of participatory democracy are being strengthened. Power and authority are being increasingly devolved to the grassroots level. A written Constitution is being drafted, debated and discussed in the councils of state and amongst the ordinary people. All this is happening under Your Majesty’s guidance and direction. We are aware of the tremendous love and affection with which the people of Bhutan look up to Your Majesty.

We are all aware that recent years have witnessed an upsurge in terrorism, insurgency and extremist activities globally as well as in our region. A strong global compact is being forged to combat this menace. Democratic societies cannot succumb to violence and terror unleashed by disgruntled elements. I am glad that our two countries are cooperating closely in addressing these issues.

In your brief stay in India, Your Majesty, you are meeting a wide cross section of our leadership and our people. You will find a clear message in all your interactions - a message of India’s total commitment to an ever-lasting friendship and cooperation with Bhutan, based on mutual trust and understanding. Together, we are working for a better future for our two peoples and indeed our whole region.
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, may I now invite you to join me in a toast: -

- to the health and happiness of His Majesty the King of Bhutan;
- to the prosperity and happiness of the friendly people of Bhutan;
- and to ever closer and warmer relations between India and Bhutan.

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081. Joint statement issued at the end of the visit of the King of Bhutan Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

New Delhi, September 18, 2003.

1. At the invitation of H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, President of the Republic of India, His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of the Kingdom of Bhutan paid a State Visit to the Republic of India from September 14 to 18, 2003.

2. His Majesty the King was accompanied by H.E. Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and other senior officials of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

3. During the visit, H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, President of the Republic of India held talks with His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck and hosted a State banquet at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Their Excellencies, Vice President Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Deputy Prime Minister Shri L.K.Advani, Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister of Finance, and other senior officials of the Government of India held separate talks with His Majesty the King.

4. Leaders from both countries recalled the strong historical ties of friendship and understanding between India and Bhutan. They noted with satisfaction the excellent state of relations and mutually beneficial cooperation that the two countries enjoy, and expressed their firm commitment to further strengthen India-Bhutan relations in the coming years.

5. The leaders welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of
Understanding establishing the India-Bhutan Foundation during the recent visit to India of the Crown Prince of Bhutan, which will add a new dimension to the relations between the two countries by facilitating greater people to people contacts. The two sides noted that the Festival of India, currently underway in Bhutan provides an opportunity for the people of Bhutan to experience the rich cultural heritage of India.

6. The two sides recognized the many years of successful economic cooperation, particularly the invaluable and substantial assistance that India continues to provide towards Bhutan’s development efforts in all fields.

7. During the State Visit to India by His Majesty the King, the Government of India has agreed to an enhanced assistance package of Rs. 1614 crores during Bhutan’s Ninth Five Year Plan.

8. It was agreed that India will continue to assist Bhutan’s economic development programmes, including the harnessing of its water resources. It was also agreed that India will continue to purchase excess power generated by Bhutan’s hydropower projects.

9. During the visit, a Memorandum of Understanding for the preparation of a Detailed Project Report on the Punatsangchu Hydroelectric Power Project was signed by the Foreign Ministers of the two countries, H.E. Shri Yashwant Sinha, Government of India and H.E. Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Royal Government of Bhutan, in the presence of His Majesty the King, H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, President of India, and H.E. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India.

10. There was a cordial exchange of views on wide-ranging issues of mutual interest and concern, including the presence of Indian insurgent groups in Bhutan, and the measures being undertaken by the Royal Government of Bhutan to persuade the militants to leave its territory. Both sides agreed to continue working closely for resolving the issue. The two governments reiterated that as close friends and allies they will not allow their territories to be used by anyone for carrying out activities that are harmful to each other’s national interests.

11. The two sides agreed that the State Visit of His Majesty the King of Bhutan to the Republic of India has contributed to further enhancing
the mutual understanding, trust, and friendship between the Governments, leaders and peoples of the two countries. The visit is yet another milestone in the close and friendly ties between India and Bhutan, which stand out today as a model of good neighbourly relations.

12. On behalf of the Government and the people of Bhutan, His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck thanked the Government and the people of India for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality received by him and the members of his delegation during his visit.

082. Suo Motu Statement by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha supporting the military action of the Royal Government of Bhutan against Indian insurgent groups operating from camps in Bhutan.


Mr. Chairman, Sir,

We have been informed by the Royal Government of Bhutan that they have launched today military action against Indian insurgent groups operating from camps in that country. Government of India strongly supports this action of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

His Majesty the King of Bhutan had telephonically informed the Prime Minister of the impending action on Saturday, 13th December.

Prime Minister has conveyed to His Majesty the King that the Government and people of India stand firmly and solidly behind the Royal Government of Bhutan at this critical juncture and would provide all necessary support as requested, till the task is completed.

The Indian Army is also taking necessary measures to intercept movement of militants from Bhutan into India.

Government of India has advised the State Governments of Assam and West Bengal to remain alert to deal with the situation arising out of this action, including sealing the borders and maintaining peace.
The Royal Government of Bhutan has always assured the Government of India that it will not allow its territory to be used for activities inimical to India’s interest. The launch of operations against Indian insurgent groups in Bhutan has struck a blow against terrorism and terrorist activities in our entire region.

The action against Indian insurgent groups in Bhutan would prevent further loss of innocent lives by the mindless acts of violence perpetrated by these terrorists. It will promote peace, stability and security in the region and further cement the strong friendship and cooperation between India and Bhutan.

Repeating to the points raised by Hon’ble Members of Rajya Sabha, the Minister said: I am extremely grateful to all the Members of this House for lending their support to the action that the Royal Government of Bhutan has started against the Indian Insurgent Groups. It has proved, once again, if such proof was at all necessary, that when it comes to matters of national security, this House, the Parliament of India and the people of India will stand solidly together to face such issues.

We all need to applaud the Royal Government of Bhutan and especially, His Majesty, the King of Bhutan who has decided to move against the Indian Insurgent Groups operating from Bhutan. It has been action against all the Indian Insurgent Groups. All these groups are being attacked by the Royal Bhutanese Army, simultaneously. We can wish them the very best in this endeavour that they are making.

The King of Bhutan spoke to the Prime Minister on Saturday, the 13th December. We had alerted our security forces. The Indian Army is taking necessary measures to intercept any movement of militants from Bhutan into India. The Army is positioned at all those strategic locations through which these insurgents might try and find their way into India.

General Roy Chowdhury asked me about the protection of the Bhutanese interests. We have tried to take care of all their concerns including convoys to Bhutan that moved through Indian territory. As far as the State Governments of Assam and West Bengal are concerned, I am very happy to inform the House that the Government of India is in very close touch with them. We are receiving the fullest cooperation from these two State Governments. Together, we are trying to keep the border sealed.

With regard to the Royal Government of Bhutan, I would say that
the Royal Government of Bhutan is a sovereign entity. They have taken this action independently.

Whatever assistance the Royal Government of Bhutan would want from us, the same will be made available to the Royal Government of Bhutan until the task in hand is completed. At this point of time, unfortunately, the details of the casualties are not available. As and when something important happens, we will, in the best Parliamentary tradition, keep the Parliament informed.

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Nepal

083. Reaction of Official Spokesperson to questions on reported declaration of cease-fire by Maoists in Nepal.


Question: There is a report that the Government of Nepal and Maoists have declared cease-fire. Any reaction?

Answer: The Government of India has noted the announcements of recent steps towards the peaceful resolution of the armed conflict in Nepal and to achieve durable peace, security and stability in Nepal. We believe that the process of dialogue should be based national consensus, should involve political parties and should be conducted in environment free from violence. We continue to regard multi-party democracy and constitutional monarchy as the two pillars for stability in Nepal and India remains committed to the strengthening of its longstanding and close friendship and good neighbourly relations with Nepal.

Question: It is understood that the Norwegian government has offered to mediate between the Maoists and the Nepalese Government. What is India’s position on this?

Answer: Our position is as I have just given to you on the developments of yesterday.

Question: So India does not have any opposition to mediation by anybody?
We would like the matter to be sorted out within the framework, which I have just outlined; process of dialogue should be based national consensus, should involve political parties and should be conducted in an environment free from violence.

084. Reaction of Official Spokesperson to the reported refusal of the Maoist in Nepal to take part in peace talks.

New Delhi, August 28, 2003.

Question: Do you have any response to the latest situations in Nepal?

Answer: We have seen reports that the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) have declined to take part in further peace talks with His Majesty's Government of Nepal. We are also concerned at the growing number of clashes and violent incidents in various parts of Nepal, including attacks on political leaders. Any resumption of armed hostilities would be unfortunate and would constitute a set back to the efforts for peace and stability in Nepal, whose people have been victims of violence and insecurity for several years. Violence cannot provide a solution to the problems Nepal is currently facing. Neither political nor economic progress can be achieved by resuming armed conflict. A meaningful and durable political solution based on national consensus and involving political parties has to be pursued by all concerned. India continues to believe that the principles of multiparty democracy and constitutional monarchy are key for restoring stability in Nepal and a solution to the difficulties facing Nepal needs to be found within this framework.
085. Press Statement on the visit of Nepalese Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa.

New Delhi, November 25, 2003.

The Prime Minister of Nepal H.E. Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa paid a working visit to India in his capacity as the Head of Government of the outgoing SAARC Chairman country, Nepal. During the visit, His Excellency the Prime Minister of Nepal, called on the President of India and Vice-President of India on November 25, 2003. The Prime Minister of India received the visiting dignitary and hosted a lunch in his honour at 7, Race Course Road on Monday, November 24, 2003. The External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha and Raksha Mantri, Shri George Fernandes also called on Prime Minister Thapa at his suite in the hotel.

In the discussions held between the Nepali PM and Indian PM, the two sides reviewed the progress achieved in SAARC since the 11th Summit was held in Kathmandu in 2002. The Indian side appreciated the skillful manner in which Nepal exercised leadership of SAARC and imparted momentum to a number of items of cooperation on the SAARC agenda. Both sides agreed on the need to advance the regional economic cooperation agenda at the forthcoming summit to be held at Islamabad in January 2004, including the adoption of the framework treaty for SAFTA.

The two sides expressed satisfaction over the progress achieved on a number of issues in our bilateral relations and pledged their determination to raise the level of our relations and bilateral cooperation to even higher level, reflecting the very close and cordial relations existing between the two neighbouring countries.

The Prime Minister of India expressed concern over the serious security situation prevailing in Nepal and stressed the need to take urgent broad-based measures to deal with it. In this context, Prime Minister reaffirmed India’s consistent position that a national consensus needs to be evolved based on the principles of multiparty democracy and constitutional monarchy. This would require both the institution of monarchy as well as the political parties to demonstrate flexibility and reach a consensus to address the challenges posed by the Maoist insurgency. A representative government, with the participation of all parliamentary parties, working in close cooperation with the monarchy, would assist in evolving such a national response to the situation.
India would, as always, continue to extend its support to Nepal in the spirit of the longstanding and traditional friendship between our two countries.

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086. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha by Mr. Vijay Kumar Pandey for The Disha Nirdesh Programme of Nepal TV.


INTERVIEWER: Namaskar. Excellency. How are you?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): Namaskar. Fine, thank you.

INTERVIEWER: First of all, I would like to thank you for giving us an opportunity to talk to you.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Welcome.

INTERVIEWER: I would like to start by asking a rhetorical question. What is the state of Indo-Nepal relations at the moment?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I think the state of Indo-Nepal relations is very good. We have an excellent relationship. There are no major issues between us. But, that does not mean that there are no problems with Nepal.

INTERVIEWER: When we talk about the relations today, that is 2003, have the relations been like this all the time or do you see anything special at this particular moment?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Well, I suppose the special thing that I see at this moment is that many of the things which had remained pending for some time have moved forward. Agreement has been reached. That encourages me to say that we have an excellent relationship at this point of time.

INTERVIEWER: Can you elaborate the areas where things were pending and areas where they have moved forward?
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: For instance, the Railway Agreement for the Customs Zone in Birgunj, that has been concluded. All those arrangements have been concluded. It had remained pending, I remember, for quite some time. So, this has moved forward.

INTERVIEWER: Let me ask you a philosophical question. As India’s international stature is growing, how important Nepal is for you now?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I think Nepal will always remain very important for us. It was always important in the past. I think the relationship between Nepal and India is not dependent on the growing stature of India as you say, or the growing stature of Nepal. It is a relationship between two countries which by geography have been put as neighbours. It is a relationship which binds us, if I may use that expression, through an umbilical cord.

INTERVIEWER: When I said the stature, I was also meaning the priorities of India are changing in the global context. So, where does Nepal fit in?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: All our neighbours will always remain our first priority. Therefore, Nepal, as the closest neighbour of India, will be always a very important priority in our foreign policy.

INTERVIEWER: Do you consider Nepal to be the closest neighbour India has?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I suppose we are the closest neighbour because your boundary on two sides is with India.

INTERVIEWER: I would like to go a few weeks back when Prime Minister Thapa was here and the Ministry of External Affairs issued a statement saying that in Nepal we should have a kind of national Government or something like that. What was the meaning and intention behind this statement?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: We had suggested that perhaps an all party Government would be better able to handle the situation which has arisen in Nepal. Our impression, our understanding, was that the political parties in Nepal were striving for such a Government. Now, to reply to your first question on the situation in Nepal: It is a difficult situation; it is a situation which is creating problems within Nepal; it is a situation which is impinging on us; and therefore, we would like stability to return to Nepal. We have been given to understand that what is in the best interest in
order to be able to resolve the issues is a national consensus to be brought to bear on the problems which have arisen; and that national consensus is best represented by an all-party Government. Unfortunately, you have not had the elections which were due last year. Therefore, there is a situation where a one-party Government may not appear to be representing the national will, the national political will, of Nepal. It was in that context and based on our, as I said, understanding that this is what the political parties want, this is what the situation of the moment demands. I had made that point when the Prime Minister of Nepal visited here. It was not that we said it only in the statement; it was a point that we made to him also.

INTERVIEWER: The MEA statement, while talking about the national Government, also, I think, was hinting towards close cooperation of work between the Monarch and the political parties. Am I correct?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Well, the Nepalese people themselves have chosen a system under which there will be a Constitutional Monarchy and a multiparty democracy in Nepal. That is a choice which we have not made; that is a choice that you have made for yourself. What we are doing is that we are sticking to the choice that you have made; and we are saying if this is what the Constitution of Nepal envisages, namely a Constitutional Monarchy and a multiparty democracy, then this is how it should be until this arrangement is changed by popular will in Nepal. So, at the moment a multiparty democracy and a Constitutional Monarchy is what we are also suggesting, and this is no different from what you yourself have accepted. In this context, it is very important for the Constitutional Monarchy and the multiparty Government to work together in order to be able to tackle the problems that you face.

INTERVIEWER: In that sense, Sir, can I take that statement as saying that it implies Monarch and the parties should work together in Nepal? Is that what India’s official stand is?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: It is quite clear, I suppose that the Monarchy and the political parties should work together in order to be able to take care of the problem that you are facing at the moment; because we believe that a problem can be tackled only, as I said, if a national consensus is backing that solution.

INTERVIEWER: Some section in the Nepalese society was taking this statement as interference, while others were saying that it is a friendly advice. Do you have any comments on that?
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I would very humbly plead, I would plead with all the humility at my command, that the statements issued by India should not be taken as interference in the internal affairs of Nepal because we have no such intention at all. We have scrupulously kept away from any interference in the internal affairs of Nepal. I am aware of the fact that there are elements which often bring this up as a sign of India’s interference. We have not done so. We give our advice only when we are asked for this advice. We give this advice only when it becomes absolutely essential.

INTERVIEWER: What are India’s interests in Nepal? Or, is India totally apathetic?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: No, we are not apathetic. As I mentioned to you, you cannot be apathetic to what is going on in your neighbourhood, immediate neighbourhood. So, we cannot say that we are apathetic to whatever is happening in Nepal. We have an interest, especially because of the fact that we have had, we still have, an open border. I mentioned to you that on two sides India and Nepal have a common border. So, if you have such an arrangement, then the events which happen, the incidents which take place, cannot be a matter of unconcern to the other. If there were developments within India they will also be a matter of concern to Nepal. Similarly, if incidents or events are taking place in Nepal, they will be of concern to India. So, that is the situation in which I would like to assert once again that we have an interest as a friendly neighbour, just as Nepal has an interest in India as a friendly neighbour.

INTERVIEWER: Can you specify the areas of interest?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: The areas of interest are all areas which are covered in the bilateral relationship between the two countries. It is economic interest, it is trade interest, it is cultural interest, it is political interest, it is security interest, and everything is covered in this.

INTERVIEWER: Can you find the areas where the interests between India and Nepal converge with each other? And, are there any areas where they collide with each other?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I think in all these areas that I have mentioned just now to you, our interests only converge. I cannot think of an area where the interests clash. I cannot.

INTERVIEWER: You must have talked to the high-ranking Nepalese officials on many occasions. Do you think or do you find that there are
areas where the Nepalese interests do not exactly follow the Indian lines or Indian interests?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** I have no such impression.

**INTERVIEWER:** What kind of Nepal would India like to see?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** I mentioned to you a little while ago that you yourself have chosen an arrangement of a Constitutional Monarchy and a multiparty democracy. We would like that system to continue until you change that system by popular consent. We would like to have the friendliest of relation with Nepal as we are having at the moment.

**INTERVIEWER:** Sometimes India raises this question of security concern which is not exactly appreciated or taken in the same sense that Delhi wants it. A section of population says that in Nepal. Do you agree that security interests of India and Nepal do not exactly follow the same track?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** No. I think it is based on some misunderstanding, some misperception. I say this because if we remember that we are two of the closest neighbours, then our security interests are bound to converge. If we maintain friendly relations, our security interests are bound to converge. So, therefore, I cannot think of any situation where we will have a difference of opinion with regard to common security concerns of Nepal and India.

**INTERVIEWER:** Are you trying to say that between India and Nepal everything is converging and there are no areas of difference?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** You referred to some elements either here or there who often tend to misunderstand. In their mind, there might be an area of divergence. But since I do not tend to misunderstand, I will say that on most issues we have areas of convergence.

**INTERVIEWER:** Hon’ble Foreign Minister, you have just said that there are elements there and here. That means that even in India there are elements that do not understand the things in the right perspective.

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** There could be. Yes. Everyone cannot understand everything. Those of us who are involved in this on a day-to-day basis, those who are concerned about it, those who study these relationships, they will have a complete understanding. The rest of them
may not have complete understanding. The rest of them can be misled on occasions as you have seen. This might lead to misunderstandings in their mind.

INTERVIEWER: How big is the area of differences between Nepal and India, what are the areas where things are not exactly converging?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I mentioned to you that I cannot think of any such thing. We have processes of negotiations, for instance. When an issue comes up, we negotiate. Negotiations often might take time, but I would not describe them as area of divergence and not of convergence.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel that relations between Nepal and India are progressing at the speed at which they should?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: We could perhaps speed it up. There are many areas where we could perhaps speed up the cooperation and collaboration that we are trying to build or we have been talking about.

INTERVIEWER: Do you agree with the school of thought that there will be always one kind of grievance between India and Nepal or another kind of grievance and we should learn to live with those things?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: The grievances have to be dealt with. If there are grievances at any level, among any section of people in either country, I think those grievances should be addressed and they should be dealt with because there is no reason why any section of people should nurse those grievances.

INTERVIEWER: What are the areas that India has grievances with Nepal, or you feel that Nepal could ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I think you are coming back to repeating a question which I have repeatedly answered. I do not think I am going to get into that situation. You seem to be getting back to me, to get out of me, areas of divergence, areas of difference, areas of whatever; and I am repeatedly telling you that I cannot, as Foreign Minister of India, I cannot think of such an area.

INTERVIEWER: Let me rephrase the question.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: You will still not get the answer you want.
INTERVIEWER: Let me put the question. Do you feel that there are areas where Nepal could do more?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I just now mentioned to you that there are areas where we could speed up action. There are areas where action in the past has been slow. In those areas we could perhaps speed up things. That is up to how much I am going to concede. But if you are wanting to know from me whether there is enmity between Nepal and India, whether there are great differences of opinion, I very politely say I will not agree with that approach.

INTERVIEWER: I am not going that far but I was trying to figure out if there are ... Let us flip the point of this question. What are Nepal’s grievances against India? In the official level talks and in interactions with different sections of the people, do you find or are you aware that there are some differences ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I think this interview is taking a twist which is not entirely to my liking, I must make it clear to you. I say this because you are emphasizing, repeatedly, on differences. I do not know what you expect of me.

INTERVIEWER: No, no. In fact we are working on a lot of convergences ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: If you are working, let us come to the convergences. Why should we talk about differences when I am repeatedly telling you that we do not have differences? However much you try and dig this information out of me, it is not going to come out because if it is not there, I am not going to invent those differences.

INTERVIEWER: There is a perception in Nepal that when Nepal deals with India, and India deals with Nepal at political levels, things are really very fine, normal and very cordial. When it comes to the level of execution, when it comes to executing those understandings made at the political level, the picture at the bureaucratic level is not that good.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: This again, I will say, is a misperception. I do not get that feeling. I think the bureaucracy in both countries is working under the guidance of the political leadership. If the political leadership is keen that decisions taken at political leadership level are implemented, those decisions will be implemented.
INTERVIEWER: So, this is just a myth.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I should think so. I do not think that bureaucracy either in Nepal or India is determined to sabotage or ...

INTERVIEWER: I am not saying that they are sabotaging. But are they representing the level of cordiality that exists at the political level?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: If they do not, then we should deal with them. I mean, if there is any instance where the bureaucracy fails to implement decisions taken at the political level, then we should deal with that situation.

INTERVIEWER: Recently, a Nepali leader, General Secretary of UML, Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal, met the Maoist leader Prachanda. This was the second time he officially met Prachanda on the Indian soil. First was in Siliguri. How does India feel about this incident?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: We feel embarrassed when such an incident takes place. I mentioned to you a little while ago that we have an open border with Nepal and, therefore, it is very easy to cross from Nepal into India, and from India into Nepal, and to have the kind of meeting that you are mentioning. We also have a large Nepalese ethnic population living in India. Therefore, it is not difficult for people from Nepal to take advantage of the open border, to take advantage of the fact that there is an ethnic population of Nepalese living in India, and perhaps arrange such meetings or such getaways.

INTERVIEWER: Does it not substantiate the theory that Maoist leaders are operating from India. I say this because it is not the second time, there is a third time also. Once I interviewed Mr. Chakraprasad Bastola. He said that he met Prachanda - he said it on television – in India. Now, one after another, when these things happen, while fully sympathizing with your theory saying that Nepal and India have open border, anybody can cross here and there, do you not think that this substantiates the doubts...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: You are saying that there was a meeting here, there was a meeting there; and then you are trying to conclude from that that they are operating from India. There is a world of difference between these two positions. For somebody from Nepal to sneak into India, or for the Maoist leaders to operate from bases in India are two entirely different things. I would like to say with all the emphasis at my
command that India provides no sanctuary to these elements from Nepal. Whenever we have had information, we have not only arrested these people, we have even repatriated them to Nepal or we have held them in prison in India. Therefore, this accusation against India as if they are being permitted to operate from our soil is entirely misplaced.

INTERVIEWER: Could it be possible that they are operating with or without your knowledge in India?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: When I told you that we were embarrassed, it clearly means that they were operating without our knowledge, and that if there was any knowledge, then we would have acted under our law.

INTERVIEWER: India has such an elaborate security system, intelligence agencies etc. People in Kathmandu ask why they are not working and figuring it out when all these things are happening.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Why do not the intelligence agencies in Nepal figure it out? How do they cross from Nepal into India or from Nepal into any other country - into Bhutan, into Bangladesh? After all, you also have your security forces, you also have your intelligence agencies. The point I am making is, however elaborate the arrangement may be, you cannot check every individual when there is an open border. Are we able to check every individual even where we have a closed border? I dare say no, it is not possible. We would not have had this problem of cross-border terrorism, if we were able to check everyone.

INTERVIEWER: If you were a Nepali, when you see these Maoist leaders meeting, going around in India, what would you feel?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: If I see a Maoist leader as a Nepalese, I would immediately pass on this information. If as a Nepalese official, as a Nepalese citizen, I had information that somebody was crossing into India, I would immediately share that information with Government of India so that Government of India could take action. You see, you must go by the record of Government of India. Please go back and ask your Government how many people we have apprehended within India from amongst the Maoists and repatriated them. If we were not interested, we would not do that. Why should we do that? I am telling you repeatedly that we feel concerned about this problem because we are also aware of linkages of these people with insurgent groups within India. If we were to
encourage the Nepalese Maoists, then we are encouraging the PWG and the MCC in India. Would any sane Government want to do that?

INTERVIEWER: In that context comes a question. What is the role India is playing in solving this problem, if any, though it is a problem of Nepal?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: There are two-three things that we are doing. One, on the open border we are trying to improve our vigilance as much as you can without changing the nature of the border that we have. Let me also tell you that if we were to change the nature of the border, then it is going to result in great hardship to the people of Nepal. So, that is not an immediate option that is available to us that you close the border and check everybody.

The second, whenever the authorities in Nepal want any advice we will be ready to give that advice. Third, we share intelligence with the authorities in Nepal. Fourth, we have told them that whatever assistance they want in terms of equipment, etc., India will be willing to provide that assistance. Whenever such a request has been received, we have tried our best to meet that request, to meet that need. So, there are various ways in which we are cooperating. But I would like to go back and tell you something else.

I was in Nepal, immediately after I took over this assignment, in August last year. I met with the then Home Minister. In the meeting with the Home Minister, a senior official of Nepal told me that the Maoists had taken a helicopter from Nepal and they had gone and landed in India. I was very surprised by this information. So, I said immediately that we would check it up. We checked it up and then we kept on pursuing this, as long as that Government lasted, to give us details of the helicopter. No details were forthcoming. Our own enquiries revealed that no such helicopter had ever flown from Nepal into India or landed in India. I am making this point to emphasise the earlier statement that I made. Often, even people in authority, people in senior positions, might be misled by information which may not be correct. So, if people in position can be misled by information which is not correct, why should I blame the general people.

INTERVIEWER: There is a perception in Nepal, which is not blaming India directly but feels that India is not doing enough. Probably you can pick up more Maoist leaders than you have done in the past.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: No, no. I am aware of the fact that
there are sections of opinion within Nepal which, unfortunately, would like to believe exactly what you are saying - that India is not doing enough, that India is deliberately promoting, India is doing this, India is not doing this - which is generally not in the interest of our relations.

INTERVIEWER: Sorry to interrupt, Sir. This particular section does not believe that India is doing it, but this section believes that India is not doing enough

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I will be quite frank with you. I am aware of the fact that any change which takes place in Nepal is often ascribed to, or placed at the door of India. I am telling you, whether it is Nepal or any of our neighbours, our policy is of a strict non-interference in their internal affairs. There is no question. If the Government of Nepal, if the authorities in Nepal, do not want to discuss an issue, we will not discuss it. We are not going to impose ourselves. It is only when we discuss it as close neighbours and friends, as I mentioned to you, that we give our advice or assistance.

INTERVIEWER: What will be your final words if you have to address Nepalese public about India’s role or its desire vis-à-vis this Maoist problem?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: It is not merely about the Maoist problem, which is an immediate problem, I think India is interested in the stability of Nepal. India is interested in a democratic Nepal as has been envisaged by the Nepalese people themselves. India is interested in this problem being resolved in a manner which will enable elections to be held. India would like to give whatever assistance India can in order to resolve this, because, in the final analysis, we are interested in the welfare and prosperity of the people of Nepal. As our closest neighbour, it is very important that there must be stability and progress in Nepal. Only then India itself will feel safe and secure.

INTERVIEWER: Sometime back, American Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca made a statement that India should use its traditional influence on all sides to solve the problem in Nepal.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: We will go by our judgment, not by Christina Rocca’s judgment.

INTERVIEWER: How are you viewing the increased western military assistance to Nepal?
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: We have clearly told our friends in the West and shared this with the authorities in Nepal also that we are ready to meet the needs of Nepal. To the extent which we are able to meet their needs, we will meet their needs. To the extent which we are not able to meet their needs, they could look elsewhere to meet those needs.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have any objection as such or do you feel ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I just explained our policy to you.

INTERVIEWER: Do your interests collide with the western powers’ interests in Nepal or...?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I do not think there is any collision. I mean, no western power can be an immediate neighbour of Nepal like India is. So, why should there be a competition?

INTERVIEWER: What about the interests of China?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Absolutely none, there is no clash of interest in Nepal between China and India.

INTERVIEWER: What could be the implications of this growing Maoist problem to India?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I mentioned to you that if there are linkages between insurgent groups within India and the Maoists, as some of our reports do indicate, then it is a matter of great concern to us.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have any gut feeling about a solution of this problem? How long will it take? Or will it make this region ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: The gut feeling that I have is that solution to all problems will emerge only out of dialogue. Howsoever much military conflict you might have, clash of arms you might have, the solution will have to come if people sit down across the table and talk to each other like you and I are talking.

INTERVIEWER: Let me go back to the India-Nepal relations. Despite having such a long and unique base, why do you think, Excellency, that both nations have failed to convert this base into the realities of the 21st century where the people from both sides could ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: As I mentioned to you, there are areas where probably we should have worked faster. I would like to say that
energy cooperation is one such area where things could have moved faster than they have in the past. We are now trying to give the necessary speed to some of these projects so that it creates a win-win situation for both Nepal and India. I would like to mention to you we have a hydroelectric project in Bhutan for instance, the Tala project. As a result of the execution of that project, the per capita income of the people of Bhutan is going to go up from something like 600 US dollars per year to about 1200 US dollars per year. This is the kind of change which a project can bring about in a country or in an area. Now we need energy. Nepal can produce energy. We need water management. Nepal needs water management. Did you not have floods this year? Would it not be better if floods did not take place in Nepal or in India in the rivers that we share? Therefore, energy and flood control are areas where there could be tremendous cooperation between Nepal and India and it could create a win-win situation for both the countries. But, unfortunately, we have not moved as fast in this area as we should have perhaps done.

INTERVIEWER: Presently, a very important step has been taken. When I was coming to Delhi, I read in the papers that a Power Purchase Agreement between India and Nepal in the West Seti has been reached. I think for the first time a benchmark price has been agreed upon. Do you have any knowledge about that?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I do not think the power purchase agreement has yet been concluded. But the point I would like to make is that if this is a good example of cooperation, let us multiply such cooperation. There are other projects in which similar cooperation could be envisaged.

INTERVIEWER: What are the biggest strengths of India-Nepal relations and what are the pitfalls that can come in the way?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I mentioned to you the relationship between and Nepal could be described as an umbilical relationship. The relationship between India and Nepal transcends all relationships that two countries can have because we are civilisationally linked, we are linked through geography, we are linked through history. What we need is to, I agree with you, give a modern dimension to this ancient relationship. That modern dimension to the ancient relationship will come, if we started cooperating more with each other in the economic field, we started cooperating more with each other in the area of science and technology, in the area of human resource development so that the people of both
countries, and especially of Nepal, could benefit from the achievements that India has made in about six decades of its independent existence.

**INTERVIEWER:** Excellency, how do you foresee the relations between the two nations in the decades to come or at least a decade to come?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** I should like to think that the relations will always be very close, very cordial and that we will continue to work together to further strengthen this relationship because there are no full stops in history. You cannot say we have reached the end of history. So, the relationship will continue to evolve. We will continue to deal with new issues; we will continue to deal with new projects; we will continue to deal with new dimensions of our relationship. As long as the authorities in both countries deal with that evolving relationship in a spirit of goodwill, in a spirit of understanding, I am quite sure this relationship will continue to prosper. This is how I would like to see the future of this relationship and not be misguided by the thoughts of a few.

**INTERVIEWER:** Please do not tell me again that I am asking negative questions all the time. What kind of troubles or pitfalls you expect in this growth that both nations should be aware of?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** The troubles and the pitfalls could come from where? They could come from external forces; they could come from internal sources. You are a democracy; we are a democracy. In a democracy, everyone has a right to express an opinion. Sometimes those opinions may not be to the best liking of a certain section of opinion in the other country. What, therefore, we need to do is to ensure that such opinions are not allowed to prevail; that misunderstandings based on misperceptions, on facts which are not true, which are rumours, are not allowed to take possession of the minds of the people. That is the most important thing. Also, we have a fraternal relationship with Nepal. We should keep this fraternal relationship. There is no question of India being the big brother, Nepal being at the receiving end. You can be an elder brother and younger brother and you can have the best of relations as between brothers.

**INTERVIEWER:** How about genuine grievances?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** They should be addressed. There will be genuine grievances on both sides. I can tell you the other day some people came and met me here and they said they face enormous difficulty in Nepal when they travel by car. There are various points in Nepal and in India where you have to traverse through each other’s territory. If you do
not have free movement, you are going to face a lot of difficulties. Now, this is a situation where Indians come and complain to me that they are facing such difficulties in Nepal. It is not merely those who are traveling to Kathmandu but from one point in India to another point in India. If they go through Nepalese territory, they have this problem. We should sit down and resolve it.

INTERVIEWER: When can we expect to see you in Kathmandu or Atalji making a visit there?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Very soon. I am very keen to come. I love Kathmandu. It is a very nice place. Wherever I have been, and I have been there a number of times, I have always enjoyed my visits.

INTERVIEWER: We look forward to seeing you soon.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Thank you.

✦✦✦✦✦

Pakistan

087. Press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the exchange of lists of Nuclear Installations and Facilities by India and Pakistan.

New Delhi, January 1, 2003.

For the Twelfth consecutive year, India and Pakistan today (1 January 2003) through diplomatic channels, simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad exchanged lists of Nuclear Installations and Facilities covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack Against Nuclear Installations and Facilities between India and Pakistan. This agreement was signed on 31st December 1988 and entered into force on 27 January 1991.

Under the agreement, the two countries are to inform each other on 1st January of every calendar year of the nuclear installations and facilities to be covered by the agreement. The first such exchange of lists took place on 1st January 1992.

✦✦✦✦✦
088. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the harassment caused to the Indian Charge d’ affaires in Islamabad.

New Delhi, January 20, 2003.

This afternoon Pakistan’s Charge d’ Affaires in Delhi was summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs by Mr. Arun Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary heading the Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran Division and a strong protest was lodged against the unprecedented harassment of India’s Charge d’ Affaires Mr. Sudhir Vyas in Islamabad on January 18. 2003. A note verbale was handed to Pakistan’s Charge d’ Affaires. India has strongly condemned the actions of Pakistani authorities and the treatment meted out to Mr. Sudhir Vyas. Such harassment is unprecedented and amounts to a clear attempt on the part of Pakistan’s intelligence services to thwart the CdA in the performance of his diplomatic duties, besides displaying a lack of normal courtesy to the National Flag of the accredited country the Indian Flag which was flying on his car. The harassment represents a gross violation of the bilateral Code of Conduct for Treatment of Diplomatic Personnel in India and Pakistan signed by the two countries in 1992 as well as international norms and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961. In addition to handing over the note verbale Mr. Arun Singh also handed over to the Pakistani CdA, an aide Memoire listing previous incidents of harassment of senior officials of the High Commission of India in Islamabad.

On January 21 the media raised questions about the harassment of the cda and these were:

Question: Mr. Vyas was again harassed in Islamabad. Anything on that?

Answer: There was another incident yesterday morning and that was factored in our response yesterday. This harassment is quite unprecedented and unacceptable.

Question: Is there any move to temporarily recall Mr. Vyas and also is there any connection in this incident and the statement made by Pakistan Foreign Minister in UN?

Answer: As far as the first part is concerned I don’t have any information and if there is anything I will come back to you. As far as the second part of your question is concerned, several issues extraneous to the UN were raked up there but the only connection I can see is of a common mindset
which is bent on keeping bilateral relations off the rails, a common mindset which is bent on sidetracking the real issue— that of cross border terrorism incited by Pakistan in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and a mindset from which arises the unprecedented sort of harassment in which normal diplomatic courtesies are not being observed.

**Question:** What about the charges made by Pakistan that similar incident happens to their High Commission officials in Delhi?

**Answer:** Well as I said yesterday, there was a complaint referred to by somebody here dated January 7, 2003. This was investigated and there was no truth found in the matter.

**Question:** There was a press note issued by Pakistan Foreign Office which was faxed to newspaper offices saying that 15-20 days ago similar treatment were meted out to the Pakistani Officials in Delhi?

**Answer:** Well I am not aware of these incidents and nor has anything of this nature been brought to my notice. I am surprised that the letter and you are mentioning similar cases. How many similar cases can there be of a Charge d’ Affaires, the senior most diplomat of India being harassed twice in three day at such levels when he and his wife are held in a car for 45 minutes and are repeatedly boxed in to cover a 10 minutes journey in one and a half hours. I don’t see any similarity with any allegation which has been made.

**Question:** One specific case that was mentioned in that letter was that of January 7 incident?

**Answer:** Well, I have just responded to the January 7 allegation. It was investigated and no truth was found in that matter.”
089. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on harassment\(^1\) meted out to Charge d’ Affaires of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad and expulsion of some officials of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi.

New Delhi, January 22, 2003.

**Shri Navej Sarna:** Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

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1. Sudhir Vyas Indian Charge d’ affaires was put under “aggressive surveillance” by Pakistani intelligence agencies and his official car blocked more than once as he was on his way to attend diplomatic functions. The Indian mission dashed off three *note verbale* to the Pakistan Foreign Office detailing the treatment meted out to Mr. Vyas and urged it to direct the authorities concerned to cease “aggressive surveillance.” However, there was no response from the Foreign Office.

On January 23 the Spokesperson answered some more questions from the media on the harassment of Sudhir Vyas.

These were:

**Question:** Any news form Pakistan. Was Mr. Vyas harassed today?

**Answer:** We haven’t received reports of harassment today. But I do understand there was harassment yesterday.

**Question:** There are some reports that Pakistan has expelled 3 officials of the High Commission of India in Islamabad? Any Comments?

**Answer:** Well, I understand its four. These four officials of the Indian High Commission were asked to withdraw from Pakistan. The charges are entirely baseless and false and this is a clear act of retaliation to the well considered decision taken by the Government of India yesterday.

**Question:** Was this retaliation expected from Pakistan?

**Answer:** Well, it has come. The officials have been asked to leave within the next 48 hours and their families in 7 days.

**Question:** Who are these Officials?

**Answer:** I understand there is a Counsellor, a Second Secretary, an Attache and a staff member.

**Question:** Can you name them?

**Answer:** Names are Mr. Vipin Handa, Counsellor, Mr. R.P. Singh, Second Secretary, Mr. Vakeel Ramdas, Attache and Mr. P. Sundaram, staff member.

**Question:** Was Mr. Handa under Pakistani agency surveillance for some time.

**Answer:** Yes, absolutely. Mr. Handa has been consistently harassed for several months in all manner of unprecedented measures and methods. He has been closely tailed, he has been followed into restaurants, followed into shops, and his family has been subjected to tremendous mental tension.

**Question:** Is this a harassment or diplomatic terrorism?

**Answer:** This is harassment entirely not in keeping with diplomatic courtesies nor with the diplomatic conventions, bilateral and international.
The Charge d' Affaires of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi was summoned today to the Ministry of External Affairs.

It was pointed out to him that the harassment meted out by Pakistani agencies to the Indian Charge d’ Affaires in Islamabad on Saturday, January 18, 2003 was completely unacceptable.

Over the last three days, the harassment of our Charge d' Affaires in Islamabad has continued, also obstructing him in the discharge of his normal diplomatic functions.

These activities of Pakistani agencies constitute a grave violation of all norms and conventions of diplomatic interaction, provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961, and Code of Conduct for Treatment of Diplomatic Personnel in India and Pakistan signed by the two countries in August 1992.

The Government of India reiterates that it is the responsibility of the Government of Pakistan to ensure the security and safety of all personnel in the High Commission of India, Islamabad and their families.

The Charge d’Affaires was also informed that four officials of the Pakistan High Commission have been found indulging in activities incompatible with their official status. These were (i) Mansoor Saeed Sheikh, (ii) Mian Muhammad Asif, (iii) Muhammad Tasneem Khan, and (iv) Sher Muhammad.

These officials were declared persona non-grata and the Government of Pakistan was asked to withdraw them immediately, within the next 48 hours.

Question: Are these personnel diplomats?

Answer: They are officials. I understand that one of them is a Counsellor, one is a First Secretary, and two are staff members.

Question: Who is Counsellor and who is First Secretary?

Answer: In order of the names.

Question: What action is GOI .......?

Answer: I don’t understand your question. The harassment is to our CDA and we have protested it very strongly to the Pakistan High Commission
in New Delhi. Today also a note-verbale has been handed over to them on that issue.

**Question:** Was there any harassment to our CDA again today?

**Answer:** There were reports of continued harassment. And in one form or the other it is continuing.

**Question:** What are the charges on which these officials were declared persona non-grata?

**Answer:** The declaration of the officials as persona non-grata is on the basis of the fact that we have evidence that they are indulging in activities incompatible with their official status.

**Question:** What are the activities?

**Answer:** I am not at liberty to share that with the Press.

**Question:** Can we say that our CDA is facing a situation like house arrest?

**Answer:** He is certainly facing a situation which is absolutely unwarranted. It is unacceptable and it is unprecedented. He is the senior most Indian Diplomat in Islamabad and this continued harassment is unacceptable and is in complete violation of even basic diplomatic courtesy, leave alone the diplomatic treaties and Code of Conduct which we have in place.

**Question:** If the harassment continues, what action GOI will take?

**Answer:** I would not like to indulge in any speculation.

**Question:** How many Indian officials are there in Islamabad?

**Answer:** The authorized strength is Fifty-five.

Thank you.

✦✦✦✦✦
Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the expulsion of Pakistani Diplomats for indulging in activities incompatible with their diplomatic status.

New Delhi, February 8, 2003.

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you for coming on a Saturday morning.

I wanted to inform you that Syed Ibne Abbas Counsellor in the Pakistani High Commission was summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs today. It was conveyed to him that Jalil Abbas Jilani, Charge d’Affaires of the Pakistan High Commission has been found indulging in activities incompatible with his official status. His withdrawal from India was sought within the next 48 hours. It was also conveyed that the Government of India did not intend any down-gradation in the level of representation of the CDA and would be ready to give a visa at the earliest to his replacement. In view of the involvement of some other officials of the Pakistan High Commission in activities incompatible with their official status, on this and some other occasions and keeping in mind the seriousness with which the Government of India assessed the present activity, the Government of India also sought the recall of four other officials of the Pakistan High Commission. These are; (i) Habib-ur-Rehman; (ii) Aftab Ahmed, (iii) Abdul Razak, (iv) Muhammad Nazir.

Question: Was this expulsion of this four staff officials linked to Abbas Jilani’s case?

Answer: As I said it is for activities incompatible with their official status and on this and some other occasions.

1. On February 7 the Spokesperson of the MEA told a media briefing that it was considering a report from the Home Ministry on the case involving the handing over of Rs. 3 lakhs by the Pakistani Charge d’ Affaires, Jalil Abbas Jilani, to a Kashmiri “activist”. He said “We are giving this report our full and detailed consideration,” and an “appropriate decision” was expected in the matter after the process of consideration was over.

In a statement, the Pakistani High Commission denied the Government of India’s charge against Jilani deploring it “utterly baseless” and “mala fide vilification campaign” launched in the media by the Delhi police. Responding to the denials, official sources said that these were only to be expected. “We are not surprised by the denials,” they said. Pakistan continues to deny its involvement in cross-border terrorism and so the denials issued today were on similar lines. Those familiar with the cycle of “incidents” and “counter-incidents” between Pakistan and India said that the inclusion of Mr. Jilani’s name in the FIR registered in the case was a new dimension.
Question: Do you recall such a withdrawal of a senior official at this level from the High Commission earlier or this is the first time?

Answer: I will have to check that as to when and how any body else left. As you know in December following the attack on our Parliament the staff component of the Pakistani High Commission and in fact our component there had been cut into half and some days ago we had on similar charges asked four other people to leave.

Question: You said you are ready to give visa, not to downgrade. Don’t you think this gives a very negative impact to our already bad India and Pakistan relations?

Answer: The activities of the CDA were not meant to improve relations. These are not the activities of a diplomat, neither normal nor keeping with his status. Government of India is recognising the fact that we are not downgrading the level of representation below CDA.

Question: But diplomatic relations does not solely depend on India. Pakistan may also........

Answer: Well I am not going to speculate on what Pakistan may or may not do. We have taken our action based on hard evidence.

Question: What is that evidence. Can you share that?

Answer: We have evidence that he was indulging in activities which are incompatible

with his official status. The specific circumstances which you have already heard about and seen in the newspapers yesterday.

Question: What is the time given to them to leave the country?

Answer: 48 hours and 7 days for the family members.

Question: But in normal cases 7 days are given to leave. Why in this case its 48 hours only?

Answer: I don’t know what is your standard of normalcy. It is not normal for a CDA to be indulging in these activities. The circumstances of the case necessitate a very serious view to be taken by the Government of India and this has been done.
Q: How do you assess the state of Indo-Pak relations? Does it have any future?

One cannot deny that the relations between India and Pakistan are presently going through one of the periodic phases of difficulty when creative activity in terms of culture, trade and economic or people to people exchange is not in any active or growing mode.

However, if you look at the relations between the two countries over the past 50 years, there have been several long phases of a similar nature. These have, from time to time, been interspersed with efforts to improve understanding and deepen the exchange.

“Terrorist groups have inter-linkages, they mutate. There can be no partial cooperation on terrorism.”

Such periods were symbolised by our Prime Minister’s visit to Lahore in 1999 and also efforts through two Prime Ministerial visits from India in December 1988 and the middle of 1989. I remain optimistic, nevertheless, about the future of India-Pakistan relations.

It is in the interest of the peoples of the two countries to have a cooperative relationship. Our repeated efforts have been aimed in this direction. It was for this reason that the Prime Minister had visited Lahore by bus and in a very symbolic step had visited the Minar-e-Pakistan and inscribed there and I quote:

“I wish to assure the people of Pakistan of my country’s deep desire for lasting peace and friendship. I have said this before, and I say it again: a stable, secure and prosperous Pakistan is in India’s interest. Let no one in Pakistan be in doubt about this. India sincerely wishes the people of Pakistan well.”

Our intentions are clear. However, Pakistan must abandon its approach of compulsive hostility and use of cross-border terrorism as an instrument of its policy.

Q: Has Pakistan given up its policy of fomenting terrorism in India?
All evidence suggests that Pakistan is trying to maintain its option of calibrating terrorism in pursuit of its political and strategic goals. You would recall that General Musharraf had on January 12, May 27 and June 6 last year made commitments to permanently end infiltration, not allow the territory of Pakistan to be used for terrorism anywhere in the world, and not allow any organisation in Pakistan to indulge in terrorism in the name of Kashmir.

There had subsequently been temporary phases of decline in infiltration. However, in the context of elections in Jammu & Kashmir, the infiltration levels rose in September and October last year and have been at monthly levels subsequently which followed the pattern of earlier years.

Most inputs and analysts also agree that General Musharraf - and the Pakistani establishment - has hardly taken any action to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism including the training camps, communication centres, launching stations, funding and indoctrination. Well known terrorist leaders Hafiz Saeed and Masood Azhar have been released.

There are also reports of support from Pakistan to Taliban remnants and Hikmatyar. Even the western media now acknowledges that while Musharraf has given support on the Arab Al Qaeda elements, Pakistan is maintaining its links with the groups acting against Afghanistan and India.

**Q: So doesn’t it make better sense to shut down the Pakistan embassy here?**

There are many useful functions that Embassies and High Commissions perform. I, therefore, feel that there is no need at all to shut down the Pakistani High Commission here. Some recent actions we have taken were in response to specific acts and were intended to send a clear signal that we will not countenance any activities in contravention of diplomatic norms.

**Q: Conversely, how relevant is our mission there?**

For reasons that I have mentioned in response to the earlier question, our Mission in Islamabad is indeed very relevant. Despite the oppressive surveillance that our officials are continuously subjected to, they do interact with people, other diplomats and also carry out the routine official activity with the Pakistan Foreign Ministry and other Ministries and Departments.
Has there been any change in visa guidelines post-December 13, considering the number of visas issued has come down sharply?

The number of visas issued has certainly come down, particularly in view of disruption of direct road, rail and air links. We have taken certain other measures such as prior reference requirement to make sure that possibility of misuse is reduced.

**Q: What’s the government policy to promote people to people contact?**

We have always supported the policy of promoting people to people contact. We believe that this is one of the ways of promoting understanding, especially when the establishment in Pakistan subjects its people to virtually round the clock false propaganda about India, the situation here and our intentions. A look at the text books used in various curricula, the discussions in official media are all pointers.

However, after December 13 we have had to take certain measures which have no doubt limited such contacts. These measures included the termination of the Lahore-Delhi bus service, Samjhauta Express and direct air links. Pakistan had to be made to understand the seriousness with which we viewed its sponsorship and support to terrorism, and the fact that the government now had a zero-tolerance for such approaches.

The people of Pakistan must also understand and deal with the fact that their government, and particularly the military regime and its related establishments, have been involved in policies that are leading to the country’s increasing isolation, its continuing social and economic backwardness, and is posing as a threat to stability in other countries.

**Q: Has Pakistan increased anti-India activities in our neighbouring countries?**

We have regular reports about Pakistan’s continuing attempts to use the territory of some of our other neighbouring countries to launch anti-India and terrorist activities.

**Q: Should Pakistan and terrorism become election issues?**

Pakistan’s sponsorship of terrorism directly affects the lives of our people in several parts of India. It is a direct threat to India’s security and integrity. It is difficult to imagine that issues as important as these and the
Government’s handling of them would not be of concern to voters during an election. I would, therefore, think that to some extent Pakistan and terrorism becoming election issues is unavoidable.

Q: Is there danger of Pakistan’s nuclear assets slipping into wrong hands?

I would say that nuclear weapons in the hands of Pakistan are already in wrong hands.

Q: Is it prudent for two nuclear powers to have such poor relations?

This is not the first time that two nuclear powers have had difficult relations. In any case, as I mentioned earlier, we believe in working for good relations with Pakistan. Pakistan must stop its sponsorship of cross-border terrorism.

Q: What could the United States have done to better persuade Pakistan to give up anti-India agenda?

It is for the United States to decide what kind of relationship it would like to have with Pakistan. At the same time, I believe that there can be no double standards with respect to terrorism. Terrorist groups have inter-linkages, they support each other, their agendas mutate. It would be incorrect to think that partial cooperation on terrorism will eliminate the potential of such threats. This is an area where obviously far more needs to be done, the comprehensive inter-linkages of the problem recognised and available instruments of leverage used.

✦✦✦✦✦
092. Question in the Lok Sabha: “Terrorist Country Status to Pak.”

New Delhi, March 12, 2003.

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have urged the US Government to declare Pakistan a terrorist State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether the Government propose to mount pressure on U.S. and other countries to declare Pakistan a terrorist State

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Vinod Khanna):

(a) and (b) Government believes that Pakistan displays all the characteristics of a state sponsor of terrorism. It has consistently conveyed this assessment to international community, including the United States. It is for the United States Government to consider whether Pakistan meets the criteria for designation as a State sponsor of terrorism under United States laws.

(c) Government uses very opportunity to apprise the international community of Pakistan’s continuing sponsorship of cross-border terrorism against India and Government’s firm resolve to use all appropriate means to defeat it.

........(Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: He knows the procedure, but he wanted the House to be apprised once again.

Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Pakistan has been waging shadow war against India for the last 15 years in which our 60 thousand civilians and 6 thousand army personnel have been killed. I want to ask the hon. Minister whether India has asked America that the definition of terrorism for Afghanistan and Iraq is different from the one for Pakistan?

America’s attitude towards terrorism shows that its opinion about Afghanistan and Iraq is different from its opinion about Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan is promoting terrorism. Have we held a dialogue with America in this regard?
The Minister of External Affairs (Shri Yashwant Sinha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon. Member is right that India has been a victim of terrorism for the last 15-20 years and Pakistan is the source of this terrorism. As far as international community is concerned, we draw the attention of America and other nations towards this that we have sufficient proof against Pakistan than American has against the nations whom it has held responsible for terrorism. As per their rules if any nation deserves to be in such a category, it is Pakistan. We go on telling them.

Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra: Mr. Speaker, Sir, America has kept Pakistan in the most favoured category. It has extended financial assistance of 20 thousand crore rupees to Pakistan recently and Pakistan is spending the money received from America in waging shadow war against India. India expects friendship from America and it is supporting our barbaric enemy and biggest terrorist nation. Have we protested against this action of America.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as per the law of America, if America puts any nation, in the category of the State sponsor of terrorism then they take a follow up action. It includes various sanctions. And it is evident that America has not included Pakistan in such a list that is why it has not imposed sanctions on Pakistan. As regards the second part of the question, I have informed the House that we do not agree with America in this regard. We draw its attention towards this whenever we get opportunity.

Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to draw the attention of the House towards the reply given by the hon. Minister. It has two things— It is said in (a) and (b) parts:

“Government believes that Pakistan displays all the I characteristics of a State sponsor of terrorism.”

It is also said- 

“...designation as a State sponsor of terrorism under United States laws.”

“The question was-

“If not, whether the Government propose to mount pressure on the US and other countries to declare Pakistan as a terrorist State?”

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we want America to declare Pakistan a terrorist State. I want to ask the hon. Minister the criteria in our country to declare any
nation a terrorist State? Whether there is any law in our country so that we can declare any nation a terrorist State. We have not yet been able to convince America to declare Pakistan a terrorist State. Whether the Government of India has been able to convince a single country in this world that Pakistan is involved in terrorist activities? If so, then we would like to know the name of the country.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as is asked in the question whether America is declaring Pakistan a terrorist State or State sponsor of terrorism or not and whether India is mounting pressure on America or not? America has its own two laws. Their law does not have the word terrorist State, it includes the word: ‘State sponsor of terrorism’, where the State is the sponsor of terrorism State sponsor of terrorism.

There is a provision that if the Government of America concludes that any particular nation is supporting or sponsoring terrorism then it would declare that nation State sponsor of terrorism and take the follow up action defined in the American law i.e. impose various sanctions. Certain countries have been included in this list which have been categorized as State sponsor of terrorism under the American law but Pakistan has not been included in this list as America have formulated this law to protect their own interests. The law mainly covers the impact on American citizens and assets. If any country tends to be dangerous for America then it declares that nation terrorist State or State sponsor of terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, America is using this law wherever their own interests are directly involved. We all are aware and the House is also aware that America will not deal with Pakistan in the same way. In fact Pakistan is a stalwart ally for fight against terrorism. This America’s policy is apparently contradictory. This contradiction is there because America is concerned about their own interests, they are not bothered about other’s interests. As far as convincing other countries is concerned, India has raised the issue with international community time and again. The House is aware that during the last 12-14 months terrorist activities have increased. Many countries condemned the attack on our Parliament. It has also been accepted that Pakistan is sponsoring cross border terrorism. Those countries are mounting pressure on Pakistan to stop sponsoring terrorism but America has not taken the step of declaring Pakistan .a State sponsor of terrorism.

Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari : Mr. Speaker, Sir, My original question was whether there is any law in India by which we can declare any nation a
terrorist nation. Hon. Minister may stand up and reply.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, replies are always given by standing up.

**Mr. Speaker:** He knows the discipline of the House and he will stand up to reply.

**Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, he keeps sitting and merely nods his head.

**Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, Ministers stand up while replying and the members keep sitting while listening to them. He is standing while he is sitting.

**Mr. Speaker:** He is standing all the time.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Member has asked whether there is any law in our country under which we can declare any nation a terrorist nation. There is POTA to control terrorism in our country. We can declare the organizations a terrorist organization under this law but we cannot deal with any country in this manner that is what I am saying... *(Interruptions)*

**Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, he is urging upon other nations to declare Pakistan a terrorist nation, I want to know that why cannot we formulate such a law in our country... *(interruptions)*

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, essential to clarify that we are doing so because America has such a law... *(Interruptions)*

**Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, Our Government has convinced other nations to declare Pakistan a terrorist State but there is no such law in our country, Mr. Speaker, Sir, please ask; his opinion...*(Interruptions)*

**Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi:** America has granted the status of most favoured nation to Pakistan and we are asking America to declare it a terrorist State... *(Interruptions)*

**Mr. Speaker:** Please sit down, questions are not asked like this.

**Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari:** I have asked another question also whether you have been able to convince any nation to declare Pakistan a terrorist nation. You have replied to half of the question... *(Interruptions)*
Mr. Speaker: Hon. Minister, there is no need to reply to this. Please ask your question. Other people have also to ask their questions.

Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari: Has the Government convinced any country in the world to declare Pakistan a terrorist state. Barring America as it does not agree but has this Government convinced any country of the world to declare a terrorist state.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have repeatedly said that this question pertains to America as to whether America declared Pakistan a terrorist State or not and there exists a law of this kind in America. As far as other countries are concerned, I have stated in the House that other countries and groups of countries have agreed to this...(Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: Prof. Ummareddyji, please go ahead with your question. .......(Interruptions)

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Pakistan is responsible for cross-border terrorism and those countries have mounted pressure on Pakistan to shun cross border terrorism. ..(Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: I am not allowing these types of questions. Please sit down.

Prof. Ummareddy Venkateswarlu: Mr. Speaker, Sir, consequent upon the attack of terrorists on the temple of our democracy, the Parliament of India, our country had sent several delegations to various other countries to apprise them of the situation and to condemn the brutal activity and the Pakistan-sponsored terrorism on this democratic institution. So, what is the response of these countries? What is the actual outcome? I would like to know whether these countries have stood by the principle of expressing solidarity with condemning such types of attacks. I also want to know whether this issue had been raised with them to express their solidarity with our country.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: As the hon. Member has pointed out, after the terrorist attack on our Parliament, a number of delegations went to various countries. The hon. Members of Parliament were either members or leaders of those delegations. These delegations went, represented the case of India, explained the enormity of the recalcitrance of Pakistan and the activities of Pakistan. It had its impact. It is in the sense that a very large number of countries, barring only a few, had openly condemned
the terrorist attack on Indian Parliament. They fully sympathised with India. As a result of the work done by those delegations, there is a far greater understanding today in the international community about India’s case vis-a-vis Pakistan. The international community has recognised that Pakistan is a sponsor of cross-border terrorism. The international community tells us that they are putting pressure; and they continue to put pressure on Pakistan to desist from it... (Interruptions)

Shri Adhir Chowdhary: Sir, Pakistan is still getting the most favoured nation status... (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: No, I have not permitted him. Please do not reply to him.

Shri Prakash Paranjpe: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I want to know this. When Yasser Arafat is creating terrorism in Israel, Israel never waits to get a green signal from America to attack on the residence of Yasser Arafat... (Interruptions)

Shri Suresh Kurup: This is not the proper way... (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: The Minister is there to reply.

Shri Prakash Paranjpe: Let me put my question... (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: The Minister is there to reply to him. If he is making a wrong statement, the Minister will correct him.

........ (Interruptions)

Shri Prakash Paranjpe: You are not my boss.

Mr. Speaker: Shri Prakash Paranjpe, do not talk to them. You please address the Chair.

Shri Prakash Paranjpe: When Yasser Arafat is making attack on Israel, Israel never waits to get the green signal from America to attack on the residence of Yasser Arafat. Why is India waiting for getting a green signal from America to attack on Pak-occupied Kashmir where training centres are there for atankawadis (terrorists)?

They are attacking our nation and we are every now and then saying that we are waiting for a green signal from America, for America to declare Pakistan a terrorist nation. When are we going to learn something from countries like Israel to say, ‘We are proud of our country and we would not tolerate anybody coming and attacking us’? We have to learn a lesson
from Israel to attack Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and finish all the training centres without waiting for any green signal from America... *(Interruptions)*

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Members, please sit down. Let the hon. Minster reply.

..........*(Interruptions)*

**Shri S. Jaipal Reddy:** Sir, I am on a point of procedure... *(Interruptions)* I am not on a point of order but on a point of procedure.

**Mr. Speaker:** Jaipal Reddyji, please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*

**Mr. Speaker:** Shri Jaipal Reddy, the hon. Member has put a question. The question is a straight question. The Minister has to reply.

..........*(Interruptions)*

**Mr. Speaker:** Shri Suresh Jadhav, would you please sit down?

..........*(Interruptions)*

**Mr. Speaker:** The question has been put. If the hon. Minister thinks that this question really needs to be replied to, he can definitely reply to it. No other hon. Member is allowed to advise the hon. Minister in between.

..........*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, please sit down.

..........*(Interruptions)*

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Please listen to my reply.

The Government of India does not think that this reference to Israel is relevant in this context; neither does the Government of India compare Pakistan with Palestine. They are in two different categories... *(Interruptions)* Therefore, as far as obtaining a green signal is concerned, the Government of India is not waiting—let me assert this with all the force at my command—for a green signal from anybody. The Government of India is competent to take all its decision by itself and will take them. We are fighting this scourge of terrorism. We will continue to fight this scourge of terrorism. We shall win this battle, we shall win this war and we shall take whatever steps are necessary to fight terrorism.

..........*(Interruptions)*
Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi: Sir, would you please allow me to ask one question?... (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: The last question on this would be by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi. I have already given half-an-hour for this Question because of its importance.

 ..........(Interruptions)

Shri Basu Deb Acharia: Sir, he has referred to Yasser Arafat as a terrorist. That should be *expunged*... (Interruptions)

Shri Mohan Rawale: Where did he refer it”?

Shri Basu Deb Acharia: He has compared it ...(Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, please sit down. ...(Interruptions)

Shri Basu Deb Acharia: Sir, how can he compare like that? It should be expunged. He has compared Yasser Arafat with terrorists. That should be expunged... (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: I have announced that Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi’s question would be the last supplementary on this Question.

 ..........(Interruptions)

Shri Prakash Paranjpe: I have referred to Israel; I have not referred to Yasser Arafat. I had said that we should learn from Israel; I did not refer to Yasser Arafat. He is misleading the *House*... (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, are you putting your question or not?

 ..........(Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: Shri Prakash Paranjpe, please sit down.

 ..........(Interruptions)

Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi: Please allow me to put the question... (Interruptions)

Before I put this supplementary through you, my humble appeal to you on behalf of our Party is that Yasser Arafat is a friendly nation’s leader, who is dear to India. Normally, it is a convention of Parliament that the
name of the Head of the State of any country, which is friendly to our
country, is not taken in a derogatory fashion. So, it should be expunged
from the record. That is my appeal.... (Interruptions)

My supplementary to the hon. Minister is that since the hon. Minister has
confessed that the United States considers the threat perception of terrorist
limited to the interests of the American people and not beyond that, the
global alliance, which was initiated by the Head of the State of the United
States, supported by U.K., made it clear in the first declaration meeting
that it will uproot the last base of the terrorists, wherever it may be in the
world. In that context, I think, the Government of India’s confession today
is that they have totally failed diplomatically to project the matter in the
international community.

However, my straight question to the hon. Minister is that since the
overwhelming people of Pakistan and India are opposed to terrorism, it is
the regime of Pakistan, which is operating it. But still there are opportunities
to exchange the social, intellectual and other organisations of Pakistan to
isolate the terrorists in their own homeland against the regime. Why I say
because I have a reason to say.

The other day, a Member of Parliament of Pakistan, Shri Imran Khan
made a statement in India... (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: Shri P.R, Dasmunsi, please put your straight question.

.........(Interruptions)

Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi: He mentioned that it is a goodwill link
between the two nations. I would like to know the Governments through
their diplomatic efforts, shall build up a campaign within Pakistan also
that the; people of Pakistan reject terrorism and restore friendship between
India and Pakistan, as it was in the past, because there are such people
in Pakistan also. I would like to know whether diplomatic channels have
overcome that....interruption

Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra: Is it the Congress Party’s policy which he has
stated?... (Interruptions)

If it is the policy of Congress, they should initiate a dialogue with Pakistan
as per their Party’s policy... (Interruptions)

Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi: The Congress Party believes that still there
are people in Pakistan who are opposed to terrorism. They are not our
enemies. Even an MP of Pakistan came to India and stated why to encourage all these things... (Interruptions)

**Mr. Speaker:** Shri P.R. Dasmunsi, please let him reply.

........ (Interruptions)

**Shri Ram Nagina Mishra:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, their party men also rejoice. When there are jubilations in Pakistan. It is their Policy... (Interruptions)

Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi: Now, your Government has failed. The Minister has confessed it... (Interruptions)

**Mr. Speaker:** Let the Minister reply. ... (Interruptions)

**Mr. Speaker:** Shri P.R. Dasmunsi, you cannot to go on replying to each and every Member. The Minister is replying to your question. Please sit down.

........(Interruptions)

Shri Yashwant Sinha: As far as the question of confession is concerned, let me clarify that I made no confession and I only stated the facts. So, there is no question of the Government of India making a confession or the Minister making a confession.

We are talking about Pakistan declared a terrorist State only in the context of the American law on this subject and, therefore, this question has arisen. Otherwise, the question will not arise...(Interruptions)

Secondly, as far as the failure of the Government of India on the diplomatic front is concerned, I most humbly submit for the consideration of the hon. Member that, as we are all aware, State-sponsored terrorism from Pakistan has been going on for almost 20 years against India— first in Punjab and then in Jammu and Kashmir... (Interruptions)

**Mr. Speaker:** Please listen to the Minister. ... (Interruptions)

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Various Governments have been in power there... (Interruptions)

**Mr. Speaker:** You do not take disadvantage of the Chair.

........ (Interruptions)

**Mr. Speaker:** Shri P.R. Dasmunsi, please sit down. I have not permitted you.
Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi: No, Sir. I would like to place it on record that Shrimati Indira Gandhi... *(Interruptions)*

Mr. Speaker: Only the statement of Minister will go on record and nothing else will go on record.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Is he condemning his own Government about diplomatic failure?... *(Interruptions)* I would like to say that as far as diplomatic failure or success or diplomatic achievements are concerned, in the last five years, we have had more achievements on the diplomatic front to our credit than any Government in the past... *(Interruptions)* The third issue... *(Interruptions)*

Mr. Speaker: Shri P.R. Dasmunsi, I have not permitted you to speak. Whatever he says will not go on record.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Shri P.R. Dasmunsi, you are the Chief Whip of your Party and you do not know how to... *(Interruptions)*

As far as the people of Pakistan are concerned, let me say that the people of India have no ill will towards the people of Pakistan. We want the friendliest of relationship with Pakistan, provided Pakistan learns to behave like a responsible member of the international community. That is the bottom line... *(Interruptions)*

Shri Basu Deb Acharia: Sir, what about expunction of remarks?

Mr. Speaker: Such type of remarks, which are contradictory to the policy we have adopted, will be removed from the record.
Convocation address of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the 29th Convocation of the Punjabi University, Patiala.


Governor of Punjab and Chancellor of Punjabi University Lt. Gen. J.F.R. Jacob, Chief Minister Capt. Amarinder Singh, Vice Chancellor Sardar Swarn Singh Boparai, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I am deeply honoured to be here today to deliver the Convocation Address of this prestigious University.

I am not unfamiliar with Patiala. One memorable visit was when I was brought as a prisoner to Patiala by the Chandigarh Administration for a political activity which was not to their liking. Unfortunately, because of the hue and cry in Parliament against my arrest, my stay in jail was rather brief – only for a few days. But I enjoyed every moment of my stay in the jail here. It gave me an insight into jail life which I regard as an essential part of one’s political training.

Friends, Punjabi University owes its foundation in 1962 to the vision and foresight of Maharaja Sir Yadvindra Singh of Patiala and renowned scholar and author Professor Harbans Singh. It is the first in India to be named after a regional language of the State and the second such university in the world. The establishment of Punjabi University has been acclaimed as a major landmark in efforts to promote research in Punjabi language and literature. It has today diversified into various academic disciplines and is engaged in the promotion of higher education and research. In its forward march spanning over 40 years, it has grown and developed rapidly under the guidance of its distinguished Vice-Chancellors, dedicated teachers, staff and students. Punjabi University can today legitimately claim to be among the premier academic centres of the country and I congratulate each and every one of you for your contributions in this regard.

Punjab has always been a ‘frontline’ state for India and continues to remain so. It bore the brunt of Partition in 1947. A large number of people from Punjab serve valiantly in our armed forces and security services. Because of Punjab’s geographical location and persisting difficulties with our neighbour to the west, Punjab continues to play a critical role in the defence of our country. Punjab is also special in one
other respect. Punjab’s experience of not only waging but also winning the war against terrorism constitutes one of the best examples anywhere in the world of a comprehensive victory of democracy and the rule of law over the dark forces of terror, secession and violence.

In international politics, it is said that no country can escape the reality of the geography that surrounds them. One can change friends but not neighbours. However, I often wonder how many nations in the world have had the misfortune of having to live and deal with a neighbour like Pakistan which seeks to project its raison d’etre on the basis of hostility towards India. Our neighbour’s efforts to sponsor terrorism, fan fundamentalism and promote secession came to a complete naught in Punjab.

Normally, this debacle should have induced Pakistan to give up such efforts and accept the inevitability and advantages of peaceful co-existence with India. However, what Pakistan has chosen to do instead is to turn its targets onto the hapless people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir as well as other parts of India.

I refer here, in particular to Pakistan’s designs over the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. As this Convocation Address is being delivered in a state which neighbours Pakistan and which in the recent past experienced a situation similar to what J&K is currently going through, I propose to focus today on the so-called ‘Issue of Jammu & Kashmir’ that our neighbour constantly talks about.

As a result of the passage of time, not everyone is fully aware of the truth behind the propaganda that Pakistan indulges in. It is important that facts relating to the matter are clarified and widely disseminated, especially, amongst young people like you on whom lies the responsibility for building the future not just for India but our entire region and the world.

Friends, the first point to understand and remember is the fact that the accession of Jammu & Kashmir to the Union of India in 1947 was entirely lawful and in full accordance with provisions of the relevant laws which governed integration of princely states with the Indian Union as well as with Pakistan, namely, the Government of India Act of 1935 and the Independence of India Act of 1947.

The accession of Jammu and Kashmir is total and irrevocable. Neither in international law nor under the two laws that I have referred to
above, is there any provision for a ‘conditional’ accession. With the acceptance by India of the Instrument of Accession signed by the ruler of the State of Jammu & Kashmir, the act of accession was complete. The state of Jammu and Kashmir is therefore an integral and inalienable part of India.

Pakistan has always coveted and continues to covet Jammu & Kashmir. When it saw that it could not obtain the State of Jammu & Kashmir by legal means, Pakistan’s response was to try and seize it by force. In October 1947, Pakistan initially sent tribal invaders into J&K and then, followed it up with regular troops. The presence of these troops was even publicly acknowledged by Pakistan in May 1948. Faced with an act of such blatant aggression, it was India which decided in January 1948 to take the matter to the United Nations. There are those who argue that this decision was a big mistake. This is however an issue for historians to debate. My point here is that the roots of India-Pakistan differences over J&K derive from this act of aggression. India’s goal in referring the matter to the U.N. was to bring to the attention of the international community this act of aggression by Pakistan and its quest was to have U.N. play its role in putting an end to this aggression.

Many of you would have noticed that despite overwhelming evidence of Pakistani sponsorship of cross-border terrorism, the Government and leaders of Pakistan continue to make public claims that no such thing is taking place. Deception and falsehoods of this nature is something Pakistan has engaged in right from the time of its independence. The tribal invaders who launched the above aggression were fed, clothed, armed, equipped and transported to J&K with the direct help and assistance of Pakistan Government. But, Pakistan kept claiming in public that it was not in any way assisting these invaders. The UN sponsored mediator Owen Dixon did not however fail to see through this ruse. On September 15, 1950, he clearly recorded that the crossing of the J&K frontier by hostile elements was “contrary to international law”. He said “and that when, in May 1948 as I believe, units of the regular Pakistan forces moved into the territory of the state, that too was inconsistent with international law.” He further proposed that “the first step in demilitarization should consist in the withdrawal of the Pakistan Regular forces”. Sadly, such a withdrawal is still to happen.

Pakistan whines day in and day out that India has failed to implement U.N. Resolutions. It accuses India of not conducting the plebiscite promised by these resolutions and of denying the people of Jammu and
Kashmir their right to Self-Determination. Let us take a look at these U.N. Resolutions and what exactly they talk about.

The United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (in short, UNCIP) Resolution I of August 13, 1948 and UNCIP Resolution II of January 5, 1949 are two resolutions which were most important in this regard. Under these resolutions, a three-step formula was agreed to by both India and Pakistan with a ceasefire, a truce agreement, and plebiscite - to be implemented in sequential order.

Immediately after adoption of these Resolutions, India made it clear that full implementation of UN resolutions would be conditional upon Pakistan fulfilling Parts (I) & (II) of the UNCIP Resolution I of August 13, 1948, which inter alia, required that Pakistan withdraw its troops and endeavour to secure the withdrawal of tribesmen and Pak nationals from J&K. India’s acceptance of UNCIP resolutions was further subject to several conditions and assurances given by UNCIP such as that Pakistan would be excluded from all affairs of J&K, the so-called “Azad J&K Government” would not be recognized; sovereignty of J&K Government over the entire territory of the State shall not be brought into question; territory occupied by Pakistan shall not be consolidated and Pakistani troops would be withdrawn completely.

Till today, neither the conditions nor the assurances have been fulfilled by Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan by failing to implement Parts I and II of the UNCIP resolution thus wrecked any possibility of a plebiscite being held in J&K. Further, instead of withdrawing Pakistani troops and other nationals from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir as called for by these resolutions, Pakistan introduced huge quantities of military equipment and armed forces into Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. It also encouraged demographic changes in the area by permitting generations of non-Kashmiris to take residence.

After waiting for over two years for Pakistan to fulfill the pre-conditions mentioned above, the people of Jammu and Kashmir felt that they could not wait indefinitely to decide their future. A Constituent Assembly was therefore convened in 1951. This Assembly reaffirmed in 1956 the accession of the state to India and finalised the Constitution for the State. The Jammu and Kashmir Constitution reaffirms that “the State is and shall be an integral part of the Union of India” and the people of J&K have since, in exercise of their democratic rights voted in successive national and state level elections with the most recent being the elections
to the J&K Legislative Assembly held in September-October 2002. There were also many subsequent developments that constituted a material change in the situation rendering the UN Resolutions irrelevant and incapable of implementation.

In the above context, let me also point out that India and Pakistan agreed in 1972 under the Shimla Accord to resolve all issues including Jammu and Kashmir bilaterally. The Shimla Accord, a bilateral agreement, provides the framework for the India-Pakistan relationship today and supercedes previous arrangements.. And, should agreements as sacrosanct as the Shimla Accord and the Lahore Declaration come under challenge, then all treaties between the two countries will automatically also come under question.

Let me now turn to the charge that India is denying the people of Jammu and Kashmir their right to Self-Determination. At the outset itself, I would like to state that it is completely ridiculous that a country which is currently a military dictatorship, which has been under military rule for almost half its existence and whose ruler deposed an elected Prime Minister and forced him into exile chooses to accuse India - the largest democracy in the world - of denying to its people their right to Self Determination. Pakistan should first provide its own people with the right to Self-Determination before it seeks to sermonize others.

Self Determination is one of the fundamental principles of international law. The majority of the membership of United Nations comprises countries which regained this right after long periods of colonial rule. Given India’s long experience with colonial rule, it has always been committed to the right of peoples under colonial subjugation to freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

However, what Pakistan seeks to do is to distort this important right and misuse it for political ends. In today’s context, this is an endeavour doomed to failure. Pakistan’s own people have remained deprived of their democratic rights for most of its history and it has ruled the part of Jammu and Kashmir occupied by it illegally as a virtual colony. Pakistan’s championing of the cause of Self-Determination has been therefore nothing but a crude attempt to bolster its agenda of territorial aggrandizement through terrorism against India.

The whole world accepts the fact that the period of colonial domination and de-colonization is now long over. We live in an age of
democracy, pluralism and multi-racialism. As a result of globalization and the increased movement of people across borders, more and more societies in the world are becoming multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-racial. India, of course has been so for centuries and since independence has enriched and strengthened her diversity even further.

The essence of Self-Determination, in relation to States that are independent, is the regular exercise of democratic choice. Human dignity, freedom, justice, tolerance and plurality are based on the full and equal participation in governance of every citizen in an open democracy. It is wrong to interpret Self-Determination as a right which permits every subunit that constitutes such a state to secede and seek independence from the rest. If this was indeed the case, then no multi-ethnic state could survive in the world. Every one of them would be torn apart by secessionist movements. In Pakistan itself, Baluchistan, Sindh and North West Frontier Province have at various times sought arrangements different from what exists today.

India, in particular, is a political laboratory where there has been a wide variety of experiments in federal power sharing over the last fifty-five years. There are different models in place across the country. For J&K, there has always been a special status provided through Article 370 of the Indian Constitution. Pakistan’s advocacy of Self-Determination for Jammu and Kashmir is therefore nothing but a cover for its territorial ambitions.

It is with the specific intention of preventing misuse of the right to Self Determination for political ends that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 re-emphasized that the right to Self-Determination is not to be construed as either authorizing or encouraging any action both internally generated or externally sponsored which could dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent states.

In the world of pluralistic societies that we live in today and particularly so, in democracies such as India where Governments frequently change through periodic, free and fair elections; where there exists Constitutional rule; a free press; independent judiciary etc., the right to Self-Determination for particular regions or groups of people within the country can only mean internal self-governance within the overall constitutional framework. There are in fact scholars who contend that the
time has now come for the concept of Self-Determination to give way to the idea of ‘Joint Determination’, which is what India has been practicing since independence.

In this connection, let me also point out how ludicrous is Pakistan’s talk of Self-Determination in the context of the policies it pursues vis-à-vis Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. The territories of J&K illegally occupied by Pakistan are not only extremely poor but also singularly lacking in political rights. Pakistan maintains a fig leaf of a so-called “AJK Government” headed by a “Prime Minister” with very limited executive powers. The reality however is that the Government of Pakistan maintains direct and complete hold on the so-called “AJK” through the “AJK Council”, a large number of whose members are non-Kashmiris. There have never been free and fair elections in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and the ruling parties in Pakistan have repeatedly manipulated results in favour of its allies, ensuring the subservience of local political leadership.

In the Pakistani version of Self Determination that POK enjoys, there can be no questioning of the occupation by force of these territories by Pakistan. For example, Part 2 of Section 7 of the POK Constitution states: “No person or political party in Azad Jammu and Kashmir shall be permitted to propagate against or take part in activities prejudicial or detrimental to the ideology of the State’s accession to Pakistan”. Under the POK Legislative Assembly Election Ordinance of 1970, any person propagating any opinion or action in any manner prejudicial to the ideology of Pakistan, the ideology of POK’s accession to Pakistan, or the sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan can be disqualified. The same caveat also applies to anyone who “defames or brings into ridicule the Armed Forces of Pakistan”. As a result of this Ordinance, in the 1996 and 2001 elections in POK, parties and candidates who wished to participate on the platform of independence and refused to sign a declaration accepting POK’s accession to Pakistan were denied the right to field candidates.

Residents of the sparsely populated and ethnically and linguistically diverse so-called “Northern Areas” are even more deprived of political rights. Northern Areas have no legal status. It is treated neither as a province of Pakistan nor a part of the so-called “Azad Kashmir”. The people of that area are ruled directly from Islamabad through a Northern Areas Council that is de facto headed by Pakistan’s Minister for Kashmir Affairs. An Islamabad-appointed Chief Executive (normally a retired Pakistani military officer) is the local administrative head and the Northern
Areas Council meets only when Pakistan’s Minister for Kashmir Affairs convenes it.

Consequent to these policies, there has been widespread discontent amongst the people of these so-called Northern Areas. Many political groups have had no option but to remain underground since any overt organizing or expression of political will is not permitted. Even peaceful protests have led to arbitrary arrests and long jail terms. Demonstrations by students in Gilgit struggling against high unemployment have been crushed and there have been many reports of brutal suppression of dissenting voices. For a country which indulges in such gross violations of human rights, to talk of Self-Determination is nothing but the height of hypocrisy.

Friends, India bears no ill will whatsoever towards the people of Pakistan. We have always stretched out our hands in friendship towards Pakistan. Prime Minister Vajpayee had no hesitation in proclaiming from the Minar-e-Pakistan during his visit to Lahore in February 1999 that a stable, secure and prosperous Pakistan was in India’s interest. But what we have received in return from Pakistan is aggression and proxy war. Pakistan’s policy of sponsoring cross-border terrorism is nothing but an effort to unilaterally alter the status quo on the ground and try to undermine India’s secular fabric.

India has always been willing to discuss the issue of J&K with Pakistan. But, Pakistan seeks parity with India in terms of ‘locus standi’ in Kashmir. Pakistan is the aggressor. It cannot have parity with India. Pakistan is in illegal occupation of a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The only issue that remains to be resolved is therefore the question pertaining to this illegal occupation and domination of the people of this area by the military establishment based in Rawalpindi, which derives its justification for disproportionate perks and privileges, and avoiding accountability, through manufactured causes and mythical enemies.

Friends, the priority for the people of India as well as Pakistan is economic development and elimination of poverty. This is the most important task that both nations face. If Pakistan would permit economic linkages and greater people to people contacts between our two countries, both our countries would benefit. It is absolutely tragic that Pakistan’s policies towards India are based on hatred and compulsive hostility. Unfortunately, the complete domination of Pakistan’s politics and economy
by the military prevents choice of policies that would respond to popular needs and aspirations. If only Pakistan would be willing to shed hostility and stop using terrorism as an instrument of national policy, there can still be a new dawn in our relationship.

Pakistan’s policies towards India have been illogical and self-defeating. But, I am certain that this situation cannot last for ever. Pakistan will have to change. It cannot remain forever on the wrong side of history. The military in Pakistan cannot suppress the yearnings of its people for a better and more normal life indefinitely.

Friends, India faces the future and the world with confidence and optimism. Our hope is to emerge as a developed country by 2020. We must collectively work towards this goal and overcome all obstacles in our path. India has faced many storms in its long history. Cross-border terrorism and the hostility of Pakistan is but one such storm. Each time, we passed through rough weather, we have only emerged stronger.

Punjab is a state which has led the rest of the country in many fields of endeavour. The people of Punjab are known for their spirit of enterprise, willingness to adapt to change and ability to absorb science and technology as well as apply it to their daily lives. I am sure the students and faculty of this University exemplify these qualities and am confident that with talents such as yours, India has no cause to worry. Friends, a strong and vibrant India is arising. In the making of this great nation, each one of us has to play his assigned role. That role may be exalted or humble. But, it can never be negligible. For, it is the combined effort of all that makes up the glory of the whole. I am confident that each one of you will play your role to the best of your ability and contribute to the greatness of this nation. I congratulate all those who are graduating today and wish you the very best for the future.

Jai Hind.
094. Comments by Official Spokesperson on US State Department’s call for a dialogue between India and Pakistan\textsuperscript{1}.

New Delhi, March 25, 2003.

Asked to comment on the call for a dialogue between India and Pakistan made by the US State Department’s Spokesperson in the context of recent terrorist violence in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, the Official Spokesperson said:

“We see the call for dialogue by the U.S. State Department’s Spokesman as inappropriate in the context of the heinous terrorist crime in J&K. It regrettably shifts the focus from the basic issue of the problem between India and Pakistan. The problem is not lack of dialogue, but continued sponsorship of terrorism by Pakistan which is being overlooked. If dialogue, per se, is more critical than combating international terrorism with all necessary means, then one can legitimately ask why both in Afghanistan and Iraq military action instead of dialogue has been resorted to.”

\textsuperscript{1} The Bush administration while condemning as “horrific” the terrorist attack at Nadimarg in South Srinagar in which a large number of innocent people including women and children were killed on the night of March 23 reiterated that violence “will not solve the problem of Kashmir” said dialogue between India and Pakistan remained a “crucial element” in the normalization. “The United States is deeply disturbed and saddened by horrific terrorist attack in south of Srinagar” and warned that the cowardly attack appeared aimed “at disrupting the bold efforts of the Kashmir State Government led by Mufti Mohammad Sayeed to restore peace and religious harmony to the troubled State”, the spokesman, Richard Boucher, said in a press statement. “Violence will not solve Kashmir’s problems. Such acts are intended to disrupt the programme of the State Government in Kashmir, which is attempting to reduce tensions and promote reconciliation. Dialogue remains a critical element in the normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan,” the statement noted. The Secretary of State, Colin Powell, had a telephonic talk with his Indian counterpart, Yashwant Sinha, to express American condemnation of the brutal attack and to extend condolences to the families of the victims. (Please also see Document No. 95)
Statement by Official Spokesperson on the killing of innocent persons at Nadimarg on March 23 and Pakistan’s encouragement to terrorist acts.

New Delhi, March 26, 2003

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

We have already strongly condemned the senseless and brutal killing of a large number of innocent men, women and children in Nadimarg on the night of March 23, which is the National Day of Pakistan. No cause, no religion, no ideology, no so-called struggle justifies such inhuman acts. Those involved in such massacres are criminals and mercenaries motivated by the lowliest impulses and performing their murderous deeds at the behest of others. The pattern, methodology and the nature of targets of these acts of terror are all too familiar and therefore the culpability of Pakistan is all too clear. The global war against terrorism can only be won when it is pursued without double standards and terrorism is eradicated wherever it exists, without being influenced by short term political and other considerations. The combat against international terrorism is ill served if threats in some cases are met with military means and in others with calls for restraint and dialogue. The clarity of the commitment of the international community to combat terrorism requires a coherent and principled approach. The epicentre of international terrorism that exists in our neighbourhood, and the infrastructure of support and sponsorship of cross-border terrorism must be completely dismantled. We are determined to face this challenge with strength, determination and resolve.

Besides that I wanted to brief you on another matter, the issue of Sikh youth being kept in custody in Pakistani prison. The External Affairs Minister has received letters of appeal from concerned parties, other Ministers as well as the President of the Bhai Mardana Yadgari Kirtan

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1. In a gruesome incident on March 23 heavily-armed militants mowed down 24 members of 11 Kashmiri Pandit families in Nadimarg village, 65 km from Srinagar. The dead included 11 women and two children. The killings were widely mourned and the State Government ordered an inquiry. Eyewitnesses said the gunmen overpowered the policemen posted at the security picket in the village, took away four self-loading rifles, three .303 rifles, a carbine and a wireless set before targeting the civilians. Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, who rushed to the village condemned the killings and said that, “it is aimed at derailing our peace process but we are committed to go ahead. This is a barbaric act.”
Darbar Society (R) and concern had been expressed in these letters that the Sikh youth were being coerced to convert to Islam by Pakistani jail authorities. The matter was taken up with the High Commission of Pakistan on January 31, 2003 and again on February 20. The External Affairs Minister has now replied to the letters that he has received accordingly.

**Question:** In your statement you mentioned that the massacre in J &K happened on Pakistan National Day. Are we saying that Pakistan Government is directly involved in this?

**Answer:** What we have said is all too clear and the culpability of Pakistan is evidence given the pattern, methodology, nature of targets and our experience of similar acts of gruesome violence against women and children in the past. The question of timing of event has to be addressed to the perpetrators of the event. Any timing for such an event would be unfortunate and terrible.

**Question:** Do we have any fresh evidence to suggest the culpability of Pakistan in this terrible act?

**Answer:** The Government has been considering this issue for the last two days. There has been on the spot assessment by very senior leaders, by the Deputy Prime Minister of India. Obviously the Government takes all its assessments into consideration but the condemnation of the act has been there right from the beginning. It is also been clear that this terrorist activity has been going on because of the sponsorship from Pakistan. This has been mentioned by different people in different ways over the last two days.

**Question:** Are we considering diplomatic sanctions against Pakistan?

**Answer:** I wouldn’t like to indulge in guesswork. I have given you our reaction to the events as of today.

**Question:** Direct involvement of Pakistan.....

**Answer:** Well the culpability of Pakistan in the sponsorship of terrorism is quite clear and it has been known to us. There has been an assessment of on the ground realities as they exist. The discussions with the people there, the nature of the attack, the kind of victims that have been chosen, these have all been assessed.

**Question:** What is India’s policy to tackle this menace? We have been
issuing lot of statements on this. But nothing seems to happening on the ground?

**Answer:** You are right to the point that enough is not happening and there has been no change on the ground realities as far as Pakistan’s sponsorship of terrorists is concerned despite statements by them to the contrary. I would like to refer you to some of the statements made by the DPM yesterday. As far as we are concerned we would continue to battle terrorism with all the determination and resolve that we have.

**Question:** You said that there cannot be double standard in dealing with terrorism. In some case through military means and in other through dialogue and restraint. Does that mean India would also ..........

**Answer:** What I am saying is that the threat of international terrorism and the perpetration of international terrorism has to be met in a principled, uniform manner. It does not have different memories in different cases and it has to be met with all our determination and there cannot be double standard in treating terrorism.

**Question:** ..

**Answer:** I would not like to take guesses again. What I have said is very clear and I wouldn’t like to paraphrase the statement any further.

**Question:** By saying that there cannot be double standard in fighting international terrorism ..........Are we critical about the present operation in Iraq?

**Answer:** What we are being critical of is the constant and unabated perpetration of terror against the people of India.

**Question:** Did we issue notice in advance about our missile test?

**Answer:** As far as I am aware a NOTAM was issue yesterday that is customarily issued in such cases.

**Question:** Pakistan has said that India never notified its missile test in advance.....

**Answer:** NOTAM is a customary thing, the obligatory thing which is issued in such cases. The rest is all confidence building measures. The confidence building measure which will really have any meaning is for Pakistan to end its senseless perpetration of terrorism against India.
**Question:** How many Sikh youth are there under Pakistani custody?

**Answer:** I understand there are 22 of them. Mostly in Quetta and some in Lahore.

**Question:** For how long?

**Answer:** They have been there for varying periods up to and more than a year.

**Question:** You have been saying that terrorism cannot be fought with double standard for two successive days. Are we referring to the present military operation in Iraq by the US and the UK? Are we taking up this issue in other forum as well?

**Answer:** We have mentioned double standard over last two days because just three days ago this horrible act of terrorist violence has taken place and naturally our concern is with the constant violence that goes on and the inability and lack of willingness on Pakistan’s part to bring this to a permanent end.

**Question:** Would you also say that it is the lack of interest by the international community especially by the country which is involved in military operation in Iraq?

**Answer:** It is for the international community to implement its commitment to end terrorism all over the globe and to tell Pakistan to live up to its commitment that it has made to the international community. As far as India is concerned India is determined to fully defend the interests of our citizens against terrorism and we have been doing so for more than 15 years.

**Question:** Are we assessing that India-Pakistan relations is slipping back to...

**Answer:** I would leave assessments to you. I am giving you our assessment of the facts on the ground. Certainly relationships cannot be seen to be mending when the sponsorship of terrorism leads to gruesome murder of men, women and children.


Question: Would you like to comment on the US and UK Joint Statement?

Answer: The Joint US-UK statement by the US Secretary of State Mr. Colin Powell and the UK Foreign Secretary Jack Straw is largely welcome. We understand from the US and UK governments that the statement was issued under instructions of the President and the Prime Minister who were meeting at Camp David. We welcome that US and UK recognise that the Pakistan has not fulfilled the commitment it made to the two countries in June last year to stop infiltration across the LOC. The statement repudiates Pakistan assertion that it has no responsibility for violence in Jammu and Kashmir. We hope that Pakistan would heed the advise proffered, by stopping infiltration and by doing its utmost to cease all aid and abetment to terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism in POK and in Pakistan.

Question: The US UK statement also offers their good offices and urges ceasefire between India and Pakistan. What do they really imply?

Answer: As far as your first question is concerned, the Government of US and UK have expressed themselves in a similar way several times before. The two Governments have reaffirmed that this does not constitute a change in their policy and that they are not seeking a mediatory role.

As far as the second question is concerned, if there is a permanent end to infiltration and to cross border terrorism, the question of firing across the LOC will not arise.

Question: Inaudible.

Answer: I think I have given you a very elaborate reaction to the statement. I would not like to dissect the statement or my response any further.
Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with the New Delhi daily the Times of India.

New Delhi, April 6, 2003.

[External affairs minister Yashwant Sinha is unfazed by recent remarks from Washington, which suggest a softening of approach towards Pakistan. In an interview to The Times of India, he denies this is a setback for Indian foreign policy and says the fight against cross-border terrorism has to be fought and won by India alone.]

What has been the achievement of our foreign policy?

A major success is that the international community has realised that Pakistan is responsible for cross-border terror. Many countries have said Pakistan should desist from sponsoring terrorism. Has it stopped it from doing so? No. Will it stop Pakistan in future? One cannot be sure. This’s why the war against terrorism will have to be fought and won by India.

The US continues to treat India and Pakistan with an even hand. Will this change in the future?

I think any country which tries to balance Pakistan with India is making a grievous mistake because the international community has accepted that Pakistan is guilty of cross-border terrorism. We are victims of this. There cannot be a balance between a victim and an assailant. We have always said that India is in a different league, be it in economic strength, military prowess or our standing in the world.

When you say that India should not depend on anybody else, aren’t you actually admitting that foreign policy has not been able to deliver on this front?

You don’t expect me to say ‘yes’ to this, do you? But our foreign policy has been effective in convincing the international community. We are assured that many countries are putting pressure on Pakistan, but it has not been effective.

India doesn’t want to hold talks until Pakistan has created the climate. Doesn’t this run the risk of escalating the situation?

No, I think it has been an effective policy so far. It has created the
desired impact to a large extent. When we say that terrorism and dialogue cannot go together, we are being pragmatic. Suppose we were talking and the Nadimarg massacre takes place, what would be the first impulse? To break off talks. So in order to have a sustained dialogue and to arrive at a long-term solution, terrorism should be brought to an end by Pakistan and a proper climate created.

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098. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the Lok Sabha on his two-day visit to Jammu & Kashmir.

New Delhi, April 22, 2003

I went to Jammu & Kashmir on a two-day visit on April 18-19, 2003.

I had five programmes in Srinagar. The first had to do with the Foundation Stone laying ceremony for modernization of Srinagar Airport. This project would double the capacity of the airport. We would like international air services to start from Srinagar.

The second programme related to the National Highway Development Project. Under this, work on a four-lane highway from Srinagar to Kanuyakumari was launched. The newly elected Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, Shri Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, had been insisting that work on this project in the Kashmir Valley should start as early as possible.

In my public rally, I congratulated the people of Kashmir on participating in the Assembly elections in large numbers. They exercised their franchise defying the threat of bullets. I assured them, “We have come here to share your pain and suffering. Whatever complaints you have, try to address them collectively. Knock on the doors of Delhi. Delhi will never close its doors for you. The doors of our heart will also remain open for you”.

I assured the people of Jammu & Kashmir that we wish to resolve all issues – both domestic and external – through talks. I stressed that the gun can solve no problem; brotherhood can. Issues can be resolved if we move forward guided by the three principles of Insaniyat (Humanism), Jamhooriyat (Democracy) and Kashmiriyat (Kashmir’s age-old legacy of Hindu-Muslim amity).
In my speech, I spoke of extending our hand of friendship to Pakistan. At the same time, I also said that this hand of friendship should be extended by both sides. Both countries should resolve that we need to live together in peace.

My last programme was about the start of work on the construction of Udhampur-Srinagar- Baramulla railway line. It is our resolve to ensure that train services start in Kashmir Valley before August 15, 2007.

Unemployment is the greatest problem facing the youth of Jammu & Kashmir. We have decided to facilitate creation of one lakh opportunities for employment and self-employment over the next two years. For this, a special Task Force would be set up with representatives from the Central Government, State Government industry, commerce, banking and financial institutions. The Task Force will present its report by June 30 and implementation would commence from August 15 this year.

At a press conference before returning to Delhi, I expressed the hope that a new beginning can take place between India and Pakistan. I said that we have extended our hand of friendship. Let us see how Pakistan responds to this. Stopping cross-border infiltration and destruction of terrorist infrastructure can open the doors for talks. Talks can take place on all issues, including that of Jammu & Kashmir.

Thank You

1. Prime Minister during his two-day visit to Srinagar told a crowded press conference on April 19 that he was “waiting for a reply from Pakistan for his offer of friendship made at a public meeting yesterday.” (He had the previous day on April 18 told a public meeting that the gun was no solution to any problem made a call for friendship with Pakistan but said “it should be extended from both sides.”) Mr Vajpayee said his Government had made efforts to build a harmonious relationship with Pakistan. “As Prime Minister of the country I wanted to have friendly relations with our neighbours and I went to Lahore, but it was returned with Kargil. We still continued and invited General Pervez Musharraf to Agra but again failed,” said Mr. Vajpayee. “We are again extending a hand of friendship but hands should be extended from both the sides. Both sides should decide to live together. We have everything which makes us to have good relations,” Mr. Vajpayee said. Mr. Vajpayee repeated the conditions for resuming talks with Pakistan and said that unless cross-border terrorism was stopped and training camps for militants dismantled, there could be no meaningful talks. `We want to tread the path of friendship but a lot depends on Pakistan’s response. I reiterate that only talks can resolve all the issues.” Repeatedly referring to his desire for friendship with Pakistan, the Prime Minister gave the impression that he did not backtrack from his offer of talks. Terrorism, he said, could not be tolerated and only when it stopped could an atmosphere for talks be created. Talks could be held on all the issues including Kashmir, he said adding “let us make an honest effort in this direction”.

...
099. Statement of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Parliament on the call received from Pakistani Prime Minister.

New Delhi, May 2, 2003.

I received a telephone call on the evening of 28th April, from PM Jamali of Pakistan.

PM Jamali conveyed his appreciation and thanks for the comments I had made in Srinagar¹ and my remarks about India-Pakistan relations contained in my statement in the two Houses of Parliament. He also condemned terrorism.

As Honourable members are aware, we are committed to the improvement of relations with Pakistan, and are willing to grasp every opportunity for doing so. However, we have repeatedly expressed the need to create a conducive atmosphere for a sustained dialogue, which necessarily requires an end to cross border terrorism and the dismantling of its infrastructure.

We discussed ways of carrying forward our bilateral relations. In this regard, I emphasized the importance of economic cooperation, cultural exchanges, people-to-people contacts and civil aviation links. These would create an environment in which difficult issues in our bilateral relations could be addressed. PM Jamali suggested resumption of sporting links between the two countries. We agreed that, as a beginning, these measures could be considered.

In this context, it has been decided to appoint a High Commissioner to Pakistan and to restore the civil aviation links on a reciprocal basis.

I also emphasized the importance of substantive progress on the decisions for regional trade and economic cooperation taken at the SAARC

¹. Please See Document No. 98
Kathmandu Summit. Agreements arrived at Kathmandu must be implemented¹.

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100. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s response to Pakistani Prime Minister’s letter.


Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

Question: Is there any response from the Indian Government to the letter received from the Prime Minister of Pakistan?

Answer: As you know the Prime Minister had received a letter from the Pakistan Prime Minister today in which the latter had expressed the desire to resume India Pakistan dialogue and had invited the Prime Minister to visit Pakistan. The Prime Minister has responded and our Prime Minister’s letter would be on its way to our High Commission in Islamabad to be handed over to the Prime Minister Jamali’s Office.

Question: What are the contents of the letter?

Answer: In his reply the Prime Minister drew Prime Minister Jamali’s attention to his affirmation in Parliament² that we are committed to the improvement of relations with Pakistan and are willing to grasp every opportunity for doing so. However, we have repeatedly expressed the

1. After Prime Minister Jamali’s telephonic conversation the Pakistani Foreign Minister on MAY 1 said India and Pakistan should go back to the pre-December 13, 2001 status vis-a-vis diplomatic relations between the two countries to create a conducive atmosphere for a composite dialogue on all outstanding issues. He told the State-run Pakistan Television in an interview that Islamabad would take up the matter with New Delhi. “Yes, we are taking up the matter with India”, he said in response to a question. However, he hastened to add: “there are many things we can suggest. Already these issues are being taken up. Some directly and some through backdoor diplomatic channels. It may be recalled that in the wake of the December 13, 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament in New Delhi, India recalled its High Commissioner in Pakistan and downgraded its mission. Besides, rail, road and air links were snapped.

2. Please See Document No. 99
need to create a conducive atmosphere for a sustained dialogue which necessarily requires an end to cross border terrorism and dismantling of its infrastructure. Also the Prime Minister said in his letter that in pursuance of the telephonic conversation of April 28, he had announced in Parliament that India would appoint a new High Commissioner to Pakistan and that the two countries could resume civil aviation links on a reciprocal basis. The Prime Minister expressed the hope that Pakistan would respond positively to these measures.

**Question:** Pakistan Foreign Minister in London has stated that India and Pakistan could commence trade talks before Kashmir. Any mention in the letter?

**Answer:** Well, in the letter in terms of resumption of dialogue the Prime Minister has emphasized the need for careful preparation of the ground so that there could be a meaningful engagement at the highest level.

**Question:** What is the Prime Minister’s stand on the invitation letter itself? Whether he is going to travel or what is it?

**Answer:** Well as I said, what I said speaks for itself, the Prime Minister emphasized the need for careful preparation of the ground so that there could be meaningful engagement at the highest level.

**Question:** Does he thank him for the letter?

**Answer:** I don’t have the text of the letter, but I am sure that all normal courtesies must have been observed.

**Question:** Did the Prime Minister invite Prime Minister Jamali to visit India?

**Answer:** From the details, I have I don’t have those details.

**Question:** Is there any indication at what level the ground level talks would take place. Official level?

**Answer:** It is quite clear that for a meaningful engagement at the highest level there has to be a careful preparation of the ground and that is obviously not done at the highest level.

**Thank You**
101. Statement by Official Spokesperson on India – Pakistan Relations.

New Delhi, May 7, 2003

We have seen the response and specific suggestions made by the Prime Minister of Pakistan in the context of SAARC and India-Pakistan relations.

In order to take forward the initiative of our Prime Minister, we have today sought Agreement for the appointment of the new Indian High Commissioner to Islamabad.

We welcome the agreement conveyed by the Pakistan Prime Minister to resumption of civil aviation links. Our understanding is that such links would include direct air services and over-flights. We have sought a specific confirmation from Pakistan in this regard. Pakistani authorities have indicated that this issue could be discussed further between the civil aviation authorities of the two countries.

We also welcome the humanitarian gesture announced by the Pakistan PM for release of Indian fishermen, 22 Sikh youth and crewmembers of the Indian cargo boat ‘Raj Laxmi’.

The Pakistan Prime Minister has made several other suggestions on diplomatic representation, resumption of road and rail link, sport contracts, etc. These measures can be considered in due course as we see progress on the steps announced by our PM, and there is evidence of Pakistan taking firm and credible action against cross border terrorism and to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism.

The SAARC related trade proposals\(^1\) are clearly inadequate in the context of the mandate of the SAARC Kathmandu Summit. We have repeatedly made it clear that the substantive progress on trade and

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1. Prime Minister Jamali said in his statement, which he made on May 6 after his telephonic conversation with Prime Minister Vajpayee on April 28 that “to give impetus to SAARC to make it more effective regional body, I have decided: a. to place additional 78 items on the positive list. It is my hope that this will clear the way for a more meaningful SAARC role for the promotion of regional trade; b. will soon approach the Secretary General SAARC to ascertain the convenience of the member states for convening the 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad well before the end of the current year. (it was held in the first week of January next year) and c. Pakistan is willing to hold South Asian Federation games as soon as possible.”
economic cooperation should take place to make the next Summit meaningful.

We remain committed to resolve all issues between India and Pakistan bilaterally, as provided for in the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration. Prime Minister, in his statement to the Parliament on May 2, had made it clear that a sustained dialogue would necessarily require an end to cross border terrorism and the dismantling of its infrastructure. Discussion on nuclear and other CBMs can be held in the context of the Composite Dialogue, which has the specific agenda item of ‘Peace and Security including CBMs’.

We welcome the fact that Pakistan has responded to the initiatives of our Prime Minister. It is quite clear that several specific steps would need to be taken by Pakistan to move this process meaningfully forward. We, on our part, remain fully committed to improving relations between the two countries.

**Question:** Who is the person for whom you have sought agreement for?

**Answer:** The normal diplomatic practice is that the sending state seeks an Agre’ment, the receiving state grants the Agre’ment and only then the announcement is made.

**Question:** Has Pakistan also sought an Agreement from India?

**Answer:** No.

**Question:** Has the government identified the person?

**Answer:** I have just told you, we sought an Agre’ment of our new High Commissioner. Obviously the Agre’ment contains the name of the person.

**Question:** Prime Minister Jamali in his statement yesterday\(^2\) referred to the fact that we could take up the dialogue from where it was left off from Agra. Is that our understanding that Agra as a beginning point or what would be the beginning point if at all dialogue is to take place?

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\(^2\) His statement said “we should begin talks from where they were left off at Agra and work out an agenda for a tiered dialogue including Summit level interaction." He also reiterated Pakistan Government’s condemnation of “terrorism in all its forms and manifestations” and pledged, “to continue to cooperate with the international community to eliminate this scourge”. He laid particular emphasis on the need to the “promotion of regional peace and security in regions of the world suffering from tensions and unresolved conflicts”. 

Answer: I think the statement that I have made sufficiently addresses these issues.

Question: In an interview with NDTV today the Pakistan Foreign Minister stated that India should not be negative and that Foreign Minister of India is scuttling the re-entry of Pakistan into Commonwealth?

Answer: I think it is precisely your unit which tried to get a reaction from the External Affairs Minister today outside South Block and he did not react. In fact he asked me to convey that he did not react because he thinks that the less we talk, the better it is for the process. But we know that the Foreign Minister of Pakistan has chosen to react on the basis of Indian press reports and we feel that it is not helpful to get personal. There are no personal agendas involved here; the Indian Government has a cohesive and unified foreign policy.

Question: Is the External Affairs Minister going to attend the C-MAG meeting in London?

Answer: He is expected to.

Question: When is the meeting?

Answer: It’s in the third week of this month. I can check the specific date for you.

Question: What would be the agenda of C-MAG?

Answer: We will let you know as we come closer to the meeting. There are eight countries involved in C-MAG including Botswana, India, Australia, Malta, Bahamas, Samoa and Nigeria. There is a standard agenda.

Question: The question of Pakistan’s re-entry would be discussed?

Answer: I would presume that is on the agenda. It was there last time.

Question: Yesterday in his press conference Prime Minister Jamali …he was asked about Kashmir resolutions … (inaudible)

Answer: He was asked a question on his statement and he responded, our views on those resolutions are well known.

On May 12 the Spokesperson Navtej Sarna again answered some questions on the India-Pakistan relations and these were:
Question: Can you kindly clarify two points (1) is there any formal communication from Islamabad accepting our new High Commissioner (2) Has Islamabad named their next High Commissioner to Delhi?

Answer: On the first one I have no announcement. On the second one, no.

Question: Pakistan Foreign Minister has today said that talks between India and Pakistan could start as soon as possible. Any comments?

Answer: We have extended the hand of friendship and we have gone over this several times. The two Prime Ministers have had a conversation – areas on which a start can be made have been identified, specific proposals have been put forward. As you know we have announced the appointment of our new High Commissioner in Islamabad and it is now for Pakistan to respond. Dialogue can begin on all issues provided a conducive atmosphere is created and for that of course the fact that cross border terrorism must end and infrastructure of terrorism must be dismantled is necessary.

Question: Today EAM in an interview to NDTV spoke about road map of the Indo-Pak peace talks. What exactly is this road map?

Answer: He did not specify what the road map was. But he said that there is a road map and there is no confusion.

Question: But what is the road map?

Answer: Well, if the Minister did not say, then I cannot.

Question: EAM is going for C-MAG meeting in London and Pakistan re-entry into Commonwealth is an agenda before the C-MAG. What is India’s position there?

Answer: C-MAG is not a bilateral platform. There are several countries involved there. They have their own rules– the Commonwealth has the Harare Declaration, it has the Millbrook Action Plan. These are not documents drafted by India. So we will wait to see the collective view of the C-MAG forum on the issue.

Question: Inaudible

Answer: I will have to check exactly what is the resolution you are talking about and when was it forwarded.
Question: In C-MAG what is India’s position on Pakistan’s re-entry to Commonwealth? Whether we will oppose or support or go along with the consensus?

Answer: It is a multilateral decision and you cannot prejudge a multilateral decision. I have just said that the Commonwealth works according to certain rules and regulations, certain basic principles that they have. They are contained in the Harare Declaration and the Millbrook action plan. These are decision which will be taken by C-MAG. Its not for me to prejudge what C-MAG will do. But if it is anybody’s case that full democracy has been restored in Pakistan, then the very rigorous and divisive demands of political parties in Pakistan regarding the LFO, the fact that President is also the Chief of the Army Staff, as also the fact that the joint sitting of the Houses has not yet taken place, these issues will have to be explained and C-MAG will take its decision.

* * * *

Question: What will India emphasise in the C-MAG discussions?

Answer: When the discussions take place, we will emphasise what we need to.

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102. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage.


Please see Document No. 341

✦✦✦✦✦
103. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on Pakistan.


Question: What is our view on Pakistan’s Foreign Minister Kasuri raising the Jammu and Kashmir issue in UNSC?

Answer: Well you know the context of the debate. I understand that Pakistan referred to Jammu and Kashmir in their statement. It is not surprising. Pakistan has utilized every opportunity to raise the J&K issue in every forum be it in NAM or SAARC and UN or some other. The fact that Pakistan has referred to J&K in their statement in the UNSC is something that we would regret but what is important to note is that no other member country except Pakistan have raised this issue and there is no support for raising this issue in that forum.

* * * * *

Question: Yesterday PM in Manali said that ending cross border terrorism is not a precondition for talks to begin. Can you explain this?

Answer: I cannot explain or clarify Prime Minister’s statement. I think he has made a full statement. I think what you are referring to is only a part of the statement.

Question: There are some confusing reports in the media about India sending troops to Iraq. Can you clarify?

Answer: I have clarified this earlier. We have received no formal request and our policy with regard to peacekeeping operations is quite clear and well established. India has participated in such operations under UN auspices.

Question: Pakistan has today announced that they will release Indian prisoners. Do you have any comments?

Answer: The information that I have is that this is a follow up to Prime Minister’s Jamali’s statement of May 6, 2003, that 14 crew members of Raj Laxmi and 6 Sikh youths are to be released. We welcome this.
Question: Is there any reciprocity from our side in terms of releasing Pakistani prisoners?

Answer: We have made several proposals and we have indicated some areas on which we have taken initiatives. For instance, the appointment and announcement of the High Commissioner – this was an area which Prime Minister Jamali had mentioned and they have followed this up.

Thank You

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104. Interview of National Security Advisor and Principal Secretary Brajesh Mishra with Indian Express Editor-in-Chief Shekhar Gupta.


[Speaking to The Indian Express Editor-in-Chief Shekhar Gupta for Walk the Talk, telecast on NDTV 24X7 on May 17, National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra confirmed that India came very close to a war with Pakistan in January (after the Dec 13 attack on Parliament) and May 2002 (after the Kaluchak attack). Excerpts from the interview:]

• How do you describe today’s situation, five years after your government came to power and you tried to give new direction to India’s foreign policy. Many people call it the new foreign policy, the friendship with US, re-establishing relationships with Europe, figuring out new Russia, opening up to Israel and all these ups and downs, more downs than ups that we’ve had with Pakistan. What kind of a journey has it been?

It’s been an uneven journey obviously, like life is uneven. But I think we can take some credit for opening ourself up to the international community and engaging ourself with the international community. And in turn the international community is engaging with us.

• Is it more up then or more down if you look at five years.
I’d say that the balance is on the credit side, not the debit.

- **What are the highlights on the credit side?**

Well, obviously we started off with the nuclear tests. Then within one month of that a dialogue with the US, that is between Jaswant Singh and Strobe Talbott, started on June 11. From then, the dialogue with the US, Europeans and other big powers has been continuing.

- **There was a sense though that despite a long process of talks with US after the tests, a breakthrough was not quite... when did the breakthrough come?**

Well, obviously the highlight of this dialogue was the visit of Clinton in March 2000. But I won’t say the dialogue between Jaswant and Talbott was a failure.

- **What’s the one big difference the Clinton visit made? What is the one new thing he said that turned the mood?**

Well, obviously, his admiration for India, Indian democracy attracted a responsive chord from Parliament.

- **There are those who say that he, because of his personality and because of the way he conducted himself on that visit, somehow convinced the popular Indian mind that Americans could be friends, almost as the mood was in the Kennedy years. Is that true? Did he break 35 years of freeze?**

Well, if it was not our conviction that the Americans could be friends, we wouldn’t be making these attempts... if we didn’t have that feeling that yes they could be friends, as the PM said they could be natural allies, we wouldn’t be doing all this.

- **If you look at the strategic picture, there are four things. One is the relationship with US which is on the up. The second is relationship with Pakistan which is mostly down on balance. Third is relationship with China which is maybe better. And fourth is our rediscovery of Soviet bloc or what used to be the Soviet bloc. I don’t know where that stays. Where do you think it is?**

Well, generally speaking you are correct. That is what the situation is today. We are hopefully improving our relations with US. There is
a process of normalisation with China. As the Defence Minister said the other day, in the last few years there has not been a single incident on the Line of Actual Control with China.

- **Does that mean that we are moving somehow towards accepting the de facto situation and carrying on with it?**

  I don’t think so because the idea is not to say that the Line of Actual Control is the border. The idea is to stabilise the LoC which it is now, and then to move on to border negotiations.

- **Is it true that in many of the recent phases of tension with Pak, when we had to mobilise forces, we have felt actually secure enough to pull out a lot of units from along the Chinese border?**

  Both during the Kargil conflict and last year’s shifting of our troops from the eastern to the western theatre, there were no threatening noises.

- **What about Pakistan’s special relationship with China?**

  They have a relationship which was built from 1963 onwards, 1961 onwards actually, and after the Chinese attack on us in 1962 it has been built up.

  - **Is it commercial or political?**

    More strategic.

  - **If you look at these two major streams, the decline in our relationship with Pakistan, the improvement in our relationship with the US, on balance are we gainers or losers?**

    Well, first of all I must question whether there is what you call a decline with Pakistan. The situation has been so since the beginning. Since the attack on Kashmir by tribals in 1947-48.

  - **But we’ve come close to war twice in the past three years.**

    But we’ve had three wars in the past. If you say it’s a decline from Lahore, I’d agree with you. But generally speaking the state of relationship between India and Pakistan has been one of hostility if one might say.
• How close did we come to war last year?

We were pretty close in January and then again in May.

• May, after Kaluchak attack?

Exactly.

• And when was it closer — in January or May?

I’d say the same both times.

• And what was the motivation? Was it anger, frustration or was it just strategic logic that you know you have to sort out this problem now, the Pakistanis won’t listen, they will keep on bleeding you.

It was anger mixed with deterrence. That you don’t do it in the future. That was the idea.

• When the two countries have nuclear weapons, there may not be any future.

People talk of nuclear weapons rather loosely. It’s not that easy to go and attack a country with nuclear weapons.

• But was that calculation made when we thought of using the military option?

Of course.

• We seriously thought of using the military option or we were on the verge of using it?

Yes, that’s what I am saying. When you asked me how close we were to war, I said yes, we were very close.

• But using the military option in a nuclearised scenario is a very complicated thing to do.

We had no desire to use nuclear weapons. And we did not think Pakistan would use nuclear weapons because (of) the symmetry being what it is between India and Pakistan. They can attack us but they know that we can wipe them out.

• So there is mutually assured destruction.
Well, if you would like to say that, yes. But it's not our destruction because we are too large to be destroyed.

- That is the worrying part. In our country as well as in Pakistan there is an immature view of nuclear weapons. As if a nuclear bomb is an oversized daisy cutter. People don't realise that if one city gets wiped out and the rest of the country is there, it's not as if everything will carry on normally.

I agree with you entirely but I am talking about total destruction. You said mutually assured destruction. So the destruction could be much more on one side than on the other.

- So did we make this calculation, simulation or did we have an idea where the war might stop or far it will go?

We had a fairly good idea. We did not think it was going to lead to a nuclear conflict.

- Inspite of the noises from the other side.

Well, they keep on talking.

- Are we more distant from war today than we were last year or could it change dramatically?

Today, at this moment we are, compared to last year.

- It could change dramatically.

One would say if there is a grave incident like the attack on Parliament then of course it could change dramatically. That's why we keep on saying, the PM keeps on saying, put an end to this. Because we'll have a good atmosphere to sit down and talk about everything including J&K.

- Even if there is an incident, how do we judge whether it's an isolated incident or if it shows bad faith on the other side?

No, we judge it in this way — these terrorist outfits have been nurtured, nourished by Pakistan. So, they are responsible for these terrorist outfits.

- You don't buy the argument that some of them could be out of Musharraf's control or that he's also threatened by them?
If they are out of control then why not destroy their training camps? Why not destroy their launching pads? Why not destroy their communications infrastructure? Once you do that, we’ll know you are sincere.

- **Do you get a sense from the Americans that they are disappointed that promises made last year were not kept?**

  I don’t want to put words in their mouth but it is clear that what Musharraf promised them and what they conveyed to us has not been done.

- **But some have been delivered.**

  What? Nothing has been delivered.

- **There has been no reduction in terrorism? There has been no reduction in infiltration?**

  Where is the reduction? As the Raksha Mantri said, infiltration comes up and down. You talk of one moment it is down, you talk of another moment, it is up. So far as terrorist incidents are concerned, look at the horrible incident on April 24. How can you say terrorism is down.

- **But do you sometimes worry that in this situation, the Americans have acquired a role. I wouldn’t say a mediatory role, but each time, we talk through the Americans, the Pakistanis talk through the Americans.**

  We have to be absolutely clear on this subject. What is the role of the US, Europe? They are legitimately concerned about avoiding a war between India and Pakistan which could, in their view, lead to a nuclear holocaust. But when they come to us saying exercise restraint, please do this, do that, we say go and talk to Pakistan.

- **But they never talk down to us.**

  No, of course not. But when it comes to a dialogue with Pakistan there’s no third seat on the table. And they are fully aware of it.

- **There is no third seat. Nobody.**

  No, it’s just India and Pakistan. This distinction has to be made all the time.
• The PM said the other day dhood ka jala, chaaj bhi phook-phook ke peeta hai, which is once bitten twice shy. Now this PM has been twice bitten so how does he go ahead and do this again?

Now what is the PM saying? As he said to Jamali, let us proceed stage by stage. Let us not jump into a summit. Let’s improve the atmosphere and then we can see. Meanwhile stop cross-border terrorism.

• In Agra, the Pakistanis said they would only talk on Kashmir and nothing else. We said composite dialogue. Now, they are saying composite dialogue. This thing is going round and round the same table although the positions have reversed.

I don’t see how the positions have reversed because when we were earlier talking about unconditional dialogue, we did not have an attack on the Srinagar Assembly. We did not have an attack on Parliament. We didn’t have the Kaluchak massacre. We didn’t have Akshardham, Raghunath temple massacres.

• Don’t you wish we had a stronger economy or we were a bigger power so we could look more of them in the eye as equals?

I certainly wish we had a stronger economy and we were a big economic power, not for the sake of looking them in the eye but for our own sake. If we had that we’d be noticed more.

• We also see this government is moving very rapidly on diplomacy and foreign policy but seems to be stalling on economic reforms. Do you see a breakthrough or do you see this going on till the elections which may be a year-and-a-half from now?

I don’t think one can call it stalling but one should keep in mind that this is not China where you can take one decision and then it’s through. This is India, a democracy, a lot of people under the poverty line, a coalition government. So we cannot be acting in the same way as China. So what happens is it is a little up, a little down but I think the course is being maintained.
105. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on Pakistan.

New Delhi, May 21, 2003.

**Question:** (Pakistan) Prime Minister Jamali has stated that India should tackle terrorists in its territory. Any comment on that?

**Answer:** I have not seen this particular statement. But without reacting to that India is determined to fight terrorism and we have been doing so. The problem that we have been facing is that of cross border terrorism.

**Question:** Prime Minister Jamali also said that Pakistan do not have control on all terrorists. Any comments?

**Answer:** I don’t want get into that at this stage. But our External Affairs Minister has responded to a similar question in London when he said that 500 Al-Qaeda, Taliban, etc have been handed over to US and that speaks for itself.

**Question:** Foreign Minister of Pakistan has said that if Pakistan cannot control terrorist infiltration then India can help… (inaudible)

**Answer:** I wouldn’t like to second guess what the Foreign Minister has said and what he had in his mind when he said that. But I can explain to you. This issue usually comes up when Pakistan talks about bringing in international monitors. In that situation we have told them that there is nobody better who knows this terrain than India and Pakistan. So there is a possibility of joint monitoring in case there is sufficient amount of confidence can be built.

**Question:** Anything on CMAG? Pakistan has been kept out from the Commonwealth. What happened to Zimbabwe?

**Answer:** I have here the entire statement that was issued by CMAG. I can read out the paragraph regarding Zimbabwe. CMAG received an update from the Secretary-General on recent developments in Zimbabwe. The Group noted the Commonwealth Statement on Zimbabwe of 16 March 2003, and the Secretary-General’s Report to the ‘Troika’ subsequently circulated by the Chairperson-in-Office to all Commonwealth Heads of Government. CMAG maintained the decision taken at its last meeting to keep Zimbabwe on its agenda.

**Question:** Any reaction to Pakistan being kept out of Commonwealth?
Answer: External Affairs Minister has said in London that he has nothing to add to the statement that CMAG has issued.

Question: So India agrees with the CMAG decision?

Answer: You have seen that there is the CMAG statement, which is taken out by all countries. India was one of them.

Question: Any dates for the resumption of India-Pakistan dialogue?

Answer: We had made two proposals. We had taken action on two points. We have already announced our High Commissioner and on Civil Aviation links we have asked for clarification. That’s where matters stand. I really see no use in going over this everyday asking if there are any dates. You know the steps that have been outlined, you know the possibilities of movement, you know that we would need positive responses.

106. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with Financial Times.


Financial Times: The peace process between India and Pakistan appears to be going slowly. You don’t even have direct flights or an exchange of High Commissioners. What is holding things up?

Yashwant Sinha: You must remember that Pakistan has not set a time-frame and we have not set a time-frame. So everyone is aware of the time things might take. And therefore the process should not be seen in terms of deadlines. And to illustrate: the prime minister made an announcement in the Indian parliament with regards to two steps. One was appointment of high commissioners and the second was opening up of Indian airspace. Now, we’ve moved on the first. We’ve been able to announce our new high commissioner. I am not blaming Pakistan but they are in the process of nominating their high commissioner. And the first step of appointing the HCs will be completed when they are appointed and then they go and take their positions. Suppose we had put a deadline on this - the appointments should be made in one week’s time, they should be in position in two weeks time - it would have been unrealistic. So I do
not think at any point of time there should be impatience either in the establishment or in the media with regards to the process.

Financial Times: You have said before that you have a “roadmap” in mind. That implies you have certain stages envisaged and a timetable. Is that wrong?

Sinha: No, I said that we have a roadmap but I did not say a timetable. And I also said that because there were two parties involved, unilaterally one party cannot set a timetable and this is common sense. And in reply to first question I have already said why a deadline should not be set.

Financial Times: Could I therefore ask you a timeless question about the roadmap which is what takes place after these initial two steps?

Sinha: The prime minister of Pakistan spoke to the Indian PM on the telephone. He made five suggestions. These were economic cooperation, improved cultural ties, sporting links, air links, and people to people contacts. These are therefore on the table. Doing these will involve doing other things too. So when you are talking of a roadmap we are clear in our mind what steps must be taken, both in regards to restoring normalcy in the relationship as well as in regard to the dialogue process and then in regard to progress of the dialogue process. And underlying all of this is the complete end to cross-border terrorism.

Financial Times: You have used the word “practical necessity” as opposed to “pre-condition” in regards to the ending of cross-border terrorism. Could you explain the difference?

Sinha: It is very simple. The difference is that if this was a pre-condition then the Prime minister would not have made his “hand of friendship” offer in Srinagar last month. But for the dialogue to succeed it is essential that cross-border terrorism comes to an end. There cannot be a conducive atmosphere for a dialogue if massacres, violence, terrorism, keeps on happening. Therefore it is important that this is brought to an end if a proper atmosphere for the success of the dialogue is to be created.

Financial Times: Would it therefore be reasonable to assume that no senior dialogue or summit will take place if terrorist outrages continue to occur?

Sinha: I only want to say this: It is an essential condition for the success of the talks.
Financial Times: Mr Vajpayee launched this process without consulting his colleagues. There are clearly divisions within the BJP. To what extent can you rely on BJP unity behind Mr Vajpayee's initiative?

Sinha: I don't think there is any difference of opinion in the BJP with regards to Mr. Vajpayee's initiative. To the best of my knowledge the BJP and its spokesmen have lent their support to this process. And everyone has also said simultaneously that cross-border terrorism must be brought to an end for this process to succeed.

Financial Times: Is it regrettable that the BJP refused to meet the parliamentary delegation from Pakistan that departed from India a few days ago?

Sinha: I cannot answer for the BJP because I am not in the day-to-day functioning of the party. But the important thing to remember is: Were they approached? What was the request made? We do not know. As far as I am concerned I got an unsigned fax message from the sponsors [of the visit] after they had already been here a few days saying they were visiting. Now clearly whoever was responsible for preparing their programme should have gone about their task in a more professional way. And therefore to read meaning into this would not be correct - that we were opposed or the government was opposed. And there are issues of convenience also.

Financial Times: We are seeing talk of Pakistan banning the Hizb-ul-Mujahidden [the largest Kashmiri separatist group, with headquarters in Pakistan's portion of the divided province] and then suggestions that it is not being banned. What is your reading of Pakistan's actions?

Sinha: I would not like to comment on this because any comment from me would be misunderstood at this point of time and I do not want to create a misunderstanding. I would only like to say that if they take action against these elements who are indulging in cross-border terror it is something that we welcome.

Financial Times: But if they did would you provide more allowance - give Pakistan more room - for the actions of other terrorist groups that Pakistan might not directly control?

Sinha: If there are elements which are - according the authorities in Pakistan - which are outside their control and crossing the Line of Control despite their best effort to stop them then we should cooperate with each
other in order to curb the activities of these elements. This would be a subject matter of discussion - a simple thing, that they get information, intelligence information, that such and such a group has escaped their whatever net they have and is likely to cross into India, we have channels of information through which such information can be passed onto our authorities and then we will be able to handle them.

**Financial Times:** We have seen reports about the US finally giving Israel permission to sell the Phalcon (early warning) system to India. Clearly US restraints on the export of dual use high technology to India is very important to India. Is there any sign of progress? Did you raise this problem recently with Colin Powell [they met in Moscow last week]?

**Sinha:** I have only like you seen the reports on the Phalcon. I cannot confirm them. Every time we have discussed the issues known as the “Trinity issues” [restrictions on dual use for India’s civil nuclear, civilian space and commercial information technology] the US has said that they would like to ensure that within the framework of their laws and regulations, they would do their best for us. This assurance has always been forthcoming. We have impressed on them the need to devise some kind of mechanism through which these good intentions will be translated into progress on the ground in a speedier fashion. I have no reasons to believe they will not act on this.

**Financial Times:** Assuming that is right, how would you measure progress? Do you have a list of shopping items?

**Sinha:** It can be measured in terms of increased cooperation and fewer hassles in regard to civilian use in regard to dual-use items. The various organisations in India do give them a list from time-to-time and we are looking for let’s say speed in that procedure.

**Financial Times:** Would it be fair to describe India-US relations as closer than ever before.

**Sinha:** I think that would be the right conclusion to come to.

**Financial Times:** What would be your optimum in terms of US-India relations?

**Sinha:** There is no optimum in sets of relations between two countries because there is always room for further cooperation and strengthening. So you cannot say that you will reach a peak at any point in time - it is a
continuous process. Trade and economic relationship is a very important priority in our relations with the US. And on this the role of Indian professionals in the US is a very important issue.

**Financial Times:** The US and others have been imposing restrictions on Indian IT professionals.

**Sinha:** There have been some fairly retrograde signals in those areas where we have built our strength. Yes.

**Financial Times:** Would it be fair to conclude that non-tariff barriers are being imposed on the Indian IT industry by the US and others?

**Sinha:** Yes, that is true. Other priorities? Attracting more US investments into India and evolving whatever commonality we can involve with regard to the World Trade Organisation issues. And we are trying to identify trade areas on which consensus can exist.

**Financial Times:** Is it fair to say that the Bush administrations actions on trade show a big gap between rhetoric and reality?

**Sinha:** Not only the US but many other developed countries fall into the same category.

**Financial Times:** Mr Richard Armitage [US deputy secretary of state] was here recently and he was here exactly a year ago also. Then he said that Pakistan had pledged to put a “permanent” end to cross-border terrorism. That clearly hasn’t happened. Are the good offices of the US regarding Pakistan diminishing in value in India’s view?

**Sinha:** We have always said that as far as that is concerned, it was a promise or a commitment made to the US. Whether it has been kept or not is an issue for them to judge. Whether it is the US or any other interlocutor, when it comes to the discussion of cross-border terrorism, we tell them what we feel about the situation, they must also be getting feedback from Pakistan, it is for them to come to a judgement. But we have good reason to believe from the US statements on this matter that they do believe India has been a victim of cross-border terrorism, that it has not stopped, that Pakistan must do more to stop it. But in the final analysis, tackling cross-border terrorism is our responsibility and have to do it alone. So we are not remonstrating with anyone and saying “such and such a promise was made to you and it wasn’t honoured”. We are not treating anyone as a final court of appeal and filing a petition to them.
**Financial Times:** Is it reasonable to assume that Pakistan’s usefulness to the US as an ally in the war on Al Qaeda is diminishing? If so then would Pakistan’s leverage over the US be waning and does this affect India’s calculations?

**Sinha:** I will say that there is no permanent situation. We cannot have a world where terrorism from organisations of the like of Al Qaeda will be a permanent feature. So anyone who is counting on it being a permanent feature would be making a big miscalculation.

**Financial Times:** You are striking a lot of bilateral free trade deals with your neighbours - Sri Lanka, Bangladesh etc. Can we conclude that your regional trade strategy will remain bilateral and therefore outside of SAARC (South Asian Agreement for Regional Cooperation) until you have fixed your differences with Pakistan?

**Sinha:** Not at all. We have always been very keen to move under the SAARC auspices also. We have been doing our best to speed up the process of the preferential trade and free trade agreements under Saarc auspices. But we will not let that hold up any bilateral understanding with countries in this region, just as we are moving forward with countries outside this region.

**Financial Times:** But you still want Pakistan to reciprocate Most Favoured Nation trade to India?

**Sinha:** This could be a part of the confidence building programme with Pakistan. But India continues to extend MFN treatment to Pakistan. Pakistan does not give India MFN treatment. In addition, out of about 7,000 tariff lines 90 per cent are on the negative list in Pakistan which means India cannot export those items to Pakistan. Then there are other non-tariff barriers. There is a clear mismatch here between the kind of treatment we give them and they give us. It is our view that as members of the WTO, Pakistan should extend MFN treatment to India. Under Saarc they should do much more. And, trade should not be treated as a hostage to the political relationship.

**Financial Times:** Regarding “normalisation” it is fair to say that Pakistan is suspicious of it because they see India as the status quo power and normalisation as something the status quo power always wishes. Whereas it is not in the interests of the antagonistic power to normalise too much.

**Sinha:** Tell me who is the status quo power between China and India [China]? How is it that we have been able to work it out with them? We
must recognise that India and China have a border conflict but we have still allowed our bilateral relationship to flourish.

Financial Times: So are China-India relations a model for how you should proceed with Pakistan?

Sinha: Not necessarily, I am just saying this is an example of how two nations have dealt with their differences over time and in the process created confidence and goodwill. I think we need to give ourselves such a chance with Pakistan. We both need to give each other a chance.

Financial Times: Have you fixed Mr Vajpayee’s visit to China? What are the main issues?

Sinha: Dates are not yet fixed. We will discuss the entire gamut of our bilateral relationship. There are many issues to discuss. I would like also to mention India’s relations with the UK. We have an excellent relationship with the UK, an excellent understanding on various bilateral issues notwithstanding various differences on Iran. My recent meeting with Jack Straw [UK foreign secretary] set a new level in terms of the warmth and understanding between our two countries.

Financial Times: Under what circumstances would India accede to the US request to send peace-keeping troops to Iraq?


Financial Times: Then it would happen?

Sinha: I will not give any details.
107. **Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs containing the decision to release Pakistani prisoners and resume Delhi-Lahore Bus Service.**

**New Delhi, May 26, 2003.**

The Prime Minister of India had emphasised the importance of people-to-people contacts for creating a conducive atmosphere in India-Pakistan relations.

Accordingly, the Government of India has today approved the resumption of the Delhi-Lahore bus service, on twice a week basis, as soon as details have been worked out by the technical authorities of the two countries.

The Government of India has also decided to release 70 Pakistani fishermen and 60 civilian prisoners presently in Indian custody. They would be transferred as soon as Pakistan has indicated that it is ready to accept them.

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108. **Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with Associated Press of Pakistan.**

**New Delhi, May 26, 2003.**

**Question:** What are the prospects of peace overtures, taken by the leadership of the two countries to bring normalisation in the Indo-Pak relations?

**Answer:** I am happy to have this opportunity to speak to the people of Pakistan through APP. This is the first interview I am granting to a Pakistani media organization. Therefore, let me begin by assuring you that people of India desire nothing but peace with Pakistan. We would like to resolve all outstanding issues between us and to work together towards a better future and towards common prosperity. We would like to be positive and optimistic about the prospects for peace in the region.

Our Prime Minister has taken a significant statesmanlike initiative by extending once again the hand of friendship to Pakistan during the public
rally in Srinagar on April 18. Our Prime Minister’s initiative had a tremendous resonance both in India and Pakistan, and internationally. If there is one central message to Pakistan contained in PM’s speech in Srinagar, it is that India will not be found wanting when it comes to efforts for peace.

Prime Minister Jamali’s telephone call of April 28 continued this process. The telephone conversation between the two Prime Ministers and exchange of letters have further created some understanding of the basis for moving ahead.

We had announced two specific steps. Following this, our new High Commissioner to Islamabad has already been appointed. This is only a reflection of the seriousness with which we are pursuing the new initiative.

We are also ready to restore civil aviation links on a reciprocal basis. This will, inter alia, enable resumption of direct travel between the two countries, which the ordinary citizens can avail of.

In fact, we have a clear road map and approach in our minds to normalize our relations in a step-by-step process, and to resume the dialogue process in a calibrated and a well prepared manner. We are ready to take these further steps. Some reported recent actions by the Pakistan authorities, for instance against some of the Hizbul Mujahideen elements, have been positive, even though still incomplete.

Therefore, I do believe that there are indications and good grounds for successful realization of the goals set by our Prime Minister’s recent peace initiative.

At the same time, we must all have no doubts about the fact that the prospects depend critically on the steps that Pakistan takes to end its sponsorship and support to cross border infiltration and terrorism, and to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism. Otherwise, the atmosphere can be vitiated and the attempts derailed at any stage.

**Question:** Is resumption of air, road and rail links between the two countries possible in the near future?

**Answer:** Most certainly. We have already announced our willingness to restore civil aviation links on a reciprocal basis. As I mentioned earlier, we are ready to take further steps. It would be natural to restore road and rail links as we proceed further on the normalisation path. This would
naturally depend on the successful implementation of the measures announced so far, and the steps that Pakistan takes to end cross border infiltration and terrorism.

Let me clarify that the step-by-step approach which we advocate is not to slow down the process but to ensure that we are sure footed and make no mistakes while moving forward. There should be no cause for retraction later.

**Question:** Do you think that the slow pace of peace process will be able to realize the objectives of overall initiatives?

**Answer:** We all want the initiative to achieve its objectives. Our goal is peace and the establishment of a durable friendship. What is important therefore is not the pace of progress but that there is sincerity to this goal. Past experience clearly suggests that one must proceed in a step by step, calibrated and well prepared manner.

**Question:** Will you please specify the time frame for the commencement of formal talks between India and Pakistan?

**Answer:** We have always been ready for talks with Pakistan. The timeframe cannot be set by only one side.

**Question:** Are you satisfied with the pace of peace process?

**Answer:** Haste does not always make for speed. One has to understand and recognize the significance of the initiative of our Prime Minister which has set the ball rolling once again. It is important to ensure that the efforts are sustained on a firm foundation. The community supportive of peace and cooperation between the two countries has once again become active. You would have seen the warmth of the reception accorded to the Pakistani parliamentarians who had recently come to India in response to a private initiative. Our Prime Minister in his telephone conversation with Prime Minister Jamali had emphasized the importance of people-to-people contact for creating a climate conducive to normalization. In the background of the history of mistrust and strained relations between our two countries, it is perhaps more productive to proceed slowly, creating a climate conducive to addressing differences, and without raising expectations that cannot be met immediately. It is important to ensure that the efforts are sustained on a firm foundation.

**Question:** Would India like to pick the thread from inconclusive Agra summit for formal talks?
**Answer:** We would like to pick up all the old threads starting with Simla.

**Question:** What is the impact of US Deputy Secretary of State Mr. Richard Armitage’s visit to Pakistan and India on current developments?

**Answer:** Richard Armitage visited India on 10th May and I met Colin Powell in Moscow four days later. In our interactions, the U.S. leaders have articulated their admiration for prime Minister’s initiative and statesmanship.

The U.S. leadership has expressed the hope that step-by-step progress would eventually lead to a resolution of all issues between India and Pakistan through bilateral dialogue. We expect the international community, including the United States, to continue to exert pressure on Pakistan to end cross-border terrorism in the context of the global war against terrorism and Pakistan’s commitment to end terrorism directed against India. The curbing of infiltration must be supplemented by dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism. That alone can build a conducive atmosphere for the proposed dialogue.

**Question:** How do you view the package of Confidence Building Measures, offered by Pakistan in response to hand of friendship extended by H.E. Prime Minister Atal Bihar Vajpayee?

**Answer:** We have welcomed several of the measures, including upgradation of representation in the respective High Commissions, and release of some Indian prisoners and fishermen. However, the measures suggested for trade are clearly inadequate. There was also no indication of the specific steps that Pakistan would take to end cross border infiltration and terrorism.

**Question:** Is India preparing to attend SAARC summit, proposed to be held during current calendar year?

**Answer:** India is a committed member of SAARC. SAARC summits are an integral part of the SAARC process. In fact, summit meetings, at the levels of Heads of State and government are at the pinnacle of the SAARC process, which is an ongoing process. Like all members, India looks forward to such events. However, so far, no dates have been proposed for the next summit.

**Question:** Does the government enjoy complete political backing of all parties to its peace initiative, offered to Pakistan?
**Answer:** The debates in the Indian Parliament, following the Prime Minister’s Srinagar initiative, clearly showed that there is across the board support for the PM’s peace initiative. There is a widespread consensus in India on the need to live in peace and friendship with Pakistan. There is also at the same time universal condemnation of the use by Pakistan of cross border terrorism as an instrument of policy.

**Question:** Do you feel satisfied over the results of the “Healing Touch” policy of Mufti Saeed government in Jammu & Kashmir?

**Answer:** Our efforts are aimed at sustaining the new momentum created by the elections in Jammu & Kashmir for complete rejection of terrorism and violence. Our Prime Minister has publicly supported the steps taken in this context by the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

**Question:** When India is going to resume sporting ties with Pakistan?

**Answer:** This would have to be a part of the step-by-step process, to be considered at an appropriate stage. Let me once again draw your attention to what our Prime Minister had told Prime Minister Jamali on April 28. He had drawn attention to the incongruence and difficulty of holding sporting ties if major terrorist attacks and killings of innocent women and children were to occur while such events are in the offing.

**Question:** Will India restore full strength of its High Commission to Pakistan in near future?

**Answer:** This would again depend upon how the normalisation process moves forward.

**Question:** APHC is demanding the resolution of Kashmir dispute on the pattern of Nagaland. How do you view this demand?

**Answer:** The Indian Government has already appointed an interlocutor for discussion with various shades of opinion in Jammu & Kashmir. The APHC should talk to him just as the Nagas are talking to the interlocutors appointed by the Government.

**Question:** How do you view Pak proposal about monitoring the LoC by international observers?

**Answer:** This proposal is both unacceptable and impractical. We have proposed to Pakistan to undertake joint patrolling of the Line of Control if they are serious about their claims of not supporting infiltration and
terrorism. Similar cooperation measures do exist in sections of the International Boundary between us.

**Question:** There are indications that talks can commence by June this year. Is it so?

**Answer:** The timeframe will depend on progress on various issues already identified.

**Question:** Is there any international pressure on India to have normal relations with Pakistan?

**Answer:** India does not act under any international pressure.

Our interlocutors, of course, have expressed their support for good relations between our two countries. This is the policy of the Government of India. This is also the approach that the people of India support.

During his visit to Lahore in February 1999, our Prime Minister had inscribed at the Minar-e-Pakistan that he believed that a stable and prosperous Pakistan was in India’s interest. The people in both the countries stand to benefit if the authorities in Pakistan were to follow a policy of peace and cooperation rather than one derived from an adversarial approach and compulsive hostility.

**Question:** What steps are required to check the negative forces, which may try to derail the peace process between the two countries?

**Answer:** Only the resolve that all issues will be settled bilaterally through dialogue and peacefully.

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109. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to the weekly magazine *Focus*.

New Delhi, June 2, 2003.

[India’s EAM Yashwant Sinha warns of the dangers that the wrong people might get control over neighbour Pakistan’s nuclear arms.]

[ *W. Dietl and U. Schmidla interviewed India’s EAM, Focus No. 23, 02 June 2003*]

What is the importance that you attribute to India’s participation in the G-8 summit in Evian?

The host, Jacques Chirac has this time decided for a totally different structure and invited non-members, which have a particular importance in the international structure, among them China and India. We enjoy taking part and there is a feeling of honour.

Are there common strategies for the G8 summit that you agreed upon with Germany during your visit, for example in the field of terrorism?

Our bilateral relations are excellent. We agree in all points. Our PM has invited the Chancellor to visit India again in 2004 and he has already accepted the invitation. We discussed the global dangers of terrorism and achieved far reaching agreement on this issue.

Two, three years ago everybody talked about the Green Card. Has it been successful?

Yes it has. As far as I know, 13,000 Green Cards were issued, 3,000 of them to Indians. However, I mentioned already earlier that Indian IT experts were not interested in coming to Germany at any price. They also did not want to take away the job of any German as some people feared.

Another important summit meeting is expected, the one between India and Pakistan. What are you planning?

We have not got so far yet. There were first steps when our PM renewed his offer regarding friendship with Pakistan. The interrupted contacts were resumed. The dialogue itself has not restarted yet.

Are there any preconditions?
No, there are not. A certain normalisation should come however. In the first line, the cross border terrorism promoted by Pakistan in the past 15 years, needs to be halted.

Last week there was a large Indian military action in Kashmir, during which 115 fighters of the Mujaheddin near the ceasefire line were killed. How can one prevent their infiltration?

The Pakistanis only would have to block the border. We are convinced that these terrorists are hired by Pakistan, trained, paid and sent there. We have reason to assume that the government in Islamabad is not innocent.

That means you do not believe it when the Pakistani government announces that it has banned one or the other organisation.

They can ban any organisation. Their members come again, with a different name. The terrorists have to be done with.

Is it true that India has secured the ceasefire line jointly with Israeli experts?

I cannot say anything about this; I do not comment on this topic.

Prime Minister Vajpayee has rejected Pakistan’s proposal for a nuclear-free South Asia. What does your alternative look like?

Our alternative has always been a nuclear-free world. We have always worked into this direction. For this reason there cannot be any regional or bilateral solution.

Does India fear that the Pakistani nuclear weapons could get into the wrong hands?

The whole world should fear that. Why only India? The target could also be New York. Terrorists nowadays operate worldwide.

It seems that the governments in New Delhi and Islamabad are also under the pressure of fundamentalists. Do you share this view?

We are the largest democracy in the world. In our country power is in the hands of elected politicians.

The well-known Indian columnist Praful Bidwai pretended however that India is today in the grip of a new wave of intellectual
intolerance, of intimidation and speeches full of hate, powered by fanatic Hindu nationalists.

The fact that he can write such things shows clearly the strength of our democracy. The man was not silenced.

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New Delhi, June 4, 2003.

[External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha believes Pakistan has to end infiltration before any long term solution can be discussed about Kashmir. Emphasising the need for improving Indo-Pak bilateral relations for the success of the latest peace initiative, Sinha reiterated that the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir belonged to India.

In a wide ranging e-mail interview with Senior Editor Ramananda Sengupta, he said India’s policy of restraint coupled with a credible deterrent had had a positive impact on stability in Asia and beyond, and that the Indian nuclear doctrine talks of massive retaliation was “designed to inflict unacceptable damage.”]

The prime minister’s peace initiative has been widely welcomed. But what has changed on the ground for the belief that the next summit will not go the Lahore and Agra way?

In his May 3 reply to the letter from the Pakistan prime minister, our prime minister had emphasised the need to prepare the ground step by step, so that there could be a meaningful engagement at the highest level without the risk of failure.

We need to take measures to generate a momentum for improvement in our bilateral relations. These include economic cooperation, cultural exchanges, and people-to-people contacts.

We also need to see firm and credible steps by Pakistan to end cross-border infiltration and terrorism, and to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism in that country. Otherwise, the atmosphere can be
vitiated, and the attempts derailed at any stage. This is the only way to ensure success.

Is there any significance to the fact that the Pakistani response to Mr Vajpayee’s initiative comes from Pakistan Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali and not President Pervez Musharraf? Does India see Jamali as the representative of the Pakistan government?

There is a dilemma and contradiction inherent in the fact that General Musharraf, even though he is the president, is also the army chief. This is, however, a matter for Pakistan to resolve.

In the past Indian prime ministers had interacted with prime ministers [Mohammad Khan] Junejo, Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto.

Under what conditions, if at all, would India be amenable for dividing Kashmir formally along the Line of Control, and accept it as the international border?

The Constitution of India as well as the Resolution adopted in Parliament in 1994 clearly lay down that the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India.

What, in your view, could provide a long term solution to the Kashmir problem?

A long-term solution to the Kashmir issue can be found once Pakistan abandons its adversarial approach, dissociates from sponsorship of terrorism, violence and armed irregulars, and works for a final settlement as provided for in the Simla Agreement between the two countries.

In this unipolar world, India can at best be a regional player. Your comments.

Globalisation has forever altered the basic tenets of international relations, especially concepts like unipolarity and regionalism.

India remains committed to the principles of multi-polarity and multilateralism in international affairs, which envisages a scenario of ‘global inter-dependence’ and mutual respect for each other’s sovereignty. We view the conduct of foreign relations as a dynamic exercise and India’s foreign policy aims at a forward looking engagement with the whole world.

The role India will play in the world will depend in the ultimate analysis, on
the national strength she is able to build and the unity and coherence that her society and polity demonstrates in the times to come.

**After becoming a nuclear power, has India become a more secure nation? How?**

The exercise of the nuclear weapon option by India unmasked potentially dangerous ambiguities in our security environment aggravated by clandestine nuclear and missile proliferation. Our nuclear doctrine rests on a credible minimum deterrent, a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons and a unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosive tests.

These actions strengthen India’s strategic autonomy and our security. We believe that our policies of restraint coupled with a credible deterrent have had a positive impact on stability in our neighbourhood in Asia and beyond.

**Given India’s conventional superiority, did the nuclear tests of 1998 actually level the battlefield between India and Pakistan?**

Nuclear weapons constitute a deterrent; they are not weapons of war. Mixing them up with conventional military warfare can be a dangerous delusion. Our nuclear deterrent is purely defensive.

**India’s nuclear doctrine pledges no first use, yet stresses that it can react with a nuclear strike even in cases of biological or chemical weapons attacks by an adversary. How do you explain this contradiction?**

Our nuclear doctrine seeks to safeguard India and Indian forces anywhere from use, by an adversary, of weapons of mass destruction.

**The explanation that India’s nuclear doctrine is not Pakistan specific is used to reject Pakistan’s call for elimination of nuclear weapons by both sides. Who are the other adversaries?**

India has always rejected calls for de-nuclearisation limited to a region or sub-region because nuclear weapons have a global reach. The aim of elimination of nuclear weapons should be pursued in a global forum with participation of all nuclear weapon states. The question about adversaries should be posed to every nuclear weapon state, not to India alone.

**How much time will it take for India to respond to a nuclear strike,**
given that the warheads and the delivery systems are kept separately and need to be mated before launch?

Those planning our security have taken all factors into account. The Indian Nuclear doctrine talks of massive retaliation ‘designed to inflict unacceptable damage.

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111. Response of Official Spokesperson to the resolution adopted at the Foreign Ministers’ meeting of the OIC.

New Delhi, June 6, 2003.

In response to a question on the recent OIC resolution the Spokesperson said: “Yes, we are aware that the OIC has, once again, adopted resolutions and statements relating to Jammu and Kashmir and other internal matters of India at the OIC Foreign Ministers’ Meeting held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. No importance should be attached to this annual charade by Pakistan. We have said on earlier occasions also that the OIC has no locus standi in matters concerning India’s internal affairs. We, therefore, reject all such irrelevant resolutions and statements.”

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112. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on some aspects of India-Pakistan relations.

New Delhi, June 9, 2003.

In response to a question about Pakistani Foreign Office Spokesman’s comments¹ on June 9, the Spokesman said:

“We are surprised at the comments. Our Prime Minister had announced specifically the appointment of the High Commissioner and full restoration of civil aviation links. He had also referred to the importance of progress on economic cooperation, including in the context of SAARC.

There has been progress on appointment of High Commissioners. Full restoration of civil aviation links has not taken place because of Pakistan’s unwillingness to indicate clearly its position on over flights. Pak has also not taken any substantial steps on trade & economic cooperation. On resumption of the Delhi-Lahore Bus subsequently announced, we await specific dates from Pakistan about arrival of their technical team.”

1. “It is not a matter of satisfaction”, said Masood Khan the new Spokesperson of the Pakistan Foreign Office in Islamabad on June 9 when asked if Pakistan was satisfied with the pace of Indian reaction. “A lot of conditionalities have been placed in the process by the Indian side, while Pakistan is saying that there should be no conditions,” he said. “We are not going into modalities but saying that there should be talks. Also we have been scanning the Indian leaders’ statements and they are not helping the process. The Indian leadership needs to put its act together and speak with one voice as the internal dissent is worrying,” said the Spokesman. “Nothing really has got off the ground between New Delhi and Islamabad except for the nomination of new High Commissioners and statements that both sides wanted communication links to be revived,” Masood Khan asserted.
113. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on operationalisation of the Lahore-Delhi bus service.

New Delhi, June 19, 2003.

On the technical level talks on the Lahore-Delhi bus between the delegations from India and Pakistan, I understand that the two sides had a good, cordial meeting. They discussed the modalities for the resumption of the bus service and would be now looking at the processing the issues of immigration, customs and other logistical aspects. As you know if things were to work out, we are ready to resume the service by July 1. We would wait for Pakistan to indicate when they will be ready and at a mutually agreeable date it can be started.

**Question:** President Musharraf has said that nothing is happening along the LoC.....

**Answer:** Clearly General Musharraf’s comments are unhelpful in the context of Prime Minister’s initiatives to establish trust and confidence in India-Pakistan relations. Despite the denials contained in his remarks, everyone knows that cross-border terrorism continues.

**Question:** Was the date of resuming the bus service not mutually agreed?

**Answer:** I think you have either missed my point or I was not clear enough. The first day’s meetings have been held, the other meetings are ready. Naturally the resumption of service would be on a mutually agreed date. As far as our side is concerned we have got the arrangements in place so that if Pakistan agrees, we can start the service by July 1. We will have to wait for a specific date from their side to say from when they can put the processes in place.

**Question:** There was no mention of dates in the meeting held today?

**Answer:** I suppose when you are discussing the logistics you are trying to see what all needs to be done and then its for both sides to come up with a particular date on which they can both be ready. As I said as far as we are concerned we feel that we would be able to complete our preparations and be ready by July 1.

**Question:** Have both agreed that they are ready on operational basis......

**Answer:** The offer was already made to resume the bus service. There
was a need for a technical level discussion to sort out logistics and that’s where the matter is.

**Question:** What about the air links?

**Answer:** The response to our Prime Minister’s initiative on civil aviation links is still awaited. Clarifications on overflights have not been received.

**Question:** What about the train service?

**Answer:** We have taken our initiatives which you know and we are waiting for clarifications on these issues.

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114. **Government of India’s response to President Musharraf’s observations** on Jammu and Kashmir.

**New Delhi, June 30, 2003.**

In response to a question on President Musharraf’s remarks on Tibet and Jammu & Kashmir, the Official Spokesperson said: “There is no similarity between Tibet and Jammu & Kashmir. Our position that the Tibet Autonomous Region is a part of the territory of the People’s Republic of China has been consistent for nearly five decades. On Jammu & Kashmir, the problem is precisely that Pakistan refuses to recognise the political and legal reality that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. Clearly therefore, the flexibility that President Musharraf referred to, has to be shown by Pakistan”.

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1. In an interview to a private Pakistani television channel in Los Angeles, during his visit there Gen. Musharraf while welcoming the peace process between India and Pakistan said the two countries “have a long way to go in resolving of their differences.” He then went on to say: “The flexibility India has shown on Tibet is a welcome sign. One can only hope it happens in the case of Kashmir too.”
115. Statement by Official Spokesperson on Pakistan Prime Minister’s statement.


We are surprised and disappointed by the Pakistan Prime Minister’s extraneous references\(^1\) to Indian Consulates General in Afghanistan and Iran in the course of comments on the heinous terrorist attack on the Hazara Shias at a mosque in Quetta on Friday July 4.

Pakistani leaders have unfortunately, on several occasions, referred to imaginary activities of our Consulates General in Kandahar and Jalalabad. Motivated and completely inaccurate and baseless reports have appeared in the Pakistani media about the activities of non-existent local employees of our Consulates General. Pakistan should abandon its old approach towards Afghanistan. The Government and the people of Afghanistan, including those in Kandahar and Jalalabad, have widely welcomed the re-establishment of our Consulates General and the trade and project related cooperation that has been facilitated as a result.

The Government of India severely condemns the terrorist attack at the mosque in Quetta targeted at the Shia minority. Continuing sectarian violence in Pakistan points to the need for Pakistan to assess the internal cost to it of the policy of using terrorism as an instrument of state policy externally.

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1. Please see Document No. 119.
116. Inaugural address by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha, at the third meeting of India-Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry.


Dr. A.C. Muthiah, President, FICCI Jenab Ilyas Ahmed Bilour, President, India-Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Jenab Iftekhar Malik, Immediate Past President, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry Jenab Aziz Ahmad Khan, High Commissioner-designate of Pakistan Dr. Amit Mitra, Secretary General of FICCI Ladies and Gentlemen.

A very warm welcome to our friends from Pakistan.

I am happy to have this opportunity to participate in this third meeting of the India-Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry. It is a reminder of the historic initiative that was taken through the Lahore Bus journey of Prime Minister Vajpayee in 1999. The hope for the future that had been rekindled by the Lahore process was quickly seized by your two Chambers to create this common platform for pursuing mutually benefiting endeavours.

The fact that this meeting is taking place today and the overwhelming participation here from both sides are clearly a reflection of the hitherto unfulfilled yearnings of the people of our two countries to find ways to contribute to enhanced trade and economic exchanges, and the resulting employment and income generation benefits for our respective peoples.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Figures show clearly, and they have been mentioned here by speaker after speaker, that we have not fully exploited our common potential. Our bilateral trade recorded officially has hovered, over the past several years, in the range of US$ 200-250 million. Our exports to each other constitute a very small proportion of the overall exports of each of our countries, namely, a mere 1%. It is also much lower than India's trade figures with other countries in the SAARC region. With Bangladesh our total trade is almost US$ 1 billion, with Sri Lanka it was close to US$ 1 billion in 2002, with Nepal it is around US$ 600 million. The level of trade with Pakistan is clearly not natural, since Pakistan's economy, as has been mentioned, is much bigger, much larger. Let us not forget
that at the time of independence more than 50% of Pakistan’s exports
and 30% of its imports were accounted for by India.

A comparison would be relevant in this regard. The US has strong
trade relations with its neighbours Canada and Mexico. In both these
cases, although US is the stronger economy, trade balances are in favour
of Canada and Mexico. Apprehensions, therefore, that the larger economy
will inevitably swamp the smaller neighbouring economies are not borne
out by reality. Balance of trade is a reflection of complementarities in the
economies. The challenge is to exploit the potential that exists to mutual
benefit. With Nepal, for example, India generally imports more than it
exports.

I would like to compliment FICCI for its excellent “Status Paper on
India-Pakistan economic relations”. It has shown that with a normal trade
relationship, our trade will easily reach the level of US$ 3-4 billion, and
Dr. Muthiah just mentioned that it could even reach $6-8 billion. You can
visualise the impact that this will have on employment and incomes in
both our countries. There would also be the resulting need for further
investments in communications and infrastructure to support this, a point
which has been made here, which would have its own spin-off benefits.
Government revenues would benefit from the tax incomes generated
and business persons of Pakistan would also benefit from the more than
one billion strong Indian market, with a middle class of over 300 million
people with increasing purchasing power, which is much larger than the
total population of many industrialised countries. Normal trade relations
will therefore expand the potential for foreign direct investment in Pakistan
considerably.

The FICCI study that I just referred to points out that many of
Pakistan’s exports would benefit and become even more competitive, a
point which has been made by both sides, through cheaper raw material
and intermediate inputs from India. This would apply to the plastics, leather
and textile industry. The Pakistani domestic and industrial consumer would
also benefit from lower prices in several sectors including engineering
industry and transport equipment.

Goods from other neighbourhood economies with whom Pakistan
has normal trade relations have not swamped Pakistani markets. For
example, out of US$ 1.8 billion worth of trade with China in 2002, Pakistan’s
exports are quite substantial and to the tune of US$ 750 million. There is
no need therefore to harbour any special fears about India. The wide
range of products of potential trade such as chemicals, industrial machinery, cement, tyres, tea, pharmaceuticals, etc. clearly show the complementarities that exist between our two economies.

Bilateral trade between India and other SAARC countries has not been to the disadvantage of the other SAARC countries nor has it been to the sole advantage of India. For example, there has been a remarkable increase in the level of trade with Sri Lanka, and this is a point I would like to particularly emphasise, following the Free Trade Agreement signed in 2001. In 2002 alone, exports of Sri Lanka to India grew by around 137%. Consequently, we have now created a Joint Study Group which is studying how to take us into the next generation of economic partnership with a focus on trade in services and investments in each other’s countries. Similarly, we also hope to commence negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement with Bangladesh before the end of this year. Let me assure you that we in India have no intention to overwhelm Pakistan’s economy through trade. Our aim is only to have a normal trade relationship, and promote trade in a manner that people of both countries benefit.

Friends, it is also unfortunate that not enough progress has been made in SAFTA and SAPTA so far. SAARC came into being in 1985. Almost 18 years later, very little progress has been made with regard to its primary objective of economic cooperation. After eight years and four rounds of SAPTA negotiations, intra-SAARC trade forms only 4% of the total trade of South Asia. The number of products on which Preferential Tariffs have been exchanged with Pakistan is in particular, minimal.

As early as 1997, there was also a decision at the summit level to have a South Asian Free Trade Area by the year 2000. However, till the beginning of 2002, only one meeting had taken place, and efforts continue to be made to delay this process. We are now in the second half of 2003, and not a single meeting has taken place this year on SAFTA despite the Kathmandu Summit mandate for a speedy conclusion of the talks to finalise the Framework Treaty. I know that your group needs no convincing of the immense benefits that would accrue from such an arrangement.

In fact, I believe that along with a free trade arrangement for goods and merchandise, we should also have free flow of investment and services within the SAARC area. We are also prepared to work for reasonable levels of uniform value addition norms for all countries in South Asia, and for harmonisation of tariff regime.
In a globalizing world, regional trade is increasingly seen as a protective measure against external shocks. According to some estimates, intra-regional trade between ASEAN countries is over 40 per cent of its total trade. The European Union too trades over 65 per cent within itself. And these figures have been achieved because both ASEAN and the EU have not allowed political differences amongst member countries to hamper trade within the region.

There is much that we can achieve together. Our representatives have worked successfully and productively in international fora including the WTO, and on discussions in UN fora on issues of poverty alleviation, access to better healthcare, ensuring education for all, and solutions to problems of environmental degradation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

India is today one of the fastest growing economies of the world, ranking fourth in terms of purchasing power parity. India remained relatively unscathed from the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis and maintained a healthy growth rate despite recession in major world economies over the past several years. We have built external foreign exchange balances of around US$ 82 billion. From a food grains importing country, we are net exporter of good grains today. Our rate of inflation has also been well under control over the last five years. A Morgan Stanley Dean Witter report felt that were it not for the resilience of China and India, the world economy would have been in deep recession in 2002.

We are proud of our achievements and confident of the future. At the same time, we are also clear that if we want to secure this future, our neighbours must become full partners in this endeavour and make equal if not more economic progress. We wish to celebrate together as we purposefully move forward. It is for this reason I recently suggested that even as we implement fully the SAARC Charter, we should also start thinking of a South Asian Union. If other regions could achieve this kind of Union, despite political, social and economic differences, there is no reason why we should deprive our people of this opportunity. I repeat this here today to show India’s commitment to the concept of a South Asian Union. We are prepared to enter into discussions on this issue from tomorrow, if other countries of the region are willing.

My intention is not in any way to wish away or to underplay the differences that exist between us. We must, at the same time, exploit the
potential for cooperation that exists. I am confident that this would increase the political and economic space to create and exploit additional areas of cooperation and deal with differences. This is the approach that we have successfully adopted and productively followed in our relations with others.

Friends, the challenge faced by India and Pakistan is whether we can truly live together as good neighbours. Till now, we have witnessed the simple logic of mutual economic benefits being overwhelmed by political and other differences between our two countries. I believe that the time has come for us to reverse this trend and for economics to attain a dominant role in our bilateral interaction. It is businessmen such as you and Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the two countries who can play a critical role in this regard.

In conclusion, the most important objective that India seeks to achieve in the next decade or so is to completely banish poverty from our land and to provide our people with a better quality of life. This objective would naturally benefit from peaceful and cooperative relations in the region and the rest of the world. We intend to continue to pursue the twin objectives of peace and economic progress with determination.

I would like to once again thank the Federation of Indian and Pakistani Chambers of Commerce and Industry for the initiative they have taken to convene this meeting and for this very important contribution to the improvement in relations between our two countries.

I wish you success in your deliberations. I would also urge you to work out specific joint recommendations to both Governments for taking the trade and economic relationship significantly forward.

Let me assure you that the Government of India would not be found wanting in implementing these joint recommendations.

Thank you very much.

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117. Media briefing by the Official Spokesperson on the meeting of the SAARC Standing Committee.


Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

**Question:** On the SAARC Meeting in Kathmandu, were there any details whether there is going to be any progress on economic cooperation?

**Answer:** You would have seen the Foreign Secretary’s detailed briefing in Kathmandu yesterday and we had also given out a short brief at the end of the day yesterday. What I can say is that a large number of decisions have been taken by the Standing Committee. We are happy at the consensus in the Standing Committee on the entire package of issues including the dates for the next summit. The Standing Committee has also stressed the urgent need for finalising the draft framework treaty on creating a free trade area that is SAFTA, before the next summit. It has also directed that there should be substantial progress to report to the summit on other parallel trade facilitation measures including the proposed regional agreement on promotion and protection of investments, avoidance of double taxation, trade arbitration council, customs cooperation and harmonisation of standards and measurements. These are all trade facilitation measures aimed to operationalise SAFTA. The committee has also agreed as far as SAPTA is concerned to recommend the launching of the fifth round of trade negotiations under SAPTA. There was also an agreement to hold a succession of meetings of committee of experts to make sure that both on the SAFTA framework and trade facilitation measures and concrete progress is made before the next summit. We hope that this entire package will be fully implemented before the next summit so as to make it meaningful. India looks forward to progress in all these issues before the SAARC Summit as decided in the Standing Committee and also to participating in the summit.

**Question:** Do you see any change in Pakistan’s attitude?

**Answer:** Again I would refer you to Foreign Secretary’s briefing in which he has answered several issues. There has been a consensus in the Standing Committee on promotion of trade and economic cooperation before the Summit. Naturally for the consensus to have been arrived at all the countries that were present had to agree with it. Now we would believe that the spirit is maintained and there should be progress on
economic issues. I agree with you on the point you are making that Pakistan’s lack of commitment on economic cooperation has been responsible for delay in these matters. So it is not only for India but for all SAARC countries, a concern and a desire that all the countries of SAARC including Pakistan should move to make trade and economic cooperation a concrete reality in the next few months.

**Question:** Pakistan’s High Commissioner while presenting his credentials has once again stressed on having a treaty for resumption air link and over-flights. Any comments?

**Answer:** I have only seen news reports to this effect. I am not going to react to this. I can tell you that we had sought clarifications on civil aviation links. We were told that these clarifications could be discussed during the technical level meetings. We had then invited dates for the technical level meetings. We are still awaiting word on that. As far as other aspect which you mentioned, we still do not have any official word on that.

**Question:** You have said that there is consensus in the Standing Committee meeting....

**Answer:** Let’s be very clear. The SAARC Standing Committee has arrived at a consensus on a package on a number of issues. One of the issues is the dates of summit and the other issues are on measures to make meaningful progress in trade and economic cooperation which I have detailed to you.

**Question:** Progress on trade treaties will it be a prerequisite condition for Prime minister to go Islamabad?

**Answer:** I think the decisions of the SAARC Standing Committee speak for themselves. It is naturally a concern that for Heads of Governments / States to meet must have before them a substantive economic agenda and good progress before the summit.

**Question:** Does that mean Prime Minister is going to Pakistan for the summit?

**Answer:** I have just told you there was a consensus on the dates of the summit and India is happy to be a part of the consensus and a consensus could not have arrived as Foreign Secretary said if India had not been part of it.

**Question:** On SAFTA....
Answer: I can only refer you to Foreign Secretary’s briefing. The fact is that the entire Standing Committee has arrived at certain decisions. Specifically an answer to your question, as far as SAFTA is concerned there is going to be a meeting in September. We hope this meeting will take place on schedule. As you recall some meetings earlier had not been taken place. Between September and January there is sufficient time for another meeting to take place if necessary. The same body of experts which is going to be talking about SAFTA is going to talk about the trade facilitation measures to operationalise SAFTA. Naturally there would be encouragement for these meetings to take place so that work can be done. As far as SAPTA is concerned there is movement because the Standing Committee has given the mandate for the fifth meeting of the SAPTA. As you know the summit mandate had only four meetings. Now the fifth meeting has been called for and we hope that this meeting will take place and a real, meaningful, credible and visible progress will be made in these meetings.

Question: Will this expert meeting take place in Kathmandu?

Answer: I don’t have the venues of this meeting. I can get that for you. There are three Ministerial level meetings that India has announced to host in the last quarter of 2003. These are on science and technology, health and information and broadcasting.

Question: On SAPTA.............

Answer: The committee has agreed to recommend the launching of the fifth round of trade negotiations under SAPTA. When you are talking of SAPTA you are talking of tariff concessions and tariff lines. A meaningful progress needs to be made here. As you know out of the 5000 tariff lines which are being made available India is responsible for making available more than half. We have really done a lot for making that a reality.

Question: Pakistani trade delegation called on Prime Minister and stressed the need for resumption of air link between India and Pakistan. The fact that Pakistanis are stressing for resumption of air links...........

Answer: I wouldn’t like to draw any conclusions. The conclusions are yours. Certainly we have taken the initiatives as part of the follow up of Prime Minister’s peace initiative to propose the resumption of civil aviation links and when we had sought a clarification on over-flights we were told that this would be discussed at a technical level. Then we have invited a
technical level team from Pakistan to discuss these issues. So far we haven’t heard from them.

**Question:** When was this invitation sent?

**Answer:** It was on 24th June.

**Question:** Suppose in September there is no progress on SAFTA will PM attend summit meeting?

**Answer:** I wouldn’t like to be a part of such pessimism. We have just had a consensus, we have expressed our happiness and satisfaction at the consensus. Let’s leave it at that.

**Question:** Do you expect bilateral summit meeting during SAARC summit?

**Answer:** I have just given you our agreement on the consensus on the dates for the SAARC Summit. Let’s leave it at that.

*In response to a question about comments made by Pakistani Foreign Secretary*¹ *in Kathmandu, the Official Spokesperson said:*

“We are disappointed at the comments made by the Pakistan Foreign Secretary. These are not in keeping with the spirit of the consensus decisions arrived at in the SAARC standing committee. They are also not in keeping with the spirit of the recent initiatives taken in India – Pakistan relations. We hope that Pakistani political leadership does not share this negative approach.”

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1. Pakistani Foreign Secretary Riaz Khokar on July 11 at a press conference accused India of “exporting” terrorism to Sri Lanka. “It is India and not Pakistan that carries baggage of terrorism. It is India that has exported terrorism to Sri Lanka,” Mr. Khokar told reporters when asked about India’s charge that Pakistan carries baggage of terrorism.
Question: Any reaction the comments of the Pakistani Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, where he criticized India for arresting Yasin Malik?

Answer: We would like to express our disappointment with continued manifestation of negative attitudes by Pakistan, in the instant case of interfering with our internal affairs. Pakistan should concentrate on the grievous political and sectarian ills of its own society. It has enough problems of its own to worry about. Pakistan should be extorted to contribute to creating a proper atmosphere for progressively normalizing relations by abjuring gratuitous comments on developments in India which are of no concern to Pakistan. For engaging with India, Pakistan should disengage itself from terrorism.

Question: Is Maulana Fazlur meeting EAM and DPM?

Answer: From what I understand no other meetings are planned.

Question: How do you characterize this visit?

Answer: It is a private visit.

Question: Can you give us some detail as to what might have happened during his meeting with Prime Minister?

Answer: I don’t have any detail but I understand that it was more in the nature of his appreciation of the Prime Minister’s peace initiative and the developments that have taken place thereafter and the importance of people to people contact towards building a proper atmosphere for dialogue.

Question: Do you think that somebody like him can play a role in this?

Answer: I am not going to characterize these possibilities - you can see them for yourself.

Question: Any latest detail on technical level meetings on air-links?
Answer: I have not heard that any dates have been proposed.

Question: Has Prime Minister told him(Maulana Fazlur) that he is going to Islamabad for SAARC Summit?

Answer: I was not a party to the discussions so I do not have more details on the discussions. But on the issue of the SAARC Summit we have already made our position clear after the Kathmandu meeting.

Question: The fact that Prime Minister met Maulana Fazlur ......inaudible

Answer: I think the Prime Minister has met him. It was a courtesy call. I would not like to characterize the Prime Minister’s meeting.

Question: Maulana Fazlur is actively pro-Taliban and he is meeting Prime Minister. Has the policy of GOI changed to pro-Taliban or his views on Taliban has changed?

Answer: It is not a question of one approach or the other changing. I think what you have to see is Prime Minister’s initiative has taken place and the developments thereafter. This visit, which is a private visit has taken place and you have heard the various statements and the discussions.

Question: Hizbul Mujjahedin cadres were told by ISI to be in small groups of two or three in order to avoid American satellite detection....inaudible?

Answer: I do not want to go into any operational detail of how terrorism operates. We would like a complete and permanent end to it and to the infrastructure that supports it.

Question: Will it have impact on the peace process?

Answer: Naturally, continuing cross-border terrorism is not conducive to building the correct atmosphere for the peace process.
Statement by Official Spokesperson on false propaganda by Pakistan against India.


The Pakistani Acting High Commissioner was called to the Ministry of External Affairs today:

His attention was drawn to the recurring propagandistic articles in the Pakistani media as well as comments of Pakistani officials and leaders targeting the Indian Consulates General in Afghanistan, particularly those in Kandahar and Jalalabad. His attention was also drawn to the baseless comments of the official Spokesperson of the Pakistani Foreign Ministry on Saturday, 26 July claiming that there was threat from Indian diplomatic missions in Afghanistan, and that Pakistan needed to counter it.

Even Afghan officials and Ministers, including their Interior Minister, had been constrained to publicly reject these preposterous allegations leveled by Pakistan.

Such persistent Pakistani allegations in an atmosphere already full of violence and terrorism threaten the security of our missions and its personnel. The Government of Pakistan was asked to take into account the spirit of the initiative of our Prime Minister, extending once again the hand friendship to Pakistan, and desist from any comments or actions that go contrary to the objective of setting in motion positive trends in our bilateral relationship.

1. The Pakistani Foreign Office Spokesperson Masood Khan told a press briefing in Islamabad that “Their (Indian Missions in Afghanistan) activities are known and they are there to disrupt relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan.” He further accused the Indian missions of making “concerted efforts to drive a wedge between the two countries (Pakistan and Afghanistan)” Stating that there was little economic activity to perform for the Indian missions in Herat, Kandahar and Jalalabad, Pakistan’s assessment was that “there is a threat from the Indian diplomatic missions in Afghanistan and we have conveyed our concern to the Afghan Government.”
120. Reaction of Official Spokesperson to questions on Pakistan from the media.

**New Delhi, August 6, 2003.**

**Question:** Pakistan Foreign made some comments few days back about violation of minority rights in India and other issues. Any comments?

**Answer:** We are disappointed at the tone and substance of the comments of the Spokesman of the Pakistani Foreign Ministry on August 4, 2003. The increasingly aggressive tone of his statements in the recent past suggests continuing unwillingness to acknowledge the failure of the unproductive policies Pakistan has so far pursued.

Pakistan’s record on minorities hardly entitles it to pronounce on treatment of minority issues in India. Even Muslim minorities in Pakistan, leave alone other religious minorities, are insecure.

**Question:** He also alleged that there were terrorist training camps in India.....

**Answer:** The less said about the Spokesman’s egregious comment about the terrorist training apparatus in India the better. At least, the Spokesman deserves high marks for originality of invention. We once again call upon the Government of Pakistan to seize the new spirit infused amongst the people of both the countries by Prime Minister’s initiative and shed its negative mindset.

**Question:** Will this impact on talks on air links?

**Answer:** well we are following a step-by-step process and we have accepted the dates for the talks and we certainly hope that talks will take place as scheduled.
121. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on observations by Pakistani President.

New Delhi, August 12, 2003.

Question: Gen. Musharraf has said that there should be cease fire along the LoC and Kashmir valley1…… Any comment?

Answer: We have seen the comments of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf made to visiting Indian Parliamentarians, journalists and others in the context of meeting organized by SAFMA.

There is nothing new in these suggestions. They have not been found effective in the past because Pakistan has continued to sponsor terrorism directed against India and provided support to cross border infiltration. Once this is stopped and Pakistani aided terrorist stop crossing the LOC, the level of firing would naturally go down.

Similarly, there is nothing to prevent the Pakistan aided terrorists to stop their activities inside J&K. Once these activities stop, there would inevitably be a change in the necessary measures required to be taken by the security forces.

We are also disappointed by the suggestions emanating from the Pakistani leadership that they had done all that they could to stop cross border infiltration and terrorism. The facts point to continuing Pakistani support through funding, training, indoctrination, launch and guidance.

Instead of propagandist statements, Pakistan should take effective and long-term oriented measures to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism.

Question: Gen. Musharraf also said that India should not continue to live in past and look forward….

Answer: We are talking of going ahead. In fact Prime Minister Vajpayee’s initiative is also all about moving ahead. But as far as the reaction is

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1. On August 12 President Musharraf in his interaction with the Indian Members of Parliament, editors, and others of the SAFMA who called on him offered immediate ceasefire on the LOC and showed his willingness to facilitate it in the valley if India reciprocated by releasing Kashmiri prisoners allowing free movement of Kashmiri leaders, reducing forces and ending military operations. Elaborating on the offer of facilitation of a ceasefire in the valley, he said no guarantee was possible since it was not in his control. However influence of various elements could be used to persuade the “freedom fighters” to respond if India assured to reciprocate by taking appropriate measures.
concerned I have given you a reaction to some specific suggestions that were made in his statement.

**On August 8, 2003 Official spokesperson had said that** “a decision has been taken as a very special case and in view of Prime Minister Vajpayee’s initiative to release Munir. You may have seen some reports. Efforts are on to have him sent back to Pakistan by Tuesday. He is expected to be in Delhi before that and consular access will be given to the Pakistani High Commission.” There were some other questions:

**Question:** Is this a part of humanitarian gesture on the GOI’s part?

**Answer:** People to people contact is a very important part of the process that we are following step-by-step. With the intention of keeping up the momentum generated by Prime Minister’s initiative, this decision has been taken.

**Question:** In response to question in Parliament, it was said that Pakistan has proposed on July 24 for talks on resumption of railway links. Any confirmation?

**Answer:** The proposal has been received and it is being examined.

**Question:** There was a report that EAM briefed the MPs who were to visit Pakistan. What was the briefing about?

**Answer:** I am not party to that briefing. It was essentially a briefing that was given at the request of the delegation. These people are going there in their individual capacities at the invitation of an NGO. The delegation is composed of several MPs as well as people from the media. From what I understand the visit is from August 9-13 and the meetings to be held on 10 and 11.

**Question:** Was the briefing on dos and don’ts?

**Answer:** Well as I said, I was not there and some media personnel were there and so it is already in public knowledge what the briefing was about.

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122. Statement by the Ministry of External Affairs on India’s offer of help to Pakistan to clean the oil spill off the port of Karachi.

New Delhi, August 14, 2003.

“Continuing with Prime Minister’s initiative extending a hand of friendship to Pakistan, and as a gesture of cooperation, the Government of India today offered assistance to Pakistan to deal with the environmental and other hazards created by the oil spill off Karachi port1.

Should the Government of Pakistan respond positively, the Government of India would provide immediate cooperation through its capabilities, equipment and materials including pollution response equipment, dispersants, containment booms, etc.”

The Spokesperson responded to questions put to him:

Question: Have they accepted the offer?
Answer: I have not heard of that.

Question: How was this conveyed?
Answer: They have been informed through the High Commission.

1. India offered help to fight the pollution caused by the Greek-registered oil tanker whose hull broke into two off the Karachi coast causing oil spill off Karachi port. The Greek ship MT Tasman Spirit ran aground on July 27 due to rains and high tides with an estimated 35,000 tons of oil still left. The Karachi administration declared a state of emergency and sealed off the 14-km long beach to ensure that people did not suffer any adverse effects from the oil slick. The news triggered panic in Karachi and there were reports of several people rushing for media help complaining of headaches and nausea. The ship was carrying 90,000 tons of oil for the Pakistan Refinery Ltd. Environmentalists have said the Karachi coastline could be affected, endangering fish, crabs and rare turtles and hampering sea traffic. The Indian mission in Islamabad formally conveyed to the Pakistan Foreign Office the offer made by the Government of India to join in any effort by Pakistan to minimise the damage from the shipwreck. The Foreign Office spokesman, Masood Khan said, “we are looking in to it. May be you could expect a formal reaction tomorrow”.
123. **Response of Official Spokesperson to Pakistani allegation of terrorist camps in India.**

**New Delhi, August 19, 2003.**

**Question:** Any reaction to the Pakistani Spokesperson’s statement that there were 55 terrorist training camps in India?

**Answer:** This is one more figment of Pakistan’s imagination. One would have chosen not to comment on this absurd allegation, but for the mindset it reveals. It is a mindset that thinks of stopping at nothing to make a propaganda point.

The more Pakistan makes such wild allegation, the less we and the international community believe that it is serious in dealing with its responsibility to end cross-border terrorism against India. We would again wish to underline that Pakistan should think, act and speak responsibly to make full use of the opportunity offered by Prime Minister Vajpayee’s initiative to improve relations between India and Pakistan, an objective to which Pakistan’s government should show as much commitment as its people seem to have begun to show.

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**Question:** Pakistan Government has proposed for talks on Samjhauta1. Any progress?

**Answer:** The Government of India has received the proposal. As you know we are following a calibrated, step-by-step approach in the matter and each step will be taken keeping in view the success generated by the previous step as well as the confidence that exist between the two sides and we are looking forward to the technical level talks on civil aviation next week.

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1. The suspended train service that ran between the two countries.
124. Statement by Official Spokesperson on India-Pakistan talks on Civil Aviation in Islamabad.

New Delhi, August 28, 2003.

An agreed press release was issued in Islamabad today at the end of two days of technical level discussions between India and Pakistan on resumption of civil aviation links. An agreement could easily have been reached. It is regretted that this did not happen because of Pakistan’s negative approach and its attempts to bring in extraneous issues.

Question: What is this agreed press release?

Answer: There is an agreed press release issued in Islamabad by the technical teams together.

Question: Which says what?

Answer: Which says that the technical level talks between Pakistan and India on resumption of civil aviation links were held on August 27-28, 2003 in Rawalpindi in a cordial and business like atmosphere. A range of issues was discussed in detail. The talks provided an opportunity for the two sides to understand each other’s respective position. It was decided to continue the talks. New dates would be fixed after mutual consent.

Question: You said Pakistan tried to bring in extraneous issues. What are these extraneous issues?

Answer: Well the details I have out of the talks, I have released to you.

Question: Now that a new date has to be fixed means that this is going to be dragged on for a long time.

Answer: Well it says that new dates will be fixed after a mutual consent. The meeting has just ended today. Now they will have to discuss when to meet again.

Thank You

(Text in italics is translation from Hindi)
125. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on India-Pakistan relations.

New Delhi, August 29, 2003.

The Confederation of Indian Industries had written to Government of India seeking permission for three things, firstly to hold a Made in Pakistan products exhibition in India, secondly to establish an India Pakistan CEO’s forum and thirdly to set up a India Pakistan trade website. The Government of India has today conveyed its concurrence on these proposals. I understand that a little later in the evening, CII will be issuing a detailed press release on these three issues1.

...This morning we gave a note to the High Commission of Pakistan informing them that we would be giving them consular access today to six Pakistani boys under the age of eighteen. I understand has been done this afternoon at Gujarat Bhawan, consular access has been provided to the High Commissions officials and now we would await their confirmation of the nationality of these individuals and once that is confirmed Government of India would make arrangements to take them to Wagah border and facilitate their repatriation and hand them over to Pakistani Rangers as per established practise. The details of the six individuals will be provided to you.

Question: In the morning Prime Minister said there would be no talks with Pakistan and on the other hand we are taking steps such as consular access and business relations...civil aviations talks also failed. What is your comment on it?

Answer: Clearly this is part of the attempts at normalisation and these are not talks. But these are steps we are taking to see how Prime Minister’s initiative can be moved forward, and yes we wish that the other talks which did not go the way that everybody would have wanted had gone in different direction. But the fact that it didn’t happen doesn’t mean that we cannot take other positive steps that we hope will be reciprocated with equal amount of sincerity and commitment.

1. The Ministry of External Affairs the same evening issued a separate press release confirming official approval of the Government of India to the CII’s three proposals.
Friends,

I am happy to have this opportunity to launch the India-Pakistan CEO’s Business Forum in New Delhi today. I compliment the CII on taking this step in furtherance of Prime Minister’s initiative to expand economic cooperation and people-to-people contacts with Pakistan. The invitation to businessmen of both countries to interact in such a forum would help in focussing on the challenges as well as the opportunities not just in Indo-Pak trade and economic relations but also the larger relationship and the global context. It will also be useful for finding new approaches for the future and discovering complementarities between our two economies.

Friends, a most of you are aware there has been a significant change in India-Pakistan relations since Prime Minister Vajpayee extended his hand of friendship to Pakistan once again on April 18, 2003 and Prime Minister Jamali spoke to him on phone on April 28. A number of important steps have been taken to advance people-to-people contacts. The Delhi-Lahore Bus service has resumed. There is now a regular flow of people across the Wagah border. I am particularly happy that all of you have come through Wagah border.

Some of the important developments since April, include:

- Exchange of Parliamentary delegations

- Visit of a 120-member business delegation from the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

- Fashion show in Karachi by some leading Indian fashion designers, and a similar reciprocal event in Delhi.
- Visit by a 60-member delegation of journalists and MPs from India to Pakistan.

- Mutual release of civilian prisoners and fishermen.

- A decision to facilitate the visa requirement of Pakistani children coming to India for medical treatment and to fully fund the travel, stay and medical treatment of 20 Pakistani children taking into account the popular response to the Noor Fatima case.

- Resumption of sporting ties.

- Staging of a Pakistani play “Ek Thi Nani” In India.

- Innovative new ways to expand trade and economic cooperation including through the establishment of this Forum.

As is obvious, a great deal of progress has been made. Unfortunately, there are also areas where we have not been able to move forward. For example, the first round of Civil Aviation talks have not proved as productive as we would have liked them to be. A Tea Trade delegation and a team of jurists from India were denied visas to go to Pakistan for reasons which remain a mystery to us. We, however, do not intend to allow these setbacks to cool our enthusiasm in any manner. We are committed to persevering with the process of normalizing the relationship.

The need for greater economic interaction between India and Pakistan is a self-evident reality. Facts and figures of India-Pakistan trade speak out loud in this regard. According to official figures, trade between Pakistan and India is currently of the order of US $ 200-250 Million. This miniscule and unnatural figure is about a quarter or so of trade between India and other countries of the sub-continent like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. In fact, estimates of actual trade, taking into account trade through third countries, is around US $ 2 Billion. But, even that is only a glimpse of the potential that exists.

If US$ 2 billion worth of goods are traded at a time when politics has been working against trade, what would be the picture when politics and trade become aligned? Moreover, enhanced trade would lead to increase in investments in communications and infrastructure. It would attract large investments from outside to both our countries. There would also be a whole range of other spin-off benefits, such as, increased revenues generated from taxes, increased employment and higher
incomes. May I also mention that reports prepared by our Chambers of Commerce indicate that normal trade between our two countries would benefit in particular, Pakistan’s exports which would become more competitive due to cheaper raw material and inputs from India.

One of the businessmen who was part of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry delegation told me that in the absence of direct trade, he had no option but to purchase textile machinery manufactured in India from Dubai. This is an unfortunate situation. We should ask ourselves who is benefiting from this absence of direct trade between India and Pakistan. Why are we denying ourselves the benefits of trading with each other? What are the elements which are preventing such commerce and how can we change them?

Friends, despite the ups and downs in India-Pakistan relations, India has continued to extend the Most Favoured Nation treatment to Pakistan. India seeks normal trade relations with Pakistan. We would like to promote trade in a manner that people of both countries benefit. It is for this reason that we have supported CII’s efforts to organize a ‘Made in Pakistan’ products exhibition in India. There is a perception that India maintains certain non-tariff barriers. Let me declare in unambiguous terms that if there are any Pakistan specific restrictions, the Government of India will strive for their removal. Naturally, it is our hope that Pakistan, will also sooner rather than later, give India the Most Favoured Nation treatment and remove all non-tariff barriers.

Along with steps such as the above, we should sincerely work towards more effective arrangements under SAARC. Progress towards SAFTA is an urgent requirement. Friends, I have in recent days spoken of India’s willingness to move towards a South Asian Union. I hope this goal will materialize some day. I dream of the day when South Asia, through mutual agreement, creates one currency, one tariff regime and agrees to free movement of goods, services and people throughout the region.

We, in India and Pakistan, have allowed our differences to overwhelm our commonalities so far. We have failed to provide adequate space for our natural complementarities to assert themselves. India’s commitment to the building, through dialogue, of a relationship of durable peace, stability and cooperation was underlined by our Prime Minister when he recorded at the Minar-e-Pakistan in February, 1999 that a ‘stable, secure
and prosperous Pakistan is in India’s interest’. As neighbours, we cannot wish each other away. We need to learn to deal with each other as two mature nations and accept each other’s reality. I am aware that there are many voices in Pakistan which echo similar sentiments towards India. It is our hope that these sentiments can slowly but steadily drown the shrill cries of hostility between us.

The people-to-people contacts which have been initiated since the Prime Minister’s Srinagar initiative reveal the extraordinary amount of goodwill that exist in both countries for each other, particularly at the common man’s level. There are strong peace constituencies in both countries and CEOs such as you gathered here, are important leaders of such peace constituencies. I believe that these peace constituencies should be encouraged and strengthened by the Governments of both countries.

Friends, I am often asked the question if India’s foreign policy is Pakistan centric. I have responded to this several times in the past and do so again today. There is a wide world out there with whom India is seeking to build good relations. In the best traditions of Indian foreign policy, we strive to strengthen relations with all countries of the world. We would like to see close economic, political, social and people-to-people linkages with all countries. India, therefore, has no intention or desire to be Pakistan centric in our policies. At the same time, we hope that Pakistan will also succeed in shedding its obsession with India. For example, the practice of turning every international and multilateral forum into a battleground to attack each other should end.

While our respective domestic media exult in the coverage of such verbal duels, the sad reality is that they lower of the standard of debate of the entire forum in which they take place and are a major source of embarrassment to all those forced to witness this unseemly spectacle. Let us put an end to this practice. The forthcoming UNGA will be a test of this.

I would like to thank the Confederation of Indian Industry in cooperation with Young President’s Organization for the initiative they have taken to launch the India-Pakistan CEO’s Forum today. I am convinced that this Forum will make an important contribution to improvement in relations between our two countries. I welcome the initiative to organize an exhibition of Pakistani products in India and the setting up of the India-Pak trade website. These measures, I am sure,
will open up new windows of opportunity for interaction between our peoples and it is through such interaction that we are going to ultimately succeed in transforming the relations between our two countries.

I wish you all success in your deliberations and hope you will have a pleasant and enjoyable stay in India.

Thank you

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127. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to the News of Pakistan.

New Delhi, September 14, 2003.

(It’s been a hectic few weeks on the foreign policy front. The won’t-go-away-easily question of sending troops to Iraq, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s visit, Pakistan’s woolly-headed peace moves and now the forthcoming United Nations General Assembly meet. So, is India sending troops to Iraq? External affairs minister Yashwant Sinha says in an exclusive interview that the situation hasn’t changed much since India said ‘no’ last time. Excerpts from an interview)

You have been holding consultations with your counterparts on the Iraq situation. The US has also indicated it is willing to try afresh for a UN resolution on Iraq. What is India planning to do?

They are concerned about the deteriorating ground situation in Iraq. We feel that the sooner sovereignty is restored to the Iraqi people and governance is handed back to them the better, or else the security situation will not improve. It is not a question of having more troops on ground, it is a question of a fundamentally different approach. Where the Government becomes Iraqi and they start taking care of their own problems, which includes security, their natural resources, their reconstruction. The sooner this happens it will be better for Iraq.

But what about sending the troops?

We will see what the credible Iraqi regime wants, they will not need foreign forces.
So, are you saying that we will not get into any more arguments with the US on the troops issue. Is there a hitch on the issue?

It’s not a question of a hitch now, the decision to send troops or not was never smooth. There were host of considerations including domestic ones. What the CCS decided on July 14 was that even in order to “consider”, we need an explicit UN mandate. The ground of reconsideration has not arisen as there is no resolution.

It’s been more than two years since the start of the war on terror. Not only is the war nowhere near finishing, worse, our own concerns have been largely ignored. What is happening?

Till the time there is an absence of clarity on the global war against terrorism it will continue to be weak. Then, there is the issue of double standards: they cannot live with one set of terrorism, but they can live with another, only because it doesn’t affect them. If you say that cross-border terrorism in Afghanistan is bad then cross-border terrorism in India is equally bad. You cannot say that cross-border terrorism in Afghanistan needs to be fought but terrorism in India needs to be condoned.

Terrorist organisations have been banned but they reappear under different names. Take the case of LeT. When Pakistan says that we have closed camps that is not enough. What do you do with those people, have you disarmed them, have you arrested them, have you proceeded legally against them? So, closing a camp is not good enough. These are issues the international community must consider seriously. India’s proposal for a comprehensive convention against terrorism has been pending since 1996, much before September 11. We must have a clearer approach against terrorism if the war against terrorism has to be successful. We have not only said this to the US but also to others.

There are concerns about our growing friendship with Israel, that it may cost us our friends in the Arab world and our commitment to Palestine. Did we forcefully articulate India’s position on Palestine and Iran, during the talks?

Our commitment to the Palestinian question remains unaltered and we have told them as clearly as possible. I spent 75 minutes with Mr. (Ariel) Sharon and we stated our position to the Israelis as clearly as they told us their concerns. We told them about our relationship with Iran. But then in the conduct of bilateral relations, no country can determine what our
relationship can be with a third country. They may have security concerns but we have explained in some detail where Indo-Iranian relationship stands and they should not have any concerns on that count.

What about the India-Israel-US axis against terrorism?

Any cooperation between these three democracies will be a part of the fight against global terrorism. It will be a part of our bilateral arrangements with them along with the international agreements on counter-terrorism. It’s not a question of an axis. No country in the world can claim they are safe from terrorism; an international understanding is developing despite differences.

What is your assessment on cross-border terrorism, has it changed since PM announced his peace initiatives?

There is no change in the ground-level situation. Pakistan continues to give support to terrorism, the infiltration continues, the infrastructure is also intact.

But what about the argument (often put forward in Pakistan) that an increase in terrorist violence will force India to a dialogue?

That has never succeeded in the past and will not work in the future. Our position remains clear and consistent that there is no question of a dialogue till Pakistan stops terrorism. In any case their argument for a dialogue does not hold ground. We cannot sort out all the issues between India and Pakistan in one sitting. It has to be over a period of time. If dialogue has to be meaningful and sustained, the right atmosphere must be created for it.

Recent people-to-people contacts have shown that people want peace. Even hardliners like Fazalur Rehman played the peace pipe when he was in India recently. So, then, is the military regime the main hurdle?

I have no doubt in the mind that the military regime is a stumbling block to peace. I have told my interlocutors that they must understand the nature of the Pakistani state and military. If you treat Pakistan as a normal polity then you are making a mistake.

Any possibility of talks anytime soon, say on the sidelines of the coming United Nations General Assembly meet?
Whether it is New York, Timbuktu, Islamabad or New Delhi, there is no bilateral dialogue possible till Pakistan stops cross-border terrorism.

Pakistan’s Foreign Minister Mehmood Khursheed Kasuri has said that he will be personally coming to India to deliver the invitation for the SAARC summit in Islamabad. Do you see it as a PR exercise or a genuine move to build bridges?

We haven’t heard officially about it, we will take a view when it comes. I would like to say that the Foreign Ministers of countries do not go around delivering invitations to the head of Governments, there are other diplomatic channels available. In any case the dates for the SAARC summit have been decided by the SAARC standing committee and we know about it.

**But has Pakistan responded to our peace moves? Do you see any intention to reciprocate?**

If we had got enough from Pakistan then we could have solved all issues. We’ll have to persevere and be patient and make Pakistan see reason.

**But for how long?**

You have to see in perspective, that for every terrorist incident that takes place, there are nine that are prevented. We have to fight the scourge of terrorism, and we will win.

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128. Questions answered by Foreign Secretary on Pakistan at his media briefing on Prime Minister’s visit to New York to attend the UN General Assembly session.

New Delhi, September 15, 2003.

Please see Document No. 442

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129. Statement by Official Spokesperson in response to a question on India’s efforts to cooperate with Pakistan to eradicate terrorism.

**New Delhi, September 18, 2003.**

We are amused, disappointed but not surprised by refusal of Pakistan to cooperate with us to eradicate scourge of terrorism.

It is indeed amusing to find the representative of a military regime pretend to speak of alleged repression and so-called State terrorism elsewhere.

It is not surprising because it has been clear right from the beginning that, in dealing with international terrorism, Pakistan is a part of the problem and cannot be a part of any effective solution. While providing some cooperation against some terrorists, avowedly under pressure and threats, it has attempted to be selective and piecemeal in such cooperation, and protect its “assets” to the extent it could. Terrorists, including those linked to or supportive of the Al Qaida, continue to find safe haven and support in Pakistan. Pakistan also continues to assess terrorism as an instrument of leverage in its dealing with India. Many, including analysts in the western media, has questioned Pakistan’s intentions and commitment.

It is disappointing because it is clear that Pakistan has still not fully absorbed the lessons of its own past mistakes. Its policy against India have not only completely failed to move towards its preferred objectives, but has in fact rebounded negatively on Pakistan itself. If Pakistan is to move towards moderation and a progressive society, as General Musharraf claims as his objective, it has to give up using fundamentalism, terrorism and subversion against other countries.

1. The Spokesperson Navtej Sarna was referring to the briefing of Pakistan Foreign Office Spokesperson Masood Khan on September 15 in which the latter described as “ridiculous and ludicrous” the proposal of the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, for India-Pakistan co-operation in fighting terrorism. Masood Khan, said that Islamabad could not be a party to “Indian terrorism” and asked New Delhi to “withdraw and roll back aggression” from Kashmir. The Pakistani Spokesperson was responding to the proposal of External Affairs Minister Mr. Sinha to the Pakistani newspaper the News (See Document No. 127) asking Pakistan to join India in the fight against terrorism. Mr. Khan said that the Joint India-U.S. exercises in Ladakh would have no effect on the status of Kashmir as a disputed territory. He reiterated Pakistan’s position that the Kashmir issue had to be resolved in line with the wishes of the Kashmiri people. He denied remarks attributed to the Foreign Minister, Khurshid Kasuri, about a joint SAARC force to combat terrorism.
We remain ready to cooperate with Pakistan should it eventually choose the right course for itself.

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130. Proposal by India to Pakistan to increase the strength of their diplomatic missions in their respective capitals.

New Delhi, September 23, 2003.

The Government today proposed to Pakistan an increase in the staff strengths of the respective High Commissions by 8 (from the present level of 47 to 55) on a reciprocal basis.

Pakistan was also informed that a visit by a team from the Pakistan Indus Waters Commission to Baglihar Project would be organised in October, in response to a request from Pakistan for a site visit.

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131. Response of Official Spokesperson to a question on American response to Pakistan’s missile test.

New Delhi, October 15, 2003.

Please see Document No. 350

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132. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha on BBC World’s HARD TALK India.

October 17, 2003.

KT: In April when the Indian Prime Minister extended his hand of friendship to Pakistan there was a worldwide acclaim and a feeling that history was about to be made. Six months later when nothing much has happened there is a sense of disappointment and a belief that a turning point could have been missed. So what’s gone wrong? That’s one of the subjects that I should tackle today with my guest, the Foreign Minister of India, Yashwant Sinha. Mr. Sinha almost six months have passed since 18th April when Prime Minister Vajpayee extended his hand of friendship to Pakistan and apart from few cosmetic changes people say not much has happened. And in fact today a question is being asked; was this a genuine gesture of friendship or was it a tactical ploy to deflect attention from international pressure to start talk or a way from previous failed policy?

Y: I think it will be a grievous error of judgment to think that it was a tactical ploy. The Prime Minister of India Mr. Vajpayee was very sincere when he extended his hand of friendship and the circumstances in which that hand of friendship was extended to Pakistan on the 18th of April in Srinagar, in Jammu and Kashmir is something which is already well known.

KT: Then can I ask you this; explain to me how on the 2nd, 6th and the 9th of April, on three separate occasions, you as foreign Minister said that Pakistan is more fitting case for pre-emptive action than Iraq?

Y: You must be able to understand the circumstances in which this statement was made. I was asked a question about the American action in Iraq. And in that context I said that if cross-border terrorism, if proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their possession, if these were the criteria, then Pakistan fulfills all those criteria much much better than Iraq did.

KT: You were responding to a question in the Hindustan Times interview on the sixth of April, but on the 2nd of April, four days earlier to AFP you said ‘ I think all the people in the international community realise that India has a much better case to go for
preemptive action against Pakistan than US has in Iraq’; that wasn’t an answer to a question, that was a statement by you.

Y: No, I was talking to a journalist.

KT: What about Parliament on the 9th of April, ‘let me remove certain misunderstanding, particularly about the right to preemptive strike against Pakistan. I’m quite sure nobody in this house would disagree with me, when I say that no country deserves more than Pakistan to be tackled in this way.’

Y: No, so what is the question?

KT: In other words, clearly this is not the sentiment of a country that is extending a hand of friendship.

Y: No these are two different things, because even after the Prime Minister extended a hand of friendship on the 18th of April he came out quite forthrightly and clearly that cross border-terrorism has to stop. So on that there’s no change in India’s position.

KT: Okay let me put…

Y: (intervenes) No, but I must go back to the question that you asked, the first question.

KT: Was it genuine or was it tactical?

Y: No that’s not… whether it was genuine yes, and whether it was tactical. And I said it was a genuine offer and that it will be a grievous error for anyone to think that we have not made progress. We have made a lot of progress since April 18th. And…

KT: (Intervenes) And as Foreign Minister you’ve exchanged high commissioners, you’ve raised the level of representation in your high commissions by seven or ten people and now you have in fact a bus plying. You haven’t even got planes and trains between the two countries. What progress have you made?

Y: No the real progress, Karan, will come when the two countries will sit down and start talking. That will be the real progress. This is…all this process that you are talking about, is the process of normalisation of the relationship between the two countries. And the steps that we have taken are very important steps.
KT: I very much want to talk about when the two countries will sit down and start talking. That’s the big question that no one seems to have an answer to, but go back to the reasons why people suspect that the gesture may not in fact be sincere. Three weeks before Mr. Vajpayee extended his hand of friendship, The United States state department after the Nadimarg massacre publicly called upon India and Pakistan to resume dialogue. Were you responding to that international pressure?

Y: No there is no international pressure what ever…

KT: None?

Y: This is something, which we must be able to get out of our minds. I don’t know why we Indians must always rush to this conclusion that we are always acting under some pressure or the other.

KT: Because on the 18th of April the Prime Minister took...

Y: No I’d like to absolutely vehemently deny it that India acts under pressure, except some spokesperson somewhere is making a statement and you take that as acting under pressure.

KT: Except on 18th of April when he was extending his hand of friendship...

Y: (intervenes) The Prime Minister of India Mr. Karan Thapar does not act under any pressure.

KT: Except on the 18th of April when he was extending his hand of friendship, on two occasions he said that events in Iraq were a warning to India and Pakistan. You may deny the pressure but the Prime Minister is acknowledging that there was pressure.

Y: No so you mean to say that if our Prime Minister had not made that offer then Iraq…U.S would have intervened in India-Pakistan...

KT: Then what does it mean that Iraq is a warning to India-Pakistan?

Y: Because what he was telling was that India and Pakistan must sit together and resolve all the issues between them. It was a message more to Pakistan. All right that was the meaning of what the Prime Minister said.
KT: Let’s just assume that you are absolutely right, that the Prime Minister wasn’t then responding to international pressure...

Y: (intervenes) No let me go back to the first question, because it is very important that I clarify that issue. How old is the...are the issues between India and Pakistan, Jammu and Kashmir 1947, 1948. And you are talking in terms of a six-month time frame and you’re saying you’re disappointed. What we need in dealing with Pakistan is patience. If we do not have patience, then no effort of dialogue between India and Pakistan will succeed.

KT: Let’s come back...

Y: So this is the most important thing.

KT: Let’s come back Foreign Minister to why people believe that the hand of friendship, which they acclaimed when they extended in April in now being seen as tactical ploy. One reason is the circumstances in which it was extended. You say that in fact the Prime Minister wasn’t acting under pressure, let’s accept that. Another reason given were that the Prime Minister deflecting attention from the recognition that India had carried out a nine month long, one million strong mobilization on its borders with Pakistan, which today even the Deputy Prime Minister doesn’t deny fail to stop terror. Were you deflecting attention from your failed policies by opening a new campaign?

Y: This shows very inadequate understanding of that mobilization, that mobilization took place after our parliament, the seat of our sovereignty...

KT: And continued...

Y: The seat of our democracy was attacked by terrorists.

KT: And continued till October the next year ...

Y: ...and continued till the next year. In the mean while we had the historic elections in Jammu and Kashmir and it was a build up which was defensive, it was a build up which was supposed to send the signal to Pakistan and I think in both we succeeded very well. In sending a signal to Pakistan, in holding free and fair election in Jammu and Kashmir, we achieved our purpose.

KT: But you failed to stop terror.
Y: Because the mobilization, sir, was on the international border. The mobilization...there are already the troops on line of control; there was hardly any change as far the line of control is concerned.

KT: All right Minister lets accept that...

Y: It was the international border where the mobilization was unacceptable.

KT: All right let’s accept that your gesture was genuine, it wasn’t tactical and those who are doubting are being unfair, then answer this to me. Six months have passed, if this is the genuine gesture of friendship, why haven’t substantiated talks between India and Pakistan started on the differences over Kashmir.

Y: For the very simple reason that Pakistan has done nothing, nothing at all to stop cross-border terrorism. By offering that hand of friendship and giving a chance to Pakistan to come clean on cross-border terrorism, Prime Minister Vajpayee was giving Pakistan another opportunity, a third opportunity...

KT: Except...

Y: Which Pakistan has not done as they...

KT: Except in May 2001’ when you invited General Musharraf to Agra and terrorism at that point was at least as bad as it is today, no such condition was applied. Why is that condition being applied now?

Y: Because you can’t go on repeating the same thing over and over again. You know...

KT: Can’t you?

Y: No you can’t.

KT: Remember what you said to the Financial Times and fairly you seem to be under the impression that in fact it wasn’t the case. You said to Financial Times in May just three weeks after the Prime Minister offered his hand of friendship that the cessation of cross-border terrorism wasn’t a pre-condition for starting talks. It was perhaps you said a condition for their successful outcome. Were you contradicting your government?

Y: No I was not and that is one point that I would like to make to you is
that you must give me time when you are quoting my extracts from what I’ve said earlier to explain to you. You know you just can’t jump from one question to another and leave the whole thing in a lurch. That statement was made in the context of the fact that the Prime Minister did not wait for the cross-border terrorism to stop to offer his hand of friendship. But we have clearly said, both the Prime Minister and I’ve said clearly that you…that what we need with Pakistan is not one round of dialogue, what we need with Pakistan is sustained dialogue over a period of time.

KT: Except it hasn’t started. It shows no sign of starting.

Y: No again, again. Let me complete. Don’t interrupt me when I’m...because it disturbs my chain of thoughts. The sustained dialogue over a period of time cannot take place and cannot be meaningful and productive if cross-border terrorism is going on. So what we are saying is therefore in order to make a successful outcome of sustained dialogue, cross-border terrorism has to end. But in making his intentions clear the Prime Minister of India did not wait for cross border terrorism to end. That is what I was telling the Financial Times.

KT: Except for the fact Foreign Minister that the problem with your condition is that the whole world knows that Pakistan uses cross-border terrorism as a lever to bring India to the table. Surely you can’t expect them to give it up before the talks begin.

Y: So...I mean you’re being worse than a devil’s advocate; you are saying that poor chap! Poor Pakistanis... you know what is the lever that they have against India except to carry on with cross-border terrorism...

KT: (intervenes) It wasn’t your condition in May 2001’, why are you making it a condition today?

Y: Because after the May 2001’ it has become worse. And it cannot be allowed to become worse.

KT: In other words you’ve been boxed into a corner?

Y: No we’ve not been boxed into a corner. We have all our options open and we’ve also...I’ve also said the Prime Minister has said and I would like to reiterate that as far as the process is concerned, we are going ahead with it, we will continue to go ahead with it. We are encouraging a lot of things, we are taking a number of steps. We’ll carry on...

KT: This is very interesting. You say as far as the process is
concerned we are going ahead, we are going to continue with it, and yet the reasons why people doubt that the gesture is genuine is not just to do with the circumstances in which it was made, not just to do with the conditions which were attached with it, its also to do with the language which you and your foreign ministry has been using. Let me give you an example. When Khursheed Kasuri, the Pakistan Foreign Minister said that he wanted to come to India to personally invite our Prime Minister for the SAARC summit, you made it very clear that he wasn’t welcome. Your spokesman actually went on to the extent of suggesting that he would be barging in. People regard that as extreme discourtesy.

Y: Did Kasuri speak to you about coming to India?

KT: But Kasuri made it pretty clear in the newspaper from his response...

Y: (intervenes) No. Is this how diplomacy is conducted, through newspapers, through the media? If Mr. Kasuri wanted to come to India, who should he have approached or contacted? He should have got in touch with us, he should have got in touch with our high commissioner in Islamabad and said I want to come to India.

KT: In other words just because he didn’t chose the direction correctly you’re responding in this way?

Y: No, let me stop you. The statement of the spokesperson about barging in was made when they talked about sub-continent’s great tradition of hospitality and how India was violating that. It was in response to a very unwelcome statement from Pakistani side that our spokesperson responded in that manner.

KT: The Pakistani Foreign Minister...

Y: But, but let me tell you, you’re not quoting anything that the Pakistan spokesperson said.

KT: Foreign Minister, the Pakistan foreign minister was simply following the footsteps of Mahesh Aacharya, the Nepalese Agriculture Minister who came to India for 2002 summit and Lakshman Kadirgama, the Srilankan Foreign Minister who came to India before for the 1998 summit. In other words he was doing what previous foreign minister had done.
Y: No he was not doing what previous foreign ministers have done.

KT: But they did it.

Y: (continues) He was trying to be one up. There have been...

KT: How do you know this?

Y: Because I know because I know that in all the summits which have been held so far, twelve thirteen of them, there have been only two or three occasions that some minister or other has travelled.

KT: The last two?

Y: No, not the last two.


Y: (intervenes) And who came? Did the foreign minister of Nepal came?

KT: Mahesh Aacharya, the Agriculture Minister

Y: (intervenes) Agriculture Minister. They could have sent their Sports Minister

KT: Lakshman Kadirgamar, the Srilankan Foreign Minister came in 1998.

Y: Why didn’t they send their Sports Minister then?

KT: So you’re objecting to...

Y: No I’m not objecting to anything. The only point I’m making is that if you want to visit somebody you don’t invite yourself through the media. You get in touch with them directly.

KT: All right. Let’s perceive that Mr. Kasuri was inviting himself as you say through media he was doing it the wrong way. But then what about this last September in New York when General Musharaf raised Kashmir at the Norwegian Prime Minister’s conference on terrorism, your foreign secretary turned around and accused him of an annual Kashmir-itch and advised him to fast for a month. Now that’s not the language of seeking friendship. That sounds as if you are trying to turn the man into an enemy.

Y: The problem Karan is that you are reducing the whole interview to just India-Pakistan. I’m sorry to say this but you and the rest of the media is
just concentrating on just one issue and that’s India-Pakistan, one. Two, the other mistake that you are making is that you’re just quoting what Indian spokesperson has said without correlating it with what the Pakistanis have said. What did General Musharraf say in that conference which the Norwegian Prime Minister had called? What did General Musharraf say when he spoke...?

KT: (intervenes) General Musharraf raised Kashmir, the issue which Pakistan has always done. When you’ve extended your hand of friendship, when you knew that he would do this, why then respond in this way when he does?

Y: I don’t understand this attitude that you have a person here who is constantly day in and day out denigrating India, abusing India and if we are saying something in response, you’re blaming us; that why did you respond. Why wouldn’t we respond?

KT: Because you extended the hand of friendship. You wanted to open a new chapter. Presumably you weren’t expecting Pakistan to give up their platform or their position.

Y: So...of course we expected Pakistan.

KT: You expected Pakistan to give up their platform, their position. In other words...

Y: Yes.

KT: In other words...

Y: So what is all this about. If they are holding on to their position, their platform on cross-border terrorism...

KT: You’re not giving your position. You are simply extending a hand of friendship.

Y: We are...in extending the hand of friendship we are saying that stop this violence, stop this cross-border terror. There can be nothing more vicious than terrorism and cross-border terrorism attack. Are you condoning that?

KT: Let me put it like this. When Mr. Vajpayee six months ago extended his hand of friendship, not only did India win worldwide praise, but people say that India has secured the moral high ground. Today
because of the way you are dragging your feet, the excuses you are giving for not talking, the language that you are using, people say that you are losing that high ground, you are becoming an obstacle. The credit you gained is slipping away.

Y: I don’t know how many people you talk to. I talk to a lot of people. I talk to a lot of Foreign Ministers, I talk to a lot of other foreigners. And I don’t get that impression that you are trying to convey here. No, I think India’s case is very well understood, India’s case is very well appreciated. And the whole international community is with us in condemning terrorism and especially cross-border terrorism.

KT: What about the critics at home that point out and say that India doesn’t have coherent and well thought-out policy with Pakistan. It’s going around in circles.

Y: We don’t accept that here clearly. We have very well thought out policy and we are acting according to that very well thought-out policy.

KT: In the last five years minister look at the things you’ve tried; summits, talks with militants, ceasefires on the line of control; you’ve kept Pakistan out of the Commonwealth quite successfully; you’ve replied to it in public at the U.N and you’ve complained to the Americans...

Y: (intervenes) No, are you recommending that they should be admitted into the...

KT: But does it not look like that you are pressing every button because you don’t know which will work?

Y: When you’re dealing with a situation that Pakistan has created for us, you have to deal on a wide variety of fronts. It cannot be a single button policy. And in the past we have offered through all these measures that you are mentioning, enough opportunities for Pakistan to come clean...come clean on what? On change of mindset. There must be a change here. They must realize that they have to, as we realize, that they have to live with India, that we are neighbours, we have to live in peace and amity. This is the change that must come about. It was not Prime Minister Vajpayee who raised the issue of Pakistan in the general assembly, it was General Musharraf.

KT: But you’re saying something very interesting. You’re saying
that for the talks to proceed, Pakistani mindsets have to change. There is no need of any change on the Indian side.

Y: No, Indian mindset is already in the right...

KT: You said a moment ago that Pakistan has to give up its platform and position.

Y: Platform or position with regard to cross-border terrorism as an instrument of state policy. That was the point which I was making.

KT: And you’re quite happy with the way the relationship is going. You actually genuinely believe that the peace process is making headway, its not mired in quicksand.

Y: It is not mired in quicksand. We are making progress, the progress will have to be slow, the progress will have to be calibrated, the progress in dealing with that, we’ll have to be patient...

KT: Okay.

Y: And you cannot solve the problem of five decades in five minutes.

KT: Then let’s...

Y: If anyone expects to do that, I’ll say please change your mindset.

KT: In which case let’s leave aside the India-Pakistan relationship...

Y: (Intervenes) Thank God!

KT: That’s stuffed where it is. But there is one relationship that is flourishing. Perhaps your relationship with America is better than it’s ever been before. The opposition however turned around and say that you’ve made India a vassal state.

Y: So there you are. What you’re saying is yourself that our relationship with the U.S is best today and...

KT: (Intervenes) But the opposition says that its only because you’ve made India a vassal state. How do you answer that?

Y: No, it’s not true, it’s not correct.

KT: Isn’t that...
Y: You know this is what I’m saying, when you said that you are acting under pressure. It’s this Indian…I don’t know why we have this complex…all Indians, that we are either a vassal state or we’re acting under pressure. We are a proud nation of one billion people… We’re the largest democracy of the world...

KT: (Intervenes) Except for the fact...

Y: We are an economic power. Why can’t we face the world with the kind of confidence we should have?

KT: Except for the fact Foreign Minister that today within 24 hours of 9/11 your predecessor Jaswant Singh offered the Americans in public military bases, arms and equipments to fight the Taliban regime. And four months earlier India became perhaps the first country in the world to support America’s controversial National Missile Defense Plan. Two major departures from India’s traditional foreign policy.

Y: Of?

KT: Of non-alignment, of not offering bases, of not stationing American troops on Indian soil.

Y: No this is something that I have gone on record already in parliament to say that we must shed this baggage of anti- Americanism. We have entered a new phase in our relationship. We have differences even today. But we are not allowing those differences to overwhelm us.

KT: In which case then can you accept that today America is India’s principle interlocutor vis-à-vis Pakistan and in fact it is playing the role of facilitator.

Y: No this is a loaded question and I’ll say it’s not true.

KT: It’s not true? America is not India’s interlocutor?

Y: On Pakistan you said?

KT: Yes

Y: No.

KT: It is not playing the role of facilitator?

Y: No it is not.
KT: Then let me quote to you what Mr. Advani said to an India audience in Washington this June. He said to them that he had told President Bush, and I’m talking about June 2003’, It’s responsibility to make the peace initiative of our Prime Minister meaningful and President Bush has assured me that he would do so’. Advani saab clearly thinks that America is an interlocutor.

Y: This is what I told the foreign minister of Eritrea. What does that mean? It means any one...

KT: (intervenes) No I’m not quoting you. I’m quoting the Deputy Prime Minister.

Y: I know but what I’m trying to tell you is that there is a global war against terrorism. And in this global war of terrorism we are all united, with United States, with others. Now as far as cross-border terrorism is concerned we have to explain our case to President Bush as we have to explain our case to every one else. And in explaining that we have to say that they not merely have to understand what Pakistan’s up to, they also have to ensure...

KT: Foreign Minister what you are saying flies in the face of facts: Kargil 1999, the summer of 2002, even last month at lunch with President Bush, when President Bush was asked to tell General Musharraf to stop cross-border terrorism, those are all clear indications that America is playing a role in keeping the peace between Delhi and Islamabad.

Y: I was talking to the Canadian Foreign Minister a little while ago and India- Pakistan came up, and I made exactly the same point that Pakistan has to stop cross-border terrorism. And anyone who wields any influence with Pakistan has to use that influence to make them desist from cross-border terrorism.

KT: Think about how often you want to claim in public how close you are to America, think about how often you publicize the fact that President Bush drops in on meetings that L.K Advani and Brijesh Mishra are having with Condoleeza Rice, or that Mr. Vajpayee is the only one invited for lunch with President Bush in New York. You want to be seem to be close and yet you won’t admit that you need them as interlocutors, and that you are successfully using them.

Y: No you are always using the wrong phrase all the time. We don’t need any interlocutors as far as Pakistan is concerned.
KT: You are using them as interlocutors, very successfully as well.

Y: No we are only that part of India-Pakistan relationship which is...which consists of cross-border terrorism.

KT: (intervenes) Absolutely. On the subject of cross-border terrorism the services of the American government, their good offices are being used.

Y: Their good offices are not being used. This is a global war against terrorism, where any good offices which are available to India will be used.

KT: Absolutely. But the good offices that are most often used are those of Washington.

Y: No, why aren't you talking about what conversations we've had with Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac? No because you are not interested, because...

KT: (intervenes) because the man who matters the most is President Bush.

Y: No, because you are hitched on the US.

KT: The amazing thing is that in fact the people who admire your policy give you credit for having dropped the traditional Indian antipathy to America, for having made America a facilitator. If you don't want to accept that credit...have you not got the courage or conviction to do that...

Y: (Intervenes) No, it's not the question of courage and conviction. We have clearly said that whatever dialogue will take place between India and Pakistan will be a bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan, that there is no place for a third person on that table, that's all. Now you are...what the confusion, let me tell you, the confusion in your mind is that you are involving the U.S in cross-border terrorism which is not the totality of our...

KT: I'm not involving the U.S. You are the one who is approaching them to put pressure on General Musharraf.

Y: Because there is an alliance, a global alliance.

KT: (intervenes) So you are using it?
Y: (continues) A global alliance against terrorism and that’s what I meant to tell you, that just as we are talking to Americans, we’re talking to a whole lot of other people and telling them that they must tell Pakistan if they are interested and they are partners in global war against terrorism to stop this cross-border terrorism.

KT: It seems to me that you’re doing it but you feel a reluctance to admit it. Why?

Y: No, no. Because you are putting it the wrong way. You are trying to convey something which is entirely wrong if I were to answer your question.

KT: In other words you are reading meanings into an innocent question and responding to that.

Y: It’s not an innocent question Mr. Thapar, that’s the point I’m making.

KT: You think that to be seen as a close friend of America would be a trap?

Y: It’s a loaded question and you’re trying to trap me and I refuse to be trapped.

KT: Foreign Minister I’m afraid, so there we must leave it. Thank you very much for speaking to HARD TALK India.

Y: Thank you.
133. **Response by Official Spokesperson to the Communiqué issued at the 10th OIC Summit in Kuala Lumpur.**

**New Delhi, October 18, 2003.**

1. We have seen the final Communique of the 10th OIC Summit. It is regrettable that the Islamic countries have once again shown an inability to take an objective and independent view of the Jammu & Kashmir issue and India-Pakistan relations. One would have thought that as a result of the current process of introspection that the OIC as an organization is going through, their Communique would have less rhetoric and propaganda and more substance. By taking one-sided positions and becoming a mouthpiece for Pakistan’s posturing on Kashmir, the OIC countries don’t enhance their credibility in the eyes of India and its people. This is not the ‘enlightened moderation’ that OIC wishes to inculcate.

2. Jammu & Kashmir has a democratically elected representative government and the human rights of the Kashmiri people are protected.

3. The Prime Minister of India has, for the third time, offered a hand of friendship to Pakistan. Instead of misleading OIC countries about the actual situation and trying to use them as pawns for its continuing confrontation with India, Pakistan should respond to India’s overture in the right spirit and in the longer term interest of both countries in peace and stability in our region.

4. While the world recognizes the international scourge of terrorism and there is a large consensus to combat this menace, it is surprising that the OIC Communique makes no reference to Pakistan’s continuing terrorism against India, which, unfortunately, is at the root of the problem in Jammu & Kashmir and in relations between India and Pakistan.

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1. The final communiqué while reaffirming the on going efforts of the Government of Pakistan to seek a peaceful resolution of Jammu and Kashmir dispute through all possible means including substantive bilateral talks with India “called for the respect of the human rights of the Kashmiri people and ending of their continued violation and urged India to allow international human rights organizations to verify the conditions of human rights in Kashmir.”
134. TV interview of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the programme ‘Court Martial’ weekly current affairs programme broadcast on SAB TV.

New Delhi, October 21, 2003.

Questioners: 1. Karan Thapar, Anchor.
2. Pramit Pal Chaudhouri
3. V. Sudarshan

[MR. KARAN THAPAR: Hello and welcome to Court Martial where each week ...a leading personality is questioned by two of the country’s top journalists. Today in the chair is Foreign Secretary, Mr. Kanwal Sibal and to ask him questions we have the Foreign Editor of the Hindustan Times, Abhisar Choudhry and the Senior Analyst of Outlook magazine, P. Sudarsan.]

Mr. Sibal, if I can take the first question, in April the Prime Minister extended a hand of friendship to Pakistan amidst great expectation. Six months later, all it ... achieved is an exchange of Ambassadors and buses. We have not even gone back to the level of the relationship in December, 2001. Are you having second thoughts?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No, a lot more has happened. Mind you, do not underestimate the importance of sending our High Commissioner there or receiving their High Commissioner here because we have really opened a channel of communication and also we have been saying that the two sides should have a dialogue. Well, we have a channel that is available to the Government of Pakistan. If they want to send us any message with regard to our basic demand that they must do something to end terrorism. It is not simply this – exchange of High Commissioners and the resumption of bus services – we were ready to have an agreement on civil aviation links but Pakistan put in a spoke and that has not moved forward. But we are willing to have the second round provided they come with an open mind. We can later look at other steps. In the meantime let me say, at the people-to-people level a lot has happened. On the trade front we have had exchanges of business delegations and we have cleared the proposal from the CII to have a meet in Pakistan, exhibition here in Delhi at the CII’s initiative. We are willing to continue to take other steps. But, let me also mention two other important steps. We have proposed, and it has been accepted, that we increase the size of the respective Missions. We
have also agreed to a Pakistani technical delegation visiting the Baglihar site.

PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: If you are saying cross border terrorism is the crucial issue, when we invited Musharraf to Agra we did not seem to be concerned about that. We were willing to have a dialogue even though he had not stopped terrorism.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: The point is that we have found that unless Pakistan puts an end to terrorism we cannot have a sustained dialogue, we cannot really have any enduring relationship. This is a fundamental issue which needs to be tackled. We cannot keep on taking half-baked steps all the time.

PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: So, Agra was a mistake.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I am not going to get into that. That happened. Now we have to look forward. That is not simply India’s requirement. The international community would want Pakistan to end cross-border terrorism and removed all the infrastructure of terrorism that exists on Pakistani soil.

V SUDARSHAN: So, if Pakistan does not stop cross-border terrorism, will our hand of friendship remain suspended in the air?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: It is not our phrase. Our hand of friendship has been extended. It is for Pakistan to grasp it. They are not coming forward. Let them come and grasp it. It is still there.

MR. KARAN THAPAR: Do not you think that by making cross-border terrorism a condition in a sense you are giving them a veto over your hand of friendship?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Not at all, because we are taking all the other steps which I have mentioned. And we are willing to take some other steps too in order precisely to move out to enable him..

MR. KARAN THAPAR: What are the other steps you are willing to take?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I have just mentioned, on the trade front, on the people-to-people front, in terms of exchange at academic level, in terms of musicians, singers, artistes,

PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: What you are describing is really just a normalizing of relations.
FOREIGN SECRETARY: Exactly.

PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: But I think, what most Indians and Pakistanis are really looking for is, when do we go for something much more than a normalization, as included war on terrorism, we are looking for a dialogue.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Let us not underestimate the importance of the word ‘normalisation’. I would be so happy if we could have normal relationship with Pakistan. We do not have normal relations with Pakistan. We are taking steps to move towards normalization.

V SUDARSHAN: Are we placing any conditions before we go to SAARC this January?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No. SAARC is in the multilateral SAARC context. All we said is that when we go to Islamabad, or wherever the SAARC Summit is going to be held, the Heads of Government and the Heads of States would have a substantive agenda before them. That substantive agenda can only be economic. At least they should be able to endorse the framework agreement for a South Asian Free Trade Arrangement, and also in terms of the SAPTA process, the preferential trade arrangement process. Here again there is still some work to be done between India and Pakistan. We hope that this can be done. Currently there is a meeting going on in Kathmandu.

MR. KARAN THAPAR: Can I interrupt?

Are you suggesting that if you do not have a substantive economic agenda, and if you do not have SAPTA Agreement, you might not allow the Prime Minister to go?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No, I am not saying that. The point is, why are we having the SAARC Summit? What is the idea of having any summit for that matter? A summit has to be based on exchange of …

MR. KARAN THAPAR: Is that a condition?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: It is not a condition. It simply is that we want to have a successful summit. Yes, it is a condition for a successful summit.

MR. KARAN THAPAR: But not for the Prime Minister going?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No.
PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: So, your case is that we do not necessarily require a success in the summit. That just it happens is good enough.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Sorry, say that again.

PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: We do not require a success in the summit.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I think all the countries of SAARC require a success. Otherwise, the process as it is lost a lot of its momentum, it will lose momentum further.

PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: Going to back to another thing. Why is civil aviation links so important in all of this? Is that a new initiative to hold up the entire normalization process?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: We are not holding it up. We have the talks. Pakistan could have agreed. They did not agree, whatever their reasons. We hope that when we will have our next round they will agree and then we can move on to other things. We have said time and again, and we have been consistent, that it will be step-by-step.

V SUDARSHAN: India is on an arms acquisition drive and so is Pakistan. To what extent is our drive different from their drive? Do we have any influence over countries who are selling the arms?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I have really no drive. On the one hand I hear a lot of criticism that we do not spend our budget, that every year thousands of crores are left unspent. These are our requirements which have been neglected. We are now trying to fill that lacuna. There is no drive as such. We need certain arms. We need certain level of defence capability which we are building. If Pakistan chooses to emulate us or work for parity, it is their business.

V SUDARSHAN: Do you have the capacity to stop the other countries from selling arms to Pakistan?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Well, I do not think that we have the capacity to stop them. Other countries will definitely take into account their own bilateral defence relationship with us. That will be an important factor in terms of what they do with Pakistan, keeping in mind our views, our sensitivity and the fact that these arms which Pakistan has acquired in the past have always been used against India, and keeping in mind that it is a Military Government it is not a democracy, and it is a country which is riven with terrorism and all the other ills.
PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: Isn’t it that military balance is now so much in our favour that the arms that we are buying now in many ways are going beyond just Pakistan? I mean, I do not know, this was a comment from the Pakistani press quoting Government officials there saying that these arms are not aimed at us any more these arms are aimed at other much larger global game that India is playing.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: That is not true. I think the global game that we are playing is based on our economic strength. The arms that we have are simply to defend ourselves. Pakistan, of course, has a unifocal view. But Pakistan is not the only one neighbour we have. We have a whole other areas where we need to beef up our defence capability including a very large coastline. If we have a strong navy, why do we need a strong navy? We need a strong navy for this reason.

MR. KARAN THAPAR: Foreign Secretary, everyone in the country knows that today Washington is playing a critical role holding peace between Delhi and Islamabad. But is the Government willing to accept that America is a facilitator in this …

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I do not agree with that proposition at all. What is holding peace is our sense of responsibility and restraint. America has nothing to do with it. I would not even use that word. America is a global power. It has interests everywhere including in South Asia. They have a relationship with Pakistan…

MR. KARAN THAPAR: … were happy to use that word.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: That was because he was asked this question and I think he was persuaded to describe what kind of a role the United States was playing and this is what came up. But we are not looking consciously for facilitators or anything else. It is entirely our responsibility to keep peace.

V SUDARSHAN: We have got repeated assurances from the Washington that Musharraf is going to stop cross-border terrorism. These assurances have not materialized. How much has this lack of materialization of these assurances impacted our faith in …

FOREIGN SECRETARY: If international terrorism is a global phenomenon and it is a concern of the international community, then if United States tells Pakistan to stop terrorism, they are not doing a favour to us. It is an integral part of this international combat against the global terrorism. So,
United States should pressure Pakistan to cease terrorism, remove the infrastructure of terrorism on their soil. They are doing the best they can under the given circumstances. But we are not seeing the requisite results on the ground and we remind Americans of this.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** Let us turn the question around. What are we doing to help the Americans in their global war on terrorism other than looking at the Pakistan …

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** We are the victims.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** We are just being victims. …

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** We are the biggest victims of international terrorism.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** So, basically our contribution before 9/11 and after 9/11 is that it is exactly the same.

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** 9/11 is not at all a cut off point. We have been suffering from terrorism for years before that. … 9/11 got America directly into …

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** … I am not saying that we have not suffered before or after 9/11. I am saying our contribution to the war on terrorism has not changed.

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** Our contribution to the global war against terrorism has been immense in terms of awakening international consciousness to this danger, to the integrality of this danger. We have been emphasizing time and again there must not be any double standards. We cannot distinguish one part of global terrorism from another. The networks are the same. The mindset is the same. The sense of grievance is the same. The Madrasahs are the same. So, it must be looked as an integral whole and … I think that is an important contribution we are making. … into other areas that must not get deflected by getting into this debate on definition of terrorism or the root cause of terrorism because these are simply alibis to deflect attention from the real problem.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** So, what is contributed is intangible ideas, basically?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** No. We have Joint Working Groups with so many countries including with the United States where we are sharing
intelligence, where we are working at so many other levels in terms of money-laundering and everything else. Then we have certain resolutions we have moved in the United Nations itself. The linkage between WMD and terrorism, that is our resolution. We would be very keen to in fact help the international community evolve legal instruments within the United Nations which can help all the nations to effectively deal with this problem.

V SUDARSHAN: On October 5, Prime Minister Vajpayee condemned Israeli attack inside Syrian territory. How does it square with the fact that we have a long mobilization to deter precisely this kind of terrorism? Does it have anything to do with American pressure on us?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No, not at all. It just is that the situation in the Middle-East is very complex. As it is between the Palestinians and the Israelis there is an unending cycle of violence. If you extend the zone of conflict to Syria, then you are adding further fuel to the fire. So, our comments are simply based on our assessment that all countries concerned should do everything possible to in fact try and resolve the issues rather than adding to their complexity.

MR. KARAN THAPAR: Foreign Secretary, in July India said that it would consider sending troops to Iraq if there was an explicit UN mandate. Now, at the moment, there is a UN Resolution that is going through the United Nations Security Council. But the Prime Minister in the meantime said that it is very possible that India does not have troops to spare. Can we see any circumstances in which India will send troops, or is it unlikely to ever?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: These are hypothetical questions. Our position has been fairly well-stated, very clear. You did mention current discussions going on for a UN Security Council Resolution. But one point I would like to highlight is the great reluctance of the UN itself to be present on the ground because of the security situation on the ground, the attacks against the UN compound and the great demoralization of UN cadres. This is a very complex factor that has entered into the whole equation where everybody has been saying that UN should play a central role and the UN itself is getting cold feet because the security situation on the ground is very complex.

PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: So the resolution is really irrelevant because you would not go any way, whether there is a resolution or not.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: The interesting thing is that the UN itself now
has to make up mind through the Secretary-General of what role it can effectively play on the ground given the insecurities.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** But if a resolution is passed, can the Secretary-General tell the Security Council, “I am not going to abide by the Resolution?”

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** That he cannot say. But the point is, how do you mobilize the UN personnel to go on the ground and take over the responsibility when they as such fear for their own lives? I am just pointing out that the whole debate around Iraq is becoming more and more complex because of the deteriorating security situation.

**MR. KARAN THAPAR:** So you are saying that it is very unlikely that Indian soldiers will be going to Iraq. You are saying that.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** Almost.

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** No, I am saying that given the present situation and the decision that the Government has taken, your presumption is not wrong.

**V SUDARSHAN:** Do you think it is only Saddam loyalists who are fighting the Americans in Iraq?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** I think nobody is very clear as to who they are. But I think more and more people are willing to realize that a lot of terrorists – Arabs and from other parts of the world – have entered Iraq because, as you know, nobody is really controlling Iraq’s borders. I think it is a serious problem down the road, the problem of a revival of international networks, terrorist networks, but this time operating in Iraq.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** Do you have any information that any of these people are coming from Pakistan or from South Asia?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** I really do not know.

**MR. KARAN THAPAR:** Mr. Sibal, India is proud of being the biggest democracy in the world, it is a phrase the Government always uses. Jaswant Singh used to talk about India being part of a concert of democracies … to keep Pakistan out of the Commonwealth when Musharraf took over. But when it comes to supporting Aung San Sukyi in Burma, the Indian Government suddenly seems scared to do so in case you end up annoying the country’s military dictators. …
FOREIGN SECRETARY: No, not at all. As you know, after the military Junta took over we cold-shouldered Burma for many years and we found that we had lost the ground there. I do not think it was wise policy. So, we changed our policy. We started engaging the Government of Myanmar. Mind you, there is no inconsistency. After all we engaged Gen. Musharraf even after he staged a military coup and Pakistan has been doing tremendous harm to our security and yet we engaged him.

MR. KARAN THAPAR: .. she is a ... prize winner; she is a Nobel prize winner; she has virtually been educated in college and school in this country. You have sacrificed her.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: We did not sacrifice her. ... The fact that we want to engage the Government of Myanmar and that we have real interests on the ground, we have our insecurity in the North-East, apart from other things, where other strategic considerations, does not mean that we are ourselves sacrificing Aung San Sukyi. I do not think there is necessarily a correlation between the two things. We cannot make our relationship with Myanmar conditional upon Myanmarese Government’s internal questions. I do not think that is a very sensible approach.

PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY: Going back to the question on democracy, America is saying that its ultimate goal in Iraq war and everything is the democratization of Arab world. Do we see that as being something in our interest? Is that something that we think we should be a part of?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I think in a general way, leave aside what the Americans may or may not wish to see happen on the ground, it would be a good thing if there were liberal, reformist, democratic governments not only in the Arab world but everywhere else including in our neighbourhood. So, that proposition is perfectly acceptable. The point is, can we at this moment realize this goal where the current situation is so complex and difficult? I think at the moment the United States and the international community have their hands full with stabilising the situation in Iraq. The goal of reforming the whole of the Arab world will come later and we will see when that is actually begun to be implemented in a serious way and what hurdles and obstacles might be.

V SUDARSHAN: When Prime Minister Vajpayee went to China, he conceded that Tibet was part of China.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Let me interrupt you because that is an unfair
way of putting the question. Way back in 1954, we hailed that Tibet was a part of China.

**V SUDARSHAN:** He said it more explicitly than ever before.

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** When we said Tibet is a part of China in 1954, how can you say that Prime Minister was more explicit than ever?

**V SUDARSHAN:** All China seems to have done is to remove Sikkim from its website. Have you been shortchanged?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** No, not at all. First of all, there was no linkage at all between Tibet and Sikkim. Sikkim is an integral part of India. In the 181 members of the United Nations, 180 accept this fact. China was isolated on this account. So, they have begun a course of policy-correction which is welcome. It is a confidence-building measure. It is not as if India is worried that the fact the Chinese have not recognized Sikkim as an integral part of India somehow detracts from Sikkim actually being an integral part of India. It is a confidence-building measure; it is a step in the right direction.

So far as Tibet is concerned, Prime Minister has explained, and we have explained time and again on the basis of all the statements we have made in 54, 58, 88, 91, that in actual fact there has been no change in our policy.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** While this is true when you are talking about the issue of the reality on the ground that Tibet is a part of China and Sikkim is a part of us, the fact remains that at least in terms of the wording that while in the 1950s we seem to have taken a relatively strong position – about Tibet being part of China – it is clearly diluted by the time Rajiv Gandhi went to China. Now the argument is that we seem to have gone back to the 1950s formulation. But what have we got in return?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** What we have said now is that the Tibetan Autonomous region is a part of the territory of the Peoples Republic of China. You can interpret it in various ways. We have not said that Tibet is part of China. If we had said Tibet is part of China, then those who want to look carefully at the meaning and import of words may come to certain conclusions. When you say that the Tibetan Autonomous Region which was set up in 1957 is part of the territory of the People’s Republic of China which was set up in 1949, then you can give it a different connotation. So, I think one has to look very carefully at the connotations.
Be that as it may, the fact is, in one way or the other, in one form of language or the other, we have always accepted the reality on the ground. Once again in 2003 we have accepted the reality on the ground.

**MR. KARAN THAPAR:** Foreign Secretary, in recent times a tradition seems to have been created by former Foreign Secretaries going as Ambassadors to Washington after retirement. Given that there is no dearth of talent in the Indian Foreign Service, is this unfair?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** First of all it is not true that all Foreign Secretaries land up in America.

**MR. KARAN THAPAR:** Since Salman Haider’s time virtually everyone is, except one Chokila Iyer. She is the exception.

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** She is also a member of the Scheduled Tribes Commission. Yes, to that extent they have been getting something or the other.

**MR. KARAN THAPAR:** Given that you are given prized postings, and given that the IFS has no dearth of talent, is it not unfair?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** All one can say is that these Foreign Secretaries who have been given assignments, it is not their decision. So, this question should be addressed to the people who take such decisions.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** When you were in Paris you said that India is a country that has been wounded by terrorism by all the neighbours. In these ten months, has anything changed for the better? What can you do about it ...

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** I think we are receiving much better cooperation from Nepal. Let me clarify, I was not accusing them deliberately of fomenting terrorism against us. If you look carefully at what I said, I did also say that sometimes because they are helpless because of the terrain, because of whatever. But we get good cooperation from Nepal. We are getting good cooperation from Bhutan. We are beginning to get cooperation from Myanmar too. With Sri Lanka we have excellent relationship. The big problem is with Pakistan clearly. Bangladesh still resists accepting the fact that there is a problem on the ground but we are working on them.

**PRAMIT PAL CHAUDHOURY:** We have another mountainous ... neighbourhood ... region which is Afghanistan. The fall of Taliban
Government was one of the really tangible gains of the US war on terrorism post 9/11. Today, Taliban are resurgent in Southern Afghanistan, the Americans are trying to talk to the moderate Taliban, a group who we consider to be pro-Pakistani, Karzai is seen as week; we do not seem to have been able to make any major inroads among the Pashtoons; we are still essentially ... targets. Are we losing Afghanistan?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: That is not true. We have a Consulate in Kandahar, we have a Consulate in Jalalabad; we have very good equation with the ground. We are involved in development projects. We have been asked to in fact spread our wings more and more on the development, on economic reconstruction side in other parts of Pashtoon-speaking belt of Afghanistan. We have a great amount of goodwill on the ground. We have signed a preferential trade agreement essentially to benefit the Pashtoon traders. I do not think we have lost the ground in Pashtoonistan at all, or that we are confining ourselves to the Tajiks and others. We have very good relationship with Panjsheris, we have an excellent relationship with Karzai, we have a very good relation with Pashtoons. We are strongly entrenched there which is why I think our neighbours are feeling very nervous.

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135. Press conference of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha on the suggestions made to Pakistan for normalization of relations.

New Delhi, October 22, 2003.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Friends, good afternoon. As you are aware, the Cabinet Committee on Security met this morning. Among other things, we discussed the progress of the Prime Minister’s peace initiative with Pakistan. After the discussion, the Cabinet Committee has approved a number of new steps, which we have already conveyed to Pakistan. The Pakistan High Commissioner was asked to meet the Foreign Secretary this afternoon. He met the Foreign Secretary at 3:15 p.m. What I am going to tell you is something that has already been conveyed to the High Commissioner to the Government of Pakistan. We have made a number of suggestions to Pakistan.

The first is, the next round of the technical level discussion for resumption of civil aviation. You are aware that we could not reach an agreement in the first round, which was held in Islamabad. That meeting ended with the promise that the two sides will meet again. We propose to hold these talks once again, and the Director-General Civil Aviation will get in touch with his Pakistani counterpart to fix the dates for this meeting.

India is keen, though it is not a sign of our weakness mind you, that civil aviation links should be restored along with overflights, overflying rights over the air space of each country. We are keen because we feel that it is in the interest of the people of India and Pakistan that this should happen. I would also like to make it absolutely clear that there is no question of India giving any guarantees to Pakistan. So, this is the first step, resumption of talks for civil aviation.

The second is, we have offered to Pakistan to hold technical level discussions for the resumption of rail link. At the same time it has also been conveyed to Pakistan that the resumption of rail link will be undertaken after the successful completion of the technical level talks with regard to civil aviation.

The third is, we have decided to resume bilateral sporting encounters. This includes cricket also.

Fourth, in order to further benefit the people in both the countries, we propose the holding of visa camps by the respective High Commission
in different cities through a mutually agreed arrangement for the cities as well as the frequency of such camps. Details in this regard can be worked out through the diplomatic channels.

Five, senior citizens – which means persons of 65 years of age and above – would henceforth be permitted to cross Wagah checkpoint on foot. At the moment our policy is restricted to crossings by groups. We are extending this facility to individuals but restricting it to senior citizens to begin with. Anyone who travels by bus is free to cross.

We have also proposed to increase the capacity of Delhi-Lahore-Delhi bus service by running more buses in convoys on the already agreed days. The Delhi Transport Corporation, which I happened to chair at one time, would follow up on this with the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation.

We have proposed establishment of links between the Coast Guards of the two countries. Such links, we have suggested, could be on the pattern of the existing link between the DGMOs (Directors General of Military Operations), and could be established between their respective headquarters. Flag meetings could also be held at sea before and after the fishing season. Details could initially be tied up through diplomatic channels and subsequently followed up by the Indian Coast Guards and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency.

We have proposed to Pakistan the non-arrest by either side of fishermen of the other country within a certain band on the sea. Details of the band on the sea again could be worked out through diplomatic channels.

Government of India would provide free medical treatment to a second batch of 20 children from Pakistan. You are aware of the fact that after baby Noor’s case we had announced that we would make this facility available to 20 children from Pakistan which will include medical treatment in India. Sixteen children have come to India. They have undergone treatment. They have either gone back or have undertaken treatment and recuperating, or waiting for treatment. Our Mission in Islamabad informs us that they have received a very large number of applications. Therefore, we have decided that we make 20 more slots available under this category.

1. It my be recalled that the announcement to facilitate and fund the treatment of Pakistani children in Indian hospitals, was first made on July 24, 2003 taking into account the popular response to Baby Noor’s case.
After all these steps are taken and the work of the Missions expands, we will be ready to look at further accretion to the strength of the two Missions - in Islamabad and Delhi. As you are aware, we have recently suggested increasing the strength by eight, which Pakistan has accepted. We are in the process of implementing it. We are prepared to increase it by another number to be mutually agreed upon once, as I said, as a result of all these steps the work increases.

We propose to go beyond the transportation links by air, road and rail. Therefore, we have proposed to Pakistan that we could consider a ferry service between Mumbai and Karachi. We will await the response of Pakistan.

Finally, but very importantly, we have proposed to Pakistan the start of two new bus services – one between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad, and the other either a bus or rail link between Khokrapar and Munabao, in Sindh and Rajasthan.

These are the steps which have been decided upon by the Cabinet Committee on Security and conveyed to Pakistan. We will await their response.

2. The Pakistan Government made its response to the Indian proposals on October 29 and also made some fresh proposals of its own. The main points in Pakistan’s reply to India’s 22 October proposals with regard to CBMs were:

1. Welcomes Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus proposal in principle. Wants check points along the way to be manned by UN officials and people should move with UN documents.
2. Sustained and serious dialogue needed.
3. India has proposed date on technical-level talks for resumption of air links. Pakistan agrees to talks in first week of December.
4. Resumption of Samjhauta Express because bulk of traffic through rail, so we believe it will serve India’s purpose of people-to-people contact.
5. No link between talks on resumption of air and rail links.
6. Welcome resumption of sporting ties.
7. Welcome (novel) idea of visa camps in various cities. But problem is how to implement? Pakistan wants restoration of number of staff in embassy to pre-December 2001 levels.
8. Senior citizens welcome to cross border on foot.
9. Instead of increase in frequency of Delhi-Lahore bus, Pakistan says it is better to resume Samjhauta Express because it will spare people a torturous 14-hour bus journey. India should have courage to restore rail links.
10. Pakistan proposes bus service between Amritsar and Lahore.
11. Work with India on release of fishermen arrested by both sides, on humanitarian grounds.
Our war against terrorism, especially cross-border terrorism, will continue. There will be no let up in dealing with terrorists who dare to infiltrate into India.

Thank you.

QUESTION: What is the change in ambience that you have proposed a long list of radical suggestions? Is there something happening behind the scenes which we do not know? Secondly, you had mentioned sometime ago that there were to be talks at the SAARC level between the officials in Kathmandu. Can you tell us something about the results of those deliberations?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: As far as the SAARC is concerned, I will ask the Foreign Secretary to tell you what happened in Kathmandu.

As far as the first part of your question is concerned, I am not aware of anything happening behind your back or my back or somebody else's back. We have been saying from day one, from 18th April to be precise, that India is very serious about its peace process with Pakistan, that the offer made by Prime Minister Vajpayee on 18th of April in Srinagar is a very serious and sincere offer of friendship with Pakistan, and that we will work overtime to make this initiative succeed. Now, the steps that we have taken so far are not inconsequential. There are a number of steps which have been taken so far and they have clearly created a groundswell of support for the Prime Minister's initiative at the level of people in both the countries. Therefore, we are interested in expanding people-to-people

12. Heart institutes in Karachi and Punjab province have offered to treat some poor Indian children.

13. Mumbai-Karachi ship: Issue can come up when the composite dialogue is resumed.

14. Rail between Sindh and Munabao: Issue can come up when the composite dialogue is resumed.

Pakistan also made some fresh proposals:

1. It will offer 100 scholarships to Kashmiri children to take graduation and post-graduation courses in Pakistan

2. Will offer treatment to aged Kashmiris

3. Help widows and victims of rape (which, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Riaz Khokar alleged, occurred due to the action of security forces). Wants UN agencies to identify such people.

Khokar said if India was sincere about bridging the gap between Kashmiris separated by the Line of Control, it would allow Kashmiris to accept the offers Pakistan has made.
contacts. Many of the steps that I have listed here will facilitate people-to-
people contacts. We are hoping that as a result of these steps that we have announced today and conveyed to Pakistan, Pakistan, we hope, will be persuaded to give up the path of confrontation, the path of violence, the path of cross-border terrorism and come to the negotiating table in a spirit which is necessary to sustain those negotiations and that dialogue.

**QUESTION:** You said in the beginning that you follow the peace process step-by-step and each step you take would be in response to the step taken on the other side. What is this in response to? What steps Pakistan has taken that enabled you to make these gestures?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** We have moved step-by-step since April 18. As you are aware, and as I mentioned just now, a number of steps have been taken. We felt that a stage had been reached where we could announce a number of steps all together and wait for the response of Pakistan with respect to all of them. So, I would not say there is a radical departure from the policy that we have been following. It is only that some of these steps have been pending for sometime and we are announcing them today.

**QUESTION:** Did the CCS meeting discuss the issue of cross-border terrorism? What do you have to say on infiltration?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** With regard to infiltration I would like to say that we have no evidence with us to enable us to come to the conclusion that there has been a reduction in infiltration, or there has been any effort at curbing infiltration. That is the reason why I said right in the beginning when I spoke about the steps that our fight against cross-border terrorism would continue in the same way in which it has been going on. That means, we will continue our fight with full responsibility and strength.

**QUESTION:** You have listed 12 proposals that you made to Pakistan. Did you consider one more suggestion, the 13th one, that there should a mutual total clamp down on hawkish statements coming from either side? I say this because this vitiates the atmosphere on both sides.

Secondly, there is a statement that resumption of Samjhauta will be done only after successful completion of technical level talks on resumption of civil aviation links and you have also said that there will be no guarantees. Pakistan has been harping on guarantees. Do you not think that this situation has sort of got struck here?
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: That is why we would need a dialogue. That is what dialogue is all about. You talk; when you feel that there is a stalemate, you talk about the stalemate.

As far as the first part of your question is concerned about the hawkish statements, this is a part of the Shimla Accord that both sides will desist from making such statements. So, all that we have to do is to go back to Shimla. This is not an issue which came up. I think I will go back to the earlier question which Amit had asked and we have not answered, that is on the SAARC. I think the Foreign Secretary would like to answer that.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: The SAARC meeting was held and it was fairly successful. There were two items on the agenda essentially – one to consider further the framework agreement for free trade arrangement within SAARC. There all the issues have not been resolved and another meeting would be necessary. But the feedback that we got from our delegation was that in terms of Pakistan’s own position, this was positive. Some issues were raised by Bangladesh and those issues have to be sorted out. Then we have also said that on the margins of this meeting of SAFTA, India and Pakistan could bilaterally complete their 4th round of SAPTA negotiations with regard to preferential tariff lines to be exchanged. There Pakistan has offered 250 tariff lines. They have assured us, and our delegation is satisfied, that the earlier problem of some of these items being on the negative list would no longer be a problem. Also, since preferential tariffs offered to one country become automatically available to the others, whatever Pakistan has offered to other countries and not yet to India would become available to India too. All in all, there was positive movement at Kathmandu.

QUESTION: …Inaudible…

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I suppose whatever the nature of Government or governance, people in authority have to respond to popular will, people’s wishes. We will continue to hope that the support that we see at the level of the people of Pakistan for peace and friendship with Pakistan will ultimately get reflected in the corridors of power also.

QUESTION: On all the suggestions or proposals that India has made, the most interesting, if I may say so, is the proposed bus link between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad. Would you mind clarifying whether this service would be restricted to the people of Kashmir on either side or it shall be open to all Indians and all Pakistanis?
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: It depends. As I said, we will await in principle response of Pakistan.

QUESTION: How does it sit with our claim of the territory which is occupied by Pakistan?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: It does not in any way affect our claim.

QUESTION: The Government had been saying that normalization of relations with Pakistan would depend on cessation of cross-border terrorism. Still you have come out with a series of offers. How do you reconcile these two positions?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I must explain what our policy is. I think we should have clarity with regard to this. One is the normalization process. That is, try and normalize as far as possible and go back to a situation where your relationship is normal. In a broad sense, go back to the position that obtained before the attack on Parliament on the 13th of December. Most of the steps that I mentioned here are part of that normalization process. Then there is the question of dialogue between India and Pakistan. That is a different issue.

When we talked about cross-border terrorism and dialogue what we were saying was that with Pakistan things are not going to be sorted out in one round of talks that would start at 3 o’clock and by 5 o’clock in the afternoon you have wrapped up everything. Considering the complexity of those issues in the composite dialogue framework, dialogue will have to be sustained over a period of time if you want the dialogue to produce results. You cannot have a sustained, meaningful and productive dialogue if cross-border terrorism is going on at the same time. Therefore, that is the position that we continue to hold. We continue to tell Pakistan about this that no meaningful, productive and sustained dialogue can take place with Pakistan if they carry on with cross-border terrorism as an instrument of state policy. So, this distinction has to be clearly understood.

QUESTION: If the steps that you have announced right now are accepted by Pakistan and implemented by both the countries, do you expect both the countries to resume bilateral talks during the SAARC Summit?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I would like to clarify the position here. SAARC is a multilateral process consisting of seven countries. We must be able to make a distinction between a multilateral process and a bilateral process. A multilateral process taking place even on Pakistani soil does
not become a bilateral process only because it is taking place in Pakistan. Therefore, participation by India in SAARC should not be linked with bilateral talks at any level with Pakistan until and unless the necessary conditions are created for such a dialogue. We have also said right from the beginning that there is no question of a summit level dialogue as the starting point of the dialogue process. We will have to prepare for the summit; we will have to begin the dialogue process at some other level. This kind of a question is repeatedly asked as to whether there will be a summit meeting in Pakistan when the Prime Minister goes to Islamabad. The answer clearly is ‘no’ because it is a multilateral process for which he will go to Islamabad. Therefore, if you want to take advantage of their presence, they were both present in New York, they were both present earlier in Kuala Lumpur, and they were both present in Almaty. So, the presence is not the most important thing.

**QUESTION:** Another important decision that was taken in today’s CCS meeting is that the DPM will talk to the Hurriyat Conference. What is the reason behind taking that decision now? It has been a long standing demand of theirs but it was not acceded to earlier.

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** This decision was taken because we wish to talk to them. The DPM will talk to them but the decision also is that there is no question of changing the negotiator from our side, N.N. Vohra.

**QUESTION:** Pakistan has repeatedly said that unless the core issue of Kashmir is settled there is no use of talks and that nothing will come out of it. Today, the CCS took a decision that the Deputy Prime Minister will talk to the Hurriyat Conference. Is it building some kind of an atmosphere there?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** Talking to the Hurriyat is our internal process. It has nothing to do with our relationship with Pakistan. Also, Pakistan has on its own decided that Jammu and Kashmir is the core issue. I have responded by saying where is the agreement between the two countries that any issue is the core issue. You cannot unilaterally decide this is the core issue. We have between us an agreement with regard to the issues in the composite dialogue process. That is the only understanding that subsists apart from Shimla and Lahore. So, I do not think it is open to any country to say unilaterally that this is the core issue.

**QUESTION:** …Inaudible…

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** We have recently made a proposal to Pakistan that we could increase the staffers by eight. Pakistan agreed to
that. That process of eight of our people going there and eight of their people coming here is on. With the arrival of those eight people there would be some relief. In the meanwhile we will see what would be the reaction of Pakistan to this. If we move forward with success and if the work of the two Missions moves forward, then we would put forward this proposal – I am making it clear now – that the number of staff in both the Missions could be increased.

QUESTION: Before the Agra Summit, we have made the proposal of resumption of rail link between Khokrapar and Munabao and bus link between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad. About the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus link, can you tell us the point at which the bus will cross the Line of Control?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Before the Agra Summit, these proposals were made. It is a reiteration of those two proposals. As far as the details are concerned, I am sorry I will not be able to fill you on the details because all these details have to be worked out.

QUESTION: The affixing of entry and exit stamps by the customs at the point on LoC where the bus would pass, would it not lead to a position ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: These are all matters of detail which will have to be worked out but the LOC is an existing reality.

QUESTION: You have just said that the issues between India and Pakistan can be resolved with a sustained dialogue. India has given enough evidence from its side with regard to the presence of Dawood Ibrahim in Pakistan. Pakistan on the other hand has kept on refuting it. In these circumstances, what relevance do you see of a sustained dialogue?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: The relevance that we see is that in the history that we have known, good has always won over the evil. We will keep on working with that hope.

QUESTION: As part of the normalization process, are you are also considering allowing the High Commissioner and other people in the Pakistani Mission here to go beyond Delhi city or are they still confined to Delhi?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: If we had taken a view on that I would have announced it. There is no decision as such.

QUESTION: In what context would the talks with Hurriyat take place?
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: In the same context in which Shri Vohra was appointed as the representative of Government of India. Talks will take place under the terms of reference given to Shri Vohra.

QUESTION: If there is not going to be any change in the Central Government’s interlocutor in Kashmir, why is the DPM going to talk to Hurriyat? Is there a message which is sought to be conveyed?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: You can come to your own conclusions. Both are the decisions of the Cabinet Committee that Mr. Vohra will not be changed and that Mr. Advani will talk to the Hurriyat.

QUESTION: You have made a number of suggestions. Some of them are quite radical like the one on ferry service. On what proposals do you think there would be a positive response from Pakistan? You said that multilateral process is different from the bilateral one. Is it possible that we might resume contacts at some level, at Joint Secretary or Foreign Secretary level, if the response is positive from Pakistan?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: These are, as I mentioned to you, a part of the process of normalization of the relationship. We will expect that Pakistan will respond positively on all the dozen suggestions that we have made. Not only it will respond positively but wherever we have to hold further talks those talks will also be successful. That will be our hope. It is in this hope that we are announcing and conveying these steps. As far as the dialogue is concerned, I have already stated our position very clearly that that is not possible unless we see evidence on the ground that cross-border terrorism is being brought to an end.

(Text in italics is a translation from Hindi)
136. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to
the weekly *Outlook* on India’s proposals to Pakistan.

**New Delhi, October 26 and 30, 2003.**

[Union External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha responded to V.
Sudarshan of the Outlook twice: on October 26, and then on October 30,
a day after Pakistan responded to India’s proposals.]

**Part I: October 26**

Considering that a month ago, rhetoric in New York was so shrill, what has changed positively for India to have offered these proposals?

The rhetoric was shrill in New York from the Pakistani side. From the moment he arrived in New York General Musharraf had been indulging in a certain kind of rhetoric which can only be described as extremely unfriendly, extremely provocative and very specially harsh on India. In his response, I think the Prime Minister of India, Mr Vajpayee, on the other hand, was restrained, he was dignified, and he must have spent only about two minutes in a fifteen minute speech talking about Pakistan on what General Musharraf had said, though, quite predictably, this occupied the total attention of the media and it became projected as if it was the sum total of our preoccupation with Pakistan. It was not.

The point I would like to make is that the rhetoric was largely from the Pakistan side. But what we have done now is only that we have carried forward the peace initiative of the Prime Minister of April 18 and we have been moving forward and a number of steps have been taken.

You have said that some of the proposals have been pending for some time. Could you elaborate?

For example the civil aviation talks are pending in the sense that you have had one round and it’s pending because the dates for the next round have not been suggested by Pakistan. Because we went to Islamabad for talks, all that was agreed was that we meet again for talks. They could have comeback to us and suggested dates. So this was an issue which remained pending. Similarly the railway link is something that Prime Minister Jamali had suggested to Prime Minister Vajpayee when he spoke to him on the telephone on the 20th. That is what I meant when I said that some of these issues had been pending.
What is the logic behind the condition that we have applied that if the air links talks are successful then we move on to the rail link?

We have said that we will hold a second round of technical discussions with regard to air links and we have said that we are ready to hold technical level discussions on the restoration of the rail links but we have said that we will take a final view only after the successful completion of the civil aviation talks.

The reasoning here is very simple. The Pakistani side is keen to restore the links - the civil aviation links - but they don’t appear keen to restore the over-flight rights. And they have some irrational fears, unfounded of course, that Indian planes will then be able to cross the Pakistani airspace and travel to Kabul which is only an hour or a quarter or hour and a half away. Therefore, as far as this particular aspect of civil aviation talks are concerned, they have been dragging their feet. This is not a technical issue. This is a political issue. And they will have to make up their mind politically whenever they want to. One would hope that they do so very soon so that in the second round we succeed in concluding the talks.

A new wrinkle seems to have been introduced into the formulation saying that no sustained dialogue was possible with Pakistan. The word “sustained” was not there previously...

I have been saying this ever since prime minister offered his hand of friendship because this question was asked: why this sudden change? Because we have been saying that there can’t be any new beginning with Pakistan unless cross-border terrorism is brought to an end. Naturally, this was the question that was uppermost in the minds of everyone. I have been, in particular, explaining that we have a large number of issues to discuss with Pakistan including Jammu and Kashmir. Obviously none of these issues can be resolved in one sitting. You need an extended dialogue with Pakistan in order to resolve these issues. Which means that the dialogue will have to be sustained over a period of time.

It’s not a question of one week or one month. Also we are not going to have a dialogue for the sake of having a dialogue. We will like the dialogue to be meaningful and productive. So these are the three critical words therefore: sustained, meaningful and productive dialogue. And you can have sustained, meaningful and productive dialogue only when cross-border terrorism is brought to an end. Otherwise you will end up discussing the incidents of cross border terrorism each time that you meet.
And it is also important that we create a certain level of confidence for the dialogue. It cannot be that terrorism continues to be the instrument of state policy of Pakistan and we are forced to a dialogue under duress. What has to be realised is that when we are talking about terrorism we are not merely referring to infiltration. We are referring to the whole paraphernalia of terrorism. Specially the infrastructure of terrorism. Infrastructure means camps for terrorists across the line of control, which means recruitment, training, arming, financing, communications - all these are part of the infrastructure - and then pushing them across. I have told the American Secretary of State Colin Powell and others that when you are talking of infiltration, you are talking about a tap which has been opened. You can close the tap, but the whole reservoir of terrorism which feeds the tap is also something that has to be tackled.

**On the yardstick of productivity, how productive in your assessment has Pakistan’s intent been? Is the freeing up of 250 tariff lines an indication of a genuine transformation?**

No it is not. Far from it. Because you know these 250 tariff lines are a very very small portion of something like lets say 6500 to 7000 tariff lines in the international nomenclature of trade. So when you are talking of 250 tariff lines, it is neither here nor there. It is not going to improve the situation from the present position of 90 per cent of the tariff lines being on the prohibited list in Pakistan, as far as Indian exports are concerned. We had suggested, to begin with, 1000 tariff lines. We thought that a thousand tariff lines might be a little more substantial but this was something that was not acceptable to Pakistan. So therefore we have had to settle for 250 tariff lines.

**Have we settled for it?**

Settled for it, yes — it has been negotiated and finalised.

**Does it give us enough confidence to go into SAARC as a result of this?**

SAARC, we have already said, that we will go. As of now we will attend SAARC.

**Whether or not there is a productive outcome?**

Of what?

**Of the SAARC summit. What do we expect from the SAARC summit?**
We then have to point out at the SAARC summit that the previous decisions, not merely of 2002 but earlier SAARC summits also, have not been fruitful.

**Some of these proposals are reheated ones. Why do we propose them again if they have already been under discussions and have not reached some kind of stalemate?**

Like what?

**The Kokrapar - Munabao point was announced in July 9, 2001. Especially the fact that administrative arrangements including those for transport will be urgently put in place so as to implement Prime Minister Vajpayee’s decision within three months.**

We made these offers that means a point on the line of control were on offer in 2001 and they were also announced by India unilaterally before the Agra summit. But all these remained wherever it was because the Agra summit did not succeed.

**And isn’t there some kind of informal arrangement already made clear by India that we will not arrest fishermen in that band we talked about in the proposal - the 20 nautical mile band? So this new band, how will it further the existing arrangement?**

No, this is a band that will have to be negotiated. And specially in Sir Creek in which there is no determined maritime boundary, there is much greater confusion. and therefore we thought that we could give them some kind of a negotiated band in the sea where a fisherman could stray inadvertently, not deliberately, and if he does then we should not arrest him. We could warn him and ask him to go back.

**Isn’t the firing of warning shots already been in operation for some time?**

That has been in operation, but the firing shots still does not prevent arrests.

**On the link from Muzaffarabad to Srinagar, do we think that any service that takes off from that point, will be free from violence that could be perpetrated on either side of the line of control?**

Quite clearly both countries will have to make arrangements so that the bus is not intercepted by terrorists.
Will you settle for some kind of arrangement that falls short of a visa stamp?

That is a matter of negotiation. But there has been a great deal of excitement in India whether we are going to recognise the line of control as an international boundary. I think that all this speculation is idle at this point in time. Because from our side there is no question of recognising the line of control as the international boundary. But the line of control exists. And we have to make an arrangement where travel across the line of control is recognised in some form or the other, just as the line of control has been recognised by both sides.

It's been one year since the elections in Jammu and Kashmir, so why have we put this internal track in play now? Isn't it a little too late? I don't think so. You can always question the timing. When we came out with these 12 measures the question was: why now? But Mr. Vohra has been at it for over six months and a stage was reached when it was felt that may be Mr. Advani could have a talk with them.

None of the other attempts we have made before Mr Vohra have been particularly successful and even this - the rump Hurriyat has said that if it is only going to be about devolution we are not going to talk about it. Is this a setback?

I wouldn't rush to a conclusion that this is a setback.

What is the earliest we can establish the 110 strength in our respective missions?

I can't predict it at this point in time. But we have said that we'll look at the strength again once these steps are agreed upon, because quite clearly it will generate demand for issue of a larger number of visas.

How much does the US treasury department characterisation of Dawood Ibrahim take our battle for the 20 most wanted men forward?

It is a very important step that has been announced by the US. It is not a question of our gloating and saying that we had said this before. The point is Dawood Ibrahim is a criminal and a terrorist and also, unfortunately, a fact that he has been allowed to take shelter in Pakistan. It is also an unfortunate fact that despite all the evidence that we have made available to them with regard to Dawood Ibrahim, they decided to turn a blind eye and a deaf ear. Now the whole thing is before the international community,
it will not suffice for Pakistan to say that he is not there. Because if he is not there they will have to tell us where he is. He lived there. He has a Pakistani passport. He has been availing of Pakistan’s facilities and hospitality so it is not enough for them to say we do not know about him.

He has been listed in the UN under the UN resolution that came into being after the Nairobi blasts. Will we now pursue this under UNSC Resolution 1373 (that came into being after the attacks on the World Trade Centre) and calls upon countries to co-operate in eliminating terrorist infrastructure and financing of terrorists within member countries?

Yes.

Do we have any steps in mind?

We have. They will come into play as soon as we can put them together.

**Part II: October 30**

What do you think about Pakistan’s counter-proposals, more specifically on the bus link between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar?

Pakistan has, unfortunately, opted to politicise what was a purely humanitarian gesture. They have disrupted the proposal by attaching conditions they knew wouldn’t be acceptable. Even now people from these regions travel without requiring the kind of documents that Pakistan has spoken about. We hope Pakistan will review its approach on this. On our part, India remains committed to doing everything possible to facilitate people-to-people contact between the people of our two countries.

Did we expect Pakistan to add the UN clause to our proposal on the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus link?

We were not surprised. We are by now so familiar with Pakistan’s negative mindset that none of their actions comes as a surprise. Let me admit however that we are disappointed to see Pakistan frustrate a measure aimed at the people of Jammu and Kashmir..

Why do you think they have offered medical facilities and scholarships to Kashmiris?

Clearly, this is typical of Pakistan’s Kashmir obsession. Why only Kashmir and not the whole of India? They are welcome to throw open their medical
and education facilities to people from the whole of India. Limiting the proposal to Kashmir makes it evident that their effort is to score political points and not act with sincerity. They seem to be under some misapprehension that India is trying to show off the superiority of its medical facilities over theirs. Pakistan citizens have been voluntarily opting to come to India for medical treatment. We have not been enticing them or luring them. Pakistan finds itself unwilling to acknowledge this fact. Anyhow, we have already clarified that the process would go further if their efforts are not targeted on any particular region of India. Our own efforts have not, for instance, been focussed on Sindh, Balochistan, NWFP or any particular community in Pakistan.

**Do you think the peace initiative has turned into a farcical game of one-upmanship?**

India’s efforts are sincere. It is up to Pakistan to decide whether it would like to respond in a manner that advances the interests of the people of our two countries or engage in one-upmanship. As far as we are concerned, we intend to continue with the process.

**Pakistan Foreign Secretary quoted you as saying that the twelve proposals made on 22nd October was a tactical move on the part of India and the Government is trying to split Hurriyat . What is your reaction?**

The news reports referred to by the Pakistani Foreign Secretary are absolutely false and baseless. Our proposals on October 22 are marked by the same spirit of sincerity which has marked all aspects of Prime Minister’s peace initiative since April 18. It is most unfortunate that the Pakistani Foreign Office, when defining its response, chose to rely on these baseless and speculative news reports.
137. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on some aspects of the Indo-Pak relations.


Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentleman

… the Chairman of the DTC has written to Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation formally reiterating the proposal to run additional buses in convoy on already agreed days on the Delhi –Lahore- Delhi route. Secondly, instructions have been issued to immigration authorities to allow those above the age of 65 to cross at Wagah on foot. Thirdly, steps have been initiated for free medical treatment to the second lot of 20 Pakistani children. These three steps have been taken in pursuance of the announcements, which you heard in this very room on 22nd of October.

Question: Pakistani Foreign Spokesperson yesterday made strong comments on our proposals saying that it would have been courteous if India has said that some of those proposals were made by Pakistan. Any response to those comments? Secondly he also made a comment on the proposed DPM –APHC leadership meeting. Any reactions?

Answer: If you are asking me about the general nature of the comments of the Pakistani Official spokesperson I would say that those comments made yesterday were unfortunate and they were not in keeping with the spirit of the present efforts being made. We hope that Pakistan’s response to our proposals will be constructive in substance and less ‘robust’ in tone and vocabulary. As far as the second specific aspect of the proposed talks between the APHC leadership and the Deputy Prime Minister, the comments are regrettably a continuation of Pakistan’s destructive approach to peace in Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan, we believe, should deal with our differences and problems with maturity and responsibility and a realization that continuation of old policy is harmful to its own interest.

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1 The Spokesman of the Pakistani Foreign Office said in Islamabad on October 27 that while Pakistan was not yet ready to respond to the Indian proposals it was considering those proposals “very seriously and consultations are being held at the highest level”. Pakistan would not “reject” them, claiming that Prime Minister Jamali himself had made some of them on May 6. He said Pakistan was ready to “engage India in dialogue.” He assured the media that “Pakistan’s response will be robust and comprehensive and we might accept some while adding some others. Some of these proposals from India had been made earlier by our Prime Minister, while some are those on which we were waiting for a response, while some others are simply ones which have been recycled and rehashed.”
Question: Don’t you think that such comments vitiate the atmosphere of the peace initiative?

Answer: I have said that these comments were unfortunate but we hope that once we get the reaction to our proposals that reaction will be constructive in substance.

Question: Prime Minister Jamali had proposed contacts between Coast Guards, don’t you think that it would not have been better for India to say yes to that proposal rather than re-phrasing the same proposal?

Answer: I don’t think that it’s a one point proposal that was made on October 22 and we were not thinking of only one aspect. It was an entire raft of proposals which the Government thought fit at this stage to unveil keeping in view the sincerity and seriousness with which the Government views the Prime Ministers initiative of April 18 and we thought that was the way to move ahead and we hope that these proposals would receive the consideration serious examination and response that they deserve.

Question: Do you have any details on the Indian arrested in Dubai? What is the normal procedure?

Answer: I have seen those news reports. Our consulate is in touch with local authorities to ascertain full details of the case and upon that all assistance as appropriate and consular assistance as requested for would be provided. That is a normal procedure.

Question: Just one clarification what is this about allowing those above 65 years of age to cross Wagah border?

Answer: One of the proposals of 22 October was that we should allow senior citizens to cross Wagah border on foot so that they don’t necessarily have to go by the Delhi- Lahore bus. They can go and cross over and this is a proposal on which action has been taken and immigration authorities have been instructed to allow them.
Statement of Government of India on India-Pakistan Relations.

New Delhi, October 30, 2003.

Spokesperson: Good Evening Ladies and Gentleman

We have a statement on Pakistan's proposals yesterday.

1. We welcome the fact that Pakistan has responded positively to at least some of the proposals announced by our External Affairs Minister on October 22. We are disappointed that they have attached impractical, extraneous or delaying conditions to the others.

2. Based on the positive responses, there would be immediate implementation of the proposals to allow senior citizens to cross at Wagah on foot. We would also initiate further steps for working out modalities for links between our Coast Guards and Pakistan's Maritime Security Agency. We also look forward to bilateral sporting encounters. We will work on the modalities of Pakistan's proposal for release of apprehended fishermen within a month, although we would have preferred to work out an arrangement for their non-arrest.

1. The main points in Pakistan's reply to India's 22 October proposals with regard to CBMs were:

   1. Welcomes Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus proposal in principle. Wants check points along the way to be manned by UN officials and people should move with UN documents.
   2. Sustained and serious dialogue needed.
   3. India has proposed date on technical-level talks for resumption of air links. Pakistan agrees to talks in first week of December.
   4. Resumption of Samjhauta Express because bulk of traffic through rail, so we believe it will serve India's purpose of people-to-people contact.
   5. No link between talks on resumption of air and rail links.
   6. Welcome resumption of sporting ties.
   7. Welcome (novel) idea of visa camps in various cities. But problem is how to implement? Pakistan wants restoration of number of staff in embassy to pre-December 2001 levels.
   8. Senior citizens welcome to cross border on foot.
   9. Instead of increase in frequency of Delhi-Lahore bus, Pakistan says it is better to resume Samjhauta Express because it will spare people a torturous 14-hour bus journey.
   10. Pakistan agrees to talks in first week of December.
   11. Work with India on release of fishermen arrested by both sides, on humanitarian grounds.
   12. Heart institutes in Karachi and Punjab province have offered to treat some poor Indian children.
   13. Mumbai-Karachi ship: Issue can come up when the composite dialogue is resumed.
   14. Rail between Sindh and Munabao: Issue can come up when the composite dialogue is resumed.

Pakistan also made some fresh proposals and these were:

(i). It offered 100 scholarships to Kashmiri children to take graduation and post-graduation courses in Pakistan.
(ii). Offer of treatment to aged Kashmiris.
(iii). Offer of help to widows and victims of rape (which, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Riaz Khokar alleged, occurred due to the action of security forces).
Wanted UN agencies to identify such people. Khokar said if India was sincere about bridging the gap between Kashmiris separated by the Line of Control, it would allow Kashmiris to accept the offers Pakistan now made.
3. We hope that Pakistan will come to the talks on civil aviation on December 1-2, with an open mind and with the intention of finalising arrangements for their successful resumption.

4. We would look forward to holding of technical level talks for resumption of Samjhauta (Mutual Understanding) Express, in the middle of December, as proposed by Pakistan, after the successful conclusion of the talks in early December for resumption of civil aviation.

5. We welcome Pakistan’s offer of medical treatment to 40 Indian children. Such offers and their implementation will no doubt enhance interaction and contribute, in some measure, to increasing understanding and empathy.

6. We are disappointed that Pakistan has, in effect, not agreed to our proposals for running extra buses on the Delhi-Lahore route, and establishing links between Mumbai and Karachi, Khokrapar and Munabao, and Srinagar and Muzaffarabad. Such links would have facilitated widening of people to people contacts and cooperation. They could have easily been put into effect through technical level discussions. Holding up such simple steps, and making them part of the Composite Dialogue process, in effect means delaying them. Since these measures are aimed at expanding interaction, widening areas of cooperation and building up trust, we will continue to hope that Pakistan will agree to their implementation. Our offer for a bus link between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad was motivated by humanitarian considerations. It is unfortunate that Pakistan has instead opted to politicise and disrupt this by attaching conditions that they knew would not be acceptable. In fact, even now people from these regions travel without the requirement of the kind of documents that Pakistan spoke about.

7. We have noted Pakistan’s proposal for a bus link between Lahore and Amritsar. We can assess the requirement for this after progress on Delhi-Lahore bus, civil aviation and Samjhauta Express.

8. We are ready for a calibrated increase in size of Missions, as the requirement grows with the re-establishment of links, and setting up of new ones. However, there is no need to wait for this for holding of visa camps, which would ease the situation for the normal traveller who otherwise has to come all the way to Delhi or Islamabad to get visas. We would urge Pakistan to reconsider this.
9. As far as Pakistan’s offer of 100 scholarships is concerned, we believe that the process of building trust and cooperation between India and Pakistan, and establishing lasting peace, would be facilitated if offers are not targeted on any particular region of India. India has never adopted, for instance, a selective approach for Balochistan, Sind or NWFP, or for any particular community. Our offers have been available to any Pakistani. If Pakistan were to make such non-discriminatory and general offers of cooperation, then it would no doubt contribute to taking the process further.

10. We are amused at Pakistan’s profession of concern at the plight of disabled and negatively affected people in the state of Jammu & Kashmir. If Pakistan’s concerns are really sincere, it should take immediate steps to end infiltration, dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism, and offer compensation to those affected by the terrorism it has sponsored. Its references to alleged repression on J&K are obviously only a ploy for its failed attempt to camouflage its sponsorship and support for terrorism.

11. I would also like to reiterate that Jammu & Kashmir is not a disputed territory. The only issue that remains to be resolved for a final settlement of J&K, is the question of Pakistan’s illegal occupation of a portion of the State.

12. Despite the limited positive responses from Pakistan, it is clear that our Prime Minister’s initiative has gathered momentum. India would sincerely continue with the process, building on the successes achieved and the support generated, so that lasting peace is established between the two countries. We also remain committed to a dialogue process based on the premise that sustained dialogue requires an end to cross border infiltration and terrorism. If Pakistan perceives, as it has claimed, that Composite Dialogue is in mutual interest, it must immediately put an end to its sponsorship of cross border terrorism.

**Question:** Pakistani Foreign Secretary quoted Yashwant Sinha saying that the 12 proposals made on 22nd October was a tactical move on part of India. He also said that EAM while briefing BJP foreign cell said that these proposals were win-win situation and also wants to split Hurriyat. What is your reaction?

**Answer:** I have been instructed by EAM that such news reports which attributes all these statements to him about “tactical moves” and “win-win
situation” are absolutely false and baseless. The proposals which were unveiled by EAM on 22nd October after the CCS meeting are marked by the same spirit of sincerity which have marked all aspects of Prime Minister’s peace initiative since April 18. It is most unfortunate that the Pakistani Foreign Office, when defining its response chose to rely on these baseless and speculative news reports.

Question: Will talks on resumption of Samjhauta Express not take place if Civil Aviation talks fail?

Answer: We hope that the Civil Aviation talks will be successful.

Question: Yesterday Pakistan offered assistance for Kashmiris widows and rape victims. What if Pakistan is ready to provide treatment to them? Will India allow them to avail?

Answer: I have given you our response on two aspects: The first is on the issue of directing any proposals to a specific region. The second is about professing concern about the people who are disabled and negatively affected in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. We have given you our response that they are so affected because of the sponsorship of cross border terrorism, perpetrated and supported by Pakistan. If they are sincere in their concern then the answer lies in ending infiltration, dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism and stopping the sponsorship of terrorism.

Question: You have covered in your response all the Pakistani proposals except one that India should allow International Human Right Commissions to make list of all victims in Jammu and Kashmir due to repressions.

Answer: I think you should read the statement carefully and you will find all the responses there. There is a clear reference to the alleged repression in Jammu and Kashmir - the Pakistani comments are only a ploy for its failed attempts to camouflage sponsorship and support of terrorism.

Question: Given India’s well known position on ending terrorism, how do you see these talks proceeding?

Answer: Which talks?

Question: …all these proposals and counter proposals..

Answer: If you ask me a specific question I will be able to give you a brief on that point.
**Question:** Theoretically, should people of Jammu and Kashmir seek the scholarship offer by Pakistan. Will Indian Government allow them?

**Answer:** I don’t want to get into speculative theoretical debate in this press conference. As far as Pakistan’s specific offer of 100 scholarships is concerned I have just given you our response and reiterated it.

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139. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee by Russian newspaper **Nezavisimaya Gazeta**.

November 12, 2003.

You are soon paying an official visit to Russia. Could you please describe the current status of relations between India and Russia?

India-Russia relations are wide-ranging and time-tested. They are based on shared interests, trust and mutual understanding. There is a national consensus in India on the need for a strong and stable relationship with the Russian Federation. There is no doubt about the importance of Russia as a reliable and strategic partner of India. Interactions in the recent past have substantiated this further. Since October 2000, we have instituted the practice of annual summits to review bilateral relations.

Our mutually beneficial cooperation includes such key areas as defence, science and technology, space and nuclear energy. Close political understanding has allowed our two countries to discuss and coordinate positions on issues of regional and global importance. Being multi-religious and multi-ethnic pluralistic societies, we share common interests and concerns.

I am greatly looking forward to my visit, during which I hope to discuss with President Putin a wide range of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual concern. I have no doubt that the visit will further strengthen our relations and lead to even greater cooperation between our countries.

**Moscow and Delhi have frequently talked about the big potential for bilateral trade and economic cooperation. What steps are being taken to realize this potential?**
Our current level of bilateral trade at about US $1.5 billion is not reflective of the actual potential. Both countries need to explore new areas of cooperation, especially since the Rupee-Rouble arrangement, which has sustained trade between us for a long time, is coming to an end in 2005. An India-Russia Task Force is being set up to work out modalities for utilizing the balance of Rupee-Roubel Debt Funds in both countries and to consider ways of boosting bilateral trade and investment.

Recently, the two countries have taken some steps to diversify the trade basket and move away from traditional sectors, to ones dealing with the new economy. The business communities of our two countries are also being encouraged to interact more closely to exploit existing opportunities. A large business delegation from India will accompany me on my visit to Russia to explore the potential for further cooperation. Efforts are also being made to create Indian joint venture banks in Moscow to facilitate payments.

One of India’s apex chambers of commerce and industry has decided to open a Representative Office in Russia to facilitate contacts and exchanges between our business entrepreneurs. I am glad that some Russian companies have recently started talks with their Indian counterparts in the field of telecommunications, information technology, and electronics. This is the direction of future cooperation, and I am confident that with sustained efforts by both sides, such cooperation will fructify in the near future.

There have been contacts at non-governmental levels – parliamentary and intelligentsia – to promote an atmosphere for the normalization of India-Pakistan relations. How do you see further progress?

Following my April 18 initiative of once again extending the hand of friendship to Pakistan there have been number of significant developments. The respective High Commissioners have assumed charge. The Delhi-Lahore bus service has been resumed and is running to full capacity. Both sides have released prisoners. In addition, there have been high-level exchanges at the level of parliamentarians, media, businessmen and cultural contacts. Certainly, a great deal of positive resonance has been generated amongst the people in the two countries. A few weeks ago, we announced steps to encourage more economic cooperation, cultural exchanges, and people-to-people contacts between the two
countries. We believe that greater interaction in these areas could help create a climate of friendship and trust in which more difficult political issues can be addressed.

We intend to continue with the step-by-step process of normalization of diplomatic and other links with Pakistan, building on the successes achieved and the support generated, so that lasting peace is established between the two countries.

**Why does your government reject direct talks with Pakistan?**

It is incorrect to say that we reject talks with Pakistan. India remains committed to discussing all outstanding issues with Pakistan peacefully through bilateral dialogue in accordance with the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration, both of which are bilateral agreed documents. What we do say is that for any meaningful political dialogue, cross-border terrorism, unleashed in Jammu and Kashmir from across our borders, has to stop. Dialogue and terrorism do not go hand in hand.

**Military-technical cooperation between India and Russia is probably the most stable and important sphere of our bilateral relations. At the same time Delhi seems to be diversifying its military ties with other countries. Do you think this tendency may lead to reduced cooperation with Russia?**

India and Russia have traditionally enjoyed very close ties in the field of defence. Relations in this sphere have grown well beyond a mere buyer-seller relationship, to now include joint design, investment and production. Such an interdependent relationship constantly generates newer and wider spheres of cooperation. All the wings of the Indian Armed Forces continue to obtain major supplies from Russia. Russia, therefore, remains our most important and reliable defence partner. The growth of our military ties with other countries cannot undermine our broad-based defence cooperation with Russia.

**India has a longstanding territorial problem with China. Is there hope that it will be solved in the foreseeable future? How do you assess relations between Delhi and Beijing?**

Our relations with China have been improving steadily over the years. The momentum of high level visits has been maintained. Various bilateral forums for interaction have been established, covering diverse areas such
as trade and investment, policy planning, security and counter-terrorism. The economic content of our relationship has increased substantially. This year, we hope to achieve a bilateral trade turnover of US$ 7 billion. Exchanges in other areas like science and technology, culture, defence, agriculture and investment have also progressed.

During my visit to China in June this year we agreed to raise our bilateral political and economic cooperation to qualitatively higher levels. As our relationship expands and diversifies, it will increase mutual goodwill and trust, which should facilitate resolution of the differences between us on the border. We have appointed Special Representatives to explore the framework of a boundary settlement from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship. We will proceed along this course, in the conviction that as we intensify and diversify our economic cooperation and people-to-people links, we can develop a climate of understanding and trust in which differences can be resolved from a larger political perspective.

**Will your country send its troops to Iraq as part of International Peace Keeping Force?**

India has welcomed the unanimous adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1511. We attach the greatest importance to the need for reconstruction work in Iraq and to the early return of sovereignty to its people. We have already pledged assistance of US $ 30 million for Iraqi reconstruction projects. We are willing to take further initiatives to assist the Iraqi people. The question of troop contribution is tied up with a number of factors including not only the ground realities in Iraq but also our own domestic security requirements.

**Terrorism and religious extremism. Which one of the two poses the biggest threat to your country?**

India is a secular country where all religions of the world are represented. Secularism is an essential principle of life in India, which is also enshrined in our Constitution. We reject extremism of any kind. Both India and Russia are multiethnic, multicultural and multireligious pluralistic democracies, which are particularly vulnerable to terrorism. Terrorists have no religion, as no religion prescribes violence against innocent people. In fact, our battle is against those extremist elements, who misuse and misinterpret religion to justify terrorism and incite violence.

**How do you see your country by the end of this century?**
Strong, prosperous and occupying its rightful place in the comity of nations, in accordance with its contribution to global economic growth, peace and security.

140. Response of Official Spokesperson to the statement of Pakistani Prime Minister.

New Delhi, November 24, 2003.

We have seen the statement on India-Pakistan relations, made by the Prime Minister of Pakistan in his address yesterday.

The Pakistan Prime Minister, Zafarullah Khan Jamali, on November 23 said Pakistani troops were ready to observe a ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) from Id, falling on November 26. He said this in his address to the people of Pakistan on the occasion of the completion of one year of his Government. Significantly he also revived the proposals on a bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad, capital of Pak-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and bus or train link between Sindh and Rajasthan and said that Pakistan was ready for discussions with India on them. The ceasefire announcement made by Mr. Jamali assumes significance, as Pakistan is to host the SAARC Summit in the first week of January and has been urging the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, to utilise the occasion for revival of the stalled Indo-Pakistan dialogue. Since August Pakistan has mooted the ceasefire proposal twice but there is a difference in the manner it has been portrayed now and in the past. The proposal made by President Musharraf, was conditional and was subject to acceptance by India. New Delhi rejected it as a non-starter on the ground that it cannot let its guard on the LoC down when there is no let-up in infiltration. Mr. Jamali now seemed to suggest that Pakistan would observe a ceasefire irrespective of the Indian position. Mr. Jamali said Pakistan was ready for talks on the re-opening of the Khokhrapar-Monabao route that remained closed since the 1965 war. When India mooted the proposal in October Pakistan said that it could be discussed as part of the composite dialogue. The Pakistan Premier said his country was willing to start a bus service between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar. In response to the Indian proposal earlier Islamabad had said the service was possible only if U.N. personnel manned the check posts and people on either side were allowed to travel with U.N. documents. Mr. Jamali invited India to initiate talks on the modalities and other related matters for starting the bus service and offered to host a meeting in this regard. To facilitate issuance of visas, he proposed that both Pakistani and Indian high commissions, after mutual agreement, should look into the possibilities of opening visa camps.

Jamali also conveyed his willingness to on the resumption of air links between the two countries and said negotiations between the two civil aviation authorities were extremely important. He hoped that these negotiations would lead to the revival of air links between Lahore-Delhi, Karachi-Mumbai and Karachi-Delhi. Mr. Jamali also re-floated Pakistan’s proposal of reviving the Samjotha Express, saying, “we think that a decision in this regard should be reached by the end of this year”. Similarly, he said, Pakistan was also ready for talks on starting a ferry service between Karachi and Mumbai. He also proposed that the Interior Ministries of Pakistan and India should find ways to resolve the problems of prisoners jailed in each other’s countries.
We welcome the decision of the Government of Pakistan to work for expanding the communication links proposed by us on October 22. We now propose immediate technical level talks for early implementation of these proposals.

We also welcome the announcement by the Prime Minister of Pakistan of a unilateral ceasefire with effect from the holy occasion of Eid. We will respond positively to this initiative. However, in order to establish a full ceasefire on a durable basis, there must be an end to infiltration from across the Line of Control.

To take this process further, we also propose a ceasefire along the AGPL (Actual Ground Position Line) in Siachen.

**Question:** The statement says we will respond positively to this initiative....

**Answer:** It says we will respond positively and in order to establish a full ceasefire on a durable basis there must be an end to infiltration from the across the LoC.

**Question:** The ceasefire is with effect from Eid. Will we also ceasefire from the same day?

**Answer:** I am not sure as to when what comes into effect. But we will respond positively.

**Thank you.**
141. Statement by Official Spokesperson proposing establishment of communication links between the Indian Coast Guard and Pakistan’s Maritime Agency.


On October 22, 2003 Government of India proposed the establishment of communication links between the Indian Coast Guard and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (MSA). India also suggested that Flag meetings could be held at sea before and after the fishing season.

Following this, Government of India have today conveyed details for implementing the above proposals to Pakistan. It has been proposed inter alia that Director/Deputy Director(Operations) at the Indian Coast Guard Headquarters could establish communication through ISD with their counterparts in Pakistan’s Maritime Security Agency Headquarters with effect from January 1, 2004. The communication links, which would be used on the basis of agreed periodicity and when required, would cover matters related to the humanitarian aspects concerning fishermen of both countries and issues arising out of the operational situation confronted by both the agencies. Similarly flag level meetings between Indian Coast Guard and Pakistan’s MSA have been proposed to be held every six months in April and September.

Pakistan’s response is now awaited.

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142. **Response of Official Spokesperson on the attack on Pakistani President Musharraf’s life**

*New Delhi, December 15, 2003.*

**Question:** What is our reaction on the attack on President Pervez Musharraf?

**Answer:** The Government of India condemns the terrorist blast in Rawalpindi yesterday, soon after the convoy of Pakistan President Musharraf had passed by. This incident has underscored, once again, the need for eliminating terrorism in a comprehensive manner from everywhere.

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143. **Response of the Official Spokesperson to the Pakistani demarche on India’s fencing work on the Line of Control.**

*New Delhi, December 18, 2003.*

In response to a question, the spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs stated that in a meeting with the Pakistani Deputy High Commissioner today it was conveyed that:

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1. On December 14 President Musharraf escaped a fresh attempt on his life as a powerful explosion rocked the Chaklala Bridge in Rawalpindi Cantonment just two minutes after the departure of his heavily guarded motorcade. No one was reportedly injured in the explosion but it did cause a major embarrassment to the military regime. Incidentally there was another attempt on his life on December 25 in which many lives were lost. That attack too was condemned by New Delhi and it “expressed its heartfelt condolences to the families of the casualties”.

2. On December 13 Pakistan lodged a complaint with India expressing its concern at the fencing along the LOC. An official of the Indian High Commission was summoned to the Foreign Office in Islamabad for the demarche. However a cautiously worded press release of the Pakistan Foreign Office said: “Pakistan has conveyed its serious concern to Indian efforts to erect a fence on the LOC and the working boundary. A demarche was made to the Indian High Commission in Islamabad.” Pakistan move came after the Indian Army announced it was fencing 460KM stretch of the LOC to prevent the infiltration of Islamic militants from across the Pakistan side of the border.
(i) The fencing work being done by us along the Line of Control was not in violation of the Shimla Agreement or the December 1972 Agreement on the Delineation of the Line of Control;

(ii) The activity has been taking place even before the cease-fire and was not a new development;

(ii) In any case, we had been compelled to start fencing work on the international border and the Line of Control because of cross border infiltration and terrorism sponsored by Pakistan. It was an operational requirement.

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144. Joint press statement issued at the end of the technical level talks between the Railway officials of India and Pakistan on Samjhauta Express.

New Delhi, December 19, 2003.

Technical level discussions between Railway delegations of India and Pakistan for the resumption of Samjhauta Express and Freight Services were held in New Delhi on December 18-19, 2003.

The four-member delegation of the Pakistan Railways was led by Mr. Muhammad Iqbal Khatri, Additional General Manager, Passenger Operations, Pakistan Railways. The four member Indian delegation was headed by Shri S.B.Ghosh Dastidar, Additional Member (Traffic), Indian Railways.

The discussions were held in a very friendly and cordial atmosphere. After two days of deliberations, the following decisions were taken: -

The existing “Agreement relating to Rail Communication between India and Pakistan – 2001” valid till January 20, 2004 has been extended for a further period of three years till January 20, 2007.

Samjhauta Express and freight services will resume with effect from January 15, 2004 as per the earlier timetable. The fare structure will be announced shortly.
For improving the quality of the service, both Railways agreed to meet regularly in future.

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145. Interview by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with the Friday Times.


[Yashwant Sinha was appointed India’s External Affairs Minister on July 1, 2002. A former Indian Administrative Service officer, Sinha left the IAS in 1984 and joined active politics as a member of the Janata Party. He has a long and varied parliamentary experience and has served as a minister three times. In the wake of the ongoing peace overtures by India and Pakistan and Indian prime minister A B Vajpayee’s decision to attend the January SAARC summit in Islamabad, TFT conducted this exclusive interview with Minister Sinha through the Indian High Commission in Islamabad.]

The Friday Times: Do you agree with Pakistan’s stand that the core problem between the two countries is Kashmir?

Yashwat Sinha: No…. Our differences over the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir are a symptom of the problems between India and Pakistan. The real problem is Pakistan’s compulsive hostility towards India…. Let me explain. There is no problem or issue between India and Pakistan that cannot be resolved bilaterally and with goodwill. It is our firm belief that greater economic cooperation, cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts would create an environment in which all issues, including that of Jammu and Kashmir, could be addressed.

Is a ‘consensus’ resolution of the Kashmir dispute possible? What will be the contours of such a resolution?

We do not believe there is a dispute. The legal validity of Jammu and Kashmir’s accession to India cannot be questioned. It is an integral part of India. As for your question regarding ‘consensus’, the Simla Agreement between the two countries provides the framework for this. It also identifies bilateralism as the mechanism to resolve all issues. However, no issue can be resolved in an environment of hostility.
Is Kashmir amenable to any solution acceptable to both India and Pakistan and the people of Jammu and Kashmir?

There are two aspects to the J&K issue. One involves the people. Finding solutions to the grievances of the people of Jammu and Kashmir is entirely India’s internal responsibility. The other is the ‘final settlement of Jammu and Kashmir’ referred to in the Simla Agreement. This is a matter purely for India and Pakistan to resolve bilaterally through negotiations. I have no doubt that solutions are possible to all problems provided the parties concerned adopt a pragmatic attitude and eschew violence. In fact, between 1972 and 1990, Pakistan avoided any discussion of the issue. It called for talks only after it began using terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir as an instrument of its policy and with the hope of leveraging this tool. Pakistan should realise that it cannot hope to obtain through proxy war and terrorism what does not belong to it legally and what it has failed to achieve through repeated wars.

An influential section of Kashmiris are talking in terms of ‘third option’ or an independent Kashmir. What are your views on that?

The State...is an integral part of India. There is no question of secession of Jammu and Kashmir or any other part of India from the Indian Union. The people of J&K have repeatedly reposed their faith in the Indian democratic system. They braved the bullets of terrorists to participate overwhelmingly in the elections to the State Assembly in October last year. The economy of the State is picking up. Tourism has revived in a big way. I have no doubt in my mind that the people are clearly aware that their interests are best served by their partaking of the benefits of India’s rapid economic development and her emergence on the world stage as a major power.

According to Minister George Fernandes, ceasefire could lead to a final solution to the Kashmir issue. What is the basis for his optimism?

Ceasefire is an indication of a new approach and mindset on the part of Pakistan that involves moving away from violence to cooperation. If continued, this approach could lead to the creation of an environment in which all issues could be better addressed.

India-Pakistan relations have been unpleasant and acrimonious since 1947. What are the major reasons for it? What in your view are the mistakes committed by India?
We all feel sad and frustrated at the unfortunate state of India-Pakistan relations.... There is little point in delving into history at this stage or apportioning blame for past mistakes. Let us look into the future...India’s approach to relations with Pakistan is underpinned by our desire to establish peaceful, friendly and cooperative relations with all our neighbours.

Don’t you think the inability of the two countries to forge friendly ties has tarnished their image abroad?

The unseemly sight of Pakistani Representatives using abusive language against India at multilateral fora saddens us and does no credit to Pakistan. That is why I called upon Pakistan in September of this year to desist from such behaviour during the UN General Assembly session. Sadly, my call was not heeded. Anyhow, India’s image is not affected ... ...because we are at the receiving end of this behaviour and...our policy is not Pak-centric.

In the presence of too much distrust, how can the two countries solve their problems on their own, without third-party mediation?

What is required to solve the problems between us is a willingness on the part of Pakistan to abjure the use of violence as a negotiating instrument. If Pakistan is willing to take decisive steps in this direction, India is ready to expend all her energies to ensure that there is a new dawn in our relations.

Why does India not allow Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other similar organisations to visit J&K?

This is not true...Jammu and Kashmir is open to all visitors, Indian and foreign. No prior permission is required by anyone to visit the State. A number of human rights organisations function within the State just as in the rest of India. A record number of foreign tourists have visited Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian media reports regularly on developments in the State. Established institutions like the National Human Rights Commission and the independent judiciary continue to play an active role in ensuring that the Constitution prevails.

These organisations regularly feature India negatively in their reports on the situation in Kashmir?

Pakistan features even more negatively in the reports of many international human rights organisations. It is the job of a human rights organisation to
criticise human rights abuses wherever they occur. India is an open, democratic society based on the rule of law. The Indian Constitution enshrines a high degree of commitment to human rights. The Government attaches the utmost importance to every allegation of human rights violation, be it in Jammu and Kashmir or elsewhere in the country. Every allegation is investigated and prompt action is taken against officials concerned whenever they are found guilty. Where allegations are found to be baseless and politically motivated, the Government places the full facts in front of the people, the media, Parliament and judiciary as appropriate.

How would you assure the international community that the intensifying fever of Hindutva is no threat to Indian secularism? Similarly, how would you ensure that minorities are safe in India particularly in light of what happened in Gujarat?

Secularism is the backbone of Indian democracy. It is guaranteed by the Constitution. No Government can go against it. The Indian Constitution provides adequate safeguards for the rights of minorities in India. India has an impartial judiciary and a Minorities Commission that thwarts any attempt to curtail the rights of the minorities. The National Democratic Alliance is totally committed to preserving and strengthening the secular character of Indian society. The so-called ‘intensifying trend of Hindutva’ you talk about is nothing but a myth. I would draw your attention to recent State elections in India which were fought on the plank of development and not religion.

As an observer one finds conflicting signals as far as Indian foreign policy is concerned. India snapped air links and now wants to restore them. It reduced the High Commission’s staff and now wants to restore the full strength. Could you explain the thrust of India’s policy vis-à-vis Pakistan?

Conflicting signals are seen only by those who look for conflicting signals...there is no lack of coherence or consistency in India’s foreign policy. Our goals remain the same. We seek peace and friendship with Pakistan. But it cannot be a peace dictated with the gun of terrorism pointed at our head all the time. In the aftermath of the December 13, 2001 terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament, we had taken some diplomatic and political steps to send a clear message that we would not tolerate the menace of cross border terrorism. This message had an impact. On January 12, 2002, President General [Pervez] Musharraf
committed himself and Pakistan to bringing to an end cross border terrorism and dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism on a permanent basis. Following Prime Minister Vajpayee’s April 18 initiative, we have provided Pakistan with yet another opportunity to end its attitude of hostility towards India. The peace initiative can succeed, only if there is an end to cross border infiltration and if Pakistan dismantles the infrastructure of terrorism.

What criteria, in the absence of international monitors, satisfy India regarding Pakistan’s Kashmir policy?

By now, it is an internationally recognised fact that Pakistan is involved in cross border terrorism…. The sole criterion India will use to assess the effectiveness of Pakistan’s commitment is the concrete action Pakistan takes on the ground. We expect Pakistan to abjure violence, stop infiltration across the Line of Control, give up terrorism as an instrument of State policy, disband terrorist training camps, cease financing and providing other support structures for terrorists and their organisations, and take action on the list of twenty wanted criminals and terrorists.

Why has India failed to suppress insurgency in Kashmir the way it did in Punjab?

India is determined to fight the menace of cross border terrorism…. We are certain that we would be successful in defeating the terrorists.... There is already a new atmosphere and additional steps are being taken after the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir last year.

For the first time you have decided to talk to APHC which does not recognise the Indian Constitution. Why this change? What do you have to offer to Hurriyat?

It was not India which was unwilling to talk to the Hurriyat but the latter. India is a pluralistic state and from time to time, we have given opportunity to various disenchanted elements to join the mainstream of Indian democracy. We have always conducted talks keeping in mind the interests of the nation and our people. Failure to recognise the Indian Constitution has not prevented us in the past from talking to such elements with a view to persuading them to join the national mainstream. There is no reason why we should not do so again.... This provides them the opportunity to align themselves with democratic politics in the Valley.
146. Statement by Official Spokesperson on proposals made to Pakistan for normalization of relations.

New Delhi, December 31, 2003.

In continuation of the step by step process for normalization of links and promotion of people to people contacts, the following proposals were conveyed by us to the Government of Pakistan today:

i) Removal of restrictions, on reciprocal basis, on the movement of respective Mission personnel, imposed since December, 2001;

ii) A further increase in the size of the respective Missions to 75;

iii) Holding of technical level talks in the week of January 12, 2004 for establishment of bus link through Munabao and Khokrapar;

iv) Holding of technical level talks in the week of January 19, 2004 for establishment of bus link between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad.

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Sri Lanka

147. Media briefing by the Official Spokesperson on the ongoing visit of Sri Lanka President Chandrika Kumartunga.

New Delhi, April 10, 2003.

Official Spokesperson: Navtej Sarna

On the ongoing visit of the President of Sri Lanka. The visiting President has completed her round of meetings. She had a meeting with the President. Our Prime Minister hosted a private lunch and there were calls by External Affairs Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, Finance Minister and by the Leader of Opposition. The main subject of the discussion was the ongoing Sri Lankan peace process. President Kumaratunga shared with her interlocutors her perspective of the peace process and how it is going. As you know she had come a year ago in April 2002 and then she had met the Indian leadership. A year has passed
since then, 6 rounds of peace talks have been held and it was an opportune
time for her to share her feelings and concerns and her perspective about
the peace process.

Question: Can you tell us more about the perspective of the President of
Sri Lanka?

Answer: I am not in a position nor am I fully aware of exactly the
conversations that went on with the different leaders. As you know the
peace process has many actors in it and of course the President of Sri
Lanka has her own perspective on this and this is what she had to share
with us. As far as we are concerned we are supportive of the peace
process and we are committed to the unity, sovereignty and territorial
integrity of Sri Lanka and to the restoration of peace through a peaceful,
negotiated settlement which takes care of the aspirations of all elements
of Sri Lankan society.

Question: The Sri Lankan President has officially articulated that the
LTTE is recruiting cadre and there are couple of incidents also...What
our view on that?

Answer: Sri Lankan President has her own experience of LTTE. That is
what she is sharing. As far as we are concerned we have our own position
on LTTE. It remains a proscribed organisation.

Question: Does the Sri Lankan President’s perception differ from GOI’s
perception?

Answer: I am not in a position to tell you exactly what her perceptions
were. What she has shared in public she has shared in public. Our idea is
to listen to all the actors who in the peace process who come to brief us.
We have had several visits. For instance the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka
has been here. He has shared his position. Several ministers from Sri
Lanka have been here and shared their position with us. Our EAM, Foreign
Secretary and other Ministers have been there. This is in the nature of a
very close, almost continuous briefing and de-briefing process which goes
on between neighbouring countries. We are very much interested in the
peaceful development and the prosperity of the Sri Lankan people under
a negotiated peace, as I said, which meets the aspirations of all the
elements there. So this visit is in that nature and these visits are extremely
useful visits.
148. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Sri Lankan Minister of Enterprise Development, Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion and Minister of Constitutional Affairs Prof. Peiris.


Prof. Peiris, Minister of Enterprise Development, Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion, and Minister of Constitutional Affairs of Sri Lanka has come on an official visit to India from 12-14 June 2003. Foreign Secretary called on him this morning. External Affairs Minister held discussions with Prof. Peiris today that continued over lunch. Prof. Peiris will be meeting Principal Secretary to PM this afternoon.

Prof. Peiris has come to India straight from the Donors’ Conference organised in Tokyo on “Reconstruction and Development of Sri Lanka”. He briefed the senior political leadership on the outcome of the Conference and the Investment Conference that was held side-by-side. He also gave a briefing on the latest developments in the peace process following LTTE’s announcement to suspend talks for the time being and not to participate in the Tokyo Conference.


India-Sri Lanka Foreign Office Consultations were held on July 25, 2003 in New Delhi. The last round of Foreign Office Consultations was held on February 25, 2000. The Indian side was led by Shri Kanwal Sibal, Foreign Secretary. The Sri Lankan side was led by Mr. Nihal Rodrigo, Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka. A wide-range of issues was discussed in a warm and friendly atmosphere reflecting the excellent neighbourly relations between the two countries.

Discussions included the latest developments in the peace process, problems of fishermen straying into each other’s waters and Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu. India reiterated its support to initiatives taken by
the Government of Sri Lanka on the peace process for a peaceful resolution of the ethnic conflict. It was agreed that the problems of fishermen should continue to be tackled in a practical and humane way. The return of refugees to Sri Lanka in security and dignity was discussed.

Economic issues discussed included utilisation of the lines of credit summary review of the functioning of the Free Trade Agreement and the working of the Joint Study Group set up to examine the establishment of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between the two countries. It was noted that an exhibition-cum-retail centre by the Sri Lanka Export Development Board will shortly be set up in Chennai. The two sides agreed to consider further expanding cooperation in trade, services, civil aviation etc. under the ambit of the Economic Partnership Agreement.

Educational and cultural matters were also discussed. The two sides expressed their satisfaction at the ongoing training and academic programmes for Sri Lankan students and trainees implemented through Ministry of Human Resource Development, Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation schemes. The work of the India-Sri Lanka Foundation was appreciated and both sides reiterated the support of their respective Governments to the Foundation.

The two sides exchanged views on regional and international issues including the next SAARC Summit and the present situation in Iraq.

The discussions were preparatory to the Joint Economic Commission scheduled to be held in mid-August 2003 at Colombo. The Joint Commission is co-chaired by the respective Foreign Ministers.

Foreign Secretary hosted a lunch in honour of Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary. During his visit, Mr. Rodrigo was received by Minister of External Affairs and Principal Secretary to PM.
150. Agreed Minutes of the fifth session of the India – Sri Lanka Joint Commission.


Agreed Minutes

1. The Fifth Session of the India – Sri Lanka Joint Commission took place in Colombo on October 15, 2003. Hon. Tyronne Fernando, Minister of Foreign Affairs led the Sri Lanka delegation. His Excellency Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs led the Indian delegation. Members of the respective delegations were as per the list at Appendix–I & II.

2. The agreed agenda of the Joint Commission meeting is at Appendix-III.

3. The Joint Commission noted with satisfaction the intensification of bilateral contacts in many fields including exchange of visits at the highest levels, which have contributed to the rapid expansion of bilateral relations since the last meeting of the Joint Commission in 1998. Areas of new and active cooperation include trade, finance, investment, agriculture, power, energy, transport, information technology, environment, health, industrial development and tourism.

4. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of the Joint Commission mechanism, and the need for it to meet more frequently to be seized of emerging issues and to direct expeditious implementation of agreed proposals. Specific proposals relating to trade, finance and investment, social, cultural and education matters and science and technology were exchanged in advance to enable decisions to be taken by the Joint Commission.

I. Trade, Finance and Investment

5. Both sides expressed satisfaction that the bilateral trade under the Indo-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISLFTA) had exceeded the one billion dollar mark. Regular bilateral reviews had helped to eliminate impediments thereby ensuring the smooth functioning of the Indo-Sri Lanka FTA.

1. Not reproduced here.
6. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the increase in direct investment flows. Bilateral trade facilitation measures such as developing common standards of measurements, liberalizing of visas for businessmen etc. were also making progress.

7. The Indian side agreed to consider the request of the Sri Lankan side for assistance in the management, rehabilitation and refurbishment of the Sri Lankan Railways, including possible financial and material assistance for the same. The Sri Lankan side also requested assistance for a gas or coal power plant.

8. The Indian side sought the facility of assured berthing and warehousing facilities for aggregation of cargo for the owners of sailing vessels of Tuticorin at Colombo port, as already agreed by Sri Lanka Port Authority. The Sri Lankan side agreed to expeditious implementation.

9. **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement**

Both sides appreciated the work of the Joint Study Group which was appointed in April 2003 and has held five meetings to prepare the framework of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement to be submitted to the two Prime Ministers when they meet in Delhi later this year. The implementation of the CEPA would take the two countries to a qualitatively new level of engagement by intensifying and deepening bilateral economic interaction.

10. **Indian Line of Credit**

Both sides welcomed the signing in the presence of the two Foreign Ministers of the Agreement to release the second tranche of US $ 30 million under the current US $ one hundred million Indian Line of Credit. The Indian side agreed to consider the Sri Lankan request to diversify the product range covered under the Line of Credit.

II. **Social, Cultural and Educational matters**

11. **Social**

The Sri Lankan side while welcoming the offer by the Government of India to contribute US $ 7.5 million for the establishment of a state-of-the art Cancer Centre in Colombo, informed that it was identifying an appropriate site and developing the modalities of the public-private partnership within which it would be operated.
The Sri Lankan side thanked the Government of India for its contribution of Sri Lankan Rs. 20 million for relief and rehabilitation assistance to the South. The two sides also noted that the Government of India was gifting a CT Scanner and a Bus to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital as well as the University of Jaffna, respectively. Government of India has offered to set up a well-equipped hospital in the upcountry region and has already begun a programme aimed at the eradication of cataract amongst the estate workers in the region.

12. Cultural

Both sides welcomed the signing in the presence of the two Foreign Ministers of the Cultural Exchange Programme for 2003-2006 under the Bilateral Cultural Agreement. The plan includes specific activities in the fields of art and culture, youth affairs and sports, tourism, films and media. Both sides agreed on the need for timely implementation of the Cultural Exchange Programme.

13. Education

Both sides expressed interest in concluding a bilateral agreement for cooperation in education taking into account the proposals forwarded by the Sri Lankan side.


Both sides noted with satisfaction the significant contribution made by the India-Sri Lanka Foundation towards fostering Indo-Sri Lanka relations through the enhancement of economic, scientific, educational, technical and cultural cooperation. Substantial progress has been achieved in terms of implementing a large variety of projects since its inception four years ago. Both sides also discussed the difficulties being encountered by the Indo-Sri Lanka Foundation on account of the fall in interest rates, which has reduced the income from its corpus fund and agreed to a further contribution of IRs. 10 million each to enable the Foundation to sustain its diverse portfolio of activities.

III. Science and Technology

15. The Sri Lankan side has forwarded proposals for cooperation in Science and Technology. Both sides agreed that a meeting of the
respective departments should be held early to jointly examine and formulate proposals for implementation.

16. Fisheries

Both sides welcomed the recent agreement between their naval authorities to institutionalize the assistance for the salvage operations of released vessels in the other country. It was noted that a number of vessels detained at Nagapattinam had been released for repair and escort back to Sri Lanka in September. They reaffirmed the need to continue to deal in a humane and sympathetic manner with fishermen who stray inadvertently into the other’s maritime zone while instituting effective measures, through enhanced surveillance to minimize such incursions. The importance of ecological and conservation aspects, in dealing with fisheries issues was also discussed. The Sri Lankan side agreed to consider the long-standing Indian proposal for licensed fishing and a Memorandum of Understanding.

17. Tourism and Civil Aviation

Both sides noted with satisfaction the positive increase of tourist arrivals from each country and agreed to support joint promotion for twin destinations in the two counties such as Sri Lanka – Kerala and Sri Lanka – Karnataka, and a joint Buddhist circuit.

Both sides expressed satisfaction that the number of destinations to which Sri Lankan Airlines operates has increased from 5-8 and weekly frequencies from 29-44 flights and agreed to work together to further increase the capacity. The Sri Lanka side requested that the passenger capacity ceiling stipulated in the Bilateral Air Services Agreement between India and Sri Lanka be increased substantially to facilitate seamless air travel between the two countries and reiterated its request for air traffic rights to operate to Hyderabad.

18. Terrorism

Both sides emphasized the need for concerted efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as senseless acts of terrorism continue to occur worldwide and in the region. They recalled the obligations devolving on States, inter alia, under Security Council Resolution 1373, the International Convention on the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism and the Kathmandu
Declaration adopted at the 11th SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu on 6 January 2002, concerning criminalization of financing for terrorist purposes and the need to prevent the abuse of financial systems of States.

In this respect, both sides reaffirmed the need to finalise and adopt, at the earliest, the proposed Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism, which would send a strong signal that the international community was united and determined in its efforts to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. They also urged the early conclusion of the proposed Additional Protocol to the SAARC Convention on Suppression of Terrorism.

19. **Delimitation of Continental Shelf Margin**

Following preparation of draft Terms of Reference for bilateral cooperation, it was noted that a meeting between the two sides will be held in November 2003 to pursue cooperation in the Delimitation of the Continental Margins of Sri Lanka and India.

20. It was agreed that the next Session of the Joint Commission would be held in India on dates to be mutually agreed upon.


[YASHWANT SINHA]  
Minister of External Affairs  
for the Government of the Republic of India

[TYRONNE FERNANDO]  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
for the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

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151. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Sri Lanka Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

New Delhi, October 20, 2003.

Mr. Navtej Sarna: Good evening ladies and gentlemen

……. Today there were calls by External Affairs Minister, there was a call by DPM, there was a meeting with the Prime Minister followed by lunch and later on this evening there is going to be call by the Minister of Commerce and Industry. The calls programmed for tomorrow are the calls by the Ministry of State by Civil Aviation, a call by Leader of Opposition and call by the Minister of Petroleum and Natural gas.

Some details I have of the meeting today between the two Prime Ministers: a number of issues, bilateral and regional issues were discussed. Trade issues figured prominently, the free trade agreement as you know has enabled bilateral trade to cross one billion dollar mark in the financial year 2002-2003. The joint study group which has been set up to make recommendations for establishment of comprehensive economic partnership agreement has been meeting and the co Chairman presented the recommendations to the two Prime ministers today and it is hoped that on this basis negotiations can begin immediately and with the target of concluding this in the next 6-7 months. The Fifth Joint Commission meeting, which was recently held in Colombo, External Affairs Minister led the Indian side, the meeting and agreements arrived, were also reviewed. As you know, there was an agreement reached there to release the second tranche of 30 million US dollars out of the 100 million dollars line of credit extended to Sri Lanka. Another issue which I can mention was the issue of the fishermen which comes up between the two sides very often, the issue of fisherman straying into each other's maritime zones. It was felt that this is an issue which should be treated in a humane and compassionate manner by both sides. On the issue of terrorism – there was agreement during the discussions that we needed concerted opposition to terrorism in all forms and there is no justification for terrorism. These were some of the issues that came up.

Question : Anything on the peace process?

Answer: I understand that we were briefed on the current stage of peace process.

Question : Is there any issue on the deadline to conclude the comprehensive economic cooperation?
Answer: No, there is no issue of deadline. The issue is that there is a need to give it a start and conclude negotiations soon. Once they start we expect in the next 6-7 months these would come up to a successful end.

Question: Could you please tell us some of the elements of economic cooperation?

Answer: The report of the joint study group was presented today, but naturally it is something, which of course takes you beyond the FTA, which already exists. If I am not wrong, the moves take you into sectors, which are not covered by FTA.

Question: Is the Defence Minister going to meet Mr. Ranil Wickramasinghe?

Answer: I don’t have that on the programme.

Thank You

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152. Joint statement issued at the end of the visit of Sri Lanka Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

New Delhi, October 21, 2003.

Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, visited India from 19-21 October 2003 at the invitation of the Government of India. He was accompanied by Tyronne Fernando, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Milinda Moragoda, Minister of Economic Reforms, Science and Technology and other senior officials.

The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka held wide-ranging discussions with Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Deputy Prime Minister and Ministers of External Affairs, Commerce & Industry, Civil Aviation and Petroleum & Natural Gas called on Prime Minister Wickremesinghe. The discussions were substantive and held in a cordial atmosphere, reflective of the close relations between the two countries.

The two Prime Ministers expressed their happiness that the Free Trade Agreement, which became operational in December 2001, had enabled bilateral trade to cross the US$ 1 billion mark in the financial year 2002-03.
A decision to go beyond the Free Trade Agreement was taken during the last visit of the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka in June 2002. An India-Sri Lanka Joint Study Group was set up to make recommendations for the establishment of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. The Co-Chairmen of the Joint Study Group presented their recommendations to the two Prime Ministers on 20th October 2003. Expressing their satisfaction on the speed with which the Joint Study Group prepared its comprehensive report with its far-reaching recommendations, the Prime Ministers congratulated the members of the Group and directed that negotiations begin immediately, with the target of concluding the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement by the end of March 2004. This would enable the two countries to reap the early benefits of freer trade in goods and services and enhanced investment and economic cooperation.

The two Prime Ministers noted the successful holding of the 5th session of the Joint Commission Meeting, co-chaired by the Foreign Ministers, in Colombo on 15th October 2003 and the signing of the Agreement to release the second tranche of US$ 30 million out of the US$ 100 million Line of Credit extended to Sri Lanka. They agreed that further Lines of Credit for infrastructure projects could be discussed.

The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction that existing understandings on dealing sympathetically and humanely with fishermen who stray into each other’s maritime zone were working well. It was noted that a number of Indian fishermen had been released by the Sri Lankan side and several Sri Lankan vessels detained at Nagapattinam had been released for repair and escorted back to Sri Lanka. It was agreed that while it was important that the fishermen should be released early, the boats may be held till the judicial processes in the two countries are completed. The Prime Ministers agreed on the need to undertake enhanced surveillance to minimize incursions, institutionalize assistance for salvage operations of released vessels, pay attention to ecological and conservation aspects and consider licensed fishing within a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding on Fisheries.

The two Prime Ministers expressed their satisfaction at increased civil aviation links between India and Sri Lanka. They noted that Sri Lankan Airlines had increased the number of its weekly flights to Indian destinations from 29 to 44 since their last meeting. Without prejudice to already existing arrangements, India offered to Sri Lanka the facility of daily air services...
by its designated airlines between Colombo and the metropolitan cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Kolkata. In addition, unlimited access would be available for air services to and from 18 tourist destinations in India. It was agreed to do away with the existing requirement of Commercial Agreements between designated airlines of the two countries for asymmetrical operations. With a view to increasing tourist flow and connectivity, it was also decided to encourage private scheduled airlines of India, who operate only in the domestic sector at present, to extend their operations to airports in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan Prime Minister agreed to reciprocate in terms of the access that airlines from India could have to Sri Lankan airspace.

The Sri Lankan Prime Minister proposed commencement of a ferry service linking Colombo with Kochi (Kerala).

The Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the significant contribution made by the India-Sri Lanka Foundation towards fostering exchanges in cultural, educational, scientific and technological areas and announced a further contribution of Rs. 1 crore each to enable the Foundation to sustain its diverse activities.

Taking note of the continuing acts of terrorism worldwide and in our region, the two Prime Ministers emphasized the need for concerted opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They agreed that there can be no justification for terrorism, be it political, religious or ideological. They recalled the obligations devolving on States, inter alia, under Security Council Resolution 1373 and the International Convention on the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism. The Kathmandu Declaration adopted at the 11th SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu on 6 January 2002 on criminalization of financing for terrorist purposes and the need to prevent the abuse of financial systems of States was also recalled. They reaffirmed the need to finalize and adopt, at the earliest, the proposed Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism, which would send a strong signal that the international community was united and determined in its efforts to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. Furthermore, they also urged the early conclusion of the proposed Additional Protocol to the SAARC Convention on Suppression of Terrorism.

The two Prime Ministers discussed the ongoing cooperation in training and the supply of equipment to the Sri Lankan defence forces and agreed that the two sides will commence discussions with a view to
concluding a defence cooperation agreement\(^1\) at the earliest.

The Sri Lankan Prime Minister apprised the Indian leadership of recent developments in the peace process and proposals made by his Government for the establishment of an Interim Administration. India expects that the response to the proposals made by the Sri Lankan Government in July 2003 will be reasonable and comprehensive. India supports the process of seeking a negotiated settlement acceptable to all sections of Sri Lankan society within the framework of a united Sri Lanka and consistent with democracy, pluralism and respect for individual rights. It believes that an enduring solution has to emerge purely through internal political processes\(^2\).

\(^1\) At the media briefing the same day the Spokesperson was asked some questions relating to Sri Lanka. These were:

**Question:** Sri Lanka Foreign Minister was quoted as saying that both countries have agreed in principle to have a defence cooperation agreement. Can you comment?

**Answer:** The two Prime Ministers discussed the ongoing cooperation in training and the supply of equipments to the Sri Lankan defence forces and they agreed that the two sides would commence discussions with the view to concluding a defence cooperation agreement at the earliest.

**Question:** Any deadline for the agreement?

**Answer:** As I said the two sides would commence the discussions, you want me to give a deadline before the discussions have commenced?

**Question:** What are the areas of discussions?

**Answer:** I would not like to hazard a guess before the negotiations begins. I will stick to this formulation, which I have read out to you, and you are likely find in the Joint Statement.

**Question:** Yesterday you said Sri Lanka and India discussed terrorism. Does this mean that there is any joint strategy to fight it?

**Answer:** Terrorism is a global scourge and increasingly countries are finding it to everybody’s benefit to fight this scourge together. Cooperation against terrorism has become a point that most countries agree to. In that context the two sides have reiterated their views on terrorism, that it cannot be accepted under circumstances, that there is no justification for terrorism and I think there is a full paragraph on this which you will see in the Joint Statement. But this is the kernel of the agreement.

\(^2\) On November 10 at the Foreign Secretary’s press conference to brief the media on PM’s visit to Russia and some other countries the subject of Sri Lanka cropped up. The following points were raised:

**QUESTION:** If you could deviate from the subject, Mr. Kadirgamar has said that India is the only country which could mediate between the two warring factions.

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** Which two warring factions?

**QUESTION:** LTTE and the Government of Sri Lanka. He says that public in Sri Lanka thinks that. How does the Indian Government view this?
India will maintain an abiding interest in the security of Sri Lanka and remains committed to its sovereignty and territorial integrity. India would welcome a resolution of the current impasse in the peace process and an early resumption of negotiations. Any interim arrangement should be an integral part of the final settlement and should be in the framework of the unity and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka.

QUESTION: Do you think there are more than two warring factions?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No. One is the question of political differences and frequently in loose vocabulary you talk of that also as warring factions. So, I was just wondering what warring factions he was referring to.

All one can say is that we have already made a couple of statements on how we are viewing the situation in Sri Lanka. It is a fluid situation. Everyday we are seeing some statements being made which have very important political implications. At the end of it, what does everybody want? What everybody wants is peace and stability in Sri Lanka and the preservation of the peace process, the promotion of the peace process in the best manner possible. The best manner possible is if there is unity on the Sinhala side and the Sinhala groups work together, which means the Government and the Opposition. There are the proposals made by LTTE. They do present certain challenges to the Sri Lankan Government. Those have to be addressed. So, all in all, the situation is not an easy one and we are looking at it closely. We are following the developments but with the ardent wish that the crisis should be contained and there should be dialogue between the respective parties and some kind of a Constitutional solution should be found which should then enable the peace process to resume.

QUESTION: Now that you have touched upon the subject, my question was that the political stand-off situation in Sri Lanka is getting more and more serious with each passing day. More recently, Wickremesinghe has made a statement that he is going to tell the Norwegians and the Americans that he can no longer handle the situation.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: When I said that some statements are coming out with important political implications, I had such statements in mind. This is what precisely I meant.

QUESTION: How do you react to that?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: We do not have to react to everything that is being said and done. It is a fluid situation. There is a political tussle going on. If we get into a situation wherein we have to react to everything that is said, then we will unnecessarily complicate the whole debate in Sri Lanka. It is best to stay out and limit ourselves to general expression of views, which I have just outlined. That is the best insofar as the needs of the situation are concerned.

New Delhi, October 21, 2003.

During the visit of the Sri Lankan Prime Minister to India in June 2002, a decision was taken to widen the ambit of the Free Trade Agreement to go beyond trade in goods to include services, to facilitate greater investment flows between the two countries and to explore new areas of economic cooperation. The two Prime Ministers appointed an India-Sri Lanka Joint Study Group (JSG) in April 2003 to make recommendations for the establishment of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

The JSG completed its deliberations in October 2003 and presented its recommendations to the two Prime Ministers on 20.10.2003 during the visit of the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka to New Delhi. It concluded that entering into a CEPA would take the two countries to a qualitatively new level of engagement by intensifying and deepening bilateral economic interaction, building on the advantages of close political relations and geographical proximity.

The Prime Ministers congratulated the members of the Group on the speed with which they had prepared a comprehensive report with far-reaching recommendations and directed that negotiations begin immediately with the target of concluding them by the end of March 2004.

The Government will examine the recommendations of the Joint Study Group and, as directed by the two Prime Ministers, begin negotiations at the earliest.

New Delhi, November 4, 2003.

We are surprised at the sudden political developments in Sri Lanka today. We hope that the situation does not provoke a constitutional crisis, which would impact on political stability in Sri Lanka and on the ongoing peace process. We also hope that a way can be urgently found through political dialogue to avoid these adverse consequences¹.

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1. The reaction of the Government of India has to be seen in the background of the proposal for an Interim Self Governing Structure presented by the LTTE to the Government of the Island on October 31 as a possible solution to the resolution of the Island’s ethnic problem. Political parties and non-government groups in Sri Lanka reacted to the proposals along predictable lines, with the nationalist parties opposing and a pro-peace group welcoming them. The President of Sri Lanka Chandrika Kumaratunga in exercise of her executive and Constitutional powers, expressing her dissatisfaction with the developments took over under her direct control the three important Ministerial portfolios – Defence, Interior and Mass Communication and prorogued Parliament. In a bid to dispel uncertainty over the peace process, President Kumaratunga reiterated her commitment to peace and assured the minority communities, in an address to the nation that night, that their concerns would not be cast aside while negotiating a lasting settlement to the protracted ethnic crisis. The President said she was “willing to discuss with the LTTE, a just and balanced solution within the parameters of the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka”. These developments took place in the absence of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe who was in Washington on an official visit. In a statement from Washington he described the President’s move as “opportunistic” and one that “precipitated a national crisis”. The LTTE, which had submitted its counter-proposals on October 31, said it was “carefully monitoring and studying the developments” and that its “leadership will decide what to do”. It may be recalled the President had, over the past months, accused the ruling United National Front (UNF) government of Ranil Wickremesinghe of “turning a blind eye” to the LTTE’s “smuggling of weapons” and of manipulating the state media. President had expressed her unhappiness several times as she felt the Prime Minister was being too generous to the LTTE in his efforts to “buy” peace. These developments reflected months of cohabitation struggle in governance with the Prime Minister and the President representing the rival Sinhala Parties. Parliament was prorogued against the backdrop of moves by ruling party MPs to impeach the Chief Justice, Sarath N. Silva, who was heading a Bench hearing on a petition seeking clarifications whether the President’s powers overrode those of the Defence Minister. Against this backdrop, the President has pre-empted what was seen as a move to circumvent her Constitutional authority.
(iii) SOUTH-EAST, EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC
155. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the 5th ASEAN- India Senior Officials Meeting.

New Delhi, May 21, 2003.

1. The Fifth ASEAN- India Senior Officials Meeting was held in New Delhi on 20 May 2003. The Meeting was Co-chaired by Shri Kanwal Sibal, Foreign Secretary, and H. E. Dato’ Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak, Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia. The Meeting was also attended by Haji Mohamad Hamid bin Haji Mohamad Jafaar, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brunei Darussalam; H.E. Dr. Chem Widhya, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Kingdom of Cambodia; H.E. Mr. Pitono Purnomo, Director for Asia Pacific and African Intra-Regional Cooperation, Republic of Indonesia; H.E. Mr. Bounkeut Sangsomsak, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lao PDR; H. E. u Kyaw Thu, Ambassador of the Union of Myanmar; H. E. Ms. Sonia Brady, Under Secretary for Policy, Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippines; H. E. Mr. Tan Chin Tiong, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore; H. E. Mr. Kitti Wasinond, Director-General ASEAN Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand; H. E. Mr. Nguyen Trang Thanh, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam; and their respective delegations. The ASEAN Secretariat was represented by H. E. Mr. Ong Keng Yong, Secretary- General of ASEAN.

2. The meeting undertook a comprehensive review of the entire gamut of India-ASEAN relations and exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. The two sides agreed that India’s expanding engagement with ASEAN, as a full dialogue partner since 1996, and a Summit level partner since 2002, was of mutual benefit and contributed to peace and stability in the region. In particular, the two sides emphasized the vast economic potential of the relationship and took note, in this context, of the ongoing work towards a Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation for conclusion at the forthcoming India-ASEAN Summit at Bali in October 2003. They expressed satisfaction that ASEAN-India trade had registered a growth of over 300% since 1991-92 and presently amounted to over US$ 10 billion.
3. The India-ASEAN SOM discussed follow up action on the directive of the First India-ASEAN Summit to intensify their cooperation in combating transnational crimes including international terrorism. They considered a Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, envisaging concrete proposals for cooperation in exchange of information, training, institutional capacity building, cooperation in legal and enforcement matters. It was agreed that the signing of the Declaration at the Second India-ASEAN Summit at Bali in October 2003 would facilitate practical steps of cooperation at the bilateral and regional levels, to combat terrorism. The meeting also welcomed the establishment of the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) in Kuala Lumpur.

4. The India-ASEAN SOM reviewed bilateral functional cooperation in diverse fields and resolved to expedite the implementation of agreed projects as well as to initiate cooperation in new areas, in line with the directives of the First India-ASEAN Summit. India also reiterated her support for the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), which is designed to promote the integration and narrow the economic development gap between the newer and the older members of ASEAN.

5. The meeting expressed satisfaction that the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), had made a positive contribution to regional peace and security. India also conveyed to ASEAN her intention to consider possible accession, to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia.

6. The two sides agreed that the Sixth ASEAN-India SOM would be held in Lao PDR, the incoming Country Coordinator for the India-ASEAN dialogue partnership, on 25-26 March 2004.

7. The Heads of ASEAN delegation called on Shri Brajesh Mishra, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister on May 21st, 2003.

8. The ASEAN delegations also expressed their gratitude to the Government of India for hosting the Fifth ASEAN-India SOM and the excellent arrangements made for the meeting.

1. The Official Spokesperson Navtej Sarna briefing the media on the same day highlighted a couple of points for the benefit of the media and said: “The meeting undertook a
156. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the 10th ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in Phnom Penh.


Question: There was a proposal to expand ARF....

Answer: From the information I received this issue came up at the ARF meeting and there was no consensus on the expansion of ARF or on the lifting of moratorium on the membership. There was no consensus. The matter has been put off.

Question: inaudible

Answer: There is currently a moratorium on expansion of ARF membership. As the previous question pointed out, there was some effort to lift that moratorium. I think the ASEAN countries had reached a decision in that regard. But when the matter came to the ARF deliberations there was no consensus on this issue. So in other words there are no new members being added to ARF.
On June 19

We will continue from where we left off yesterday. The External Affairs Minister is leading our delegation for the tenth session of the ARF and related meetings in Phnom Penh. Today there was the meeting of the Post Ministerial Conference (PMC). That is called the meeting of 10+10, that is the ASEAN 10 and 10 sectoral dialogue partners. In this meeting EAM made two interventions, the first on WTO matters and the second on HIV/AIDS and the other infective diseases. On WTO matters EAM stressed the importance of these issues for developing countries, a gain in 5% of their share of world exports could translate into an income gain of US $ 350 billion annually which is the several times the aggregate annual ODA inflows. EAM also took the opportunity of reiterating the key priorities for developing countries in the Doha round which were identified by the Prime Minister at Evian recently. I may recapitulate that these were issues like the rapid elimination of the tariff and non-tariff barriers to developing country exports, the phasing out of trade distorting agricultural subsidies, the removal of visa and non-visa impediments to the free movement of natural persons for providing services and broader access for developing countries to pharmaceuticals…..

1. EAM also had bilateral meetings with his counterparts from other participating countries. The following details of those meetings were given by the Spokesperson at the media briefing on the 19th.

"External Affairs Minister also had two bilateral meetings. As you know he already met the US Secretary of State Colin Powell yesterday and today he met the Foreign Ministers of China and Myanmar. During the meeting with the Chinese Foreign Minister Li the two sides expressed satisfaction at the development of bilateral relations specially in the trade area and agreed that the two sides could work together in the interests of developing countries in multilateral fora including the WTO, etc. The two sides looked at the preparations for the upcoming visit of the Prime Minister. Similarly he had a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Myanmar and later today I understand he is expected to meet Foreign Minister of Canada. There was also a one hour meeting of PMC (10+1) which is the ASEAN 10 and India. This meeting reviewed India-ASEAN relations and preparations in this regard for the next summit to be held in Bali in October this year. Tomorrow they will be having the meeting of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation( MGCO). As you know the members are India, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos-PDR and Myanmar. This forum is looking at cooperation in education, culture, tourism, communications and transportation sectors. This meeting will be held after a period of two years after a long gap. It should have been held earlier and we will be stressing the importance that we attach to this forum across these sectors which have been identified."
Let me begin by extending to all of you a hearty and warm welcome to this Ministerial Session of the 2nd India-ASEAN Business Summit. I am particularly grateful to our Ministerial colleagues from the various ASEAN countries who have come to India to participate in this event and are with us this morning. I would like to recognize the distinguished Ministers from Malaysia, Myanmar and Singapore, the Chief Minister of Malacca who are with me on the dias, as well as the large number of senior officials from all ASEAN countries. Let me also extend cordial greetings and a warm welcome to all the business delegates.

It is gratifying that this event has become an annual feature. I am glad that this year, the Confederation of Indian Industry, has joined hands with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the organizers of the First India-ASEAN Business Summit, in organizing this event. I also welcome the keen interest shown by ASEAN business in this event, symbolized by the participation of the Chairman of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council in our gathering this morning.

India’s ‘Look East’ policy has now entered its Phase - II. Phase- I was focused primarily on the ASEAN countries and on trade and investment linkages. Phase- II is characterized by an expanded definition of ‘East’ extending from Australia to China and East Asia with ASEAN as its core. Phase- II marks a shift in focus from exclusively economic issues to economic and security issues including joint efforts to protect sea lanes, coordination on counter terrorism etc. On the economic side, Phase - II is also characterized by arrangements for FTAs and establishing of institutional economic linkages between the countries of the region and India.

The world is today integrating very fast and every country is forced to face the challenge of globalization. Since the process of globalization is inevitable, the challenge is to manage its effects and to ensure that its benefits are appropriately assimilated and internalized. Special steps are also required to ensure that globalization does not have an adverse impact on the weakest sections of society. The Asian financial crisis in 1997 holds valuable lessons for the rest of the world. This crisis demonstrated
that globalization can be faced more effectively through collective efforts rather than singly and it is in this context that evolution of ASEAN and India-ASEAN relations should be viewed.

Friends, as was mentioned in the inaugural address by our Prime Minister, we are delighted that the Economic Ministers of ASEAN and India yesterday finalized the text of the Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation that our leaders will sign at the Second India-ASEAN summit at Bali next month. This is truly a major breakthrough in economic cooperation that should significantly contribute towards the evolution of an increasingly integrated India-ASEAN economic space over the next 15-20 years. Some of our ASEAN friends have had some hesitations and reservations about this agreement, but we hope that they would be convinced that this initiative is a long-term win-win initiative for all parties.

India is currently also engaged in negotiations with Thailand for an FTA and with Singapore for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. Both sets of negotiations are proceeding well and we hope to bring them to an early conclusion. I am convinced that these Agreements along with measures we are undertaking to improve physical connectivity such as the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway and Delhi-Hanoi rail line will together usher in a new era in our relationship.

Prime Minister Vajpayee called upon us today to aim high and target a turnover of US$ 15 billion over the next two years and US$ 30 billion by 2007. Trade and investment between India and ASEAN is far below potential considering that we have a combined population of 1.5 billion, a GDP of US$1.5 trillion, and share the huge advantage of geographical proximity. The share of ASEAN in India’s foreign trade has shown only a modest rise from about 6% in 1991 to 9% in 2002. The share of India in ASEAN’s foreign trade has remained at a negligible 1%. There are obviously latent strengths in India and ASEAN that we have not fully tapped.

In the decade 1991-2000, there was a nearly three-fold increase in trade turnover (from US$3.5 billion in 1991 to US$10.1 billion in 2000), with the most rapid increase in the five-year period between 1991 and 1996. Trade between India and ASEAN grew by 22.6% from US$ 9.88 billion in 2001 to US$ 12.11 billion in 2002. However, the 1997 Asian financial crisis led to an understandable decline in trade. Despite the fact that the economic situation has improved over the last 5 years, India-ASEAN trade hasn’t really picked up significantly over this period. We
need to work harder to get India-ASEAN trade grow at the impressive rates it registered in the first half of the 90s.

There are also some other features of India-ASEAN trade that need to be looked at seriously. While the composition of India’s exports to ASEAN is quite diversified, ASEAN’s exports to India are dominated by two items viz. electronic goods and edible oils. Secondly, there is need to diversify the direction of India-ASEAN trade. Currently, about 85 to 90% of India-ASEAN trade is with three or four ASEAN countries. While seeking to increase the trade with existing partners, Indian and ASEAN exporters must also actively explore possibilities of greater mutually beneficial trade with the other ASEAN countries.

Creating greater awareness about one another plays a vital role in creating new opportunities for business. Let me therefore draw attention to the growing importance of the ‘soft’ areas of cooperation like culture, entertainment and the media. There is tremendous potential for cooperation and collaboration in the fields of tourism and entertainment industry. Bollywood films are now shot all over the world, including increasingly in Asian locales. Films can be a powerful medium to explore the richness in art, architecture, nature, culture, religion and civilizations of Indian and South-East Asia. Such collaborative efforts, whether in cinema or other forms of art and culture, will make a tremendous contribution to spreading greater mutual awareness about India and ASEAN among our people. They will also showcase our part of the world to people beyond the region, and promote tourism and business into India and ASEAN.

The media of our respective countries has an important role to play in creating greater awareness not only about the opportunities for business between India and ASEAN, but also about the life and culture of the people. We need to use all the catalysts at our disposal to generate an irreversible momentum in the flywheel of our relationship. It is gratifying that a number of journalists from the ASEAN region have come to India to cover this Business Summit. This morning, we also saw the inauguration of the India-ASEAN Business Portal. I am confident that this portal will play an important role in creating greater awareness about the opportunities of doing business between India and ASEAN.

With ASEAN engaged in negotiating free trade arrangements with India, China, Japan and South Korea, we stand today on the threshold of an Asian economic community for the first time. I am convinced that the
future of Asia rests in expanded economic interaction between the countries of the region.

An environment of security, predictability and peace is essential for business to flourish and development to take place. Enhancing cooperation in the field of security is critical to our larger efforts aimed at building lasting economic ties. Today, the principal threats to peace and stability in the world are not from wars between nations but from the threat of trans-national terrorism. That is why, as we jointly work towards an intensification of our economic and other ties, India and ASEAN should not lose sight of the overarching importance of working purposefully and in cooperation to combat the menace of terrorism. The recent incidents of bombing in Jakarta a few weeks ago and in Mumbai last week are a reminder to us all that we have to stand united in our war against the spreading tentacles of terrorism. The Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism and other Trans-national Crimes that India and ASEAN propose to sign at Bali reflects our determination to effectively combat this menace.

In today’s globalising world, economic cooperation is at the heart of relations between countries. It is the foundation on which the entire edifice of relations has to be built. India looks forward to a comprehensive engagement with all ASEAN countries. We would like to share our strengths for the development of the region and for mutual benefit.

Let me conclude by pointing out that ten plus one constitutes a full team. Whether it be cricket, football or hockey, eleven is a team. India is delighted to complete the team of the ASEAN ten.
1. It is an honour for me to address this distinguished gathering of Health Ministers of the South East Asia Region of the World Health Organisation. Let me at the outset welcome Timor L’este, the new addition to our family.

2. Ours is a region with challenging statistics in the realm of health. But equally, it is a region united by a mission to bring about change. It is India’s conviction that countries of the world, especially developing countries, can bring about the required change through collective efforts and cooperation.

3. Meetings such as these provide therefore invaluable opportunities for bringing about greater synergy of human resource capital and technological capacities available within the region, exchange of best practices and experiences, and to strategise joint action to tackle health related problems.

4. I wish all of you a productive meeting and pleasant stay in New Delhi.

5. The membership of this grouping is interesting as it does not strictly conform to the principle of geographical contiguity, pointing to the self-evident truth that health epidemics are not contained by political or geographical boundaries. The recent months have been testimony to this as the outbreak of SARS raged across the world, affecting all aspects of life – political, economic and social. It brought home the stark message of human vulnerability to disease, and the
downside of living in a global village where no one can be untouched by the suffering of the other. But the containment of the epidemic, through vigilance and early warnings, transparent exchange of information and concerted public action, also showed that such challenges can be overcome successfully when we act together.

6. India, in spite of its very large population remained a SARS-free country. This was possible entirely due to prompt preventive action, personally supervised by our very able and dynamic Minister of Health, Smt. Sushma Swaraj.

7. Health occupies a pre-eminent position when we speak of human development and global prosperity. At the Millennium Summit of the UN General Assembly in 2000, world leaders pledged to work together to “uphold the principles of human dignity, equality, and equity at the global level”, and set themselves eight goals with quantifiable and monitorable targets to measure progress of humankind – three of these are directly related to human health – viz. reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating the “globalized” scourges of HIV/AIDs, malaria and other diseases. Four of the remaining eight have a tangential but vital link with health – eradication of poverty and hunger, universal primary education, empowerment of women and sustainable development, which includes access to safe drinking water.

8. It is now accepted widely that international endeavours to improve global health have a direct bearing on the economic development of countries, in particular developing countries, which lag behind in key indicators. The Commission on Macroeconomics and Health set up under the aegis of the WHO to examine this link came up with some telling conclusions. It showed that with interventions costing as little as US$ 34 per head, infectious and nutritional deficiencies could be brought down, saving eight million lives per year. The economic spin-off of better health thus achieved would amount to an increase of global wealth by US$ 186 billion per year. This was seen to be a 6:1 return on investment. For this Utopian situation, health related assistance would need to rise six fold from present figures of around US$ 6 billion per annum. With global political will, particularly of our developed country partners, this should not be impossible to achieve given that health expenditure of OECD countries is to the tune of US$ 3 trillion per year, and their total GDP, US$ 30 trillion.
9. However, while calling for international cooperation, we should take heed of the fact that the primary responsibility for improved health of our people vests with national governments. The experience of some developing countries, and parts of my own country, have shown that rapid social progress can be achieved, in spite of a low level of economic development, if priority is given to social development in education and health. Our own experience in India in this regard is worth sharing with countries in the region. Through a systematic programme of political empowerment of women at the grassroots level through reservation of seats in elected local bodies and by making large catalytic investments in education and health, particularly of women and children, we have been able to effect significant change within the span of a single generation. There has been a breakthrough in reduction of maternal and child mortality, malnutrition and diseases related to poor hygiene. Fertility rates have also been moderated.

10. While looking at health related statistics in isolation can draw a picture of gloom, there are also positive indicators in many key areas which point to progress achieved. But much more is yet to be done. Thus while immunization has helped to prevent 85% of measles deaths and ensure a near eradication of polio, eleven million children continue to die every year across the world of preventable causes. There has been significant progress in the consciousness of the need to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic with virtually all countries having adopted multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS strategic plans. At the same time, almost 25 million people have been lost to the disease worldwide.

11. Developing countries have reasons to take pride, however, from the success notched by our combined efforts in the context of the WTO. We have won a hard-fought battle for recognition of the need for access to medication at affordable prices for the people of developing counties. It is now accepted that such access is among the most effective elements of public health policy aimed at reducing mortality and infection rates of scourges such as HIV/AIDS. Combined action by developing countries has brought a human-face to the debate on trade policies and public health needs.

12. The war is, however, not yet over. Governments of developing countries must consult each other on their policies, pool technical expertise and exchange best practices. R&D in the Pharma sector
has hitherto been primarily the preserve of resource-rich MNCs of the developed world. As a result, only around 10% of R&D in health spending is directed at the health problems affecting 90% of the world’s population. Search for legitimate profit has in some instances, sadly, given way to profiteering. Health should be a commitment and not merely a matter of money. Suffering innocents should not be exploited but supported.

13. Strangely, sometimes cheaper and better medicines manufactured by countries like India are also confronted with problems of market access in fellow developing countries. Procedures relating to drug registration, testing etc. are used to shut our products out of the market. This situation should change. There is a crying need for greater South – South cooperation in the field of health and pharmaceuticals. The interests of the large majority of the people in our countries demands that we not only sustain existing cooperation but also rapidly strengthen it. Developing countries need to draw up effective strategies to ensure greater market access for generic and patented drugs which they are able to produce at competitive prices. Where appropriate, we must evolve common platforms in international fora, including the WTO and enter into bilateral as well as regional arrangements.

14. The South East Asian region of WHO which we represent, unfortunately accounts for 40% of the world’s poor, 40% of global maternal and neo-natal deaths, 40% of the world’s cases of tuberculosis and 40% of deaths due to infectious diseases. These are thresholds which need to be brought down if we are to ensure human centred development in the region. We can take heart from the fact that the human development indices related to average life expectancy and basic health care have shown substantial improvement in the last 2-3 decades. But clearly there are miles to go before any of us can rest. The key to ensuring a disease-free region quite obviously rests in greater cooperation among ourselves. It is also my view that the since the basic responsibility for fighting disease is that of the Government, R & D in the pharmaceuticals sector should also become an important duty of Governments. I say this not to discourage the private sector but to assert that Governments should not abdicate their responsibilities in this regard.
15. Let me also emphasize in this connection, the need to promote indigenous medicines as well as strengthen cooperation in this field. Many of us have strong traditions of indigenous medicines which derive from our rich resources of bio-diversity. Indigenous medicines are relatively cheap and normally, have few side effects. It will be useful for countries of this region to take up research into indigenous medicines and their popularization as a priority.

16. The Pandava King Yudhisthira who in our ancient traditions is associated with righteousness, as Dharmaraja, expressed his vision of leadership as:

   “I seek no kingdoms nor heavenly pleasure nor personal salvation, I seek only to relieve humanity from its manifold pains and sufferings as this is the supreme objective of mankind.”

17. We, as Ministers, representing at once the leadership of our governments, and the aspirations of our peoples, have an onerous responsibility to ensure the human dignity of each of our citizens, central to which is their physical well-being. Let me, therefore, wish you all success in your deliberations – may you learn from each others successes and failures – and use the combined experience and talent of the region to achieve the goal of ‘Health for all’.

18. With these words, I declare open the 21st Meeting of Ministers of Health of the South East Asia Region of the WHO.

Thank you.
159. Press interaction of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal in connection with Prime Minister’s visit to Indonesia and Thailand from 7th to 12th October 2003.

New Delhi, October 3, 2003.

FOREIGN SECRETARY (SHRI KANWAL SIBAL): The Bali Summit, as you know, is on October 8. On the 7th is the Business event in which the Prime Minister will be participating.

Just to give you a little background, in 1992 India became the Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN. In 1996 India became the Full Dialogue Partner. In 1996, India joined the ASEAN Regional Forum. In 2002, the India and ASEAN Business Summit was held in Delhi and Hyderabad. In 2002, the ASEAN-Indian relationship was raised to Summit level at the 8th ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh. In 2003, there was an India-ASEAN Business Summit in Delhi and Mumbai. On October 7, as I mentioned, there will be the ASEAN Business and Investment Forum in Bali, which the Prime Minister would be addressing. Then, of course, there will be the 9th ASEAN Bali Summit, which will also be the second ASEAN-India Summit.

We are planning to sign three documents during the Summit. One is India’s accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South East Asia. This TAC, as it is called, was adopted by ASEAN in the First Summit Meeting in Bali in 1976.

The second is a Joint Declaration for Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism. ASEAN has signed similar declarations with some other countries, notably with the United States. The Terrorism as you know, has become a major concern of several ASEAN countries. The Al-Jamiya network is active in Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia and Philippines. They have also spread activities into Thailand and Indonesia has been amongst the worst affected. You would recall the Bali blasts in 2002 and the Jakarta blasts in August this year. So, the ASEAN countries are serious about dealing with the menace of terrorism and related crimes like money laundering and drug-trafficking. Malaysia and Brunei have so far been unaffected by terrorist activities on their soil. But largely speaking, the consciousness of this menace and the need to deal with it now is well evident.

The third is the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between ASEAN and India. This initiative, as you may recall,
was started by our own Prime Minister at the First ASEAN-Indian Summit at Phnom Penh last year when he proposed to conclude a Free Trade Area Agreement with ASEAN to which the ASEAN leaders responded immediately and a call was given in the Joint Declaration from Phnom Penh for establishing an FTA in ten years. This Framework Agreement, which will be formalized during the approaching Summit, lays down the roadmap for the FTA. We will provide you the details in Bali after the agreement has been signed.

As you might know, the Prime Minister will be visiting Thailand from October 8 to 12. The last bilateral visit of our Prime Minister to Thailand was in 1993 when the then Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao visited the Country in April that year. The Thai Prime Minister Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra has visited India twice, in November, 2001 and in February, 2002. The Government of Dr. Shinawatra has laid great emphasis on strengthening relations between India and Thailand after coming to power in February, 2001.

Prime Minister’s programme in Thailand will, of course, include the audience with His Majesty the King of Thailand. He will have a one-to-one meeting with Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra the Prime Minister, followed by Delegation-level talks. Importantly, he would address the Special Session of the National Assembly of Thailand. We understand that this is the first time that any foreign leader has been given the privilege of addressing the National Assembly of Thailand. Dr. Shinawatra would host a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister would address a Business Meeting on October 10 at Bangkok. The other Thai dignitaries who would call on the Prime Minister are the two Deputy Prime Ministers of Thailand, the Foreign Minister, and the Commerce Minister. We intend to sign five MoUs, or programmes of cooperation, during the visit. An MoU for cooperation in the field of agricultural science, technology and economy; another in the field of tourism; exemption of visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passports; another one in the field of biotechnology; and the very important one, perhaps the most important, the Framework Agreement of Establishing a Free Trade Area Between India and Thailand.

This Framework Agreement would cover goods and services, investment, and trade facilitation measures. So, it is a comprehensive Framework Agreement. Details of this can be provided in Bangkok after it is signed.

By way of background information, bilateral trade between India and
Thailand crossed the US $ one billion mark in the year 2000 for the first time. The growth in trade has been sustained in 2001-2002. Two-way trade during the first six months of this year has reached almost 700 million dollars, which means that there should be, if this momentum is kept, a substantial jump in the year 2003 as compared to 2002. Indian investment in Thailand from 1991 to 2002 has reached almost one billion dollars. There are 26 major joint-venture projects in operation in Thailand in areas such as chemicals, steel wires and rods, rayon fibres, drugs and pharmaceuticals, etc. There have also been approvals of Thai investment in India in the same period, 1991-2002, of the order of 783 million, mainly in the telecom, hospitality and tourism sectors though actual investment is not very substantial.

We have a fairly wide-ranging relationship with Thailand as you can see. We have a bilateral security dialogue in the areas including terrorism, money laundering and narcotics. This has been institutionalized. There are a variety of agreements in place for cooperation in the IT sector, space applications and science and technology. That is it.

**QUESTION:** When will these agreements be signed at the ASEAN?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** On the 8th.

**QUESTION:** One of the areas of prime concern in ASEAN is the situation in Myanmar. The case of Aung San Syuki specifically is likely to figure in a big way when the leaders meet. Would it also figure in our discussions with the ASEAN leadership? What might India be saying on the issue?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** In the conversations that our Prime Minister has with the ASEAN countries, it is possible that this subject could come up. But then, Myanmar itself is a member of ASEAN and Myanmar would be sitting at the table. So, clearly whatever discussion takes place will not be in a bilateral framework between India and a particular country on the other side. So, from this you can judge that the nature of the conversation would be in a certain format and would be of the kind which will not require a very detailed exposition of our policy and our views. Over and above that, it is quite clear that while on the one hand we are strongly supportive of initiatives to develop our linkages with Myanmar because of the importance we attach to our relationship with Myanmar in terms of not only our Look-East Policy but specifically in terms of stabilizing the situation in the North-Eastern part of the country for which a stable relationship with any Government in power in Myanmar is necessary and desirable,
on the other hand, movement of Myanmar towards democracy, internal reconciliation, the internal political dialogue leading to a resolution of the political problem that currently Myanmar faces is also something we would welcome and support, and we have said so.

The only thing we have been saying is that the pace of this dialogue should be something that should be determined by the Myanmar people themselves. The solutions that have to be found should be found from within the country. There should not be a tendency to impose solutions from outside or try to accelerate artificially the process of internal reconciliation through sanctions and pressure.

**QUESTION:** Regarding the Framework Agreement, there have been reports that Vietnam and Philippines have some reservations.

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** All that has been overcome and it is ready for signatures.

**QUESTION:** What were their apprehensions?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** Whatever those apprehensions, it is a part of the process of negotiations. Philippines, as you know, has had reservations also about the ASEAN-China Framework Agreement. So, their position is consistent and they required some additional concessions from our side, which have been given.

Insofar as Vietnam is concerned, they did have some concerns which we felt were based more on lack of information and lack of dialogue and lack of effort to engage us in order to make their concerns known and for us to have a chance to allay those concerns. After we were a little surprised that Vietnam was being a little difficult in this regard we engaged them and we have succeeded in satisfying their concerns. So, everybody is now on board and we will be signing it.

**QUESTION:** Do you have any deadline by which India will be completing FTA with ASEAN?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** Yes. All these details we will tell you there because this is the content of the FTA itself. We will give you the details there.

**QUESTION:** What is the deadline? Is it five year, ten years?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** Obviously the FTA does contain all this. There
is one deadline for ASEAN-6 and there is another one for CLMV countries because they are relatively less advanced economically. So, all that has been built into this. This idea of a special and differential treatment that we ourselves advocate in our international negotiations has also been accepted in terms of our own agreement with ASEAN.

QUESTION: Do you have anything to say on Pakistan testing the missile HATF-II?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: This is nothing new. They have had missile tests before.

QUESTION: With regard to India’s accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, what does it signify especially in the context that the ASEAN members are trying to reactivate this Council, make it more powerful?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: We have no differences with ASEAN at all. We do not foresee any differences in the future. We have the friendliest of feelings towards ASEAN. Since countries outside ASEAN can be members of this Treaty on Amity and Cooperation, as a gesture of goodwill we have also agreed to sign this Treaty. So, essentially it is a gesture of political goodwill. It is not as if we are likely to, or there is any potential of India getting involved in any of the processes and the mechanisms that have been put in place to resolve any differences that may occur within the ASEAN group.

QUESTION: What about China?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: As is well known, in respect of China there are some problems with regard to maritime frontiers and conflicting claim of certain islands, etc. But that is something between China and ASEAN. It is not something which is relevant to us.

QUESTION: There is also a proposal to improve road network between India and ASEAN countries. What is the progress on that?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Progress is relatively less satisfactory than it should have been. There is this trilateral highway project between India, Myanmar and Thailand. We hoped that we would be able to complete it in two years’ time but it has not happened. There are two Committees that have been formed, the Technical Committee and the Finance Committee. I think a meeting of the three Foreign Ministers in which, amongst other things, this project will be focused upon.
QUESTION: What is the broad content of the Joint Declaration of Terrorism likely to be at the ASEAN?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I can say that in a general way it follows very closely the agreement that is there between ASEAN and the United States. This is important because, as you know, we have had this proposal for an international comprehensive convention against terrorism which we initiated at the United Nations. We have not been able to progress sufficiently on this because it has got caught in what we think are the red herrings relating to definition of terrorism and root causes of terrorism, which we have always said are alibis which those who promote terrorism seek in order to justify what they are doing. This debate, unfortunately, has complicated the task of the international community to develop new international legally binding instruments to combat the menace of international terrorism. So, in that context, for us to be able to reach an agreement with ASEAN on terrorism, I think is a significant political achievement and it avoids the kind of pitfalls that we are facing in the United Nations.

QUESTION: What about the bilaterals on the fringes of ASEAN?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: There are some important bilaterals that are envisaged. I do not know if I have the details. There is the call on President Megawati of Indonesia. I am told that there are several requests which we are working on. I think there would be enough time available. The Prime Minister, as you know, is leaving on the 5th night. He will be there on the 6th. Part of the reason why he is going a day earlier is to devote the 6th of October to the bilaterals. So, we have the intention of having fairly intensive bilaterals.

QUESTION: Will there be a meeting with the Chinese premier?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: There is talk about that.

QUESTION: In which sectors will most of these bilateral agreements take place?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: There are no bilateral agreements in ASEAN. There are only bilateral conversations and those can cover any area that is of interest to either party apart from bilateral relationship. There could be India-ASEAN relationship, international terrorism is a big issue, reform and restructuring of the United Nations is a very big issue, developments in Iraq is an issue everybody is interested in exchanging views on. These
are the clear subjects which could come up in any serious bilateral between India and any other country.

QUESTION: You might have seen the new Resolution on Iraq. What is India’s view on it?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: We do not have any view yet. It has just been presented to the P-5 and E-10. Some meetings have taken place and countries seemed to have expressed their views. We have seen some statements that have been made by the UN Secretary-General. I would say that these discussions are at the initial stages. We will have to see how much more would need to be done to make this acceptable to all concerned, and for it to be passed with unanimity. I would imagine that the intention would be to have a resolution which is passed unanimously. But, for that, the resolution has to incorporate some of the basic points that major countries have been making about the UN role, about the political process and the deadlines for this, and on control over Iraq’s economic and natural resources and the funds, etc. So, this is an ongoing process. Let us see what happens.

QUESTION: Has the meeting with the Chinese Prime Minister not yet been confirmed?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I have a feeling that it is. Off hand, I do not recall the date and time but it is.

Thank you
Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on the eve of his departure for the India-ASEAN Summit (Bali) and Thailand.

New Delhi, October 6, 2003.

I leave tonight for Bali to attend the 2nd India-ASEAN Summit. I will pay an official bilateral visit to the Kingdom of Thailand on my way back from Bali.

Our relations with the countries of ASEAN, and with ASEAN itself, have acquired a new dynamism in recent years. We are in the process of strengthening the contemporary relevance of our historical cultural links. We have political convergences and economic complementarities in a globalising world. The upgradation of our dialogue with ASEAN to Summit level last year was a recognition by both sides of this.

In Bali, I will have bilateral interactions with leaders of many of the ASEAN+3 (China, Japan, Korea) countries. This provides a timely opportunity to discuss a number of areas of common interest. We are all concerned about the fate of multilateralism in the modern world. We have to deal with the increasing spread of terrorism into the South East Asian region. Unsatisfactory progress on the Doha Development Agenda affects South East Asia in the same way as it affects India.

The Kingdom of Thailand is one of our closest allies in the ASEAN region. We have maintained our traditional cultural affinities. We have also significantly strengthened our trade and economic cooperation in recent years. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra visited India twice in the last two years and there has been a long pending invitation for me to return the visit.

Thailand has made a remarkable economic recovery in the last few years after the Asian financial crisis. Prime Minister Thaksin has launched a number of new initiatives for closer integration within Asia to promote economic growth and equitable development. I look forward to an exchange of views and perspectives with the Thai leadership on closer cooperation between India and Thailand in all these and other areas of bilateral and international interest.

The people of Indian origin are a significant minority in Thailand and play an important role in the political, economic and social life of the
country. I hope to interact with a cross-section of the community in Bangkok.

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161. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at ASEAN Business and Investment Summit.

New Delhi, October 7, 2003.

“The India-ASEAN Partnership and beyond”

It is a great pleasure to be here among eminent business representatives from ASEAN, East Asia and India. I congratulate the organizers of this first ASEAN Business and Investment Summit. Events like these provide valuable opportunities for interaction among business and industry of our countries and for exchange of perspectives between Governments and industry.

Friends,

While the 20th century economy was driven by capital accumulation, manufacturing technologies and labour power, the 21st century is defined by knowledge and human capital. It is this that gives strength to the Asian identity. There is an emerging perception that this will be the century of Asia’s pre-eminence. The brain power of Asian scientists and engineers, the dynamism of our businessmen and industrialists, our intellectual and human resource capital – all these support this perception. The growing economic weight of Asia is strengthened by favourable demographic trends, and is no longer constrained by Cold War divisions.

India, ASEAN and the countries of East Asia are a part of this trend. ASEAN is already in an advanced stage of economic integration. With each of China, Japan and Korea also, ASEAN has a well-developed and diverse economic relationship. India has lagged behind, for a variety of political and economic reasons, which are now history. However, this situation is changing rapidly, and it is the exciting potential of the future India-ASEAN partnership that I propose to put before you today.

Over the last 12 years, the Indian economy has maintained an average annual growth of over 6%, which is better than that of most other
countries. Our interest rates are falling, inflation has been kept down, and foreign exchange reserves are growing rapidly. India remained unaffected by the Asian financial crisis a few years ago. We have targeted an 8% growth over the next five years. As our economic base is large, there is considerable untapped potential for India’s continued – and even accelerated – economic growth.

Friends,

Perceptions shape decisions. Often they are flawed. Sometimes, they are incomplete. The rich cultural diversity and spiritual traditions of India are well known, but they constitute only one aspect of India. There is another India, the India of the 21st century, which is still not so well known, with its many strengths:

• **One**, an inherently strong economy driven primarily by indigenous skills and domestic enterprise.

• **Two**, a growing and accessible domestic market, with import and investment barriers falling away. To take just one random example of the growth of the market: in the last few months, it has been absorbing about 2 million mobile phones a month. Import duties are moving towards ASEAN levels, and sectoral caps on foreign investment are rising.

• **Three**, a rich pool of human resources – English speaking, with R&D skills, technological training and managerial capabilities.

• **Four**, some special capabilities in state-of-the-art technologies. India is one of only three countries – the others are USA and Japan – to have indigenously designed and manufactured supercomputers. It is one of only 6 countries, which can build and launch its own satellites.

• **Five**, global leadership in technologies of the Knowledge Economy. India’s pre-eminent position in IT and IT-enabled services has led global companies to set up captives in India or to outsource their operations to quality Indian service providers.

• **Six**, a sound and transparent financial system, with well-managed banking and insurance sectors, and vibrant capital markets. Our paperless, computer-driven National Stock Exchange is the third largest in the world, in terms of number of annual transactions.
India is today a country on the move. We are experiencing many revolutions simultaneously. There is, of course, the IT revolution. This in turn has unleashed a socio-cultural revolution, which has empowered hundreds of millions of our citizens, strengthening our democracy and stimulating our creativity. We are experiencing a demographic revolution, where the numbers of young people are increasing. Already, 54% of our population is below 25 years of age. This has created a revolution of expectations, where a powerful new force of young people, full of optimism and ambition, fired by boundless energy, is actively seeking opportunities for wealth, success and prosperity. The combined effect of these has been a psychological revolution, in which a defensive, introverted approach has given way to an outward-looking, self-confident attitude, willing to accept challenges and take risks, rejecting fear and shunning fatalism.

It is this India that seeks to partner ASEAN in this era of globalization. India’s trade and economic interaction with the ASEAN countries has been steadily growing, but not fast enough. A year ago at the First India-ASEAN Business Summit, I had said that the India-ASEAN trade of less than 10 billion dollars does not do justice to our combined population of one and a half billion people, producing a trillion and a half dollars worth of goods and services annually. Our trade has since grown by about 25%, but my comment remains valid.

We have recognized this fact in the India-ASEAN Framework Agreement for Comprehensive Economic Cooperation, which we have been negotiating over the past year. We are working on eliminating trade and investment barriers to facilitate business.

At the same time, India is conscious of the concerns of the new ASEAN members. We are offering unilateral tariff concessions on items of export interest to the CLMV countries. We are also seeking to incorporate an Early Harvest scheme to provide the incentive for a long-term engagement. If we proceed along this course, we can target a trade turnover of US$ 30 billion by 2007 and a Free Trade Area within 10 years.

A study, commissioned by our apex commerce & industry organizations, has highlighted five main areas with maximum promise for growth:

- Indian IT enabled services create multiple opportunities for collaboration in embedded software or joint development of industry specific solutions. ASEAN countries can outsource their
operations to quality Indian service providers at competitive prices. Today, South East Asian countries import most of their IT products from the West. The irony is that most of these products are actually created by Indian sub-contractors. The result is a double disadvantage: you pay much more, and India gets much less.

- The Indian financial services industry is growing rapidly, driven by deregulation of insurance and investment in the banking sector by private companies and foreign banks. ASEAN investors will find attractive opportunities in personal financial services, insurance and corporate banking. India is poised to emerge as an additional global hub for financial transactions.

- The Indian pharmaceutical industry has achieved global recognition. The strength of this industry is low cost, high quality generics. Branded and patented medicines are also beginning to emerge as an important segment of the industry. ASEAN can source its imports of low cost generics from India, or shift manufacturing base to India.

- Indian entertainment business has benefited from deregulation and export opportunities. Joint ventures for TV content production and animation software exports present attractive opportunities for India and ASEAN.

India has placed special emphasis on infrastructural development to stimulate rapid economic growth. This includes de-regulation of all segments of our telecom industry and up-gradation of highways, bridges, ports, airports and convention centres. Many ASEAN companies are already present in these and other sectors. There are many other opportunities here for Asian business.

For free trade and open economic interaction, we must review, improve and harmonise our travel-related regulations and restrictions, including visa regimes. We have to upgrade our air, sea, road and rail links in capacity and quality, to meet new demands. To improve the profitability of business activities and tourist ventures, we should develop cross-regional links of tourist centres to enhance the synergy of Asian destinations.

I will say a brief word about India's investment regime. It is liberal and transparent, as befits a democracy like ours. We may occasionally have some problems, because of the difficulties in reconciling competing
interests and concerns. This is normal in an open, democratic set-up. We are constantly trying to refine our regulations and procedures. All the same, if you analyse the experience of our foreign investors, returns on investments in India are generally higher. Repatriation of profits is also much easier than in many other countries.

Investors have to understand that India’s continental size and diversity are unique. Marketing or investment strategies that may have worked well elsewhere may need to be tailored differently for India. Those who understand this do well. Companies that have taken the trouble of finding the right keys to unlock the doors of the Indian consumer’s mind have done well for themselves. People tell me that successful investors often paint a deliberately pessimistic picture to discourage competitors from entering a lucrative market!

In spite of the stalemate at the Cancun Ministerial Conference, a rule-based and fair multi-lateral trading system should remain our goal. But while we search for this ideal, regional trading arrangements offer immediate advantages, particularly for geographically contiguous regions. They can provide our domestic industry and agriculture with a valuable learning period, before being exposed to the far greater competition of global free trade.

Friends,

Non-Asians view Asia as the principal market of the future. But it will also emerge as a manufacturing hub and a global provider of services. In the next 50 years, as the population of the developed world ages, a younger and better-educated work force will emerge in Asia to fill the breach. This generation will drive the future growth of the global economy. Asian countries should work towards strengthening their mutual synergies, so that they are strategically placed to derive maximum benefit from the emerging opportunities. The India-ASEAN partnership should energise this process to move us closer to our shared goal of making this truly the Asian century.

Thank you.
162. ASEAN-India Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism.

Bali (Indonesia), October 8, 2003.

The Governments of Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Member Countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Republic of India, hereinafter referred to collectively as “the participants”;

Mindful of the 2001 ASEAN Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism, which, inter alia, undertakes to strengthen cooperation at bilateral, regional and international levels in combating terrorism in a comprehensive manner and affirms that at the international level the United Nations should play a major role in this regard;

Reaffirming their commitment to counter, prevent and suppress all forms of terrorist acts in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, international law and all the relevant United Nations resolutions or declarations on international terrorism, in particular the principles outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1373, 1267 and 1390;

Viewing acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed wherever, whenever and by whomsoever, as a profound threat to international peace and security, which require concerted action to protect and defend all peoples and the peace and security of the world;

Rejecting any attempt to associate terrorism with any religion, race or nationality;

Recognising the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other States;

Acknowledging the value of cooperation on security, intelligence and law enforcement matters, and desiring to entering into such a cooperation to combat international terrorism through the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, as a leading ASEAN body for combating terrorism, and other mechanisms;
Recognising the transnational nature of terrorist activities and the need to strengthen international cooperation at all levels in combating terrorism in a comprehensive manner;

Desiring to enhance counter-terrorism cooperation between the relevant agencies of the participants’ governments;

Solemnly declare as follows:

Objectives:-

1. The participants reaffirm the importance of having a framework for cooperation to prevent, disrupt and combat international terrorism through the exchange and flow of information, intelligence and capacity-building.

2. The participants emphasize that the purpose of this cooperation is to enhance the efficacy of those efforts to combat terrorism.

Scope and Areas of Cooperation:

3. The participants stress their commitment to seek to implement the principles laid out in this Declaration, in accordance with their respective domestic laws and their specific circumstances, in any or all of the following activities:

i. Continue and improve intelligence and terrorist financing information sharing on counter-terrorism measures, including the development of more effective counter-terrorism policies and legal, regulatory and administrative counter-terrorism regimes.

ii. Enhance liaison relationships amongst their law enforcement agencies to engender practical counter-terrorism regimes.

iii. Strengthen capacity-building efforts through training and education; consultations between officials, analysts and field operators; and seminars, conferences and joint operations as appropriate.

iv. Provide assistance on transportation, border and immigration control challenges, including document and identity fraud to stem effectively the flow of terrorist-related material, money and people.

v. Comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1373,
1267, 1390 and other United Nations resolutions or declarations on international terrorism.

vi. Explore on a mutual basis additional areas of cooperation.

**Participation:**

4. Participants are called upon to become parties to all 12 of the United Nations conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.

5. The participants are each called upon to designate an agency to co-ordinate with law enforcement agencies, authorities dealing with countering terrorism financing and other concerned government agencies, and to act as the central point of contact for the purposes of implementing this Declaration.

**Disclosure of Information:**

6. The participants expect that no participant would disclose or distribute any confidential information, documents or data received in connection with this Declaration to any third party, at any time, except to the extent agreed in writing by the participant that provided the information.

**Implementation:**

7. All the participants are urged to promote and implement in good faith and effectively the provisions of the present Declaration in all its aspects.


✦✦✦✦✦
163. Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Association of South East Asian Nations.

Bali (Indonesia), October 8, 2003.

Preamble

We, the Heads of State/Government of Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia (Cambodia), the Republic of Indonesia (Indonesia), the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Malaysia, the Union of Myanmar (Myanmar), the Republic of the Philippines (the Philippines), the Republic of Singapore (Singapore), the Kingdom of Thailand (Thailand) and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (collectively, “ASEAN” or “ASEAN Member States”, or individually, “ASEAN Member State”), and the Republic of India (India);

Recalling that in 2002, we had agreed on the importance of enhancing our close economic cooperation and to work towards an ASEAN - India Regional Trade and Investment Area (RTIA) as a long-term objective;

Desiring to adopt a Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation (this Agreement) between ASEAN and India (collectively, “the Parties”, or individually referring to an ASEAN Member State or to India as a “Party”) that is forward-looking in order to forge a closer economic partnership in the 21st century;

Desiring to minimise barriers and deepen economic linkages between the Parties; lower costs; increase intra-regional trade and investment; increase economic efficiency; create a larger market with greater opportunities and larger economies of scale for the businesses of the Parties; and enhance the attractiveness of the Parties to capital and talent;

Recognising the important role and contribution of the business sector in enhancing trade and investment between the Parties and the need to further promote and facilitate their cooperation and utilisation of greater business opportunities provided by the ASEAN-India RTIA;

Recognising the different stages of economic development among ASEAN Member States and the need for flexibility, including the need to
facilitate the increasing participation of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (the New ASEAN Member States) in the ASEAN-India economic cooperation and the expansion of their exports, inter alia, through the strengthening of their domestic capacity, efficiency and competitiveness;

*Reaffirming* the rights, obligations and undertakings of the respective parties under the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and other multilateral, regional and bilateral Agreements and arrangements; and

*Recognising* that regional trade arrangements can contribute towards accelerating regional and global liberalisation and as building blocks in the framework of the multilateral trading system,

have agreed as follows:-

**Article 1**

**Objectives**

The objectives of this Agreement are to:

(a) Strengthen and enhance economic, trade and investment cooperation between the Parties;

(b) Progressively liberalise and promote trade in goods and services as well as create a transparent, liberal and facilitative investment regime;

(c) Explore new areas and develop appropriate measures for closer economic cooperation between the Parties; and

(d) Facilitate the more effective economic integration of the new ASEAN Member States and bridge the development gap among the Parties.

**Article 2**

**Measures For Economic Cooperation**

The Parties agree to enter into negotiations in order to establish an ASEAN-India Regional Trade and Investment Area (RTIA), which includes a Free Trade Area (FTA) in goods, services and investment, and to strengthen and enhance economic cooperation through the following:
(a) Progressive elimination of tariffs and non-tariff barriers in substantially all trade in goods;

(b) Progressive liberalisation of trade in services with substantial sectoral coverage;

(c) Establishment of a liberal and competitive investment regime that facilitates and promotes investment within the ASEAN-India RTIA;

(d) Provision of special and differential treatment to the New ASEAN Member States;

(e) Provision of flexibility to the Parties in the ASEAN-India RTIA negotiations to address their sensitive areas in the goods, services and investment sectors with such flexibilities to be negotiated and mutually agreed based on the principle of reciprocity and mutual benefits;

(e) Establishment of effective trade and investment facilitation measures, including, but not limited to, simplification of customs procedures and development of mutual recognition arrangements;

(f) Expansion of economic cooperation in areas as may be mutually agreed between the Parties that will complement the deepening of trade and investment links between the Parties and formulation of action plans and programmes in order to implement the agreed sectors/areas of cooperation; and

(g) Establishment of appropriate mechanisms for the purposes of effective implementation of this Agreement.

**Article 3**

**Trade In Goods**

(1) With a view to expediting the expansion of trade in goods, the Parties agree to enter into negotiations in which duties and other restrictive regulations of commerce (except, where necessary, those permitted under Article XXIV (8)(b) of the WTO General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)) shall be eliminated on substantially all trade in goods between the Parties.

(2) For the purposes of this Article, the following definitions shall apply unless the context otherwise requires:-
(a) "Applied Most Favoured Nation (MFN) tariff rates" shall refer to the respective applied rates of the Parties as of 1 July 2004;

and

(b) "Non-tariff measures" shall include non-tariff barriers.

(3) Upon signing of this Agreement, the Parties shall commence consultations on each other’s trade regime, including, but not limited to the following:

(a) Trade and tariff data;

(b) Customs procedures, rules and regulations;

(c) Non-tariff measures including, but not limited to import licensing requirement and procedure, quantitative restrictions, technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary;

(d) Intellectual property rights rules and regulations; and

(e) Trade policy.

(4) The tariff reduction or elimination programme of the Parties shall require tariffs on listed products to be gradually reduced and, where applicable, eliminated in accordance with this Article.

(5) The products which are subject to the tariff reduction or elimination programme under this Article shall include all products not covered by the Early Harvest Programme (EHP) under Article 7 of this Agreement, and such products shall be categorised into two tracks as follows:

(a) **Normal Track:**

Products listed in the Normal Track by a Party on its own accord shall have their respective applied MFN tariff rates gradually reduced or eliminated in accordance with specified schedules and rates (to be mutually agreed by the Parties) over a period from:

(i) 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2011 for Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, and India;

(ii) 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2016 for the Philippines and India;

and
(iii) 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2011 for India and 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2016 for the New ASEAN Member States.

In respect of those tariffs which have been reduced but have not been eliminated, they shall be progressively eliminated within timeframes to be mutually agreed between the Parties.

(b) Sensitive Track:

(i) The number of products listed in the Sensitive Track shall be subject to a maximum ceiling to be mutually agreed among the Parties.

(ii) Products listed in the Sensitive Track by a Party on its own accord shall, where applicable, have their respective applied MFN tariff rates progressively reduced/eliminated within timeframes to be mutually agreed between the Parties.

(6) The commitments undertaken by the Parties under this Article and Article 7 of this Agreement shall fulfill the WTO requirements to eliminate tariffs on substantially all the trade between the Parties.

(7) The specified tariff rates/tariff preferences to be mutually agreed between the Parties pursuant to this Article shall set out only the limits of the applicable tariff rates/preferences or range for the specified year of implementation by the Parties.

(8) The negotiations between the Parties to establish the ASEAN-India RTIA covering trade in goods shall also include, but not be limited to the following:

(a) Modalities, including detailed rules governing the tariff reduction and/or elimination,

(b) Rules of Origin;

(c) Treatment of out-of-quota rates;

(d) Modification of a Party’s commitments under the agreement on trade in goods based on WTO Agreements;

(e) Non-tariff measures/barriers, including, but not limited to, quantitative restrictions or prohibition on the importation of any product or on the export or sale for export of any product, as well as sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade;
(f) Safeguards based on the WTO Agreements;

(g) Disciplines on subsidies and countervailing measures and anti dumping measures based on the existing WTO agreements; and

(h) Facilitation and promotion of effective and adequate protection of trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights based on existing WTO, World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and other relevant Agreements.

Article 4

Trade In Services

With a view to expediting the expansion of trade in services, the Parties agree to enter into negotiations to progressively liberalise trade in services on a preferential basis with substantial sectoral coverage. Such negotiations shall be directed to:

(a) Progressive elimination of substantially all discrimination between or among the Parties and/or prohibition of new or more discriminatory measures with respect to trade in services between the Parties, except for measures permitted under Article V(l)(b) of the WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS);

(b) Expansion in the depth and scope of liberalisation of trade in services beyond those undertaken by ASEAN Member States and India under the GATS; and

(c) Enhanced cooperation in services between the Parties in order to improve efficiency and competitiveness, as well as to diversify the supply and distribution of services of the respective service suppliers of the Parties.

Article 5

Investment

To promote investments and to create a liberal, facilitative, transparent and competitive investment regime, the Parties agree to:

(a) Enter into negotiations in order to progressively liberalise their investment regimes;

(b) Strengthen co-operation in investment, facilitate investment and improve transparency of investment rules and regulations; and
(c) Provide for the protection of investments.

**Article 6**

**Areas of Economic Co-operation**

(1) Where appropriate, the Parties agree to strengthen their co-operation in the following areas, including, but not limited to:

(a) Trade Facilitation:

   (i) Mutual Recognition Arrangements, conformity assessment, accreditation procedures, and standards and technical regulations;

   (ii) Non-tariff measures;

   (iii) Customs co-operation;

   (iv) Trade financing; and

   (v) Business visa and travel facilitation.

(b) Sectors of Co-operation:

   (i) Agriculture, fisheries and forestry;

   (ii) Services: media and entertainment, health, financial, tourism, construction, business process outsourcing, environmental;

   (iii) Mining and energy: oil and natural gas, power generation and supply;

   (iv) Science and technology: information and communications technology, electronic-commerce, biotechnology;

   (v) Transport and infrastructure; transport and communication;

   (vi) Manufacturing: automotive, drugs and pharmaceuticals, textiles, petrochemicals, garments, food processing, leather goods, light engineering goods, gems and jewellery processing;

   (vii) Human Resource Development: capacity building, education, technology transfer; and

   (viii) Others: handicrafts, small and medium enterprises, competition policy, Mekong Basin Development, intellectual property rights, government procurement.
(c) Trade and Investment Promotion:

(i) Fairs and exhibitions;

(ii) ASEAN-India weblinks; and

(iii) Business sector dialogues.

(2) The Parties agree to implement capacity building programmes and technical assistance, particularly for the New ASEAN Member States, in order to adjust their economic structure and expand their trade and investment with India.

(3) Parties may establish other bodies as may be necessary to coordinate and implement any economic cooperation activities undertaken pursuant to this Agreement.

Article 7

Early Harvest Programme

(1) With a view to accelerating the implementation of this Agreement, the Parties agree to implement an EHP, which is an integral part of the ASEAN-India RT1A, for products covered under paragraph 3(a) below. The progressive tariff reduction under the EHP shall commence from 1 November 2004, and tariff elimination shall be completed by 31 October 2007 for ASEAN-6 and India, and 31 October 2010 for the New ASEAN Member States.

(2) For the purposes of this Article, the following definitions shall apply unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) “ASEAN 6” refers to Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand; and

(b) “Applied MFN tariff rates” shall refer to the respective applied rates of the Parties as of 1 July, 2004.

(3) The product coverage, tariff reduction and elimination, removal of, non-tariff barriers, rules of origin, trade remedies and emergency measures applicable to the EHP shall be as follows:

(a) Product Coverage.

(i) Common products on which the Parties agree to exchange tariff concessions are listed in Annex A.
(ii) Products on which India accords concessions to the New ASEAN Member States are listed in Annex B.

(b) Modality for Tariff Reduction and Elimination. The modality for tariff reduction and elimination for the products covered by the EHP shall be finalised under Article 8(2) of this Agreement.

(c) Removal of non-tariff measures.

In order to fully realise the potential benefits of the EHP, the parties shall promote and facilitate trade in all products listed in the EHP. The parties shall also endeavour to refrain from using non-tariff measures adversely affecting trade in Early Harvest products.

(d) Rules of Origin.

Products covered by the EHP shall qualify for tariff preferences in accordance with the Rules of Origin to be agreed under Article 8(2) of this Agreement.

(e) Application of WTO provisions.

The WTO provisions governing modification of commitments, safeguard actions, emergency measures and other trade remedies, including anti-dumping and subsidies and countervailing measures, shall, in the interim, be applicable to the products covered under the EHP and shall be superseded and replaced by the relevant disciplines negotiated and agreed to by the Parties under Article 3(8) of this Agreement once these disciplines are implemented.

(4) The Parties shall also explore the feasibility of cooperation in the areas listed in Annex C.

Article 8

Time frames

(1) For trade in goods, negotiations on the Agreement for tariff reduction/elimination and other matters as set out in Article 3 of this Agreement shall commence in January 2004 and be concluded by 30 June 2005 in order to establish the ASEAN-India FTA.

(2) The negotiations on Rules of Origin for trade in goods under Articles 3 and 7 and modality for tariff reduction and elimination under Article 7 shall be concluded no later than 31 July, 2004.
(3) For trade in services and investments, the negotiations on the respective Agreements shall commence in 2005 and be concluded by 2007. The identification, liberalisation, etc., of the sectors of services and investment shall be finalised for implementation subsequently in accordance with the timeframes to be mutually agreed: (a) taking into account the sensitive sectors of the Parties; and (b) with special and differential treatment and flexibility for the New ASEAN Member States.

(4) For other areas of economic cooperation, the Parties shall continue to build upon existing or agreed programmes set out in Article 6 of this Agreement, develop new economic cooperation programmes and conclude Agreements on the various, areas of economic cooperation. The Parties shall do so expeditiously for early implementation in a manner and at a pace acceptable to all the Parties concerned. The Agreements shall include timeframes for the implementation of the commitments there in.

Article 9

Most-Favoured Nation Treatment

India shall continue to accord Most-Favoured Nation (MFN) Treatment consistent with WTO rules and disciplines to all the non-WTO ASEAN Member States upon the date of signature of this Agreement.

Article 10

General Exceptions

Subject to the requirement that such measures are not applied in a manner which would constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination between or among the Parties where the same conditions prevail, or a disguised restriction on trade within the ASEAN-India FTA, nothing in this Agreement shall prevent any Party from taking action and adopting measures for the protection of its national security or the protection of articles of artistic, historic and archaeological value, or such other measures which it deems necessary for the protection of public morals, or for the protection of human, animal or plant life, health and conservation of exhaustible natural resources.
Article 11

Dispute Settlement Mechanism

(1) The Parties shall, within one (1) year after the date of entry into force of this Agreement, establish appropriate formal dispute settlement procedures and mechanism for the purposes of this Agreement.

(2) Pending the establishment of the formal dispute settlement procedures and mechanism under (paragraph 1 above), any disputes concerning the interpretation, implementation or application of this Agreement shall be settled amicably by mutual consultations.

Article 12

Institutional Arrangements for the Negotiations

(1) There shall be established an ASEAN-India Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) to carry out the programme of negotiations set out in this Agreement.

(2) The ASEAN-India TNC may invite experts or establish any Working Group as may be necessary to assist in the negotiations of all sectors in the ASEAN-India RTIA.

(3) The ASEAN-India TNC shall regularly report to the Minister of Commerce and Industry of India and the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM-India Consultations), through the meetings of the ASEAN Senior Economic Officials and India (SEOM-India Consultations), on the progress and outcome of its negotiations.

(4) The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, and the ASEAN Secretariat shall jointly provide the necessary secretariat support to the ASEAN-India Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) whenever and wherever negotiations are held.

Article 13

Miscellaneous Provisions

(i) This Agreement shall include the Annexes and the contents therein, and all future legal instruments agreed pursuant to this Agreement.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, this Agreement or any action taken under it shall not affect or nullify the rights and
obligations of a Party under existing agreements to which it is a party.

(3) The Parties shall endeavour to refrain from increasing restrictions or limitations that would affect the application of this Agreement.

(4) Any ASEAN Member State may defer its participation in the implementation of this Agreement provided that a notification is given to the other parties within twelve (12) months from the date of signing of this Agreement. Any extension of the negotiated concessions to such ASEAN Member State shall be voluntary on the part of the parties participating in such implementation. The ASEAN Member State concerned shall participate in the implementation of this Agreement at a later date on the same terms and conditions, including any further commitments that may have been undertaken by the other parties by the time of such participation.

**Article 14**

**Amendments**

The provisions of this Agreement may be modified through amendments mutually agreed upon in writing by the Parties.

**Article 15**

**Depository**

For the ASEAN Member States, this Agreement shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of ASEAN, who shall promptly furnish a certified copy thereof to each ASEAN Member State and India.

**Article 16**

**Entry into Force**

(1) This Agreement shall enter into force on 1 July, 2004.

(2) The Parties undertake to complete their internal procedures for the entry into force of this Agreement prior to 1 July, 2004.

(3) Where a Party is unable to complete its internal procedures for the entry into force of this Agreement by 1 July, 2004, the Agreement shall come into force for that Party upon the date of notification of the completion of its internal procedures. The Party concerned,
however, shall be bound by the same terms and conditions, including any further commitments that may have been undertaken by the other Parties under this Agreement by the time of such notification.

(4) A Party shall upon the completion of its internal procedures for the entry into force of this Agreement notify all the other parties in writing.

In witness whereof, we have signed this Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Republic of India.

Done at Bali, this 8th day of October, 2003 in duplicate copies in the English Language.

164. Statement to the Indian Media by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the conclusion of his visit to Bali and Thailand.

Chiang Mai, October 12, 2003.

We will return to India after a rewarding visit to Bali and Thailand.

The 2nd India-ASEAN Summit in Bali marked the institutionalisation of our annual summit level dialogue with ASEAN. It enabled us to review the substantive progress in several areas of common interest to India and ASEAN since our first Summit meeting in Phnom Penh last year. We also discussed the future directions of our cooperation.

ASEAN leaders appreciated the fact that we have made remarkable progress on the substantive agenda that we spelt out at Phnom Penh.

Our Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation was finalized within a year of our announcing that we would be aiming for it. Through this, India also demonstrated its ability and political will to deliver on its economic linkages within the region. We made it clear that we can proceed at a pace at which ASEAN is comfortable.

India reiterated its willingness to support new projects for training, education and capacity building to hasten the process of integration of the new ASEAN members.
ASEAN leaders welcomed our new offers for additional flight services from airlines of ASEAN countries to our major metropolitan cities and other tourist destinations. They shared our ideas for strengthening India-ASEAN road links. We agreed to join with ASEAN countries in efforts to liberalize the air cargo services sector. Our idea of an India-ASEAN Motorcar Rally to demonstrate our geographical links, drew an enthusiastic response from many ASEAN leaders. Here in Thailand also, Prime Minister Thaksin strongly supported the idea.

Several ASEAN leaders underlined the potential for cooperation with India in the field of public health, through pharmaceutical imports from India and joint research for medicines and measures to deal with diseases like HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria.

I put forward the idea that ASEAN needs to be more closely integrated with India, China, Japan and Korea. An Asian Economic Community, including the 14 countries of ASEAN + 3 + 1, would more efficiently exploit our synergies.

We agreed to ask our think-tanks to submit to the next (Laos) India-ASEAN Summit a “Vision 2020” document, which would lay out the road map for future development of our relations with ASEAN.

By acceding to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South East Asia, we have initiated a new level of political cooperation with ASEAN.

Our Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism is an important step forward in promoting cooperation to eliminate the scourge of terrorism from the region.

During my stay in Bali, I also had meetings with the Presidents of Korea, Philippines and Indonesia, and with the Prime Ministers of Vietnam, Singapore and China.

President Megawati and I welcomed the development of bilateral ties in recent times. We agreed to expand cooperation in combating terrorism. Ways of increasing trade between our two countries were also discussed. We expressed interest in undertaking railway projects in Indonesia. India was invited to invest in existing palm oil plantations of Indonesia or those now coming up.

In my meeting with the President of Korea, we agreed that our two countries should work to strengthen existing economic links. Korean
companies have recently expanded their activities in India, using it as a manufacturing base for their global exports. President Roh and I agreed that we would strengthen the political aspects of our friendly relations. We have invited President Roh Moo-hyun to visit India in the first half of next year.

The President of Philippines expressed her country’s keenness to deepen relations with India. She made a special mention of the contributions of the people of Indian origin to the Philippines’ economy. I invited President Arroyo to visit India.

The Prime Minister of Vietnam and I agreed to maintain the momentum of our recent high-level exchanges, in keeping with our traditionally close ties. We talked about our cooperation bilaterally and within ASEAN.

In my meeting with Singapore Prime Minister Goh, we discussed the progress in other negotiations for our bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. We have set the target for finalization of the agreement in the first half of 2004.

My meeting with Chinese Premier Wen Jaibao touched on the substantive forward movement in our bilateral relations since our last meeting. To continue this process, we have agreed to expedite the establishment of the Joint Study Group on economic cooperation. The Special Representatives of the two governments will have their first meeting on the border question in the near future. Premier Wen agreed to make a return visit to India as early as possible.

Although it has been ten years since the last visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Thailand, our bilateral relations have developed rapidly, particularly in recent years. I was particularly touched by the Prime Minister of Thailand’s attentive and warm hospitality, going well beyond normal protocol requirements. We also greatly appreciated Prime Minister Thaksin’s commitment to developing our bilateral relations in all areas, and his support for India’s dialogue with ASEAN.

In our discussions, Prime Minister Thaksin and I expressed our commitment to intensify our security cooperation and our joint efforts against terrorism. India and Thailand also agreed to work together against drug trafficking, and in joint naval patrolling against narcotics and piracy. We underlined the further scope for our economic cooperation and collaboration in areas like science & technology, tourism and civil aviation.
We agreed to set up cultural centres in each other's country to reinvigorate our age-old cultural affinities.

The Framework Agreement for a Free Trade Area is the first between India and an ASEAN country. Through its Early Harvest Programme, India and Thailand can shortly reduce tariffs on 84 items of our trade. Prime Minister Thaksin and I agreed that we would expedite the implementation of the agreement, for the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to the free movement of goods, capital and services within agreed time frames.

The other Agreements signed in Bangkok cover cooperation in tourism, biotechnology, agriculture and exemption of visa requirements for certain categories of passport holders.

Our decision to jointly work out a liberalized visa regime for business travellers between India and Thailand will have a positive impact on our economic exchanges.

Thailand has agreed to reciprocate our offer of increased flight services to Indian destinations, by offering daily flights to Bangkok and the freedom of operation to other cities in Thailand.

We agreed to set up a twinning arrangement between Port Blair and Phuket in Thailand and to develop combined India-Thailand tourism destination packages.

The Prime Minister of Thailand and I also discussed our close cooperation in various regional and multilateral institutions. Both sides underlined the importance of making early progress on trilateral transportation projects between India, Myanmar and Thailand. Prime Minister Thaksin responded positively to several of our initiatives in ASEAN.

My address to a specially-convened joint session of the Thai National Assembly, the first by a foreign leader, was a unique honour for India. I also addressed a meeting of Indian and Thai businessmen organized by the apex chambers of commerce and industry of the two countries.

I had the pleasure of an audience of an hour and a half with His Majesty the King at his palace in Hua Hin. Deputy Prime Ministers Korn Dabbaransi and Somkid Jatusripitak, Commerce Minister Adisai and Foreign Minister Surakiart called on me during my stay in Bangkok.

I was impressed by the Huai Hong Krai Royal Study Centre here in Chiang Mai. It is a striking demonstration of afforestation and sustainable development.
Both the India-ASEAN Summit and my bilateral visit to Thailand illustrated the depth and versatility which our relations with ASEAN and its countries have acquired. The development of closer political and economic linkages between India and ASEAN is in consonance with our efforts for a multipolar world order and for expanding our economic opportunities. The response of ASEAN to our initiatives has been unequivocally positive in all aspects.

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Australia


New Delhi, August 28, 2003.

The third meeting of India-Australia Framework Dialogue took place this morning in Adelaide, with Shri Yashwant Sinha, External Affairs Minister and Mr. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, co-chairing the session. The discussions took place in a warm and forward-looking atmosphere that has marked the bilateral relations between the two countries in recent years.

Foreign Minister Downer said he was “personally enthusiastic” about further growth in India-Australia relations.

Australian Foreign Minister expressed sympathy over the recent terrorist attacks in Mumbai and underscored the critical need for the international community to join forces in fighting terrorism. Australia had earlier sent a message condemning the attack. The two Ministers signed an MoU on Counter-Terrorism that will provide the institutional mechanism for strengthened cooperation in this crucial area.

Both Ministers agreed that there was increasing strategic convergence between the two countries which was matched by expanding trade and investment ties. Noting that this sector would provide the muscle to bilateral relations in the coming years, EAM proposed setting up a Group of Experts comprising of economists, representatives of business
chambers and government, to carry out a systematic study of the potential for cooperation and prepare a roadmap. Foreign Minister Downer fully supported the idea.

The two Ministers also discussed other the increasing role of education, tourism and greater people-to-people contacts, related visa facilitation issues, etc.

Both welcomed the institution of Strategic Dialogue between the two countries as contributing to greater understanding of issues of concern between the two countries. It was also agreed to enhance defence cooperation.

The two Ministers also exchanged views on the situation in Iraq, non-proliferation, developments in the Pacific, South and South East Asia and Commonwealth issues.


The Government of Republic of India and the Government of Australia (hereinafter called the Parties):

Desirous of enhancing existing co-operation between the Parties on defence, intelligence, security and law enforcement matters, and desiring to strengthen and expand this co-operation to fight international terrorism;

Reflecting the determination of the international community to prevent, suppress and eliminate international terrorism in all its forms;

Realising the danger that international terrorist networks pose to international peace and security and to the safety of their citizens and property;

Recognising the importance of highly effective international co-operation at all levels to combating international terrorism;
Noting with concern the emergence of links between international terrorism and transnational organised crime and the upsurge in terrorist threats and activities;

Have reached the following understandings:

Objective

1. The Parties, within the framework of this Memorandum of Understanding, will co-operate in preventing, suppressing and combating international terrorism, including the new international terrorist and organised criminal networks that have emerged in recent years.

Areas of co-operation

2. Areas of co-operation under this Memorandum of Understanding include:

   (a) information and intelligence assessments;
   (b) law enforcement, including the prevention and investigation of terrorist activities and the apprehension of criminal offenders;
   (c) money laundering and the financing of international terrorism;
   (d) the development of appropriate and effective counter-terrorism legal, regulatory and administrative regimes;
   (e) smuggling and border control issues, including document and identity fraud;
   (f) illegal trafficking in weapons, ammunition, explosives and other destructive materials or substances;
   (g) links between international terrorism and transnational organised crime; and
   (h) defence and security co-operation relating to international terrorist activities.

Forms of co-operation

3. Forms of co-operation under this Memorandum of Understanding include:
(a) the exchange of information and intelligence;
(b) consultations on terrorism-related issues of concern to either Government;
(c) visits by Ministers, officials and experts on international terrorism;
(d) the convening of meetings, seminars, workshops and conferences;
(e) joint operational and training activities;
(f) co-operation in preventing and investigating acts of terrorism, including bringing the perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice;
(g) collaboration on projects of mutual interest;
(h) capacity-building initiatives, including training and education programs;
(i) sharing best practices and procedures to strengthen co-operation; and
(j) co-operation in regional and multilateral fora on issues relating to international terrorism and transnational organised crime.

Additional areas and forms of co-operation

4. The Parties may, at any time, mutually determine additional areas and forms of co-operation under this Memorandum of Understanding.

Implementing agencies

5. A Joint Working Group will meet annually to review co-operation under this Memorandum of Understanding, including the identification of possible new areas of co-operation.

6. This Memorandum of Understanding will be implemented by the respective relevant agencies of the Parties, including foreign affairs, internal security, law enforcement, defence, intelligence, immigration and such other agencies that may be responsible for the areas of co-operation outlined in paragraph 2 above.

Domestic and international law

7. This Memorandum of Understanding will be implemented in
accordance with each country’s domestic laws and regulations and in accordance with their international legal obligations

Settlement of disputes

8. Any disputes arising from the interpretation or implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding will be settled amicably by consultation or negotiation between the two Governments through diplomatic channels.

Amendment and review

9. This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended or reviewed at any time by mutual consent of the Parties. Amendments will be in writing and consist of an exchange of letters through diplomatic channels.

Commencement and termination

10. This Memorandum of Understanding will come into effect on the date of signature. It may be terminated by either Party giving three months written notice to the other Party of its intention to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding.

Signed at Adelaide on this twenty-eighth day of August, 2003 in two original copies in the Hindi and English languages, both texts being equally authentic. However, in the case of a divergent interpretation, the English text will prevail.

For the Government of Republic of India
Yashwant Sinha
Minister of External Affairs

For the Government of Australia
Alexander Downer
Minister for Foreign Affairs

✦✦✦✦✦
China

167. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the *People’s Daily*, Beijing.

New Delhi, June 20, 2003.

*People’s Daily (PD)*: The world situation has changed a lot since India PM’s last visit on China in 1993, what’s your view on the recent developments in world affairs? Could you make some comments on how these developments should affect the international relations?

*Prime Minister (PM)*: The global scene has undergone a sea change in the last decade. The technology revolution has created an explosion in productivity and growth, but has also raised the spectre of the digital divide within and between countries. The enthusiasm over the inexorable march of globalisation has been tinged with disappointment over the uneven spread of its benefits. Global terrorism has demonstrated its reach and ability to overcome asymmetries in power. The developments in Iraq demonstrated the infirmities of the post-World War II multilateral institutions. All these developments underline the pressing need to urgently evolve a cooperative multi-polar world order, which would be based on the values of pluralism and consensus, and would further the legitimate interests and aspirations of its constituent elements. India and China can be partners in this endeavour.

*PD*: India and China are both great countries, and they have enjoyed a long history of friendly interactions. We believe that your visit will play an active role in promoting the bilateral relations. So the Prime Minister, please elaborate on the current situation and future development of Sino-India relations. And as the largest two developing countries in the world, what role should India (and China) play in the setting up of a new world order?

*PM*: India and China are neighbours bound by centuries-old ties of civilization, history, religion, culture and economic interaction. Particularly in the last few years our two countries have developed a wide canvas of mutually beneficial cooperation.

In recent years, our two countries have launched a process of diversification of bilateral relations. Our dialogue now addresses not only the various areas in which we can improve bilateral cooperation, but also international issues such as terrorism, security, environment, sustainable
development and multilateral economic regimes. Our trade relations are developing in a healthy manner. Exchanges are growing in culture, education, science & technology, media and tourism. It is a sign of the maturity of our two ancient civilizations that we are successfully pursuing the path of fruitful cooperation, even while simultaneously addressing our differences.

But I must say that for two countries of our sizes, populations, human resources and economic strengths, these are still only the first few steps on a long and promising path. We need to do much more to fulfil the true potential of our partnership – in promoting equitable economic growth within our countries, in the search for a multi-polar world order, in fashioning pragmatic responses to the challenges of globalisation, and in countering the threat to our societies from terrorism and violence.

**PD:** It is very important to restore and strengthen close exchanges between the two countries in such areas as trade, culture, tourism, sports etc, which could lead to the further development of the bilateral relations. What specifically, in your view, the two governments should do in these areas to improve and strengthen such exchanges?

**PM:** As I have just said, our bilateral relations have developed and diversified. The areas that you have mentioned namely trade, culture, tourism and sports are all sectors where useful progress has taken place over recent years. I expect that in my discussions with the Chinese leadership, we will confirm the need to further expand and intensify relations between our two countries in these and a number of new sectors. I believe there is a mutual desire for this.

**PD:** We know that you visited China as India Foreign Minister in 1979. As for this visit, what impresses you most about China? Is China in your eyes follows the image in your mind before your visit?

**PM:** China has moved ahead in every possible way since my visit as Foreign Minister in 1979. In fact I think there have been a major transformation even since my last visit to China as member of an Indian Parliamentary delegation in 1993. I am greatly looking forward to the opportunity of witnessing for myself the rapid economic development and significant technological successes which the Chinese people have achieved, particularly in the last two decades. Your remarkable achievements have many lessons for India.

**PD:** You expressed the willingness to restore peace talks with Pakistan in
April. And till now both countries have taken measures to ease the tension. What’s your prospect on your peace effort? What is India’s evaluation towards the Subcontinent’s future development?

**PM:** I have frequently expressed our commitment to a relationship of peace, friendship and cooperation with Pakistan. It was that commitment that took me on a bus trip to Lahore in February 1999, and which prompted me to invite President Musharraf to Agra in July 2001 inspite of the vitiated atmosphere caused by our military conflict in Kargil. Good relations between India and Pakistan are dictated by geography and economics. We have much to benefit by directing our national energies to economic development in peaceful coexistence, rather than to mindless confrontation.

I hope my political initiative will inspire action to end cross border terrorism and to dismantle the infrastructure of support to it. Naturally, this is a requirement to create a conducive atmosphere for a sustained dialogue.

**PD:** We noticed that India has been working hard to strengthen regional cooperation, which is also a trend in world development. Now India is taking efforts to establish India-ASEAN Free Trade Zone, and also to promote economic cooperation within South Asia. What in your view, such efforts will bring on India’s future development?

**PM:** India’s efforts at promoting regional cooperation in South Asia are not new. We are now discussing an India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement, as well as an FTA among Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand under BIMST-EC. Bilaterally, we already have special trading arrangements with Bhutan and Nepal, and an FTA with Sri Lanka. I have little doubt that regional economic integration in South Asia will bring enormous benefits to our people, as there is substantial complementarity among our economies. Freer access to the large Indian market should be particularly beneficial to our South Asian and Southeast Asian neighbours. The India-ASEAN FTA will create a large market of 1.5 billion people, with a combined present GDP of US$ 1.2 trillion, and will cover investment, and services, in addition to trade in goods. It will promote economies of scale, and greater specialization in economic activity. In order to reap full benefits from the FTA, our businesses would need to be adaptable and flexible. We will also need to greatly strengthen transport and communications linkages between India and South East Asia.
168. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Xinhua News Agency.


Question: What is the aim of your visit to China?

Answer: My visit to China is the first by an Indian Prime Minster in nearly a decade. In this period, our two countries have developed a wide canvas of mutually beneficial cooperation. I hope my discussions with the leadership of China will build better understanding and trust between our two peoples, and impart further momentum to our broad-based bilateral cooperation.

The world around us has also changed dramatically during these years. As two of the world's largest and most populous developing countries, India and China should remain in close touch on global issues of concern to developing countries.

Our two countries jointly defined the principles of Panchsheel about 50 years ago as the basis of relations between sovereign, independent countries. With a commitment to Panchsheel, respecting equality, and with mutual sensitivity to the concerns of each other, our two countries can construct an enduring and powerful partnership.

I also look forward to the opportunity of witnessing for myself the rapid economic development, which China has achieved in the last two decades.

Your remarkable successes have many lessons for India.

Question: What is your view about the current development and future of Sino-Indian relations?

Answer: In recent years, our two countries have launched a process of diversification of bilateral relations. We have successfully developed mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation, while simultaneously addressing our differences. Our dialogue now addresses not only the various areas in which we can improve bilateral cooperation, but also international issues such as terrorism, security, environment, sustainable development and multilateral economic regimes. Our trade relations are developing in a healthy manner. Exchanges are growing in culture, education, science & technology, media and tourism.
But for two countries, which together have one-third of humanity, we have only taken the first few steps. We need to do much more to fulfil the true potential of our partnership – in the search for a multi-polar world order, in fashioning pragmatic responses to the challenges of globalisation, and in promoting a climate of peace, stability and development in Asia and in the world.

I hope to discuss these aspects with the Chinese leadership during my forthcoming visit to China.

**Question:** What is the future and potential of economic and technological cooperation between China and India?

**Answer:** India and China are among the world’s fastest growing economies. The basic structure of our economies is not dissimilar though we have chosen different paths towards development. We have complementarities created by our technological development and human resources skills.

Our trade is growing rapidly. It nearly touched $5 billion last year and at the rate, at which it is growing, can easily reach $10 billion in the next couple of years. Of course, we have to constantly strive to increase the proportion of 'new economy' products in our turnover, compared to the traditional items.

Indian companies are showing interest in investing in China. About 70 Indian companies have entered China, with an investment total of about $65 million. I understand more projects are on the anvil. We would equally like to see Chinese companies investing in India.

The convergence of our commercial interests in information technology has not been fully realised. The undoubted Chinese prowess in manufacturing can form a formidable synergy with Indian software engineering. I am sure there are other possibilities for strategic alliances and joint ventures between our companies for competitive presence in global markets.

During my visit, I will discuss with the Chinese leadership proactive measures to identify and exploit new opportunities for economic and technological cooperation.
169. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to *Wen Huibao*, Shanghai.


**Question:** As the first Prime Minister to visit China in 15 years, what messages are you bringing to the new Chinese leadership and the Chinese people?

**Answer:** The last visit by an Indian Prime Minister to China was in September 1993.

India and the People’s Republic of China are the two most populous countries in the world. We are neighbours bound by ties of civilization, history, religion, culture and economic interaction.

We face common challenges in our efforts to rapidly improve the socio economic condition of our peoples.

Our perspectives on today’s fast changing and globalising world have much in common. We share a desire to strengthen the trends for multi-polarity in international relations and to channel the beneficial forces of globalisation towards economic growth with socio-economic equity.

Therefore, I come to China with a message of peace, amity, trust, understanding and cooperation. There is no objective reason for discord between us. Applying the principles of Panchsheel (which were jointly defined by us almost 50 years ago), with mutual sensitivity to the concerns of each other and respecting equality, India and China can harness their civilizational ties and economic complementarities to create a strong force for positive change in the world.

I am also coming to China to see for myself the rapid economic development in the People’s Republic of China over the last two decades. There is a lot that the Indian people can learn from your great economic successes.

**Question:** India-China relations in the past years have seen improvements on many fronts. How would you characterise the potentiality of the bilateral relations in the future?

**Answer:** I have already touched on the huge potential for India-China cooperation. India and China are among two fastest growing economies in the world. The basic structure of our economies is not dissimilar, although
we have chosen different paths towards development. We are part of a fast globalising world. There are enormous economic complementarities between our two countries. We have to work together in the years ahead to exploit them more fully for mutual benefit.

We must also build on the very useful foundations, which we have laid in recent years for diversifying our relations. We are in the process of establishing a meaningful and regular high level dialogue architecture, covering diverse areas of bilateral cooperation and cooperation in regional and international matters.

Our interaction needs to be intensified through exchanges in culture, tourism, education, media and science & technology. We should jointly further our common interests in the environment and sustainable development.

**Question:** You mentioned recently that India’s nuclear development was not Pakistan-centric. Could you elaborate on that?

**Answer:** The most important aspect of India’s nuclear weapons programme is its defensive character. It is not directed against any country. We are developing a minimum credible nuclear deterrent, to deter any adversary from using nuclear weapons against India. We have ourselves included the principle of no first use in our nuclear doctrine.

**Question:** On the border issue, India seems reluctant to accept the guidelines of “mutual understanding and mutual accommodation” proposed by China. What do you think should be the spirit for the two sides to solve this issue?

**Answer:** I do not want to talk about words and definitions here. Both our countries are willing to discuss and resolve the border question through peaceful discussions. The resolution should naturally be fair to both sides, and has to be mutually acceptable. We have established an institutional mechanism to discuss principles. Peace and tranquillity are being maintained in the India-China border areas in accordance with our bilateral agreements of 1993 and 1996. Both sides have agreed that any differences on these matters should not be allowed to affect the overall development of bilateral relations. As our mutual goodwill and trust strengthens through the progressive diversification of our all-round cooperation, I am sure our two countries will find amicable solutions, as befitting two civilized nations.

**Question:** On the economic relations, business communities in both countries have shown tremendous interest in building up closer ties. Do
you think the political leadership lags behind in that sense and what measures are to be taken to promote this trend on the Indian side?

Answer: My Government has actively encouraged the development of trade and economic cooperation between India and China. Our bilateral trade has grown from about US$ 3 billion at the end of 2000 to about US $ 5 billion at the end of last year. In the first four months of this year trade volume increased by more than 70% over the same period last year. Indian companies have set up 71 projects in China, investing about US $ 65 million. More investment is planned. We welcome Chinese companies in India for trade and investment.

During my forthcoming visit, I hope to discuss with the Chinese leadership ways to develop our economic partnership comprehensively by exploiting more fully our complementarities and using the new opportunities, which the globalisation has created.

Question: As you mentioned lately that “the world is changing fast” and “sitting on one pole”. How would that affect India’s foreign policy and her policy toward China in particular?

Answer: Recent global developments have underlined the importance of cooperative multi-polar world order, inspired by an ethic of pluralism and consensus, which would accommodate the legitimate interests and aspirations of this constituent elements.

India and China are tow of the largest countries in the world both geographically and demographically. Our economies are growing fast. Our inherent strengths are undeniable. Growing mutual cooperation between India and China can greatly enhance our political and economic contributions to a more equitable world order. This should motivate our countries to forge closer links.

Question: Some argue that India’s relations with the United States could be used a counterforce against China. What is your comment on that?

Answer: I have said earlier that the need today is for a cooperative multi-polar world order, which accommodates the legitimate interests and aspirations of all its constituent elements. We should discard Cold War concepts such as balance of power and spheres of influence. In this conviction, India does not seek to develop relations with any country to “counterbalance” another. Both India-USA relations and India-China relations have their own compelling logic.
**Question:** Is India going to show the same level of interest in Non-Aligned Movement and the sort in the future (sic) and continue to play as an independent global force, or is India going to turn more practical and pragmatic in her foreign policy?

**Answer:** The Non-Aligned Movement was born out of the desire of the economically weaker and newly independent countries to retain their independence of action in their political and economic development. While the Movement was created in the specific context of the Cold War in a bi-polar era, the need to preserve independence of action is just as important in a multi-polar world.

India is one of the rounder members of the Non-Aligned Movement. We continue our efforts within NAM to articulate more effectively the interests and concerns of developing countries.

**Question:** Would you please write a few words for the readers of Wen Huibao?

**Answer:** I extend my warm greetings to the people of Shanghai. In recent years, Shanghai has acquired the reputation of being the industrial and commercial powerhouse of the surging Chinese economy, I will bring to Shanghai warm sentiments of friendship from the Indian people. I would like to take back with me experiences and memories of your remarkable successes.
170. Media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the Prime Minister’s visit to the People’s Republic of China.


SHRI NAVTEJ SARNA (OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN): Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. We have the honour of having the Foreign Secretary, Shri Kanwal Sibal with us today for a special briefing on Prime Minister’s forthcoming visit to People’s Republic of China. We also have with us Shri Nalin Surie, Head of the Territorial Division. I request the Foreign Secretary to say a few words before taking questions.

Foreign Secretary: This is indeed an impressive gathering. I am not surprised for there is great interest in Prime Minister’s visit to China; an interest that is reflected not simply by the presence of all of you today, but also by the very senior media delegation that is accompanying the Prime Minister.

At the risk of repetition, may I recall that Prime Minister Vajpayee’s visit is the first in almost a decade. In the interim, there have been other high level visits exchanged. Vice President K.R. Narayanan visited China in October 1994, President Jiang Zemin visited India in November 1996, President K.R. Narayanan was in China in May 2000, NPC Chairman Li Peng and Premier Zhu Rongji visited India in January 2001 and 2002 respectively.

Prime Minister Vajpayee is, however, no stranger to China. His visit as the Foreign Minister of India in February 1979 led to the unfreezing of India-China relations. We have traversed a considerable distance since then.

Mr. Vajpayee visited again in January 1993 as a member of the Indian Parliamentary delegation led by the then Speaker of the Lok Sabha. His visit on this occasion will, therefore, enable him to see for himself the significant changes that have taken place in China during the last decade.

In the last few years, India and China have developed a wide canvas of mutually beneficial cooperation. The objective of the Prime Minister’s visit to China on this occasion is to impart further momentum to our broad-based bilateral cooperation and to build better understanding and trust between our two peoples. I need hardly remind this audience that in the last decade the world around us has changed dramatically. We believe
that as two of the world’s largest and most populous developing countries, India and China should remain in close touch on global issues of concern to our country and to developing countries.

Our two countries face common challenges in our efforts to rapidly improve the socio-economic conditions of our peoples. Our perspectives in today’s fast changing and globalising world have much in common.

Prime Minister will be meeting with virtually the entire top leadership of China. As you know, there has been a generational leadership change in China in the last few months. Prime minister has already had one useful and friendly meeting with President Hu Jintao in St. Petersburg and is looking forward to resuming his acquaintance with him. There will be extended discussions with Premier Wen Jiabao.

Prime Minister will also meet with Chairman of the Military Commission Jiang Zemin, NPC Chairman Wu Bengguo and Vice President Zeng Qinghong.

He is to make three important addresses. You already have other details of his programme. It promises to be a busy four days.

There will be major business interactions both in Beijing and Shanghai. An impressive team of the captains of Indian industry comprising members of FICCI, CII and ASSOCHAM will be present both in Beijing and Shanghai. The Shanghai event will focus on information technology and how best we can tap the Chinese market.

The visit to Luoyang will help renew our ancient connectivity. The White House Temple there is where the first two Buddhist monks from India, Kasyapa Matanga and Dharama Ratna, came and lived.

During Prime Minister’s visit we expect to sign a number of agreements. The spread is quite considerable and reflects the growing diversification of our relations.

We expect that the Prime Minister’s visit will buttress the ongoing effort to construct an enduring and strong partnership between India and China, based on the principles of Pansheel, mutual sensitivity to each other’s concerns and equality.

**Question:** What do you expect from the Chinese leadership on the issue of Sikkim? Would you say something on that?
Foreign Secretary: A lot has already been said about it in the press on the basis of a great deal of speculation. This is an old issue. There is nothing new in it. It is always there in the background.

Question: A related question to this. Is there a possibility that it could be agreed upon that a trade route could be opened via Sikkim again?

Foreign Secretary: At the moment, we have a certain number of agreements that we are going to sign. They are a large number. For the time being I do not see this as one of them.

Question: You are not ruling it out though?

Foreign Secretary: This is not on my list. By ‘for the time being’ I meant that in the sense that relationship with China is a continuing one while the Prime Minister’s visit to China will be a very very important point in this visit. But the relationship is a continuing one and it will continue to progress steadily and it will move forward. We have several issues that we have to resolve with China. These issues, we are persuaded, will be resolved in due course on the basis of principles that we have agreed upon and basically ... because of the basic advantage to both sides the two big countries India and China want to develop a strong relationship because this has repercussions, very positive repercussions, not only in terms of bilateral relationship but regional stability but also global peace and stability. So, there is a mutuality of interest there.

Question: What substantive outcome do you expect on the boundary dispute?

Foreign Secretary: Boundary dispute has very old beginnings. We are grappling with it. There is absolutely no expectation on either side that this visit will result in any settlement of the boundary dispute. That process is continuing. We have agreed to clarify the Line of Actual Control. That process is moving forward. We have already exchanged the maps in the Central Sector. We are now looking at the Western Sector. After we managed to do that, we will move on to the Eastern Sector. After the Line of Actual Control is delineated on the ground on the maps, then we begin the next stage of settling the boundary issue. So, there is a process. I think it is not necessary to project this visit in the context of this process whereas that process is independent of this visit.

Question: Would you please elaborate on the agreements to be signed?
Foreign Secretary: Actually, I have the list before me. But I want to reserve some surprise for you people.

Question: Indicate some of the subjects.

Foreign Secretary: Already in the press some areas in which agreements are going to be signed have appeared. Those are by and large correct. It is consular side, science and technology, culture, education, etc. These are by and large the areas.

Question: On the issue of exchange of maps, since almost a year the process on the Western Sector has been stalled. As you said, the relationship is a process and not just one visit. But, obviously you have hit some hurdle on this issue. So, is there going to be any via media, any mechanism that is being worked out or which might be known during the Prime Minister’s visit which will sort of help us overcome this obstacle?

Foreign Secretary: The process is something which has been bilaterally agreed upon. The stages of the process are clear. The hurdles, which you have referred to, have nothing to do with the process per se. If we can get back to the process, we can overcome the hurdles.

Question: Will you be a little more specific? Now you are saying that it has nothing to do with the process. Will you be able to take us into confidence about what is the issue that is holding it up?

Foreign Secretary: From our point of view, we should be able to move ahead without any difficulty. We do hope that the Chinese will think likewise, especially after the Prime Minister’s visit. If, on their side they have any things on their mind, we hope that those particular question marks they may have would be dispelled, would be answered and we can move forward. But let me clarify that it is not saying that they are going to ask us a question and we are going to answer. I am just putting it in a general way. If they have some reasons in their mind, those reasons we hope would be satisfactorily addressed and we move forward.

Question: The Middle Sector which you talked about the maps for which have been exchanged between the two countries was in any case the least disputed one.

Foreign Secretary: No, no, do not underestimate these things. It is just we succeeded, therefore the impression is that there was no difficulty. When it comes to territory, there is a saying of Napoleon that he was
willing to sacrifice one Division for one inch of territory. So, if you want to make an issue of things, you can make an issue of anything. So, the fact that we were able to agree to exchange maps in the middle sector in fact gives hope that we will be able to move forward in the other sectors. But this is a process which is inherently a complex one. You cannot expedite the pace artificially. But if you are heading in the right direction, that is the right thing to do.

**Question:** Are any deadlines going to be fixed during the Prime Minister’s visit?

**Foreign Secretary:** That is a great mistake in diplomacy where you lay artificial deadlines. When you cannot meet those deadlines and then you have a feeling of being unsuccessful. One should not lay deadlines. But also do not forget that even the Middle Sector took quite a while. It was not something which was settled overnight.

**Question:** Are there going to be any tariff lines exchanged in terms of boosting trade? Is anything happening on trade?

**Foreign Secretary:** Yes, we have some ideas that we are working on. They are good, useful ideas. I think the trade part is one of the very satisfying, encouraging areas of our developing relationship with China because trade figures are growing. The first four months are showing are showing spectacular results. It is 70 per cent plus.

**Question:** It is actually 96 per cent.

**Foreign Secretary:** Ninety-six is even better than the figures with me. But 70 per cent is good enough, as satisfying as 96 per cent. So, the fact that we are going to have these two particular business events in Shanghai and Beijing and the large business delegation accompanying our Prime Minister, plus certain ideas we are discussing in terms of giving a boost to our bilateral economic relationship, all that augurs well on the economic side.

**Question:** Would you tell us what those ideas are?

**Foreign Secretary:** I think they will appear when …

**Question:** In the fullness of time?

**Foreign Secretary:** Well, the time is not far away. Fullness of time is that the process of ripening is going to be long term. In the immediacy of time.
Question: Do you expect the Prime Minister’s visit to focus any attention on the Tibetan issue? Or would you characterize that also as very very old?

Foreign Secretary: Yes. We have accepted a position there. We have accepted a formulation there which was agreed in 1991. So, this is not a …

Question: Can you just spell out for the record?

Foreign Secretary: I do not have that formulation. But the 1991 formulation in the Joint Communiqué signed at that time states our position. While, of course, the whole Tibetan issue is a fluid one. You know that a delegation of His Holiness Dalai Lama visited China recently. So, in that sense the issue in its entirety would need to be resolved. But this is not an issue of a nature which is germane to the reasons for this visit, to the quality of this visit, or to the results of this visit.

Question: Is it true that China is very disturbed with our Naval movements in South China Sea?

Foreign Secretary: No, no. I do not know where you picked this up. No.

Question: Would the Prime Minister also be discussing the issues of Sikkim and the boundary with the Chinese leadership and Mr. Jintao? Would it be one of the issues?

Foreign Secretary: I cannot in advance tell you what issues can or will not be raised. Since we are discussing our bilateral relationship in all its aspects, I cannot at this stage give you any answer to this. But, it is clear that this is an issue in our relationship.

Question: On the issue of multipolarity, do you expect any discussion with China?

Foreign Secretary: Discussion, no. But I think both India and China support the principle of multipolarity. So, I do not think we need to discuss where we had already reached an agreement on multipolarity. In other words, we do not have to discuss this in order to create a convergence in our positions. That convergence is there. But very clearly also I must explain, and this is important, that our vision of multipolarity is different-significant power centres in the world cooperating with each other internationally and not confronting each other. We should be able to tackle the global problems and those are growing. The world as a whole is
addressing them more and more. Therefore, all the major countries should put their heads and minds together and address those problems in a cooperative framework. There should not be an attempt to develop a global agenda which is based on the interest priorities or concerns of one single power centre.

**Question:** My first question is that in the last few days the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman has been using one phrase referring to the discussions on the LAC as well as on the border. The phrase is ‘on equal consultation, mutual understanding and accommodation and mutual readjustment. What does this mean? Do we accept this phrase? What are they referring to?

**Foreign Secretary:** Nobody has so far explained to us what this means. That is why this is not joint parlance. The moment it becomes joint parlance we will know what it means.

**Question:** Why are they bringing it up again and again? What does it mean? Even President Zhu in St. Petersburg brought it up with the Prime Minister. What does it refer to?

**Foreign Secretary:** I hope that at some stage we will be able to answer your question.

**Question:** What does it mean?

**Foreign Secretary:** You are asking me what it means. I do not know what it means. So, when I know what it means, then I will tell you what it means.

**Question:** After all the Chinese President raised it with the Indian Prime Minister. And the Foreign Ministry Spokesman ...

**Foreign Secretary:** We have not come to a stage in our dialogue with the Chinese where we have sought or are being given clarifications on the meaning of the formulations. This is true.

**Question:** Would you say a lot is lost in translation?

**Question:** Are they saying something else? I think you referred earlier to the 1988 Communiqué when Rajiv Gandhi went.

**Foreign Secretary:** That is joint formulation. That is what the both sides have agreed to and both sides know what meaning of that is. For the rest it is ...
**Question:** Are you saying that they are trying to change or move forward from this joint formulation that was agreed upon in 1988? Are they trying to introduce new elements?

**Foreign Secretary:** When the time comes, we will be able to understand this and be able to pronounce on it. At the moment...

**Question:** In fullness of time....?

**Foreign Secretary:** In fullness of time, yes.

**Question:** You said the two countries are the world’s most populous countries. Are there going to any visa relaxations to enable easier movement of people between the two countries?

**Foreign Secretary:** We are going to sign an agreement.

**Question:** Can you tell us something about it?

**Foreign Secretary:** We have already said that this agreement will be signed and all these things will be simplified. That is why this agreement is important. This does not apply only to the diplomats and the officials, it would be an across the board agreement.

**Question:** Do you thing that after this visit there would be a resolution of the problem of stopping of Chinese goods in India?

**Foreign Secretary:** I do not think that this is a problem of the dimension that you are suggesting that it is. The balance of trade for the first time has moved in India’s favour. Five billion dollars of trade has been built up in a few years and the latest statistics show that the balance of trade has moved in our favour. Therefore, let us look at it realistically.

**Question:** You talked about multipolarity. Are you trying to make a distinction from what Chinese position is on multipolarity?

**Foreign Secretary:** All I can say is that my understanding of some others who speak up for multipolarity, like the French, this is what their understanding is. So is the Russian understanding of multipolarity. The same that I mentioned. I assume that this is China’s understanding of multipolarity. None of the other countries which are generally referred to as future poles, has a concept of multipolarity which is different from what I stated. In other words, it is not intended to confront anybody. It is not based on confrontation between the poles but a cooperative structure
between the poles. Therefore, my understanding is that our respective concepts of multipolarity are the same.

**Question:** China has clearly stated that Pakistan is its very good friend. In the Prime Minister’s meetings with Chinese leadership, will the issue of cross border terrorism from Pakistan side come up for discussion?

**Foreign Secretary:** We do not have any issue to raise in this regard. We are more interested in what would happen at Camp David when Musharrafji goes there.

**Question:** A connected question. Nepal is also closely associated with China and there are disturbances in Nepal. Is India going to discuss the Nepal situation with China?

**Foreign Secretary:** As I said, there is no such choreography under which we can say there are some issues on which there can be discussion and there are some issues on which there would be no discussion. If this is comes up, it may be discussed. But, there is no controversy at all in this.

**Question:** So, we are not going to raise any issue relating to Pakistan and Nepal from our side.

**Foreign Secretary:** There is no such thing in what we have briefed you.

**Question:** To follow on the multipolar world, are Russia, India and China planning to set up a kind of a forum where they lobby for the things they want?

**Foreign Secretary:** No, no. What has only been agreed to is that the Foreign Ministers of the three countries can meet on the margins of the UN General Assembly and discuss issues relating to the discussions at the United Nations. After all the United Nations General Assembly addresses all the issues. So, those issues which are raised in the UN General Assembly could be a legitimate subject matter of consultations, or exchange of views, between these three Foreign Ministers. Plus, there is a track 2 exercise that is going on. Two seminars have been held already and the third is planned for in India. That is another separate track that is going on. But it is not intended to establish any forum or to jointly lobby for any particular thing.

**Question:** Would the Prime Minister also raise the issue of Chinese assistance to Pakistan in the nuclear field?
Foreign Secretary: If I were to tell you what the subject matter of the discussion is going to be, then why make the visit...

Question: It is a legitimate question.

Foreign Secretary: I know it is a legitimate question but my answer is also legitimate.

Question: Which is what?

Foreign Secretary: Which is that I cannot reveal to you now the agenda of talks before the talks have begun.

Question: So you are not ruling it out then?

Foreign Secretary: I am not saying anything. I am simply saying that it is not appropriate, it is not correct, it is wrong in fact, to speak about the actual agenda of the talks in concrete terms at such high level even before talks have begun. At the end of the talks, then we will tell you as to what was discussed and what was said, as we do normally.

Question: After ten years the Indian Prime Minister is visiting China. There is an added dimension that Indo-American relationship is growing much faster and on Indo-American military cooperation also we are going ahead quite fast. So, many experts believe that it is an added dimension to this Indo-China relationship also and also that China will be worried and concerned. We would like to know your reaction to that.

Foreign Secretary: You know the Chinese relations with the United States are very strong. Look at their trade figures. The total Chinese trade with the United States is bigger than our global foreign trade. So, what does that mean? What conclusions does one draw from it? I think these are independent relationships and the dynamics of this are independent. I think it helps the world in general honestly if Indo-US relations increase, Sino-Indian relations increase. I do not think it is a zero sum game- on the contrary.

Question: You said that the Prime Minister’s visit is independent of the process of border resolution between the two countries. In what terms would the Government like to quantify the success of this visit to China?

Foreign Secretary: This visit will be very successful. First of all the fact of the visit itself has political importance an Indian Prime Minister going after ten years. In between there have been, of course, other high level
visits. Such a visit provides you an opportunity to take stock of your entire relationship. We will do that. This sends a very powerful political signal to people, to institutions, to comment on both sides of a declared desire to build up a stronger relationship. That is the whole purpose of a high level exchange of visits. If they were not important, people would not hold them. The reason why they are held is this that at the highest political level you want to send a signal down that the leadership wants to achieve a high level of relationship and the machinery of Government should support that. The other is that the fact that India and China are seeking to maintain a very high level dialogue and even enhance it has a direct message regionally, beyond the region, and globally. That is important too. Specifically in terms of trade, this is a win-win area of our relationship which is going ahead very well. And the fact that large business delegation on the Indian side is accompanying our Prime Minister is a very helpful because they can make use of the opportunity of this high level visit to send the message of what is possible to do today in terms of the two economies because there are growing complementarities and there are new strengths in our own economic possibilities on both sides and we can capitalize on that. And then, we are signing several agreements which then provide you the essential framework within which you improve the relationship in those domains. That is very important too.

Finally I would say that when for example we tell the Pakistanis that let us have people to people contacts, let us have more cultural cooperation, more economic cooperation, that this can create an atmosphere in which outstanding problems can be better resolved, the same logic here. We expand our relationship, we build our relationship. In fact, we have followed this logic very well in the case of China and we advocate this logic to our Pakistani friends. This also would then help us to resolve the outstanding problems in our relationship.

**Question:** You have said that you are trying to send a very powerful economic signal. Yet, the fact is that the Indian Government, on various occasions, have been banning Chinese companies from trading.

**Foreign Secretary:** No, it is not true. Of course, I respect the press and press must do its job. Press very frequently does its job very accurately, but sometimes not so accurately. But there is nothing in what you are saying. Seriously. The point is that all countries of the world, when it comes to certain security matters and all, have certain rules and regulations. So, one should not deliberately try and misinterpret the salience of such rules and regulations and make it appear as if any
particular country is targeted. It is not the case. We have no interest in doing that. But we have an interest, not in specific relation any particular country, that certain security norms should be there.

**Question:** Let us take telecom for example. The Chinese companies are very competitive in telecom. Are you going to allow them to bid for DoT tenders?

**Foreign Secretary:** I really cannot go into details because I will be overstepping my information and my competence. I do not wish to answer that question frankly.

**Question:** On Sikkim we have had a briefing from Chinese officials in Delhi.

**Foreign Secretary:** I am hearing you, but not promising to answer you.

**Question:** I mean the signal that was sent out was a positive one that there could be some forward movement, but the latest indications are that there may not be. I want to know, is there any particular reason for that?

**Foreign Secretary:** Since the Chinese tell you this, please ask them.

**Question:** India has summit level meetings with many countries like Germany, Russia and I am sure there are a huge number of others. Is it time for India and China to, say put in place an annual summit or something like that? Would that be up for discussion during this visit?

**Foreign Secretary:** In effect if you see, formally this is not the case. I just read out to you the high level kind of visits that are taking place, though not at the level of the Prime Minister. You are right in saying that when you talk about summit we are talking about the Prime Minister of India and counterpart on the other side. We have not reached that stage yet.

But if our relationship continues to progress in the way we hope it will, then all possibilities are open.

**Question:** On Sikkim, are we seeking any precondition from China on Sikkim that only then we will have trade between India and China?

**Foreign Secretary:** I would rather not get into that. I have answered enough questions on Sikkim.

**Question:** Will you have any joint declaration at the end of the visit?
Foreign Secretary: The last joint declaration was in 1991. After that I just read out to you the visits that took place - President Narayanan twice, President Jiang Zemin, Chairman Li Peng, Premier Zhu Rongji. These are all successful visits and we achieved a good deal of progress. The 1993 agreement, 1996 agreement, etc. So, let us not try and link the relevance of this visit, the importance of this visit, the success of this visit to yardsticks which are quite unnecessary.

Question: Is there going to be any formal agreement on combating terrorism?

Foreign Secretary: I think the entire world is in consensus on terrorism and China also is a part of that consensus. The UN Security Council Resolutions are there, the Joint Working Group on terrorism that we have on China is there. So, we have moved quite far in terms of sharing our concerns and trying to achieve a degree of cooperation on how the whole issue of global terrorism should be dealt with.
171. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee before his departure for People’s Republic of China.

New Delhi, June 22, 2003.

I leave today on an official bilateral visit to the People’s Republic of China.

We attach high priority to our relations with this important neighbour. Our two countries have developed a wide canvas of mutually beneficial cooperation. Particularly over the last few years, we have been developing and diversifying our relations, even while simultaneously addressing our differences. As the world’s two largest and most populous developing countries, India and China need to remain in close touch on all major issues of global concern.

Three weeks ago I had a very useful meeting with President Hu Jintao in St. Petersburg. My visit will give me an opportunity of also establishing contact with Premier Wen Jiabao and other representatives of the new Chinese leadership.

Besides Beijing, I will be visiting the industrial and commercial centre of Shanghai and the town of Luoyang which has an ancient historical connection with India. I hope to see for myself the remarkable economic transformation that China has undergone over the past decade.

I believe that my discussions with the new Chinese leadership would help in building better understanding and trust between our two countries. There is a compelling geographical, political and economic logic for closer relations between our two countries.


Recalling the historical and cultural links between India and China, and

Desirous of promoting the development of cultural relations between their countries,

The Governments of the Republic of India and the People’s Republic of China have agreed to set up Cultural Centres in each other’s capitals and will facilitate their establishment. Details of the latter will be finalized to mutual agreement through diplomatic channels at an early date.

Signed in Beijing on 23 June, 2003 in the Hindi, Chinese and English languages.

For the Government of Republican of India For the Government of the People’s Republic of China


The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People’s Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as Contracting Parties);

Considering the desire of both countries to strengthen their friendly relations;

Desirous of facilitating the contacts between nationals of both countries on the principles of equality and reciprocity in accordance with the laws of their respective countries;

Recalling the Consular Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People’s Republic of China signed on 13 December 1991; and

Also recalling the Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying the Visa Procedures between the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of India signed on 22 October 1994;

Have agreed as follows, subject to their national laws and regulations:

Article 1

For the purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying Visa Procedures,

(a) “MOU” refers to the Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying the Visa Procedures between the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of India signed on 22 October 1994;

(b) “MEA” refers to the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of the Republic of India;

(c) “MHA” refers to the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of the Republic of India;
“MFA” refers to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the People’s Republic of China; and

“Duly authorised Chinese organisation” refers to Ministries and Commissions of the State Council, the Governments of all Provinces, Autonomous Regions, and Municipalities directly under the Central Government, and Foreign Offices and Bureaus of Economy and Commerce thereunder, and departments and units recognised by the Department of Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China;

“Recognised Indian organisation” refers to recognised chambers of commerce or industry associations or other trade bodies, public sector undertakings, government-approved joint ventures, liaison offices or private sector companies who are members of a recognised chamber of commerce or industry association or other trade body;

“Family members” refers to spouse and the children who are dependent on the applicant and forming part of the same household

Article 2

The Embassy and Consulate of each Contracting Party may issue multiple entry business visas valid for six months and multiple stays of less than ninety (90) days each to nationals of the other country who travel to the receiving country on a temporary visit for purposes of trade, short-term project work and other short-term business related activities;

In the case of Indian nationals, the Chinese Embassy or Consulate in India may grant them visas on receipt of a letter of request from their company or employer and upon presentation of a letter of invitation from a duly authorised Chinese organisation;

In the case of Chinese nationals, the Indian Embassy or Consulate in China may grant them visas on receipt of a letter of request from a duly authorised Chinese organisation and upon presentation of a letter of invitation from a recognised Indian organisation;

The Contracting Parties have agreed that for those applicants for a business visa who have an invitation from an organisation not covered under Article 2(b) and (c) above, or who do not have any
invitation and/or are visiting each others’ countries for the first time, the Chinese side may issue a three (3) month single entry visa with a duration of 60 days on receipt of a letter of request from a recognised Indian organisation whereas the Indian side may issue a two (2) month single entry visa on the basis of a letter of request from a duly authorised Chinese organisation. Where such letters cannot be produced, the respective Embassies or Consulates may decide on the issue of visa based on their respective Government’s guidelines; and

(e) Each Contracting Party agrees that conversion of business or any other visas to employment visas may not be permitted unless the applicant who is a national of either Contracting Party returns to his or her country of nationality or permanent residence and applies to the Embassy or Consulate of the other Contracting Party.

Article 3

The Embassy and Consulate of each Contracting Party may issue work (employment) visas as follows:

(a) For the Head and Deputy Head of a representative office of a company or organisation of each country in the territory of the other country, the Chinese side may issue single entry work visas valid for three (3) months upon presentation of a visa authorisation from a duly authorised Chinese organisation and proof of approval for opening the representative office issued by the Chinese authorities for industrial and commercial administration, with a copy of the terms and conditions thereof, whereas the Indian side may issue single entry work visas valid for three (3) months upon receiving a visa authorisation from MHA and on presentation of the approval issued by the Government of India for opening the representative office, with a copy of the terms and conditions thereof;

(b) For those applicants who have received offers of employment, including for contracted projects, in each others’ countries, the Chinese side may issue single entry work visas valid for three (3) months to the Indian nationals in question upon presentation of a notice of visa authorisation from a duly authorised Chinese organisation and valid employment licenses of the People’s Republic of China for Foreign Nationals issued by the Chinese Labour and Social Security Authorities; whereas the Indian side may issue single
entry work visas valid for three (3) months upon receiving a visa authorisation from MHA, a letter of appointment from the company based in India and where applicable, a confirmation that the project in question and the necessity for employment of Chinese personnel thereof has been approved by the project contracting authority in India;

(c) Each Contracting Party will endeavour to issue single entry three (3) month visas to the above-mentioned persons within ten (10) working days after the receipt of their visa applications;

(d) The Embassy and Consulate of each Contracting Party may issue three (3) month single entry visas to the above-mentioned personnel's accompanying family members, upon presentation of proof of their relationship and a sponsoring letter from their employer in the receiving country;

(e) The above-mentioned Indian personnel, and their accompanying family members shall complete formalities for residence permits and multiple exit-and-entry visas by applying to the local Public Security Bureau within thirty (30) days after their arrival; whereas the above-mentioned Chinese personnel, and their accompanying family members shall complete formalities for residence permits and multiple exit-and-entry visas by applying to the MHA within thirty (30) days after their arrival and thirty (30) days before the expiry of the three (3) month period of the entry visa issued to them;

(f) The residence permits issued by both sides under Article 3(e) above would need to be renewed on an annual basis irrespective of the duration of the applicant’s employment in each other’s countries; and

(g) The Embassy and Consulate of each Contracting Party may, upon presentation of invitation letters from the employers of the above-mentioned personnel, facilitate the issue of tourist visas to their non-accompanying parents, parents-in-law, spouses and children who wish to go on a family visit.

Article 4

The Embassy and Consulate of each Contracting Party may issue visas for tourism purposes as follows:
(a) The Chinese side may issue 3-month single entry visas with a duration of thirty (30) or sixty (60) days stay on presentation of a confirmed return air ticket and proof of sufficient finances to cover all expenditures in China;

(b) The Indian side may issue three (3) month single entry visas on presentation of a confirmed return air ticket and proof of sufficient finances to cover all expenditures in India;

(c) Both sides may also issue multiple entry visas if the itinerary of the applicant and the air ticket issued to him confirms that this is required; and

(d) Both sides may extend visas issued for the purposes of tourism for a further period, if so required.

Article 5

The Embassy and Consulate of each Contracting Party may issue student visas as follows:

(a) The Chinese side may issue a three (3) month single entry visa to Indian applicants on presentation of Application Form for Overseas Students to China (JW201 Form or JW202 Form), Admission Notice and Physical Examination Record for Foreigners, with a resident permit and multiple entry visas to be applied for to the local Public Security Bureau within thirty (30) days of their arrival;

(b) The Indian side may issue a three (3) month single entry visa to Chinese applicants on presentation of a letter of admission from a recognised educational institution in India, and proof of finances to cover travelling expenses to and from India and all expenditure in India, with visa extension, resident permit and multiple entry visas to be applied for to the MHA within thirty (30) days after their arrival and thirty (30) days before the expiry of the three (3) month period of the entry visa issued to the applicant; and

(c) In the case of applicants covered under the Cultural Exchange Programme or the Education Exchange Programme or other mutually approved programmes between the Contracting Parties, both sides may issue relevant visas on presentation of a letter of authorisation from the concerned Government body in each others’ countries.
Article 6

The Embassy and Consulate of each Contracting Party may issue visas to those travelling to each others’ countries for conferences, seminars and other short-term academic exchanges as follows:

(a) The Chinese side may issue a three (3) month single entry visa with a duration of thirty (30) days stay on presentation of the letter of invitation from a duly authorised Chinese organisation, after confirming any necessary internal clearances; and

(b) The Indian side may issue a one (1) month single entry visa on presentation of the letter of invitation from the host organisation in India, after confirming any necessary internal clearances.

Article 7

The Contracting Parties have agreed on the modification of Article 2 of the MOU as follows:

The Embassy and Consulate of each side shall, upon request by a diplomatic note from the MFA on the Chinese side and the MEA on the Indian side, issue multiple entry tourist visas valid for six months free of charge to non-accompanying parents, parents-in-law, spouses and children of the resident personnel of diplomatic and consular missions of the other side in the receiving country who wish to go on family visits.

Article 8

The Contracting Parties have agreed on the modification of Article 4 of the MOU as follows:

(a) The Embassy and Consulate of each side shall, upon request by a diplomatic note from the MFA on the Chinese side and the MEA on the Indian side, issue visas free of charge to holders of diplomatic or service (official) passports of the other who seek to visit the Embassy or Consulate in the receiving country on temporary official duties, except those whose applications are denied;

(b) The Embassy and Consulate of each side shall, upon request by a diplomatic note from the MFA on the Chinese side and the MEA on the Indian side and an invitation letter from a relevant department or unit of the receiving country, issue visas free of charge to holders of diplomatic or service (official) passports who are invited by a
relevant department or organisation of the receiving country, except those whose applications are denied; and

(c) The Contracting Parties shall ensure that in all cases, a diplomatic note for issue of visas from the MFA on the Chinese side and the MEA on the Indian side shall be accepted by the receiving Embassy or Consulate for processing. If any clarification on procedural matters needs to be obtained in connection with the issue of the visa, the concerned Embassy or Consulate may seek necessary clarifications from the East Asia Division, MEA on the Indian side and the Department of Consular Affairs, MFA on the Chinese side.

**Article 9**

Each Contracting Party reserves the right, for reasons of security, public order or public health, to suspend temporarily, either in whole or in part, the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying Visa Procedures upon notification being given thirty (30) days in advance of the intended date of suspension of this Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying Visa Procedures to the other Contracting Party through diplomatic channels

**Article 10**

Each Contracting Party may request in writing, through diplomatic channels, a revision or amendment of the whole or part of this Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying Visa Procedures. Any revision or amendment which has been mutually agreed upon shall come into effect on a date to be mutually agreed upon and shall accordingly form part of this Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying Visa Procedures.

**Article 11**

Any difference or dispute arising out of the implementation of the provisions of this Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying Visa Procedures shall be settled amicably by consultations between the Contracting Parties.

**Article 12**

This Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying Visa Procedures shall enter into force on the date of its signing.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned being duty authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present Memorandum of Understanding on Simplifying Visa Procedures.

DONE at Beijing on this the Twenty third (23) day of June in the year Two Thousand and Three (2003) in two (2) originals, each in Hindi, Chinese and the English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA


The Ministry of Law and Justice of the Republic of India and the Supreme People’s Prosecution Service of the People’s Republic of China, hereinafter referred as “the Parties”

Desiring to strengthen friendly relations between the two countries;

Being convinced about the important role of judicial authorities in the life of society;

Noting that the exchange of knowledge and experience in the judicial and justice fields serves the interests of both States;

Taking into account the international commitments, national legislation and powers of both Parties;

HAVE AGREED as follows:

Article 1

The Parties shall promote cooperation in the following fields:
1. Exchange of information on legal matters;
2. Exchange of experience and best practices in the field of justice in the two countries;
3. Mutual support for training public prosecutors and auxiliary judicial personnel;
4. Exchange of information on drafting of laws and implementation of legal provisions;
5. Cooperation in other legal and judicial matters which are of interest to both Parties.

**Article 2**

For the purpose of implementing the provisions of the present MoU, the Parties will set up programmes of cooperation on a mutual basis.

**Article 3**

In order to develop and implement programmes of cooperation, the Parties shall set up expert working groups.

**Article 4**

The Parties shall subject to their national legislation and rules and regulations create conditions for direct contact and exchange of experience between judicial authorities and justice officials of the two countries.

**Article 5**

The Parties shall facilitate the organization of seminars and conferences on issues of mutual interest.

**Article 6**

The Parties shall promote the exchange of experts on issues of mutual interest.

**Article 7**

Parties shall use their official language along with English translation for the purpose of correspondence.
Article 8

Parties shall bear expenses arising under this MoU for the activities taking place in their territories. In the case of visits of delegations, the financing shall be arranged in the following way:

1. The receiving Party shall cover the expenses regarding the stay and transportation within its territory;
2. The sending Party shall cover the travel expenses to and from the receiving country.

Article 9

This MoU will come into effect on signature and shall remain in force for an indefinite period. However each Party may denounce the MoU at any time by giving a notice to the other Party of its intention to terminate this MoU. Denunciation shall take effect three months from the date when the other State has received such notification.

The following representatives being duly authorised thereto by their respective governments have signed this Memorandum of Understanding.

Done at Beijing on Monday, June 23, 2003 in three authentic copies in Hindi, English and Chinese languages, each text being equally authentic. However, in case of divergent interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the Ministry of Law & Justice  For the Supreme People’s
of the Government of the  Prosecution Service of the Government
Republic of India  of the People’s Republic of China.

In pursuance of Article III of the Agreement of Cooperation of Science and Technology between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People’s Republic of China

Department of Ocean Development, Government of the Republic of India and State Oceanic Administration of the People’s Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as Contracting Parties),

Considering that cooperation in the field of ocean science and technology can promote the well-being and prosperity of the two countries,

Recognizing that such cooperation can strengthen friendly relations between the two countries,

Wishing to establish closer cooperation and foster friendly relationship between scientific and technological institution and personnel in the two countries,

Have agreed as follows:

**Article I**

The Contracting Parties agree to promote development and cooperation in the field of:

A. Integrated coastal zone management;
B. Sea-bed resources exploration and exploitation technology;
C. Polar Science;
D) Ocean energy;
E) Gas Hydrate exploration and exploitation technology;
F) Marine resources assessment;
G) Seaweed production and processing;
H) Satellite Oceanography;
I) Other fields of marine science mutually agreed by both Parties.

**Article II**

Cooperation between the Contracting Parties may be effected with mutual consent by means of

A) Exchange of scientists, research workers, specialists and scholars;
B) Exchange of marine data and information;
C) Organization of bilateral symposium, training courses and seminars;
D) Joint identification of marine problems, projects planning and their formulation and implementation;
E) Exchange of development and activities in marine science and technology and experience and know-how resulting therefrom;
F) Supply of equipment as may be mutually agreed upon;
G) Utilization of facilities for R&D as may be mutually agreed upon; and
H) Other forms of cooperation in the field of marine science as may be mutually agreed upon.

**Article III**

A) The Contracting Parties will endeavour to promote cooperation between their respective organizations, enterprises and institutions concerned with ocean science and technology within the framework of this MOU.

B) The Contracting Parties may, if necessary, sign project implementation protocols or contracts, in accordance with the laws and regulations in force in their respective countries, stipulating provisions, regarding responsibility of participating agencies protecting intellectual property rights, indicating targets and schedule of action and containing financial terms and other conditions.
Article IV

The Contracting Parties should provide necessary assistance in accordance with the laws and regulations in force in their respective countries for the delivery of the equipment required for joint activities undertaken in furtherance of the MOU.

Article V

A) The Contracting Parties will establish a Joint Committee on Ocean Cooperation, which will consist of five members from each Contracting Party. Each Contracting Party shall designate a Co-chairman and a focal point. The Committee will ordinarily meet once a year in the two countries in turn. The frequency of meetings may be reviewed after two years.

B) The Joint Committee will plan and coordinate marine cooperation, and supervise such cooperation. The Committee will also promote new cooperation that both parties are interested in.

C) During the period between meetings of the Joint Committee, additions or amendments may be made to on-going cooperative activities, as may be mutually agreed upon.

D) To assist the Joint Committee, each contracting Party shall designate an Executive Agency. The Agency on the Indian side shall be the Department of Ocean Development and on the Chinese side shall be the State Oceanic Administration.

Article VI

The Contracting Parties agree that each Party will ensure that any documents, technology materials and technology contained whether or not subject to any copyright, patent, restricted designs or like protection obtained through corporation or under this MOU is not used or disclosed for any purpose other than that for which it was provided without the specific consent of the other Party.

Article VII

Each party shall bear the costs originated by their respective activities. In the case that joint activities, which imply diverse contributions for each party, are undertaken, the Contracting Parties shall agree in writing on the respective financing in each particular case.
All visiting persona will comply with the security regulations of the host country. Any information disclosed or made available to visitors will be treated in accordance with the provisions of Article VI.

**Article VIII**

Each Contracting Party shall, subject to its laws and regulations, extend to the citizens of the other Party who stay on its territory, all assistance and facilities in the fulfillment of tasks they are entrusted with according to the provisions of the MOU.

**Article IX**

The Contracting Parties shall solve the disputes or disagreements occurred in the implementation of the MOU through negotiation.

**Article X**

The MOU shall enter into force from the date of its signing and shall remain in force for a period of five years. The MOU shall be automatically extended for a further period of five years, unless one of the Contracting Parties gives written notice to the other Party of its intention to terminate this MOU twelve months before expiry of the said period. The termination of the MOU shall not affect the validity of activities already being implemented under this MOU. The protocols and contracts already signed under the scope and spirit of this MOU will be executed until due discharge by performance.

The respective liabilities and responsibilities of the Contracting Parties detailed in Article VI and VII will be maintained and continued notwithstanding the termination by any of the Contracting Parties or expiry of this MOU or any of its implementing documents/instruments.

**Done** this in Beijing on Monday, June 23, 2003, in two originals in Hindi, Chinese and English languages, all texts are equally authentic.

**For the Government**
**Of the Republic of India**

**Department of Ocean Development**

**For the Government of the**
**People’s Republic of China**

**State Oceanic Administration**
176. Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between the Republic of India and the People’s Republic of China issued during the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to China.


At the invitation of Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China H.E. Wen Jiabao, Prime Minister of the Republic of India H.E. Atal Bihari Vajpayee paid an official visit to the People’s Republic of China from 22 to 27 June 2003.

During this visit, Premier Wen Jiabao held talks with Prime Minister Vajpayee. Their Excellencies President Hu Jintao of the People’s Republic of China, Chairman Jiang Zemin of the Central Military Commission, Chairman Wu Bangguo of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress and Vice President Zeng Qinghong of the People’s Republic of China held separate meetings with Prime Minister Vajpayee. The talks and meetings were held in a sincere and friendly atmosphere.

Leaders from both countries noted with satisfaction the progress made over recent years in bilateral relations. This is conducive not only to their respective development, but also to regional stability and prosperity. The two sides recalled the historical depth of their friendly contacts. India and China are the two largest developing countries of the world with centuries-old civilization, unique history and similar objectives. Both noted that the sustained economic and social development in the two countries, representing one third of humanity is vital for ensuring peace, stability and prosperity not only in Asia but also in the whole world.

The two sides agreed that India and China have a mutual desire for good neighborly relations and have broad common interests. They agreed to fully utilize the substantial potential and opportunities for deepening mutually beneficial cooperation.

Friendship and cooperation between the two countries meets the need to:

• promote the socio-economic development and prosperity of both India and China;

• maintain peace and stability regionally and globally;
strengthen multipolarity at the international level; and
enhance the positive factors of globalization.

Both sides affirmed that they would abide by the following principles, promote a long-term constructive and cooperative partnership and, on this basis, build a qualitatively new relationship:

Both sides are committed to developing their long-term constructive and cooperative partnership on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, mutual respect and sensitivity for each other's concerns and equality;

As two major developing countries, India and China have a broad mutual interest in the maintenance of peace, stability and prosperity in Asia and the world, and a mutual desire in developing wider and closer cooperation and understanding in regional and international affairs;

The common interests of the two sides outweigh their differences. The two countries are not a threat to each other. Neither side shall use or threaten to use force against the other; and

Both sides agree to qualitatively enhancing the bilateral relationship at all levels and in all areas while addressing differences through peaceful means in a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable manner. The differences should not be allowed to affect the overall development of bilateral relations.

Both sides agreed to hold regular high-level exchanges between the two countries. This will greatly enhance mutual understanding and expand bilateral relations. With a view to deepening their coordination and dialogues on bilateral, regional and international issues, both sides agreed on the need for annual meetings between Foreign Ministers of the two countries. They also agreed that personnel exchanges and friendly contacts between ministries, parliaments and political parties of the two countries should be further enhanced.

The two sides welcomed the positive momentum of bilateral trade and economic cooperation in recent years and shared the belief that continued expansion and intensification of India-China economic cooperation is essential for strengthening bilateral relations.

Both sides shared the view that existing complementarities between their two economies provide an important foundation and offer broad
prospects for further enhancing their economic relations. In order to promote trade and economic cooperation, both sides will take necessary measures consistent with their national laws and rules and international obligations to remove impediments to bilateral trade and investment. They reaffirmed the importance of the ministerial meeting of the Joint Economic Group (JEG) and agreed to hold the next (seventh) JEG meeting within the year.

The two sides will set up a compact Joint Study Group (JSG) composed of officials and economists to examine the potential complementarities between the two countries in expanded trade and economic cooperation. The JSG would also draw up a programme for the development of India-China trade and economic cooperation for the next five years, aimed at encouraging greater cooperation between the business communities of both sides. The Group should present a study report and recommendations to the two Governments on measures for comprehensive trade and economic cooperation by the end of June 2004.

The two countries will launch a financial dialogue and cooperation mechanism to strengthen their dialogue and coordination in this sector.

The two sides agreed to enhance cooperation at the World Trade Organization, which is not only to mutual benefit but also in the broader interest of developing countries. The two sides will hold dialogues on a regular basis in this regard.

Historical and cultural links between India and China will be strengthened, inter-alia, through the promotion of exchanges in culture, education, science and technology, media, youth and people-to-people relations. They agreed to set up Cultural Centers in each other’s capitals and facilitate their establishment.

Both sides will work towards the enhancement of direct air and shipping links, tourism, exchange hydrological data in flood season on common rivers as agreed, cooperation in agriculture, dairy, food processing, health and other sectors.

They agreed on the need to broaden and deepen defence exchanges between the two countries, which will help enhance and deepen the mutual understanding and trust between the two armed forces. They confirmed that the exchange of visits by their Defence Ministers and of military officials at various levels should be strengthened.

The two sides exchanged views on the India-China boundary question and expounded their respective positions. They reiterated their
readiness to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution through consultations on an equal footing. The two sides agreed that pending an ultimate solution, they should work together to maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas, and reiterated their commitment to continue implementation of the agreements signed for this purpose, including the clarification of the Line of Actual Control.

The two sides agreed to each appoint a Special Representative to explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship the framework of a boundary settlement.

The Indian side recognizes that the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the People’s Republic of China and reiterates that it does not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities in India. The Chinese side expresses its appreciation for the Indian position and reiterates that it is firmly opposed to any attempt and action aimed at splitting China and bringing about “independence of Tibet”.

The Indian side recalled that India was among the first countries to recognize that there is one China and its one China policy remains unaltered. The Chinese side expressed its appreciation of the Indian position.

India and China recognized the primacy of maintaining international peace. This is a prerequisite for the socio-economic development of all developing countries, including India and China. The world is marked by diversity. Every country has the right to choose its own political system and path to development. As two major developing countries, India and China acknowledged the importance of their respective roles in the shaping of a new international political and economic order. The international community must help the developing countries to eliminate poverty and narrow the gap between the North and the South through dialogue and cooperation so as to achieve common prosperity.

The two sides acknowledged the vital importance of the role of the United Nations in world peace, stability and development. They are determined to continue their efforts in strengthening the UN system. They reaffirmed their readiness to work together to promote reform of the UN. In reform of the UN Security Council, priority should be given to enhancing representation of the developing countries.

Both sides stood for continued multilateral arms control and disarmament process, undiminished and equal security for all at
progressively lower levels of armament and for multilateral negotiations aimed at nuclear disarmament and elimination of nuclear weapons. They are firmly opposed to introduction of weapons in outer space, use or threat of force against space-based objects and support cooperation in development of space technology for peaceful purposes.

The two sides recognised the threat posed by terrorism to them and to global peace and security. They resolutely condemned terrorism in any form. The struggle between the international community and global terrorism is a comprehensive and sustained one, with the ultimate objective of eradication of terrorism in all regions. This requires strengthening the global legal framework against terrorism. Both sides shall also promote cooperation on counter-terrorism through their bilateral dialogue mechanism.

India and China face special and similar challenges in their efforts to protect the environment while simultaneously forging ahead with rapid social and economic development of their countries. In this context, the two sides agreed to work together in a practical manner to cooperate on preserving the environment and ensuring sustainable development and to coordinate positions on climate change, biodiversity and other issues in relevant multilateral fora.

The two sides supported multilateral cooperation in Asia, believing that such cooperation promotes mutually beneficial exchanges, economic growth as well as greater cohesion among Asian countries. The two sides viewed positively each other’s participation in regional and sub-regional multilateral cooperation processes in Asia.

The two sides stated that the improvement and development of India-China relations is not targeted at any third country and does not affect either country’s existing friendly relations and cooperation with other countries.

The two sides agreed that the official visit of the Prime Minister of India to the People’s Republic of China has been a success, has contributed to enhancing mutual understanding and trust between the Governments, leaders and peoples of the two countries, and marks a new step forward in strengthening the all-round cooperation between India and China in the new century1.

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1. The following agreements and MoUs were signed during the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the People’s Republic of China on June 23, 2003.
Prime Minister Vajpayee invited Premier Wen Jiabao to visit India at a mutually convenient time and conveyed to President Hu Jintao an invitation from President Abdul Kalam to visit India. The Chinese side accepted the invitations with appreciation. The dates of the visits will be settled through diplomatic channels. On behalf of the Government and the people of India, H.E Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee thanked the Government and the people of China for the warm welcome received by him and his delegation.

(1) **Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Ministry of Law and Justice of the Government of the Republic of India and the Supreme People’s Prosecution Service of the People’s Republic of China.** (Document No. 174)

(Signatories: Shri Yashwant Sinha, External Affairs Minister and Mr. Jia Chunwang, Procurator General on the Chinese side)

The MoU envisages facilitating closer cooperation in the judicial field between India and China, through the exchange of information, experience in legal matters, including drafting of laws and Implementation of legal provisions, exchange of experience and best practices, mutual support for training public procurators and auxiliary judicial personnel, and cooperation in other legal and judicial matters of interest to both countries. The MoU also provides for setting up of expert working groups, facilitation of direct contacts, conduct of joint seminars and exchange of experts to meet the objective of cooperation in the judicial field. Seminars and conferences on issues of mutual interest will also be organized.

(2) **Executive Programme on Educational Cooperation and Exchange between the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of the Republic of India and Ministry of Education, the People’s Republic of China.**

(Signatories: Shri Yashwant Sinha, External Affairs Minister and Mr. Zhou Ji, Minister for Education of the PRC on the Chinese side)

Under this executive programme, both sides aim to consolidate and strengthen mutual cooperation in the field of education through sharing of experiences between the educational administrators and through the study of education systems and innovative education programmes in each country. The two sides agree to exchange views and conduct discussion on mutual recognition of academic degrees. They will also cooperate in such areas as the development of curricula for primary and secondary school education, exchange of teaching materials, teaching methodologies as well as the feasibility of conducting joint research in various modes of pre-research and in-service teachers’ training and will examine the possibility of jointly establishing a Demonstration Centre for Teacher Training. They will also take measures to encourage higher education institutions from their respective countries to establish direct exchange and cooperation through exchange of lecturers, scholars, books, research materials and audio-visual aids, holding of joint seminars/symposia etc. They have noted the importance of student exchange programmes in various areas including IT and have provided for 25 post-graduate scholarships to be offered annually by both countries. They have also agreed to exchange two language teachers in Hindi and Chinese respectively. This programme will be valid from June 2003 to 2006 and will be extended for another three years if both sides so agree.

(3) **Protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for Exporting Mangoes from India to China between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and General**
Signed in Beijing on 23 June 2003 in the Hindi, Chinese and English languages.

(Atal Bihari Vajpayee) 
Prime Minister  
The Republic of India

(Wen Jiabao) 
Premier of the State Council  
The People’s Republic of China

Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People’s Republic of China.

(Signatories: Shri Yashwant Sinha, External Affairs Minister and Mr. Li Changjiang, Head of AQSIQ on the Chinese side)

Under the India-China bilateral WTO accession agreement of February 2000, both sides agreed to sign a Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) protocol to facilitate exports of Indian fresh fruits and vegetables to China. An umbrella MoU on the application of Phyto-Sanitary Measures was signed during the visit of Premier Zhu Rongji in January 2002. India proposed 17 categories of fruit and vegetables (including mangoes, guavas, grapes, papayas, melons, gherkins, cucumbers, beans, aubergines, capsicums, gourds etc) for coverage under this MoU. The Chinese side decided to deal with each item separately. The first item taken up for consideration under this procedure was the mango. After completion of a Pest Risk Analysis and detailed negotiations, agreement has now been reached on procedures relating to inspection, certification, packaging and labelling of all consignments of mangoes to be exported to China from India. Now that we have a basic understanding of the relevant procedures, it is hoped that agreement on similar protocols for all the other identified fruits and vegetables can be concluded expeditiously.


(Signatories: Shri Kanwal Sibal, Foreign Secretary, on the Indian side, and Mr. Wang Yi, Vice Foreign Minister of the PRC on the Chinese side)

This MoU lays down mutually agreed procedures for the issue of visas in various categories (business, employment, tourism, students, conferences and other short-term academic and cultural exchanges etc.) for private passport holders and on the Chinese side, also for holders of “ordinary passports for public affairs” who are mainly employees of state owned enterprises. This MoU provides clarity on the kind of documentation required for various visas and on the duration and validity of visas issued for different purposes. This will help streamline the process of obtaining visas for businessmen, tourists, students, academics and other experts travelling to each other’s countries and will serve to promote people-to-people interaction.


(Signatories: Shri Kanwal Sibal, Foreign Secretary, on the Indian side, and Mr. Wang Yi, Vice Foreign Minister of the PRC on the Chinese side)
This MoU seeks to establish cooperation in the field of small hydropower, wind power and other areas of renewable energy through joint research and development activities, exchange of technical expertise and information networking. The ultimate objective is to commercialise the result of such cooperation, create business opportunities and facilitate sustainable market development in an environmentally responsible manner. Areas of cooperation will be defined by mutual consent in accordance with the interest of experience of the scientific, technological and industrial institutions and personnel of the two countries and the facilities available. The MoU provides for exchange of scientific and technological problems, formulation and implementation of joint research and development and demonstration projects on application of renewable energy technologies for augmenting energy availability in a cost-effective manner, training of personnel and setting up of technical demonstration projects in areas of renewable energy.

(6) Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in the field of Ocean Science and Technology between Department of Ocean Development, Government of the Republic of India and State Oceanic Administration, People’s Republic of China. (Document No. 175)

(Signatories: Shri Kanwal Sibal, Foreign Secretary, on the Indian side, and Mr. Wang Yi, Vice Foreign Minister of the PRC on the Chinese side)

This MoU aims at promoting development and cooperation in areas such as integrated coastal zone management, sea-based resources exploration and exploitation technology, polar science, ocean energy, gas hydrate exploration and exploitation technology, marine resources assessment, seaweed production and processing, satellite oceanography and other fields of marine science of mutual interest to both sides. Such cooperation would be developed through the exchange of scientists, research workers, specialists and scholars; exchange of marine data and information; organization of bilateral symposium, training courses and seminars; joint identification of marine problems, projects and planning and their formulation and implementation; exchange of experience and know-how gained through development and activities in marine science and technology; mutual supply of equipment; utilization of facilities for R&D and other such mutually agreed means of cooperation.

(7) Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Science and Technology of the Republic of India and the National Science Foundation of China.

(Signatories: Shri Shivshankar Menon, Ambassador of India and Mr. Wang Yi, Vice Foreign Minister on the Chinese side)

This MoU provides for maintenance and development of cooperative research activities in the field of natural sciences within the framework of the Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology between the Government of India and the Government of the People’s Republic of China signed on 22 December 1988 in Beijing. The objective will be to ensure that the cooperation will bring real benefits to the development of science and technology in both countries. Collaborative activities will be undertaken in the fields of natural sciences with emphasis on Physical Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Chemical Sciences and Biological Sciences. It recognizes that as a first step, a practical means of initiating collaboration between scientists of the two countries is provided by holding meetings of equal numbers of researchers (to be known as N+N meetings) from each side alternatively in India and China. Other forms of collaboration, including individual outgoing and incoming visits by leading scientists and joint research in areas on subjects identified as a priority by scientists of both sides will be based on the relationship built by N+N meetings, or on other established relationships. Priority areas for cooperation will be identified as also a framework of cooperation for each selected area (key institutions,
key persons, forms of cooperation, financing etc.). The MoU also provides for periodic reviews of on-going programmes and for the exchange of information.

(8) **Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People’s Republic of China on the Reciprocal Establishment of Cultural Centres in their Capitals.** (Document No. 172)

(Signatories: Shri Kanwal Sibal, Foreign Secretary on the Indian side and Mme Meng Xiaosi, Vice Minister of Culture on the Chinese side)

This MoU reflects the agreements reached in principle by both sides to establish independent cultural centres in each other’s capital cities. Relevant details such as location, staffing patterns, broad consensus on activities to be undertaken by the centres and so on will be worked out through mutual negotiations in the near future.

(9) **Executive Programme of Cultural Exchanges between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People’s Republic of China for the years 2003-2005.**

(Signatories: Shri Kanwal Sibal, Foreign Secretary on the Indian side and Mme Meng Xiaosi, Vice Minister of Culture on the Chinese side)

The Executive Programme of Cultural Exchanges (CEP) provides for exchange of cultural troupes, art exhibitions, and cultural festivals, cooperation in the fields of archaeology and library science, cooperation between the National Museum, national Gallery of Modern Art, National Library, Sangeet Natak Academy and their respective Chinese counterparts etc. It also provides for interaction in the fields of youth affairs and sports, social sciences and mass media, including exchange of radio and TV programmes and training of personnel in radio, TV and films. This is a programme valid for the period June 2003-2005. There is, however, a provision which states that after June 2005, this agreement will remain operative till such time as a new CEP is negotiated and formalized.
177. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Peking University.


Mr. Minister,
President of Peking University,
Distinguished Faculty Members,
Friends,

I thank you for inviting me to speak today at this renowned centre of learning. This premier University of China has had an eventful history, including migrating over 3000 kilometres during the Second World War to maintain its uninterrupted academic tradition.

You also have a special connection with India. We are grateful to your University for having sent Professor Tan Yun Shan to Shantiniketan many decades ago. It was he who inspired our great poet Rabindranath Tagore to set up the famous “Cheena Bhavan” in Vishwa Bharati University, of which I have the honour to be the Chancellor.

Today we repay this debt in some measure by pledging our support for a Centre for Indian Studies in this University. I have just had the privilege of inaugurating that Centre and of making a symbolical initial donation to its library. My government is prepared to depute two faculty members from India to the Centre. We have pledged to contribute an amount of one million rupees annually for the first five years towards its running costs. We can fund an annual scholarship at an appropriate institute in India for a student of the Centre. We are also offering an annual prize of a three-week visit to India for the first-ranked student of the centre. I propose we call this the Tan Yun Shan Award in memory of that modern-day pioneer of India-China cultural understanding. We would be happy to extend any other form of support, which the Centre may require.

Friends,

Initiatives like the Centre for Indian Studies are specially welcome as part of our current effort to enrich the interaction between the India and China of today. We are, of course, two of the world’s oldest civilizations with contacts over at least two millennia. The Silk Route connected us through commerce, but also by facilitating the free flow of our music, our scriptures and our literature. The message of the Buddha, transmitted
from India, was received by millions in China. Our maritime trade links kept us in close contact and also created a confluence of our cultures with that of South-East Asia.

But there were periods in history when our civilizations went into an introspective phase and lost regular touch with each other. In a later era, both countries suffered from colonial invasions and deprivations, which accentuated this trend. The shadow of the Cold War and the consequent distortions of global international relations had its impact also on India and China. From relative isolation from each other, we went into a state of estrangement.

We have emerged decisively from this dead-end of mistrust, already a few decades ago. We have vigorously set about recovering our mutual understanding, building a broad base for our cooperation and redeeming the promise of our complementarities.

It is in this task of recovering mutual understanding that the Centre for Indian Studies can make a significant contribution. You have built up an impressive scholarship in Indological studies, focussing mainly on history, languages and literature. I would suggest that you also strengthen your scholarship on modern Indian political, economic and sociological studies. Distance encourages caricatures and stereotyped images, based on old experiences. Academic exchanges and contemporary studies help to bridge the gap of information and perceptions. You can make your centre fulfil Lao Zi’s ideal of knowledge and understanding:

“Without stirring abroad
  One can know the whole world;
Without looking out of the window
  One can see the way of heaven.”

We know where we have come from. Let us better understand each other as we are today, and comprehend where we can go together in the future. The better we understand each other, the more we can do together.

No objective analysis can deny the combined strength and complementarity of an India-China partnership:

Ø We are the two most populous countries of the world,
Ø We have the two fastest growing economies in the world – yours faster than ours. In any economic forum in the world these days, the focus is on India and China.
Ø Both of us have continent-sized markets, with the advantages of huge economies of scale.

Ø We also have the problems of continent-sized countries – unequal development, a wide spread of income disparities, and a potential digital divide. Exchange of developmental experiences can be valuable.

Ø We are both at the forefront of developing and applying the technologies, which drive the Knowledge Economy.

Ø We have a harmonious balance of strengths. India’s strengths in Information Technology, software engineering, management and financial services are well matched by the Chinese expertise in hardware, construction and industry.

Ø Both India and China were present at the broader dialogue of developing countries with the G-8 countries in Evian earlier this month. I was struck by the congruence in our positions. If we acted in concert, it would be very difficult for the world to ignore us.

Ø India and China have frequently reiterated their commitment to the development of a cooperative multi-polar world order. In the complex international situation of today, we have a role to play in helping to restore the authority of the international organisations, which have been undermined in recent months.

Our two countries have been taking steps towards increasing mutual trust and understanding, through more intensive interaction. In recent years, our cooperation has greatly expanded and diversified. Our bilateral trade has shot up from around 200 million dollars in the early nineties to around 5 billion dollars. Indian business and industry have overcome their initial cultural and commercial apprehensions of Chinese business and are strengthening their linkages. The conclusive proof of this is the size and variety of the business delegation, which is here in China to coincide with the visit. It is also noteworthy that Indian investment in China is nearly 65 million dollars.

The India-China dialogue already transcends bilateral relations to encompass international issues such as terrorism, security, environment and sustainable development. We have an increasing commonality of interests within the World Trade Organization and overlapping concerns on globalization. Our coordination and collaboration in various multilateral
institutions is expanding into newer and newer areas. A small, but important, example of such effective joint action is our cooperative effort to make the infrastructure lending policies of the World Bank more rational.

But, as I have said before, for two countries of our human resources, economic strengths and technological skills, we have only scratched the surface. Your senior leader Mr. Deng Xiaoping once said that the 21st century can only be the Asian century if India and China combine to make it so. To do so effectively, we should be conscious of our complementary strengths, resist contradictory pulls, and deploy our resources in a mutually reinforcing manner. Our trust and understanding should be able to withstand forces which seek to divide us.

I would like to dwell in this context on what is frequently described as “rivalry” between India and China. As two large developing countries at roughly the same stage of development, sharing the same neighbourhood, pursuing similar growth trajectories, with comparable economic priorities and similar political ambitions, it is inevitable that comparisons will be made between India and China. It is also an unavoidable characteristic of human nature that there is always a sense of competition between two close and equal neighbours.

But we need to clearly understand the difference between healthy competition and divisive rivalry. Even in the present-day world, you can find examples of countries which have maintained close political coordination, strengthened their economic complementarities and harmonized their international objectives, even while maintaining a healthy and good-natured economic and commercial competition. The developing world in general, and our two countries in particular, can benefit greatly by absorbing the lessons from these experiences. We should focus on the simple truth that there is no objective reason for discord between us, and neither of us is a threat to the other. These simple, but profound, principles should form the bedrock of the future India-China partnership.

One cannot wish away the fact that before good neighbours can truly fraternize with each other, they must first mend their fences. After a hiatus of a few decades, India and China embarked on this important venture a few years ago. We have made good progress. I am convinced that, with steadfast adherence to the Five principles of peaceful coexistence, with mutual sensitivity to the concerns of each other, and with respect for equality, our two countries can further accelerate this process so that we can put this difference firmly behind us. I am
encouraged after my discussions with Premier Wen Jiabao that both our countries see an opportunity to proceed along this path.

It is a tryst with destiny, which beckons to us. When we redeem it, we can truly fulfil the ideal of close cooperation, described so colourfully by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore:

“When daylight breaks, we are free from the enclosure and the exclusiveness of our individual life. It is then that we see the light, which is for all men and for all times. It is then that we come to know one another, and come to cooperate in the field of life.”

India and China can create this destiny.

Thank you.

✦✦✦✦✦


The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People’s Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as the two sides),

With a view to promoting the development of friendly relations between the two countries and two people’s,


Desirous of opening another pass on the India-China border and setting up an additional point on each side for border trade,

Have agreed as follows:

Article I

The Indian side agrees to designate Changgu of Sikkim state as
the venue for border trade market; the Chinese side agrees to designate Renqinggang of the Tibet Autonomous Region as the venue for border trade market.

**Article II**

The two sides agree to use Nathula as the pass for entry and exit of persons, means of transport and commodities engaged in border trade. Each side shall establish checkpoints at appropriate locations to monitor and manage their entry and exit through the Nathula Pass.

**Article III**

All the provisions of the Memorandum on the Resumption of Border Trade signed between the two Governments on 13 December 1991 and the Protocol on Entry and Exit Procedures for Border Trade signed between the two Governments on 1 July 1992 under the Memorandum shall also be applicable to the border trade through the Nathula Pass.

**Article IV**

This Memorandum may be amended or supplemented by agreement in writing between the two sides.

**Article V**

This Memorandum shall come into force as from the date of its signature and shall be valid during the validity of the Memorandum on Resumption of Border Trade signed between the two Governments in New Delhi on 13 December 1991.

Done in Beijing on 23 June 2003 in two originals each in the Hindi, Chinese and English languages, the three texts being equally authentic.

For the Government of the Republic of India  For the Government of the People’s Republic of China

✦✦✦✦✦
179. Opening remarks by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at a press briefing for Indian and foreign media during Prime Minister’s visit to China.

Beijing, June 24, 2003.

Last evening, Prime Minister and Premier Wen Jiabao signed the Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between India and China. The Commerce Minister of China, Lu Fuyuan and I signed the Memorandum on Expanding Border Trade through Nathula Pass on the India China boundary.

Today, Prime Minister had very useful and friendly conversations with President Hu Jintao, Chairman, Central Military Commission Jiang Zemin, NPC Chairman Wu Bangguo and Vice President Zeng Qinghong. All his interlocutors underlined that his visit has been very successful. The meetings enabled Prime Minister to establish a personal relationship with the new Chinese leadership. This is of particular importance since we expect our two countries to be working together more closely in the years ahead on the basis of agreements arrived at during this visit.

The Declaration that you have before you is the first ever joint document signed by leaders of our two countries. Prime Minister Wen Jiabao has described this Declaration as marking a new stage of development in our relations and a blueprint and document of historic significance.

I would wish to highlight to you some of the main elements of the Declaration:

- Progress in bilateral relations between India and China is conducive also to regional stability and prosperity. Our two countries have broad common interests.

- Cooperation between our two countries will strengthen multipolarity at the international level.

- India and China will build a qualitatively new relationship based on the principles of Panchsheel, mutual respect and sensitivity for each other’s concerns and equality.

- Continued expansion and intensification of India-China economic cooperation. You have already heard of the Joint Study Group
that the two Prime Ministers have set up and which is to report by the end of June 2004. This Group will examine the potential complementarities and also draw up a programme for the development of India-China trade and economic cooperation for the next five years.

- Both countries will open Cultural Centres in each other’s capitals.
- Defence exchanges will be enhanced.
- On the boundary question, there are three aspects namely, continued maintenance of peace and tranquility in the border areas; continued implementation of the 1993 and 1996 agreements including clarification of the Line of Actual Control; and, appointment of a Special Representative by each side to explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship, the framework of a boundary settlement.
- There is agreement on a high-level dialogue architecture. Foreign Ministers are to meet annually.
- Both sides recognize the threat posed by terrorism to them and resolutely condemn terrorism in any form.

A reading of the Declaration will bring out many more important facets of bilateral and international cooperation that have been agreed upon.

The Memorandum on extending border trade is in pursuance of the existing agreements of 1991 and 1992 on border trade. You will recall that in 1993 there was another agreement adding border trade through Shipki La pass in Himachal Pradesh to the original agreement on Lipulekh pass. Border trade through these two passes in 2002-03 was a little under Rs.10 crores.

Before we left India we had told you that we expect that the Prime Minister’s visit to China, the first after almost a decade, will buttress the ongoing effort to construct an enduring and strong partnership between India and China based on the principles of Panchsheel, mutual sensitivity to each other’s concerns and equality. I have no doubt that this objective has been achieved.

I will take some more of your time and tell you about the meetings today. Our Prime Minister and President Hu Jintao recalled very warmly
the meeting they had in St. Petersburg. President Hu Jintao said that the visit of the Prime Minister will send a message to the entire international community that China and India are coming closer together. A theme which came through repeatedly in all the meetings was the commitment of both sides to impart a much greater momentum to our bilateral relationship in all spheres and build trust and confidence. The Prime Minister emphasized in all his meetings that his visit to China was meant to further build on the trust and confidence between the two countries and expand the area of understanding between the two countries. All the Chinese leaders that the Prime Minister met termed his visit as extremely successful and referred to the rich results.

Our Prime Minister and President Hu Jintao agreed that both countries want to pursue the path of economic progress in their respective countries in an environment of peace in the region, as well as in the rest of the world, so that the ultimate objective that both countries have of providing a better life to their people could be achieved. The Prime Minister referred to the progress which China has made and compared his impressions of today with his earlier impressions when he came here in 1979 and again as a Member of Parliament in 1993 and complimented the Chinese leadership on the progress that they have made. In return, the Chinese leadership complimented the Prime Minister on the progress that India was making and also the very remarkable progress that India has made in certain spheres, especially in the area of science and technology.

You heard the Prime Minister speak at the Business Forum. He emphasized the fact to the Chinese leadership that one of the main objectives of his visit was to strengthen the economic relationship and that is why he has brought the largest-ever business delegation that has travelled with the Prime Minister and that this will contribute to the enhancement of our relationship in the economic area.
180. Keynote address by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajapyee at the Seminar on “China-India Economic Cooperation and Development”.

Beijing, June 24, 2003.

Mr Minister,

Chairman of the China Council for Promotion of International Trade,

Friends,

It is a great pleasure for me to be here today, among the premier business representatives of one of the most dynamic economies in the world today. On this visit, I have been in Beijing now for just over a day. But wherever I have been in this city, I saw the pace of economic change and could sense the urgency of the modernization drive. It has truly been an eye-opener.

I must note that the Indian business delegation accompanying me on this visit is among the largest that has travelled with me on my official visits abroad. This says something about the potential which Indian trade and industry circles see in economic cooperation with China.

I have had the privilege to witness three distinct phases of economic change in this country. I first came here in 1979, just after the “Four Modernizations were adopted. I came again in 1993, when Senior Leader Deng Xiaoping had just launched the second phase of your economic reforms. Now in 2003, we see the country’s ambitious plan to quadruple its GDP by 2020. Judging by your past performance, I have no reason to doubt that you will also achieve this extraordinary target. China is today the world’s fastest growing economy and is second largest in purchasing power parity. Your achievements in the economic transformation of your country are truly remarkable and I congratulate the Chinese government and people for them.

Friends,

While our expansion and growth rates have lagged behind China, the Indian economy has also made impressive strides in the last decade or so. In the last 12 years, we have recorded an average annual growth of nearly 6 per cent. India is the world’s fourth largest economy on
purchasing power parity. Our trade with the world has also recorded a steady annual growth of over 8 per cent in the past decade. We can now say with some certainty that Indian private business and industry has come of age in a rapidly globalizing world. Indian companies are now acquiring brand recognition abroad in cutting edge areas like Information Technology, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. The Forbes 200 ranking last year of the world’s best small companies included as many as 13 Indian companies.

Dear Friends,

The twin objectives of my visit to China at this stage were

1. to establish close relations with the new leadership of your country, and
2. to impart a fresh momentum to the comprehensive cooperation which India and China are in the process of building.

I must say with great satisfaction that my meetings with the leadership of China have been excellent. They have confirmed that the desire to build stable, enduring and forward-looking ties of friendship is shared by the highest political levels in both countries.

Some of the results in economic cooperation have already been quite encouraging. Our bilateral trade has been growing rapidly. Though it is from a relatively narrow base, the recent annual growth rate of 30 per cent in our bilateral trade is quite significant. In the first four months of this year, bilateral trade registered an astonishing growth of about 70 per cent. China now accounts for about 4 per cent of India’s foreign trade and this proportion is rising. At this rate, the bilateral trade target of 10 billion dollars which had been mentioned during the Chinese Premier’s visit to India last year is likely to be attained soon.

Equally importantly, bilateral investments have started picking up. There are about 15 Chinese companies in India and 71 projects set up by Indian firms in China. Although the net investment figures are not as yet very large, the symbolism of two of the largest developing countries investing in each other’s economies is important.

Speaking at the Peking University yesterday, I had drawn attention to the many commonalities between India and China, which have created
potentially rewarding synergies. Both have large populations, growing economies, and a majority of our people dependent on agriculture. Shared economic, social and ecological problems create opportunities for closer cooperation.

There was a period in the India-China relationship when our preoccupation with our differences prevented a pragmatic understanding of the mutual benefits from cooperation. Our present course of developing all-round bilateral cooperation, while simultaneously addressing our differences, has transformed the quality of our relationship. This has helped to further narrow our differences and to accelerate our cooperation.

Of course we have much further to go to realize the full potential of our partnership. We have, first and foremost, to bridge the information gap between the business communities of our two countries. There has to be far greater exposure in each country of the opportunities available in the other. This would help to diversify our trade basket. It would also ensure that we first look within our countries for solutions to our economic needs, before we turn to the developed countries.

Our two governments have decided to make a concerted effort to move our economic cooperation to greater heights. Premier Wen Jiabao and I decided yesterday that we would form a Joint Study Group of economists and officials from our two countries to review existing cooperation, to identify new areas of promise and to draw up a comprehensive perspective plan for the further development of a multi-faceted economic interaction. This is an initiative which will require meaningful inputs also from business and industry of India and China.

For a rapid expansion of our economic interactions, it is very important to strengthen passenger and cargo transportation links, banking support structures and trade facilitation measures. While governments on both sides can work to address these infrastructural problems, it is for private business and industry to optimize their utilization.

Friends,

This is a business seminar and innovative ideas for progressing the India-China economic partnership in various areas should really emerge from your deliberations. I cannot lay down either policy prescriptions or action agendas for this endeavour. I would only like to affirm to you that the leadership of our two countries believes in the huge
potential for our economic and commercial cooperation. We are committed to create conditions which would facilitate the rapid growth of this cooperation. This provides a strong political underpinning to your endeavours. I hope you can build on it constructively and creatively.

Thank you.

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181. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on “India & China: Challenges and Opportunities in the IT Sector”.


Mr. Mayor,
Mr. Vice Mayor,
Chairman of the Shanghai Council for the Promotion of International Trade,

Friends,

I am happy to participate in this unique event, which focuses on an area of particular promise in India-China bilateral cooperation. It seems specially appropriate to hold this function in Shanghai, which is both a showcase of the economic transformation of China, and a hub of its technological development.

We often say India and China are ancient civilizations. Both our countries have experienced colonial domination and external pressures in recent centuries. We commenced our independent existence, not very long ago, as poor and industrially backward countries. It should therefore be a matter of pride that our two developing countries are counted among the leaders in the cutting-edge technologies, which drive today’s knowledge economy. This has enabled us to accelerate our economic growth by compressing the intermediate stages in the development process. Technological upgradation and innovation is, therefore, a high priority area for India.

The Indian I.T. industry – as we have just seen in the presentation – has been a major success story in this endeavour. The market capitalization of the Indian software industry has climbed steeply from 4
billion dollars in 1999 to about 50 billion dollars today. Our software exports are about 10 billion dollars.

Apart from traditional on-site software development, Indian companies have also ventured into I.T.-enabled services like Call Centres, Medical transcription, data digitization, legal data-bases, and animation. More than 500 portals are being launched in India every month. Of 70 global software companies with the highest certification for quality control, 48 are Indian. One of our major I.T. firms has recently crossed 1 billion dollars in total revenues, and at least two other major firms are close to this impressive turnover figure.

We are also aware of China’s impressive capabilities in information and communications technologies. China is one of the world leaders in computer hardware. The Chinese I.T. industry achieved a total volume of over 25 billion dollars last year in hardware alone. What is perhaps less well known is that China’s software industry has also been surging ahead. China is the third-largest market in the world for personal computers, and is expected to be in second position by 2005. By that time, sales of personal computers in the country are expected to reach 80 million.

China’s internet-enabled population reached nearly 60 million persons last year. It is worth remembering that this is more than the entire population of several countries! The Dragon processor chip, China’s first indigenously produced computer chip, was also a technological achievement.

While our hardware and communications infrastructure is also growing rapidly, we have much to learn from China in this area.

Friends,

In recent years, Indian business and industry have been strongly exploring the synergies with China in the knowledge-based technologies. An awareness gap between the industries in the two countries appears to have inhibited a more vigorous interaction. That is why events like this need to be commended.

There are some obvious areas of convergence of commercial interest between India and China in this sector.

- It is self-evident that our respective core competence in hardware and software provides a natural ground for an effective alliance in the I.T. industry.
- The profiles of our respective software industries are also complementary. While in China, the predominant focus is on products, the Indian software industry focuses more on contract services and solutions.

- The strong international brand recognition of Indian IT firms is an asset that can enrich an India-China IT partnership. The higher end of the value chain is a niche that even multinational firms have not explored in the Chinese market.

Both our countries face the challenge of a 'digital divide' from regional imbalances in access to technologies. India has launched an ambitious programme to ensure 'I.T. for all' by 2008 with a major national campaign for universalising I.T.-based education at all levels of the education pyramid. We have conducted innovative experiments at the community level using low cost computing, home networking solutions, more efficient use of the internet bandwidth and e-marketing. With a similar diversity of regional educational and social patterns, China would also have collected experiences which may be relevant to us. A sharing of experiences in this important objective could help to develop better strategies in both countries to bridge the digital divide.

There is another potential strategic gain from an India-China partnership in I.T. We know that technological advantage can be sustained only with intensive research and continuous innovation. If countries like India and China were to concentrate on specific areas of their technological advantage, they could benefit far more than by competing across the spectrum. In combination, rather than in competition, Indian and Chinese I.T. industries can be a potent force. This is a principle which has far wider application in South-South cooperation.

The Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008 could provide a good opportunity for Indian and Chinese I.T. firms to work together. Our experience has shown that in mega events like these, a substantial proportion of the contracts awarded in the I.T. sector are actually subcontracted to Indian firms by contractors from the developed countries. Indian and Chinese firms could instead join up to provide state-of-the art solutions at cost effective prices, thereby also cutting out the middlemen. We could even think of a joint institutional mechanism between the two governments which could see whether modalities could be worked out for this.
India has a national e-governance programme seeking to link grassroots public services with those at the macro level. Here again, India and China can share experiences in optimizing our e-governance systems.

Friends,

One of the main objectives of my visit to China is to impart a fresh momentum to the comprehensive bilateral cooperation which India and China are seeking to build. The most significant decision in this direction was the agreement by the two Prime Ministers to set up a Joint Study Group to recommend to the governments concrete measures for boosting our trade and economic cooperation over a short to medium term time frame. If our economic cooperation is to break out of the present traditional mould, knowledge-based technologies need to occupy a far more prominent position in our economic interactions. I believe the discussions today would illustrate the tremendous scope. The two governments can only give policy and infrastructural support to this endeavour. Indian and Chinese business and industry have to take up this challenge.

Thank you.
182. Press conference of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the end of his visit to China.

Beijing, June 27, 2003.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee: Thanks for your cooperation. The tour is coming to an end. The time to return is approaching. One has to go one day but I will today itself! I have achieved the purpose of my visit. The objective was to bring strength to relations with China and to create mutual confidence in bilateral relations. Both are neighbours, both have ancient civilizations, both are developing countries facing all the challenges. Despite different way of live, there is an urge to work together. I feel in the last few days our steps have moved in the right direction. The path is long but a good beginning has been made. There have been frank discussions with the Chinese leaders. The discussions were not confined to merely bilateral relations. International issues like what is happening in Koreas and Europe also came up for discussion. China and India were in agreement that multi-polarity should be strengthened. There is unanimity on the need to maintain peace. The differences should be resolved through dialogue. The steps that have been taken for cooperation in the economic sector and that may be taken in future, will give new depth to and contents to the economic relations. There is no basis for apprehension of fresh problems with the opening of trade relations with Tibet. There is desire for enhanced trade between the two countries. There was consensus that the two work together in the I. T sector. Altogether the visit has been good and it augurs well.

Shri Manoj (Journalist): Mr. Prime Minister, in our relations with China there is the question of Pakistan; and the other issue is the assistance that China has extended to Pakistan, which is still being extended. I want to know if this issue was raised and whether we got an answer for that.

Prime Minister: Very few questions connected with Pakistan were raised. Primarily it was India-China dialogue. There was of course reference to third country but that was not the main part of the discussions. While discussing the situation in South Asia such issues were brought up but the dialogue was not centred on Pakistan.

Journalist: Mr. Prime Minister, since Monday when that agreement was signed, it is being said that the Chinese leaders are very clever; while they made us give away in writing on Tibet once again, on Sikkim they have refused to give any thing in writing. During this visit while China got some success, we got nothing in writing. What would be your comment about this?
Prime Minister: On Tibet nothing new has been said or agreed upon. What we have been saying for years has been repeated; and repeated in a good way; the autonomy of Tibet has been emphasized. Tibet is an autonomous region of China. This is the feeling that comes out from that. On Sikkim there is some decision which will take us to the right direction. The objective we wish to achieve will be fulfilled soon. This is my belief.

Akhlesh, (Journalist): Mr. Prime Minister this is ..., we have seen China with our own eyes; we have seen China as a kind of development taking place. Now my question is can we do a China in India? Why haven’t we done it so far?

Prime Minister: I will bring something better than Shanghai. It was a great pleasure to see the development of Shanghai. I came here earlier too. Shanghai is an example of how change can be brought about with one own efforts and with the help of science. But the authorities of Shanghai also agree that they have yet to go a long way.

Amit (Journalist): Prime Minister you have referred to multi-polarity in the statement you have issued in your opening remarks in your speech to the IT event yesterday you spoke about South-South cooperation, at the same time your Government is actively considering the dispatch of Indian troops to Iraq at a time when the ground situation is disturbing, coalition soldiers are being killed everyday. Are you going to endanger the lives of Indian soldiers in Iraq?

Prime Minister: By putting both the questions together you have not been fair to them. If you had known my straight and spot answer you would have not mixed the two questions. Whether the Indian forces will go or not is being considered; no decision has yet been made on that. While taking the decision, what you said will be kept in mind.

Journalist: Sir, when will this happen?

Prime Minister: After we return; it cannot happen in between.

Rajdip, (Journalist): Yesterday, President Musharraf has spoken up of a West Asia style road map for peace between India and Pakistan. I am sorry to bring to Pakistan while we are in China but very quickly where do we stand on a West Asia style road map. Is there, would you be able to consider it?

Prime Minister: You are missing the target.

Journalist: No Sir, The exact statement was that West Asia style road
map should be there. On the lines of what is being happening between Israel and Palestine. This has been said by President Musharraf in Washington. Are we willing to consider any …

Prime Minister: *On Palestine our views are already there.*

Journalist: No Sir. But on the Indo-Pak whether India and Pakistan should have a West Asia style road map. Is there an agreement between India and Pakistan in which America could intervene.

Prime Minister: *There Is no chance for that; not it appears to be necessary.*

Journalist: Mr. Prime Minister, You have come to China for the third time and have also been impressed with China’s economic progress. More than the border issue you have laid great stress on the improvement in the economic relations. I would like to know after having come so many times, did you feel that India did not make progress like China because of its democratic system? Both India and China started on the development process together; but neither in systems, nor in roads, nor in hygiene, nor in economic progress, nor in the income of the common man, annual income, we are no where in comparison to China. After coming to China, how do we think that we failed to make the progress in comparison to China and how we should we go about it?

Prime Minister: You have asked a question which needs deep soul searching. (laughter) I think this question is good for a weekly and not for a press conference. The outline of a speech was—Are we competitors? We are competing. It is competition. In some areas if not ahead of China, we have made progress in comparison to China, and the world recognizes it. There are some deficiency and we are trying to meet them; and if we get another five years, we shall try to achieve them. (laughter)

Ashwani, (Journalist): For a long time there is a border dispute between India and China; China is in occupation of 16,000 Kilometre area of India. In the discussions you had with the Chinese leaders, did you raise the issue of borders?

Prime Minister: There was a lot of discussion on the border issue. It was decided that both sides will nominate a representative each, who shall decide on the political parameters to find a way to proceed further. There has never before been discussions on the border issue as now. It was not merely discussions, but progress to make headway. An important step has been taken.

Shri Kutty, (Journalist): I have two questions. One is that anything did
you expect when you started this tour and I want your impression on the generation of Chinese people?

**Prime Minister:** One gain of this tour has been that I got an opportunity to get acquainted with the new Chinese leaders. Earlier there was meeting in St. Petersburg but now I got an opportunity for free discussion with almost all the Chinese leaders. After these discussions I found that we could talk to them; the talks could make progress. The point to make is that relations could be improved. This includes all types of relations.

**Journalist:** Sir, since you talked about multi-polarity, is it possible to have military cooperation after economic cooperation between the two countries?

**Prime Minister:** How does this come out?

**Journalist:** We are talking about multi-polarity. We are talking of economic cooperation between the two countries. Is there possibility of defence cooperation in the future because Defence Minister George Fernandes too went to China some time ago?

**Prime Minister:** No possibility of defence cooperation. There is no proposal for a defence agreement. Do you want it?

**Journalist:** Sir, You have just said that if you get another five years India can become like China; then do we take it; Is this the final word on the retiring question?

**Prime Minister:** Some question like this…laughter…do not mix both the things—it is better to keep them separate, it will help to understand it.

**Journalist:** Tibetan view is that India has ignored their sentiments during these discussions.

**Prime Minister:** This is not correct. Before the discussions there were talks with the friends of Tibet. During the discussions, contact was maintained with them. They are satisfied with the Indian point of view. They have no complaint.

*Thank you Sir.*

*Thank you very much.*

*(The text in italics is a translation from Hindi)*
...I wanted to share some information with you about today’s Inter-
session Meeting of the Consultative Committee on External Affairs and
the subject for discussion was India-China relations. You can imagine
this was of great interest coming as it does just 12 days after Prime
Minister’s visit to China. The External Affairs Minister briefed the Hon’ble
Members of the Parliament present and cutting across political party lines
there was widespread appreciation of the achievements of the Prime
Minister’s visit and members congratulated the Prime Minister and the
External Affairs Minister and the Government for having undertaken the
visit and for the achievements that the visit produced. Mr. Sinha essentially
briefed them on all aspects of the visit and the purposes of the visit as
well as the achievements. He mentioned that the twin objective of the
visit were to establish close relations with the new leadership of China
and to impart fresh momentum to the ongoing diversification of cooperation
between our two countries. These objectives had been fulfilled and in
fact the External Affairs Minister quoted the Prime Minister saying “the
journey ahead is long, but a good beginning has been made”. The
meetings of the Prime Minister that had been held have enabled him to
establish personal relationship with new leadership of the People’s
Republic of China. The stress on economic and trade relations was evident
from the fact that the Prime Minister delivered two keynote addresses at
two very large gatherings of Indian and Chinese businessmen and that
he had been accompanied by a 70 member delegation of senior
businessmen from various chambers of commerce. EAM also mentioned
that a decision had been taken to set up a joint study group to report
within the next 12 months on the potential complementarities in expanding
trade and economic cooperation between our two countries and to draw
up a program for the next five years. EAM also briefed the Consultative
Committee on the documents that had been signed. For the first time the
two Prime Ministers signed the Joint Declaration outlining the platform
and roadmap that both countries have agreed on for India-China relations.
This declaration was a signal that our two countries are committed to
working more closely together including through our common desire to
strengthen the trend towards multipolarity. EAM also briefed the
Consultative Committee on the other document which was the Memorandum on Border trade and its implications. Another significant outcome was the decision to appoint Special Representatives to look at the boundary question and these representatives will explore from a political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship the framework of a boundary settlement.

EAM reiterated that regarding Tibet, contrary to some media reports, there was no change in India’s position either on Tibet or on the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama or other Tibetan refugees in India. EAM also pointed out some areas of follow up action. One is the establishment of an Indian Cultural Centre in Beijing, to establish annual meetings of Foreign Ministers, convening joint economic group later this year, setting up of the joint study group, scheduling meetings of the Special Representatives and to deliver on the assistance that was promised by the Prime Minister to the newly establishment India Study Centre in Beijing University as well as the draw up programme for the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of Panchsheel which falls next year. These are some of the issues that were discussed today. If you need figures of bilateral trade, EAM briefed the Committee that it has grown by 37.5% in 2002 to US $ 4.9 billion. India has been given approved tourist destination status by China and cooperation on flood forecasting and control has begun with the supply of hydrological data of Brahmaputra in the flood season, while exchanges in other existing areas of cooperation like science and technology, cultural exchange, defence, agriculture, investment have progressed.

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184. Suo Motu Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the Lok Sabha on his visits to Germany, Russia, France and China.


Please see Document No. 388

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It is a privilege for me to be invited here today to deliver this lecture in memory of Admiral Ramdas Katari, a distinguished sailor, strategist and diplomat. The first Indian to become the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Katari envisioned a modern navy for the country and did a lot to translate that vision into reality. A highly decorated soldier, he moved effortlessly to the world of diplomacy and served with distinction as India’s Ambassador to Burma (now Myanmar) for four years. I would like to compliment the Indian Navy for carrying forward the fine traditions initiated by visionaries like Admiral Katari.

I have been asked to share a few thoughts with you on one of the most important bilateral relationships we have. Let me begin on a somewhat provocative note by saying that the title of this lecture – “The Emerging India-China Relationship and its Impact on India/South Asia” – represents a particular mind-set that is no longer valid. This is because first, I think that the relationship between India and China today is mature enough to be seen as having “emerged” rather than “emerging”, though in a sense the relations between these two large countries will always remain a work in progress. Secondly, the impact of our relationship is global and to restrict the canvas to South Asia is to limit the scope of our understanding of India-China relations.

Let me substantiate my first contention regarding the maturity of the relationship between India and China. In recent years, relations between India and China have progressively developed and diversified. This is a process that both governments have consciously promoted. Our Prime Minister’s visit to China marked the beginning of a new phase in the India-China relationship. It was a historic visit, the results of which have surprised many. During the visit, the leaders of the two countries agreed that we should qualitatively enhance the bilateral relationship in all areas, while addressing differences through peaceful means in a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable manner. We agreed that the common interests of the two sides outweigh their differences, and that they are not a threat to each other. For the first time, the two Prime Ministers signed a Joint Declaration. It is an important document, which outlines the principles
and shared perspectives that will guide the future development of our bilateral relations. The Declaration sends a signal to Asia and the world that our two countries are committed to working more closely together, including through our common desire to strengthen the trend towards multi-polarity.

I will illustrate the maturity of the present state of our relations with China with a few observations, which do not attempt to present a comprehensive picture. First, India and China have today extensive dealings in bilateral, regional and multilateral forums. We are seeking improved relations with each other without pre-conditions. We continue to have differences, including an unresolved boundary issue, but over the years, we have, together, evolved a remarkable matrix of relations, under which we have consciously decided to “compartmentalise” our differences and address them without letting them come in the way of the development of relations in other areas. We have not allowed our differences to define our relationship. It is a pragmatic model of inter-state relations, which has obvious relevance in other situations, including in our dealings with Pakistan.

Secondly, it is a relationship that is characterised by a strong political commitment, and indeed investment, by the leaderships of the two countries. This is evident in the pattern of high-level exchanges. There is no objective reason for discord between us. We also believe that mutual exclusion or containment is not a valid policy choice. At the same time, we are fully aware that there is a deficit of trust, which must be addressed as the two countries move towards their shared vision of a constructive and cooperative partnership. Our Prime Minister’s visit to China represented a major step forward in that direction.

Thirdly, the level of mutual understanding that has been achieved is exemplified by our success in maintaining peace and tranquillity along the border. It is no mean achievement considering that we have a common border that extends for almost 3500 kilometres and where there are clear differences of perception, both in terms of the boundary and the Line of Actual Control (LAC). You are aware that in the late 1980s, there was tension along the border, particularly after the Wangdung incident, but the two countries responded in a sensible manner and have over the years carefully put in place an edifice of CBMs, of dialogue and interactions at the diplomatic and border commanders levels, of service-to-service exchanges, including the first-ever joint search and rescue exercise conducted by our Navies only a week ago. This has helped preserve and
reinforce peace, tranquillity and indeed amity in border areas. We are engaged in clarifying the LAC, a process that must be expedited. During the Prime Minister’s visit to China, the two Prime Ministers appointed their Special Representatives to explore the framework of a boundary settlement from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship. It is an issue I will return to a little later in my talk.

Fourthly, bilateral economic and commercial interactions have acquired an altogether new dimension now. Possibly for the first time in the exchanges between India and China since our independence, we have now a significant economic aspect to this relationship. Our bilateral trade has shot up from around US $ 200 million in the early nineties to around US $ 5 billion in 2002, and this year we hope to reach US $ 7 billion. Indian business and industry have overcome their initial cultural and commercial apprehensions of Chinese business and are strengthening their linkages in a pro-active manner. Enhanced trade and investment linkages not only make great economic sense but also provide ballast to the political relationship; mutual economic stakes will be a factor of stability in a relationship, which has seen many ups and downs in the past.

Finally, the India-China dialogue already transcends bilateral relations to encompass international issues such as security, environment and sustainable development. These are being discussed through dialogue mechanisms which have recently been extended to new subjects such as counter terrorism and policy planning. Our deliberations in these forums have revealed a growing convergence of views on key issues, including on terrorism. We have an increasing commonality of interests within the WTO and overlapping concerns on globalisation, as was evident at the recent ministerial meeting at Cancun. Our coordination and collaboration in various multilateral institutions is expanding into newer and newer areas. Both countries, seek to reinforce multilateralism and multi-polarity. The concept of multi-polarity must not, however, be mistaken for creating poles in opposition to each other. We do not want to reinvent the confrontationist model of the Cold War. Both India and China look upon the next twenty years as a window of strategic opportunity to raise the living standards of their peoples.

It is clear that as in India, there is also a need felt in China to improve the bilateral relations. This is not only because together we represent one-third of humanity. This has much to do with the changing perceptions about India, her economic success, her achievements in the field of science and technology, and global reach and dynamism of her foreign policy. It
is also a factor of our steadily improving relations with the United States, the continued strategic partnership with Russia, our comprehensive partnership relations with the EU and its constituents, and our initiatives in West Asia, CIS countries, Africa and Latin America. It also has to do with our improving relations with other Asian countries, particularly ASEAN. It has to do with the increasing scope of potential cooperation between India and China in regional and multilateral forums, as we face new global challenges such as terrorism, drugs and piracy, as well as dangers in the fields of public health, environment, etc. It has to do with the fact that we are both in the forefront of developing countries and have similar approaches to many global and regional issues. It is clear that both India and China respect each other’s independent foreign policies and are adjusting their relationship to take into account the new global realities, each other’s growth as vibrant nations and economies and also in response to the dynamics operating regionally and globally.

Let me also clarify here what does not drive our relations with China. There are some who argue that India’s relations with the United States could be used as a counterforce against China. We categorically reject such notions based on outmoded concepts like balance of power. We do not seek to develop relations with one country to ‘counterbalance’ another. We value our relations with both China and the USA and both relationships have their own compelling logic. We must also debunk the theory that India’s ‘Look East’ policy of greater engagement with ASEAN is somehow aimed at containing China. Indeed, as I have stated at other forums recently, we have now entered Phase-II of the ‘Look East’ policy, which encompasses not only the ASEAN Ten but also China, Japan, and other countries of East Asia, including Australia and New Zealand.

I would also like to reiterate, what I have said earlier, that we reject the theory that a conflict between India and China is inevitable. India neither pursues nor makes policy towards China based on the belief that the conflict between the two is inevitable. India’s approach to China is and will remain forward-looking and full of optimism. It will not be driven by a sense of either fear or envy. We are convinced that both countries can grow strong and prosperous in partnership rather than in conflict, and maintain their independence and national character in the process. While it is undeniable that China and India are in some sense competitors, it is also clear that, just as the US and Europe, we can be both partners and competitors at the same time. All that is required is, that this competition be healthy. This also relates to the level and rate of success achieved by the different development paradigms followed by India and China. While
China may be seen by some as currently being ahead in this competition, India’s success is clearly recognised and better understood now nationally and internationally than before. The management of this competition is the challenge and the Joint Declaration signed during Prime Minister’s visit to China provides an agreed via media for that.

Likewise, the argument that the dominant theme of China’s South Asia policy is to prevent the rise of a potential rival or competitor in the form of India is a defeatist argument. There are probably some in our neighbourhood who seek to play their “China connection” or “China card” to “counter” or even “contain” India. The bankruptcy of this approach is however becoming increasingly evident. China cannot objectively be a competitor for India in South Asia. Destinies of the countries of South Asia are interlinked by the overwhelming logic of history, geography and economics. I believe the current relationship between India and China is certainly beneficial for each other and for South Asia. That India and China have succeeded in maintaining peace and tranquillity on their borders, and are steadily increasing the lines of communication between them, brings a large measure of stability to the region. We do not and should not judge our relationship with China in the context of our bilateral relations with any other country, whether in the region or outside the region. It also means that other countries need to adjust their own equations with both India and China to factor in the reality that it is no longer a matter of playing one against the other. It must also be recognised that increasing cooperation between India and China in the multilateral arena, which is a sub-set of our current relationship, will also have a positive cascading effect on the region, especially on issues relating to the interests of developing countries.

As I have stated earlier, during Prime Minister’s visit to China in June this year, both countries agreed to qualitatively enhance their bilateral relationship in all areas and also charted out a roadmap for doing so. Let me share with you some of my thoughts on what can be done by India and China to bring about a quantum jump in the relationship.

While the basic paradigm of the relationship – of seeking improved relations at all levels and in diverse areas while addressing differences – remains valid, the time has perhaps come to deal with some of those outstanding issues in a determined manner, without postponing tough decisions for the next generation. We believe the relationship has reached a level of maturity where we can discuss those issues with a greater sense of urgency. This updated paradigm of relationship is both desirable
and sustainable. The initiative on the appointment of the Special Representatives flows from such an assessment. As Prime Minister stated recently, a final resolution of the boundary question is a strategic objective and both countries should be ready to take some pragmatic decisions to achieve it. While India and China agree that their differences should not be allowed to affect the overall development of bilateral relations, there is little doubt that a boundary settlement will give a major boost to the relationship. It will also send a powerful signal to the rest of the world that India and China have broken out of the shackles of the past.

Secondly, the two countries must pay closer attention to each other’s sensitivities and aspirations. This has been agreed to in the Joint Declaration signed by the two Prime Ministers. We have taken a principled position on issues like Tibet and Taiwan, and our position is appreciated by China. We are happy that the understanding reached during Prime Minister’s visit to China started the process by which Sikkim will soon cease to be an issue in India-China relations. Some aspects of China’s relations with Pakistan, including their nexus in nuclear and missile proliferation, however, continue to cause serious concern in India as they have a direct and negative bearing on our national security environment. We regard China as a friend and we expect friends to show greater sensitivity to our security concerns. It is also important that both countries acknowledge each other’s strengths and aspirations, and try to ensure that each has sufficient strategic space in keeping with the principle of multi-polarity to which both India and China subscribe.

Thirdly, we must be far more pro-active and ambitious in developing our economic partnership by exploiting more fully our complementarities and the new opportunities created by globalisation. Though our bilateral trade has shown an impressive increase in recent years, the turnover is still less than 1% of China’s overall trade, which is expected to reach US $ 800 billion this year. India-China trade is quite inadequate when compared to the complementarities that exist. For the first time, the business communities of the two countries are seriously looking at each other, with optimism and not with anxiety, and the two Governments must encourage this process with appropriate policy initiatives. Our economic engagement must be commensurate with the fact that India and China have two of the fastest growing economies in the world. A recent report by Goldman Sachs projects that India’s economy will overtake that of France, Germany and Japan in less than thirty years and emerge as the third largest economy in the world in US dollar terms (and not just in Purchasing Power Parity), next only to that of the USA and China.
I believe that we in India must be ambitious, and not excessively cautious. Our experience during the last two-and-a-half-years has shown how our apprehensions regarding Chinese goods overwhelming our manufacturing sector, following the lifting of quantitative restrictions on imports, were greatly exaggerated. This is a matter of some personal satisfaction to me because, as Finance Minister, I was at the receiving end of all this criticism. I do expect that the India-China Joint Study Group, agreed upon during Prime Minister’s visit, will examine the feasibility of an upgraded bilateral framework for relationship, including a Free Trade Area. I know that some will receive this suggestion with disbelief and regard it as premature, as they did when Prime Minister proposed a framework agreement for a Free Trade Area between India and ASEAN just over a year ago. But the fact is that we have already concluded a framework FTA with ASEAN. An Asian FTA, including China, Japan and South Korea, apart from ASEAN and India should therefore be within the realm of possibility. Indeed, I am also inclined to believe that in the years to come, India and China will be key partners in regional economic arrangements transcending Asia.

Finally, it is in the interest of both India and China to continue to raise the level of mutual trust and understanding. We must upgrade the quality of our dialogue and continuously address each other’s concerns in a frank but constructive manner, not as adversaries but as friends, convinced that there is no fundamental contradiction in our basic interests. The degree of positive or negative influence which the actions of other countries can have on the bilateral relationship between India and China is proportional to the level of mutual trust and understanding that exists between us. It is important to continue in the conflict resolution mode that now exists between India and China, and indeed accelerate this process, not only because it is beneficial to us but also because it is beneficial to the region, and to the world. The risk of conflict or even divisive rivalry, open or covert, between two of the largest countries in the world, with huge and steadily growing economies, with nuclear weapon capabilities, with geographical contiguity and unresolved territorial issues, is a specter that should never be allowed to haunt us or affect our search for peace and stability in this world.

Friends, India’s fundamental national goal is the pursuit of a better quality of life for its people. What we seek the most is, economic progress and prosperity, the development of art, culture, literature and sports, and the emergence of a plural and multifaceted society that utilises the natural
talents and versatility of our people to the full. I believe China also has a similar motivation. Peace and stability in the neighbourhood is of critical importance to both of us, in order to be able to pursue these goals and it is in this context that we must see India-China relations over the long term.

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186. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference Jia Qinglin.

New Delhi, November 24, 2003.

...Mr. Jia Qinglin, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, ... Mr. Jia Qinglin met (November 23) the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Manohar Joshi at the Parliament House and had expressed China’s opposition to terrorism in all forms. He had offered condolences to the members of the bereaved families of the martyrs who died in protecting the Parliament House on December 13, 2001. Continuing his visit today he had called on Prime Minister. During this meeting, which lasted for half an hour, the two leaders had discussed the bilateral relations, particularly the positive developments, which had taken, place during Prime Minister Vajpayee’s visit to China earlier this summer. They discussed the recent first meeting of the Special Representatives, prospects for the next meeting and also the trade increases, rather dramatic trade increases, which had been made in the last few months. At this rate it looks like the target, which has been set of, US $10b is within hand. The trade is now about US $ 5.3b and is expected to reach US $7b at the end of this year. In a very short while the Foreign Minister will be calling on him. This evening there will also be a meeting with the Vice President who will be hosting a dinner in honour of the visiting dignitary.

Additionally the spokesperson made the following points on EAM’s meeting with Mr. Jia Qinglin, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference

1. Bilateral political relations and positive developments since PM’s visit were discussed.
2. Economic cooperation was discussed at length. Despite the dramatic increases in bilateral trade, it was felt that further efforts needed to be made to enhance economic cooperation and the Joint Study Group would examine ways & means of doing this.

3. EAM raised the issue of advisories related to Dengue fever in India that had been issued by China. Mr. Qinglin confirmed that as of today all restrictions imposed on account of Dengue fever are being lifted.

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Fiji

187. Statement of the Government of India welcoming the decision of the Fijian Supreme Court regarding representation of all Political parties in the Cabinet and the decision of the Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase to abide by the Court’s decision.


The Government of India welcomes the ruling of the Supreme Court\(^1\) of Fiji on July 18, 2003 that a multi-party Cabinet in terms of Section 99 of the Constitution is obligatory.

India also welcomes the statement made by Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase that he will abide by the Court’s decision.

It is hoped that in the coming days, both sides will be able to reach an accord and arrangement which will fully comply with the Court’s judgment, in the best interests of Fiji and its people.

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\(^1\) A five-member Bench of the Supreme Court of the Fiji Islands ruled that the Prime Minister must give proportional representation in his Cabinet to all parties with more than 10 per cent of the seats in the House of Representatives. Fijian Prime Minister Qarase, in his reaction to the Supreme Court ruling said in his statement that “his task now is to implement the decision taking into account the political questions that the Constitution does not address.” The Supreme Court ruled that under Section 99 of the Constitution the Prime Minister must invite all the major parties to be represented in the Cabinet. It however, left to the Prime Minister the selection of persons in consultation with the leaders of the parties concerned.
Indonesia

188. Statement by Official Spokesperson about a terrorist attack on a Hotel in Jakarta.

New Delhi, August 8, 2003.

Government of India strongly condemns the terrorist attack on a hotel in Jakarta and extends its deepest sympathy and condolences to all those affected and to the Government and people of Indonesia. India believes that such brutal and senseless acts of violence cannot be justified on any grounds whatsoever.

Today, when the menace of terrorism confronts nations across the world, there is need for the international community to strengthen and intensify cooperation to effectively combat and eradicate this menace. More needs to be done to isolate external forces and groups that continue to provide sustenance to terrorism and to dismantle the infrastructure that nourishes it. India is committed to work with its partners in ASEAN and with the international community towards this objective.

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189. Press release issued by the Embassy of India in Jakarta on the 1st India-Indonesia Joint Commission meeting held in Yogyakarta.


Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs, paid an official visit to Indonesia from 30th August to 2nd September 2003, to co-chair the First India-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting in Yogyakarta. During the visit, EAM had a bilateral meeting with his counterpart H.E. Dr. N. Hassan Wirajuda and is expected to call on the Vice President Hamza Haz in Jakarta. EAM also visited cultural heritage sites of Borobudur and Prambanan temples in Yogyakarta.

The Joint Commission meeting on 1 September, 2003. was preceded by a meeting of Senior Officials from the two sides. The meetings were held in a cordial atmosphere underlining the close ties between the two
countries. The decisions of the Joint Commission meeting are summarized as follows:

a) Trade and Economic: While noting the current level of bilateral trade at US $ 2 billion, the two sides agreed to find innovative means of promoting trade through greater import of commodities such as crude palm oil, coal and timber from Indonesia, and diversifying the trade basket. The Indonesian side agreed to facilitate Indian investment in the Oil and Gas sector. The two sides agreed to establish an Eminent Persons Group to look into possible areas of cooperation in trade and investment. The EPG will report the results of its deliberations to the Joint Commission.

b) Tourism: Recognizing the vast potential in the tourism sector the Joint Commission decided to convene the first meeting of the Working Group on tourism before the end of 2003 to work out an action plan to be implemented by both sides.

c) Technical Cooperation: Given the current utilization of the slots to Indonesia under ITEC and Colombo Plan, India agreed to increase the slots from current 100 to 125. India also accepted the Indonesian request to tailor specific projects in the area of promotion of human rights and women’s welfare. India conveyed its commitment to complete construction of the Vocational Training Centre in Jakarta in the next six to eight months.

d) Science and Technology: Both sides agreed to substantially upgrade their current level of cooperation in this sector and to pay special attention to areas such as space research, remote sensing and bio-technology. Indonesia expressed interest in cooperating with India in the area of launch of micro-satellites. Scientists from the two sides will meet shortly to draw up a concrete action plan.

e) Defence and Security: The Joint Commission also agreed to expedite establishment of the legal framework for dealing with security related issues through signing of an extradition treaty, a MOU on prevention of trafficking in drugs and psychotrophic substances, and Agreements on Mutual legal assistance in criminal, civil and commercial matters.

The two Ministers agreed to intensify bilateral cooperation to jointly fight the menace of international terrorism. Speaking to the media after the meeting, the Indonesian Foreign Minister stated that both India and Indonesia were victims of terrorism and there was need for the two
countries to cooperate for preventing further terrorist attacks, as witnessed recently, in the two countries.

Expressing satisfaction at the increasing defence cooperation, Foreign Minister Wirajuda pointed out that the common maritime boundary, and the close geographical proximity dictated that India and Indonesia work closely together particularly in such areas as joint naval patrols, training and development of military technology.

External Affairs Minister underlined the special interest that India has in the Indonesian energy sector including natural gas, and conveyed that Indian companies were willing to look at investment opportunities in Indonesia. India was a large market for Indonesian products in this sector.

The two sides noted with satisfaction the elevation of India’s dialogue with ASEAN to the Summit level and looked forward to the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Bali for the second India ASEAN Summit in October 2003. Indonesia, it is capacity of the current Chairman of ASEAN, welcomed India’s decision to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South East Asia, and informed that India and ASEAN will sign a Joint Declaration on International Terrorism.

Laos

190. Joint Statement issued during the visit of Prime Minister Bounnhand Vorachit of Lao People’s Democratic Republic.

New Delhi, June 16, 2003.

1. At the invitation of H.E. Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. Bounnhang Vorachit, Prime Minister of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, paid a state visit to India from June 15 to 22, 2003.

2. Prime Minister Vorachit was accompanied by Mr. Chansy Phosikham, Minister of Finance; Mr. Siane Saphangthong, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry; Mr. Phongsavath Boupha, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sinlavong Khoupaythoun, Vice-Minister, Chief of Cabinet of the Prime Minister’s Office, and other officials.
3. During the visit, Prime Minister Vorachith called on H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, President of India. H.E. Mr. Yashwant Sinha, Minister for External Affairs, H.E. Mr. Rajnath Singh, Minister of Agriculture and Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha called on the Prime Minister. The discussions were conducted in an atmosphere of cordiality and mutual understanding between good friends. Both sides reiterated the desire to strengthen the long-standing friendly and beneficial relations between the two countries.

4. The Prime Minister of Lao PDR laid a wreath at Mahatma Gandhi’s Samadhi. Apart from New Delhi, Prime Minister Vorachit and his delegation will visit major commercial, economic, technological and cultural centers in Agra, Hyderabad and Mumbai.

5. This visit follows Prime Minister A.B Vajpayee’s visit to Laos in November 2002, during which the two countries had signed four agreements for cooperation in the power sector, defence, drug control and visa free travel for diplomatic and official passport holders. Both sides were happy to note the follow up action since taken, in implementation of the agreements.

6. The Indian side welcomed the visit to India by H.E. Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR from May 4 to 8, 2003 as a timely initiative to take stock of bilateral cooperation on the eve of the visit of Prime Minister Vorachit to India in June 2003 and before the Lao PDR takes over as Country Coordinator for India in ASEAN in July 2003.

7. On bilateral issues, both sides underlined the need to enhance cooperation in the field of trade and investment, including by identifying areas of complementarity of goods and services. The Indian side expressed readiness to encourage investment from public and private sectors in the development of infrastructure base in the Lao PDR.

8. India conveyed its readiness to continue extending its cooperation in human resource development in priority areas identified by the Lao PDR particularly in science and technology. India agreed to make available, as in previous years, training slots for 70 officials annually, including short, medium and long-term training. Besides, India will provide two scholarships per year for bachelors and masters degrees for Lao monks.
9. The two Prime Ministers reiterated their commitment to increase bilateral cooperation in the fields of information technology, culture and tourism. The Lao side welcomed the steps taken by India to realize the proposal for setting up an IT Center in Vientiane to develop their capacity in this crucial area. The Lao side also expressed appreciation for India’s intention to consider investing in a specialty hospital in the Lao PDR, for which a proposal has been received.

10. An Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology between India and the Lao PDR was signed in the presence of the two Prime Ministers. Both sides believe that the agreement would pave the way for further expanding cooperation in this field.

11. Welcoming the fact that Lao PDR was taking over as Country Coordinator for India in ASEAN from July 2003, both sides agreed to take concrete initiatives to strengthen the linkages between India and ASEAN including under the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) designed to benefit the four new ASEAN member countries including the Lao PDR.

12. The two countries also agreed to support and participate in various projects within the framework of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, especially people to people relations.

13. The two sides exchanged views on international and regional issues of common concern. On the evolving situation in Iraq, India and Lao PDR stressed the importance of a representative government of the Iraqi people being put in place as early as possible and welcomed the affirmation in the UNSC Resolution 1483, of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their political future and take control of their natural resources.

14. Recognising that international terrorism poses a grave threat to peace-loving societies everywhere, India and Lao PDR agreed to strengthen their cooperation in the fight against terrorism and its support mechanisms, particularly organized crime, illicit arms and drug trafficking. In this regard, they stressed the importance of cooperation in the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions against terrorism, including UNSCR 1373 and 1456.

15. The Lao PDR welcomed the recent initiative of the Prime Minister of India aimed at fostering friendship and good-neighbourly relations

16. Both sides agreed that the state visit of Prime Minister Bounnhang Vorachit to India was a great success and would contribute greatly to further cementing the traditional friendship and cooperation between the two governments and countries.

17. The Prime Minister of the Lao PDR expressed sincere thanks to the Prime Minister, the Government and the people of India for their warm and cordial welcome to the delegation of the Lao PDR.

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Malaysia

191. Media briefing by the Official Spokesperson on the treatment meted out to some Indian nationals in Malaysia.

New Delhi, March 10, 11, 12 and 21, 2003.


Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening, Ladies and Gentlemen.

.... I have received number of calls from some of you on the incident in Malaysia in which several Indian nationals were ill-treated. The High Commissioner of Malaysia in New Delhi Dato Choo was called into the Foreign Office this afternoon by Secretary Mr. R.M. Abhyankar. The Secretary took up the matter of the high-handed way in which Malaysian authorities have treated Indian nationals strongly to the Malaysian High Commission. Such unacceptable action by Malaysian authorities cannot but adversely affect bilateral relations and would also badly dent Malaysia’s image as a destination for IT professionals, as a country which is keen to encourage foreign participation in IT and other sectors.

Question: Are you planning to send the High Commissioner back?

Answer: As I told you he was called in today and our views were conveyed to him. Depending upon the clarification or explanations that we receive we will decide upon further action appropriately.
Question: What was the provocation? What happened?

Answer: I don’t have any idea of the provocation. That of course will come from the explanations that we get from either here or through our High Commission which has been pursuing this case actively in Kuala Lumpur. But what I do understand is that yesterday at about 7 in the morning the police rounded up about 270 Indians mostly IT professionals and took about 160 odd to the police station where the treatment was rough. The High Commission swung into action and by 7 p.m in the evening all except 8 or 9 of them had been released. Of these 8 or 9 their papers were being checked out and its not necessary that anything is wrong with their papers. The High Commission is working on this issue out there and we are keeping in touch with the High Commission.

Question: Is it true that their visas were scratched out?

Answer: These are reports which are coming from Kuala Lumpur and I will be able to get you some more details on each of these cases and on the remaining 8 or 9. But yes I have seen those news reports.

Question: Were they all staying together?

Answer: Yes, they were in one block. But that is nothing wrong in that.


Question: Any further development on the Malaysian incident?

Answer: On the unfortunate incident in Malaysia, yes our High Commissioner has been in close touch with the Foreign Ministry there and Home Ministry. We are awaiting clarifications as to why Indian nationals were treated in the way that they were. Meanwhile, as you may perhaps know a Malaysian Minister, the Minister for Entrepreneur Development, Dato Seri Nazri Abdul Aziz is currently in India to attend an international conference and as part of his meetings here he is scheduled to meet the Minister for Commerce and Industry and the Minister for Textiles today and the Minister for Human Resource Development tomorrow. It is expected that during these meetings the Ministers will take up this issue and will be expressing our shock and displeasure at the treatment which was meted out to Indian IT professionals who were there doing their professional job and who are highly regarded all over the world. This issue will be taken up in their conversations with the visiting Malaysian Minister.

Question: One of the opposition parties in Malaysia has called that
Malaysian Government should apologise to India? Are we demanding such apology?

Answer: We have already called in the Malaysian High Commissioner yesterday and sought explanation of what happened and similarly it has been taken up in Malaysia. As I told you this is going to be taken up by our three Ministers with the visiting Minister.

Question: What about those 8 or 9 people in Malaysia. Are they in jail?

Answer: The latest information that I have is that out of the 270 who were rounded up, 195 were taken to the police station. After the high level interventions by the High Commission which could only start in the afternoon because the IT professionals and the others there were not allowed consular access. They were not allowed to reach out to the High Commission and even when the High Commission officials reached there it took a couple of hours to get consular access. So after the high level intervention 185 of the 195 were released by day before evening. 10 of them remained in custody. 5 of these were released on Monday and one of them has been released today which leaves a figure of 4.

Question: Any reports of fake visas, etc?

Answer: Only four remain out of 195. That means that the others were not in contravention of any laws. In fact they are there as highly regarded professionals who have been invited by Malaysian companies to work in their IT sector which leaves only the question of 4 people. There is nothing yet to say that they are in contravention of law, their cases are being examined.

Question: Has the Malaysian High Commissioner got back to us?

Answer: Not to my knowledge and similarly we don’t yet have a satisfactory answer at the Kuala Lumpur end. Naturally I may add after an event which is so high handed and so uncalled for in nature, things cannot quickly go back to business as usual, unless we have a proper explanation and until we are satisfied that the root cause of this has been gone into.

Question: Any idea of how many Indians are working in Malaysia?

Answer: I don’t have an overall figure.

Briefing on March 12:
Question: Have you got any feedback of the meeting between the visiting Malaysian Minister and Mr. Murali Manohar Joshi?

Answer: No.

Question: Do you have any information on the reports in the Indian Express that MEA might have advised Civil Aviation sector to cut down....

Answer: I don’t have details on that.

Question: The Malaysian authorities have said that it was not a drive against Indians only but against illegal immigrants. What do you have to say on that?

Answer: If it is a drive against illegal immigrants then it seems to be pretty misguided in its implementation because out of the 195 who were taken to prison, 191 were released having perfectly valid documents. It is important to note that the Malaysian illegal immigration drive since last year is basically aimed at unskilled workers – labourers who were pouring into Malaysia from other countries but not against highly qualified professionals with full documents. I understand that Indian IT professionals also have smart cards issued to people with full credit in high qualification. These smart cards are issued by the Malaysian authorities. They also have proper employment visas from the companies with whom they work. So if you equate these highly qualified professionals with illegal immigrants, that is wrong.

Question: You said 4 people are still under police custody since Sunday. How do you plan to intensify on this front?

Answer: It is not just that. It is not just the fact that 4 people are in custody. It is the issue that such treatment has been meted out to Indian nationals. The entire things need to be looked into. I just got an update on the status of these four people. Out of these 4, documents of one have been verified and he is understood to have been released today. Out of the other 3, one of them is not an IT professional.

On March 21 at a briefing on Iraq, some questions on Malaysia also came up and these were:

Question: There were reports that Malaysia has tendered apology. Have we received this officially?

Answer: There was a meeting this morning between our High
Commissioner and the acting Prime Minister of Malaysia Mr. Badawai. I understand that the acting Prime Minister conveyed his apologies to the High Commissioner and assured her that incidents such as the one that happened recently involving the IT professionals would not happen in the future. WE are awaiting a fuller report of that meeting from our High Commissioner.

Question: Now that Malaysia has apologised. Are we back on the business or are we still waiting for.....

Answer: I would say that the meeting and communication of apology by the acting Prime Minister is a positive development and a timely development in view of the repercussions that the incident had on our bilateral ties and it will certainly have a bearing on several areas of mutually beneficial cooperation, especially the IT sector.

Question: Azlan Shah Hockey tournament starts tomorrow. Are we sending our team now?

Answer: I wouldn’t like to guess. The Hockey team has not gone. As I told you this is a positive development today and it will positively affect bilateral relations in several spheres including the IT sector.
Myanmar


New Delhi, January 20, 2003.

The Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Union of Myanmar, hereinafter referred to as the “Sides”,

Considering it beneficial to both sides to hold consultations and exchange opinions at different levels, on the issues of bilateral relations and regional and international problems of mutual interest,

Article 1

The Sides shall hold regular consultations at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and other agreed levels on international, regional and bilateral issues of mutual interest.

The Sides shall, by mutual consent constitute working groups and groups of experts for dealing with specific issues.

Article 2

The Sides shall, in advance, by mutual consent determine the levels, agenda, time and place of holding of negotiations and consultations.

Article 3

The Sides shall cooperate and consult each other to co-ordinate their positions in international and regional organisations and fora.

Article 4

The Sides shall facilitate interaction of diplomatic services, and share their experiences through exchange of delegations, organisation of seminars and joint research projects and any other activities promoting direct links between them.

Article 5

The Sides may by mutual consent modify or amend the present Protocol.
Article 6

The Present Protocol shall enter into force on the day of its signing and shall remain in force for a period of five years. After each term, it shall be extended automatically for another five years unless one of the Sides notifies the other in writing, six months in advance, of its intention to terminate the Protocol.

Done at New Delhi on this 20th day of January 2003 in duplicate in Hindi, Myanmarese and English languages. In case of divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

Minister of External Affairs Minister of Foreign Affairs
For the Government of For the Government of
Republic of India Union of Myanmar

193. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha’s visit to Myanmar.

New Delhi, January 21, 2003.

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening, Ladies and Gentlemen.

This is on the discussion held between the Foreign Minister of Myanmar and our External Affairs Minister. The two Ministers had one to one meeting followed by delegation level talks. The talks covered full range of bilateral1 economic relations as well as international relations, in

1. Separately the Spokesperson Navtej Sarna at another media briefing giving a resume of the bilateral relations between the two countries said that this was the first official visit by a Foreign Minister from Myanmar since 1987. Giving a background to India-Myanmar relations he said: “India and Myanmar have enjoyed close and friendly relations based on historical, cultural and social-ethnic linkages. As you would recall the two countries have opened Consulates in Mandalay and Kolkata respectively. Our External Affairs Minister has visited Myanmar in February 2001 to inaugurate the Tamu- Kalemyo-Kalewa route. Subsequently another visit by the External Affairs Minister took place in April 2002 in connection with the trilateral highway project. The areas of cooperation between India and Myanmar include the area of energy in which the discussions will be progressing as well as the area of education and health.

India offered to build other roads connecting the border regions of the two countries in addition to the Kaladan multi-modal transport project taken up by India, which involved development of the Port at Sittwe and improvement of the navigability of the Kaladan river and construction of a road link form Kalpetwa to Southern Manswerairozoram.”
particular a discussion on Iraq. As far as bilateral relations are concerned the stress was on economic relations and economic cooperation and the projects that are going on as part of the close cooperation between India and Myanmar. In particular the sectors that came up for discussions were energy and power generation, particularly Hydroelectric projects, road construction and cooperation in regional bodies. In the energy sector it was proposed that a team should go from India to look into the prospects of onshore exploration of oil and gas in Myanmar. As you know we already have cooperation in the offshore sector in the A1 Block. It was also decided that a team should go to look into the data collection process which can lead to the setting up the Tawanti Hydroelectric project. Road projects particularly the Trilateral project that links India, Myanmar and Thailand was also discussed and positively assessed in terms of the progress that has been made. Myanmar also expressed its interest in cooperation in the IT field and the Minister is going to be visiting IT companies in Hyderabad to look as to who could cooperate with Myanmar in this sector. It was also decided that substantive work should continue in BIMST-EC. India’s dialogue with ASEAN and in particular India’s annual summit now being held with ASEAN was positively welcomed by Myanmar. India reaffirmed its commitment to assist the CMLV countries in the integration with ASEAN initiative. In particular Mr. Sinha stressed that Myanmar being a neighbour had in any case a special status amongst these countries. On the issue of insurgency groups operating in Myanmar the Foreign Minister of Myanmar reaffirmed that the soil of Myanmar would not be allowed to be used by any group which could harm India. After the discussion there was signing of a protocol on Foreign Office Consultations. So there will be regular foreign office consultations between the two countries and this is in keeping with the cooperation Conference on Disarmament which has been going on in the areas that are outlined above.

**Question:** When is the energy team likely to go to Myanmar?

**Answer:** There is no date. The decision has been taken that a team would visit. The dates will be worked out between our embassy and the Government there.

**Question:** Where exactly is the offshore exploration cooperation?

**Answer:** ONGC- Videsh and GAIL are cooperating with Daewoo International in the A1 Block of the Rakhine coast.

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1. The India-Myanmar-Thailand Ministerial Meeting on Transport Linkages was held in New Delhi on 23rd December 2003.

2. The meeting was attended by His Excellency Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs of India, His Excellency U Win Aung, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar and His Excellency Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand. They were accompanied by their senior officials.

3. His Excellency Shri Yashwant Sinha chaired the meeting. The Ministers reaffirmed their common commitment to promoting transport linkages among the three countries with a view to expanding trade, tourism and people-to-people contact. They further emphasized the importance of greater connectivity as a means of strengthening regional economic growth and integration and of cementing the bonds based on cultural and historical affinities.

4. The Ministers reviewed the progress made in the project for construction of the Trilateral Highway from Moreh in India to Mae Sot in Thailand through Bagan in Myanmar. The heads of the Task

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1. On December 22 Navtej Sarna Official Spokesperson giving the background on the Ministerial Meeting said: “The Foreign Ministers of the three countries decided in a meeting on Transport Linkages held in Yangon in April 2002 for the construction, within a time-frame of two years, of a highway from Moreh in India to Mae Sot in Thailand through Yangon in Myanmar. The FMs had also agreed to meet annually and issue policy guidelines to Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM), which will be held annually back-to-back with ASEAN-India Dialogue SOM. The Foreign Ministers had also agreed for the promotion of a highway from Kanchanaburi in Thailand to Dawei deep seaport in Myanmar and shipping links to seaports in India; facilitation of movement of goods and peoples across borders; and cooperation in other areas. Two Task forces were setup by the Foreign Ministers to implement the trilateral highway project, one on technical matters, chaired by India, and one on financial matters, chaired by Thailand. A meeting of the Task Forces was held in December 2002. The Technical Task Force carried out a field survey for the highway in April 2003 and agreed on the alignment for the 1360 km route. According to the estimates prepared by the Myanmar side the entire project is to be completed in three phases. EAM will be meeting the Foreign Ministers of Myanmar and Thailand in New Delhi on December 23, 2003 to discuss the project. The meeting will be preceded by meetings of the Task Forces on Technical and Financial Matters related to the project.”
Forces on Technical and Financial Matters, whose meetings were held on 22nd December, 2003 briefed the Ministers on the various developments with regard to the project.

5. The Ministers commended the members of the Technical Task Force for conducting the field survey of the 1360 km. long trilateral highway. They discussed the route alignment of the highway as recommended by the Task Force on Technical Matters in April 2003 as well as the route proposed by the Myanmar side. It was agreed to proceed first with Phase-I and to consider changes in the alignment in the middle sector proposed by Myanmar only in Phase-III. The Myanmar side would, however, reconsider its proposed alignment.

6. The Indian side agreed to consider offer of a Line of Credit at concessional terms to the Government of Myanmar for financing new constructions from Chaungma-Yinmabin (30 km.) and Lingadaw-Letsegan-Pakokku (48 km.). The Indian side also agreed to consider similar financing of the upgradation to two-lane standard of the Yinmabin-Pale-Lingadaw (50 km.). Further, the Indian side agreed to consider, subject to internal approvals, financing of the upgradation of the Bagan-Meiktila (132 km.) segments. The Indian side agreed to undertake the preparation of a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for a bridge over the Ayeyarwaddy River and for the causeways near Kyadet.

7. The Thai side agreed to extend concessional loans for financing the up-gradation to two-lane standard of the Thaton-Hpa-an-Kawkareik section (136 km.) and Kawkareik-Myawaddy section (62 km.). The Thai side also agreed to assist Myanmar in financing of the route Thaton-Mawlamyine-Mudon-Kawkareik as a second phase of the same package.

8. The Myanmar side agreed to consider financing of construction of all weather intermediate lane approach roads at both ends from Pakokku to Bagan up to the existing ferry crossing and the rehabilitation/reconstruction of only distressed and weak bridges. The Myanmar side agreed to explore the possibility of important commercial segments of the highway being constructed, operated and maintained by operators on a commercial basis.

9. It was agreed that the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) of the various segments should be completed at the earliest so that concrete
proposals for financing could be formulated. With a view to early completion of the project on a fast track basis, the Ministers authorized the Technical Task Force to consider other methods of implementation.

10. The Ministers agreed to meet again in 2004 in Mandalay. It was agreed to set up the Group of Senior Officials at the level of Director General/Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Myanmar agreed to convene the first meeting of this group early next year. The Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) would review the work done by the Task Forces, whose meetings would be convened early in Yangon. The SOM would specifically work towards signing of a Protocol that would address administrative and legal arrangements for free travel and transit of goods on the highway. The Myanmar side was requested to prepare a Concept Paper detailing all the issues covering road agreements, visa issues, transit, banking, emergency assistance, etc. and use the model of cooperation of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), where relevant. This paper would be considered at the level of SOM. Further, the SOM would actively explore the possibility of the participation of the private sector in the project.

11. It was agreed that due attention would be given to maintenance of the highway once constructed for which the members of the Technical Task Force were directed to submit recommendations for consideration at the next meeting of senior officials. India and Thailand offered training courses in road maintenance.

12. The Ministers reiterated their commitment to the importance attached to the deep-sea port at Dawei and its road link to Kanchanaburi. This matter would be reviewed in the SOM.
195. Question in the Rajya Sabha: “Boundary dispute with Myanmar”.


Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:-

(a) whether any boundary dispute exists between Myanmar and India;
(b) if so, what efforts have been made to settle the dispute in a friendly and peaceful way; and
(c) the steps taken to further improve and strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs: Shri Vinod Khanna:

(a) to (c) Sir, a statement is placed on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

1. Under the boundary agreement of 1967, a Joint Boundary Commission was constituted for demarcating the India-Myanmar boundary. Out of 1643 kms. of the India-Myanmar boundary, demarcation of 1472 kms. has been completed. 136 kms. in the Lohit sub-sector of Arunachal Pradesh and 35 kms. in the Kabaw valley of Manipur sector remains undemarcated. Although the undemarcated sectors are not an issue in bilateral relations, discussions in this regard are held in the institutional mechanisms for boundary-related issues.

2. It was also agreed in the Joint Boundary Commission by the two Governments to maintain all boundary pillars and to move forward with joint inspection, repair and restoration of pillars. The first meeting between the Heads of Survey Departments of India and Myanmar was held in Yangon in September 1993.

3. At the meeting of Heads of Survey Departments held in New Delhi in October 2002, the work plan for the field seasons 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 was finalised. A Director level meeting of the Survey Departments was held at Tamu-Moreh in December 2002. The work on joint inspection has progressed smoothly.

4. Our relations with Myanmar reflect our common desire to cooperate
with each other to promote peace and tranquillity along the border, achieve sustained economic development in both our countries and to foster people-to-people interaction. To this end, our effort has been to strengthen the friendly relations through high-level dialogue and increased economic interaction through collaborative projects. There are institutional mechanisms for maintaining regular dialogue on issues of mutual concern which meet from time to time.

Shri Rishang Keishing: Mr. Chairman, Sir, according to the statement, 136 Kms. in the Lohit sector of Arunachal Pradesh and 35 Kms. In the Kabaw valley of Manipur sector remain undemarcated. I would like to know how this happened. Was it that this area was never demarcated? Or, though the demarcation was done, the boundary stones or boundary pillars, etc. were damaged, or, removed? How soon will this be demarcated?

Shri Vinod Khanna: Sir, a boundary agreement was signed between India and Myanmar in March, 1967. Under this agreement, a Joint Boundary Commission, composed of officials representing the two countries was constituted and charged with the task of planning and carrying out demarcation of the Indo-Myanmar boundary.

Sir, the hon. Member is talking about 136 Kms. in the Lohit sub-sector of Arunachal Pradesh and 36 Kms. in Kabaw valley sector of Manipur. The demarcation in the Lohit sector has not been undertaken due to the reluctance of Myanmar to associate itself with the Sino-Indian border, which has been mentioned in the statement. The demarcation of the boundary in Arunachal sector has not been discussed after March 1976. This is because the boundary begins from the injunction of India, China and Myanmar; and Myanmar desires to have a tripartite meeting organized.

In the Kabaw valley sector, the demarcation is yet to be finalised in the following segments. It is only in the following segments, which is the Tuwang-Molcham area, which is between border pillars 64 and 68. All this information is given in the statement. The other, Sir, is the Molcham village in the Kabaw valley of Manipur. 2.84 Kms. Length of boundary remains to be demarcated. Differences over the demarcation of the boundary in the Kabaw valley were actually resolved by the technical-level agreement of October 27, 1980, according to which, an adjustment of 1.43 square miles of area in favour of the Burmese was to be made by India in the new Bongmal Tuwang sector. In return, the Burmese were to accept the ground position of pillars and were to accommodate India in
ASIA

Moreh area, by way of shifting the boundary pillars 77, fixed earlier by 250 yards eastwards towards Burmese side. The above agreement could not be implemented due to opposition from the Manipur Government.

Shri Rishang Keishing: How soon would this demarcation be completed?

Shri Vinod Khanna: Sir, there is no dispute with the Government of India; but Manipur continues to have reservations about the above package deal offered by the Government of Myanmar. Since then, three alternative proposals, or so, of the Government of India have been forwarded to the Manipur Government for its consideration, but the Manipur Government has not, so far, responded.

Shri Rishang Keishing: Sir, I live in the border area. My place is hardly 10 Kms. away from the border. We definitely want peace and tranquillity along the border areas. Is not the movement of insurgent outfits, insurgents along with the trafficking of drugs by anti-social elements is the real setback in maintaining this peace and tranquillity? In the discussion with the Myanmar Government, I would like to know, whether any specific decision was taken in this regard. If so, how are you going to implement that? What are the decisions, if any?

Shri Vinod Khanna: Sir, our relations with Myanmar reflect the common desire to co-operate with each other to promote peace and tranquillity along the border to achieve the sustained economic development in both the countries and to foster people-to-people interaction. The hon. Member has expressed his concern about the illegal trade that is taking place there. For this, the reply that I would like to submit is, Tamu (Myanmar) - Moreh (Manipur) is the only designated border trading point between India and Myanmar, which is currently operationalised. The other agreed trading point - Champai-Rih - is yet to be operationalised. Since, Champai is farther away from the border, it has been decided to operationalise LCS at Zokhawthar. The LCS at Champai will be notified and staff would be posted at Zokhawthar. A number of measures have been taken to address illegal trade in areas of infrastructure and construction of weigh bridge; a modern warehouse has been completed, security is being provided by a Battalion of Assam Rifles and a decision on a larger currency chest for Union Bank of India has been taken by the RBI.

Shri Shankar Roy Chowdhury: Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any discrepancy in alignment of the McMahon Line in the Fish Tail area of Lohit Sector of Arunachal Pradesh. The discrepancy being between its alignment by
geographical and satellite survey. If the hon. Minister so desire, this can be communicated to me confidentially.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Sir, there are many issues relating to McMahon Line which are under discussion. And, as the House is aware, many of it are confidential in nature. General Roy Chowdhury, from his previous experience, would be aware of most of it. But, on this issue, I seek your protection.

**Shri Balkavi Bairagi:** Mr. Chairman, I want to tell the Hon. Minister that just before the meeting at Temu Moreh in December 2002 we were there in connection with a committee meeting. At that time many people from Moreh area came and met us. One thing that is clear is that for eight or nine years there has been no meeting between the two governments. You yourself have accepted this in your reply. Now there is a gap of eight-nine years between the meetings between the two governments. Now for lack of demarcation of 35 km of the boundary, Myanmar has usurped 12 or 13 Km of Moreh area from India. It was their grouse that the whole bazaar has shifted there along the Indian border. I would like to know if you would take up this issue with Myanmar at the next meeting to find a way out and try to stop the illegal trade. Hon Chairman if there are no meetings for nine months at a stretch then there are going to be problems.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Chairman sir, the Foreign Minister of Myanmar had visited India recently at my invitation. After many years, after eight or nine year there was a visit by the Myanmar Foreign Minister. We had a good talk. We discussed the border question and the question of illegal trade too. We too discussed about the insurgents groups operating from both the sides. In this way our relations are improving, depth of our friendship is increasing. We are having joint action on these issues. When we met the Foreign Minister of Myanmar he had suggested a four-stage formula to tackle the border problem, illegal trade, smuggling, daily incidents, etc. There is already a joint border commission. He suggested contacts at the local level and at higher levels; If the problems are not resolved at the joint boundary commission and these are discussed between the foreign ministers. We are discussing the suggestion to resolve the issues put forward by the Myanmar Foreign Minister. I would like to reiterate that for lack of demarcation of the Myanmar boundary with India, we should not believe, has created any differences or conflict situation between the two countries. There is complete friendship and understanding between the two countries and we are managing the border well.
Singapore


New Delhi, April 8, 2003.

1. On 8 April 2002, the Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Goh Chok Tong, met in Singapore and agreed to establish a Joint Study Group to study the benefits of an India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA).

2. The Joint Study Group\(^1\) met seven times, alternately in India and Singapore, and has submitted its report to the two Prime Ministers.

\(^{1}\) The Joint Study Group (JSG) was set up by the Prime Ministers of India and Singapore during the Indian Prime Minister’s visit to Singapore in April 2002 to study the scope and structure of a bilateral CECA. Dr. Rakesh Mohan, Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India and Mr. Lim Chin Beng, Member Public Service Commission, Singapore, co chaired the JSG, and presented their report to the two Prime Ministers before the signing of the Declaration.

The JSG envisaged as an integrated package, consisting of the following agreements:

- A Free Trade Agreement, which would include inter-alia, trade in goods and services, and investment;
- A bilateral agreement on investment promotion, protection, and cooperation;
- An improved Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement;
- A more liberal Air Services Agreement, and Open Skies for Charter Flights; and
- A work programme of cooperation in a number of areas including health care, education, media, tourism, and the creation of an India-Singapore Fund, with a target of US$ 1 billion.

The CECA was expected to lead to a far-reaching benefits for both countries in trade and investment flows, and in greater exchanges in professional services, especially in the Knowledge Economy. The CECA would be another important step in India’s expanding relations with the ASEAN region, and would supplement other ongoing initiatives such as the India-ASEAN Free Trade Area. The CECA would help Indian businesses leverage Singapore’s strengths in finance, manufacturing and marketing, to achieve greater competitiveness, and to use Singapore as a gateway to South-East Asia. Linkages with Singapore based MNCs would help Indian corporates expand their economic outreach globally. The JSG recommended that the two countries should aim to complete negotiations on the CECA within a time frame of 18 months. The two Prime Ministers agreed that, given the tremendous prospects of fruitful cooperation within CECA, the negotiators of the two countries would be asked to complete negotiations within a period of 9 to 12 months and to also provide for an early harvest.
In its report, the Joint Study Group has concluded that a CECA between India and Singapore would provide significant benefits for both countries, in terms of the potential for increased trade and investment, and through economic cooperation.

3. As important as the direct economic benefits the CECA would bring to the two countries, the CECA would serve to strengthen ties between India and Singapore, and to form a bridge between India and the ASEAN region.

4. Significantly, the CECA could serve as a pathfinder for the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement, and to connect Singapore to one of the world’s most dynamic emerging economies. The CECA would also strengthen and catalyse the multilateral trading system.

5. We agree that the Joint Study Group’s report will serve as a framework for subsequent negotiations on a CECA. Negotiations for the India-Singapore CECA should begin as soon as possible and aim to conclude with the signing of the relevant agreements as early as possible.

Signed in New Delhi on 8th April, 2003.

G(NS) George Yeo Arun Jaitley
Minister for Trade and Industry Commerce and Industry Minister
For the Government of Singapore For the Government of India

New Delhi, April 8, 2003.

The Government of the Republic of Singapore (hereinafter referred to as “the Government of Singapore”), represented by the Technical Cooperation Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereinafter referred to as “TCD”), and the Government of the Republic of India (hereinafter referred to as “the Government of India”), represented by the Technical Cooperation Division in the Ministry of External Affairs (hereinafter referred to as “TC”), desiring to cooperate in extending technical assistance to Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (hereinafter referred to as “CLMV”) for their economic and social development have reached the following understanding:

1. The Government of Singapore and the Government of India shall jointly establish and administer a programme to train selected participants from CLMV countries under a Third Country Training Programme (hereinafter referred to as “TCTP”) arrangement.

2. The implementation of the TCTP, including the approval of the course programme, shall be jointly administered and approved on the Indian side by TC, and on the Singapore side by TCD.

3. The participants shall be nominated by the governments of the CLMV countries covered by the TCTP. The Government of Singapore, represented by TCD, and the Government of India, represented by TC, shall jointly approve the applicants.

4. The training will take place at the Singapore Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Training Centres in the CLMV countries. The Government of Singapore will provide the necessary training facilities (including classrooms, training aids, utilities, refreshments and stationery) and where necessary, provide Singapore experts to jointly conduct the courses. The Government of India will provide the necessary experts. The Government of India and the Government of Singapore will be responsible for their respective
trainers’ airfare to and from their country, trainers’ remunerations, insurance, allowance, local accommodation and transport.

5. The medium of training will be the English Language. The number of courses, areas of training and details of each individual course to be offered each year shall be jointly decided by TCD and TC.

6. Any dispute between the Government of Singapore and the Government of India, which arises out of or in connection with this Memorandum, will be resolved by mutual consultation.

7. This Memorandum will come into operation on signature and shall continue in operation unless it is terminated by either signatory giving six months’ written notice to the other party.

8. This Memorandum may be amended in writing by mutual consent of the Government of Singapore and the Government of India. Any amendment of this Memorandum will be without prejudice to any right or obligation accruing or incurred under this Memorandum prior to the effective date of such amendment.

9. The foregoing record represents the understanding reached between the Government of the Republic of Singapore and the Government of the Republic of India upon the matters referred to therein.

Signed in New Delhi on 8th April, 2003.

For the Government of the Republic of Singapore

Prof. S. Jayakumar
Minister for Foreign Affairs

For the Government of the Republic of India

Yashwant Sinha
Minister for External Affairs

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Mr Prime Minister,

Once again, let me welcome you and your delegation to India. We see your visit as a demonstration of a new vibrancy in India - Singapore relations, which have benefitted greatly from a regular exchange of high-level visits.

During my visit last April, I saw for myself how Singapore has transformed itself in the last few decades. You have turned your weaknesses into strengths, and your disadvantages into opportunities. Your country is a by-word for efficiency, discipline and world-class facilities. There is much that we can learn from you.

Our bilateral trade and investment links continue to strengthen as we engage more closely with each other. The IT Park in Bangalore is an example of just how effective our partnership can be. Our efforts in other sectors of the knowledge economy also show that we have much to share with each other. We value Singapore’s increasing involvement in the Indian economy, as our largest trading partner from ASEAN.

The complementarities between our two economies propel us towards closer cooperation. We recognized this last year by setting up a Joint Study Group to explore the prospects of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between our two countries. I am happy that the Group has prepared a comprehensive report in a remarkably short time. We have today agreed to commence inter-governmental negotiations. A Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement would mark a quantum leap in our bilateral relations. We should strive to reach this goal soon.

Mr. Prime Minister,

Our links with Singapore are reinforced by intensifying engagement with ASEAN. Developing closer ties with ASEAN is one of the cornerstones of our “look-East” policy. We highly appreciate your personal commitment to India’s increased interaction with ASEAN, which was recently elevated to a Summit-level dialogue last year in Cambodia. We are already committed to working towards a regional Free Trade Area with ASEAN in a decade. When India and Singapore conclude a Comprehensive
Economic Cooperation Agreement, it could become a role model for the India-ASEAN - FTA. Similarly, I am confident that our collaboration in the initiative for ASEAN integration would inspire other regional initiatives.

Mr Prime Minister,

These are critical times for the world. The situation in West Asia is a cause of serious concern for all of us. The sufferings caused by the war in Iraq is a source of deep anguish for us. We sincerely hope that hostilities will end soon. We would then need to focus on humanitarian assistance for rebuilding that war-ravaged country. The larger aim of a worldwide coalition against international terrorism still remains an unfinished agenda. India and Singapore have possibilities for cooperative efforts in these areas. Our relations therefore can acquire much wider dimensions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I equest you to join me in a toast:

To the health and happiness of the Prime Minister of Singapore;
To friendship between India and Singapore.

Thank you.

✦✦✦✦✦
Thailand

199. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the engagements of the Thai Foreign Minister on a visit to India.

New Delhi, February 14, 2003.

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

... Dr. Surakiarat Sathirathai Foreign Minister of Thailand is currently on a visit to India and he had a meeting with the External Affairs Minister Mr. Yashwant Sinha in the afternoon followed by a lunch hosted by the EAM in honour of the Thai delegation. This meeting essentially was the fourth India-Thailand Joint Commission.

To give you a backdrop on this visit – this visit takes place in an atmosphere of enhanced cooperation between India and Thailand marked particularly by regular high level exchange of visits. The Thai Prime Minister came twice to India, our Prime Minister paid a short visit when returning from India-ASEAN summit and the Deputy Prime Minister had recently paid a visit to Thailand. Thailand and India have also cooperated in the multilateral fora particularly Thailand’s role in India’s increasing dialogue with ASEAN has been very positive. India and Thailand are also members of BIMST-EC as also the Indian Ocean Rim Arc and also ARF, the Mekong-Ganga Project as well as the trilateral project of India, Thailand and Myanmar which is the transport linkage project between the three countries. There are several areas which we have been working with each other and it is in this context that the Joint Commission Meeting was held after a gap of 7 years. That is the point I wanted to make because it was pointed out by the EAM that we should make sure that we don’t have these gaps and the next meeting is held next year. It is evident that there is a strong political will to push forward this bilateral relationship and what needs to be done is stronger follow up and implementation action particularly on the Joint Commission. The Joint Commission is a very wide ranging forum and it covers areas from trade and industry to bio technology, science and technology, space, culture, tourism, civil aviation, education. After the meeting today an Agreed Minutes of the meeting were signed which basically set out a Road Map for the development of bilateral relations in all these areas. Various Joint Committees, Joint Working Groups have to do the official level follow up in each of these
areas. The main discussion focussed on the trade aspect and the fact remains despite the fact that we have all the juridical basis for an excellent trade relationship - we have the protection of bilateral investment agreement in place, we have the agreement for avoidance of double taxation - the trade between the two countries has just crossed 1 US billion dollars. The target now is to make it US 2 billion dollars. One of the instruments on which currently work is being done is a bilateral free trade agreement. A joint negotiating committee is currently working on the draft framework on FTA. This was due to be finished by September and one of the significant decisions today was that this deadline should be brought forward to July so that the framework agreement is ready for signing by the end of the year or earlier. As part of the effort to remove not only the tariff but also the non-tariff barrier the other issues and suggestions which were discussed and considered very positively by both sides were setting up a Joint Venture centre in India and also working out Mutual Recognition Arrangement which in trade terms essentially means that if the goods are inspected in one country and passed then they don’t have to be re-inspected in other countries.

Thailand is also positively viewing India’s request that businessmen should be allowed five year visas and also the work permits should be given to Indian professionals particularly in IT areas which has formed the major focus of bilateral interest. Setting up of an IT centre in Thailand also came up for discussion. The other areas in which there was a lot of interest is tourism and civil aviation. A large number of Indian tourists go to Thailand. Thailand is thinking of launching joint promotion programmes and they will be sending a delegation from the tourism industry for follow up. There was a feeling that there should not be a lack of flights between the two countries that the flight frequency should be increased. Thailand is also interested in involving India’s hotel industry. Interestingly the Foreign Minister of Thailand has come with a large delegation with 26 officials as well as business and media. The Thai Foreign Minister particularly mentioned that they should make each other’s country hubs of the regions. Thailand for India and India for Thailand should be a hub in the two regions. They highlighted bio-tech as a major point of interest for them in the field of science and technology. ISRO has also proposed to Thailand that they would be willing to develop, design and launch a remote sensing satellite for Thailand and this would be satellite for development purposes for crop and rainfall assessments and other remote sensing development activities. This is under consideration by the Thai authorities. So all in all it was a very positive meeting, discussions were wide-ranging, the
atmosphere was very good and it is clear that a lot can be done with Thailand. Thailand, Myanmar, India project also came up for discussions and it was decided that it should be completed as soon as possible. If necessary the three Foreign Ministers would also meet to see that this project gets the necessary political push to head for an early conclusion.

**Question:** What is the target to attain US$ 2 billion trade between India and Thailand?

**Answer:** It is unrealistic to say now. We only have 1 billion dollars. The whole thing is to give it an impetus. There is no time frame. Of course the intention is to increase bilateral trade as soon as possible.

**Question:** Why was this Joint Commission held after a gap of 7 years?

**Answer:** As I said there were lots of Ministries involved. Normally these things take place once you have sufficient movement on various issues and then it has to be across the board getting together of several ministries from both countries. I think it shows that the implementation was not as should have been. But that was what was underlined in today’s meeting. Given the political relationship, given the tremendous goodwill between the two countries this sort of a gap in the implementation should not be allowed to happen and we must have the next joint commission meeting next year.

Thank You

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200. Press interaction by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal in connection with Prime Minister’s visit to Indonesia and Thailand from 7th to 12th October, 2003.

New Delhi, October 3, 2003.

Please see Document No. 159

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201. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the Thai daily *the Nation*.

Bangkok, October 9, 2003.

Q. How do you see India’s position in trade and investment in Southeast Asia vis-à-vis the People’s Republic of China? Why do you say trade with Southeast Asia could rise to US$ 15 billion in two years time? What will be the leading trade items from India and for Southeast Asia?

The rapid intensification in recent years of India’s trade and investment relations with South East Asia is an integral part of our foreign policy. The combination of our geographical proximity, economic complementarities and human resources creates a huge potential, which needs to be optimally exploited. India’s trade with ASEAN increased from US$ 3.5 billion in 1991 to US$ 12.5 billion in 2002. It looks like it may even exceed US $ 15 billion in the next ASEAN address a few problem areas, the trade could even further double to $ 30 billion in the next few years. Agriculture, pharmaceuticals, information technology and a variety of manufactured products contribute to this growing trade.

Q. Why is the Indo-Thai FTA a milestone? Why is it different from the South Asia Trade arrangement? How did you become interested in forming an FTA with Thailand? What do you think will be the lead business sectors for Thailand from India?

The major difference is that the India-Thailand FTA looks like it will work, while the South Asia Free Trade Agreement and the South Asia Preferential Trading Arrangement have not seen real progress solely because of the unreasonable obstructions of one South Asian Country.

The India-Thailand FTA would be the first such agreement outside South Asia. A Joint Working Group conducted a feasibility study last year and concluded that immense potential exists for enhancing cooperation in trade, services and investment and that the proposed FTA was mutually beneficial and desirable. Several sectors have been identified, including information and Communications Technology, Space Technology, Biotechnology, Finance and Banking, Tourism, Infrastructure, Health Care, Construction, Education, Fisheries and Aquaculture. I am sure the FTA would provide a new stimulus to our trade and economic cooperation.

Q. Much has been said about Indian bureaucracy and inward
looking Indian business people. Are non-tariff barriers going to be an issue to get the trade and investment value and volume up, as India also has special surcharges which are not expected to be covered under the FTA? Is it true that many Indian businesses do not see the challenge of coming to this part of the world since the Indian market is already very large?

I think today’s technology revolution and globalization do not permit any country (or any group of people) the luxury of being inward-looking. We have to march with the times, and India’s economic indicators show that we are doing so with outstanding success.

It is, of course, true that India has a market of continental proportions and Indian business obviously seeks to retain its dominance therein. But our liberalization policies have ensured that foreign business can also access these markets with the right marketing strategy. At the same time, a number of Indian companies are going multinational, manufacturing in foreign countries and operating in global markets. Indian investment in the ASEAN region has in fact been growing rapidly in recent years.

Q. India, China, Brazil and Thailand are among the members of the Group 21 (may be more now) that have been pro-active in the recent trade ministerial meeting in Cancun. How do you view the world trade outlook with recent talk collapse?

The collapse of the Cancun meeting is a major disappointment, but it is not the end of the road in the search for a rule-based multilateral trading system. The issues on the Cancun agenda will have to be addressed in the future, and this will have to be done in an equitable and development-oriented manner. We hope that realism will eventually prevail, and that developing countries will succeed in convincing the developed world that the reforms they are seeking would actually benefit both North and South.

Q. Please assess your view of the progress in the liberalization of the Indian economy. With the election in 2004, what will be your key economic agenda?

The liberalization of the Indian economy has recorded remarkable gains, particularly in the last five years. There is a broad consensus across the political spectrum about the imperative of economic reform, which has unlocked the enormous growth potential of the economy. The benefits of liberalization are increasingly reaching the masses. Consumers have a greater choice of products and services, and competition keeps the prices
in check. Economic growth has been achieved with low levels of inflation and rising external reserves.

Of course, during this transition period, my government has paid particular attention to tacking the socioeconomic consequences of high economic growth. The needs of equitable development and poverty alleviation sometimes moderate the pace of our reform programmes. But attention to these needs helps to create the overall democratic consensus for the reform process, which makes it strong, enduring and irreversible. We will continue to move forward with our liberalization measures in a development-oriented and people-friendly manner.

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202. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with the Thai paper Matichon.

New Delhi, October 9, 2003.

Q. Thailand and India have good relations since the past. What is the kind of cooperation that can make it better?

India’s ties with Thailand are deep rooted. Over the years, both countries have cooperated with each other in various fields. However there is still a large untapped potential. We are focussing on measures that can enhance our political, economic and cultural cooperation, both bilateral and multilateral.

India’s expertise and capabilities in Information Technology, biotechnology, space technologies, biomedicine, and other cutting edge areas are well known. Thailand and India have bilateral agreements on cooperation in scientific research, industrial applications, civilian applications of nuclear energy and space technologies, and information technology. We are striving to further strengthen our collaboration in these areas.

India and Thailand are both agricultural countries with a broad biodiversity. Agricultural science and technology offer many areas of cooperation.

Both countries can gain from exchanges of scientists and experts for research and development. India provides scholarships for short-term in-service training in various areas of science and technology, IT,
electronics, industrial techniques and agricultural practices. Professionals from Thailand can avail of these facilities.

India also collaborates with, and provides assistance to, the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Bangkok through regular short-term deputation of Professors from engineering institutions in India.

Q. You would be the first Foreign Leader to address a Joint session of Thai Parliament, What would be your message to the people of Thailand.

I send my hearty felicitations to the people of Thailand ahead of my visit to this beautiful country next week. I am delighted that I shall be visiting a country with which India has enjoyed extremely close and cordial relations throughout history. Our ties are rooted in a shared cultural and spiritual heritage, enriched by the legends of Ramayana and the immortal teachings of the Buddha. In modern times, these have acquired new facets with steadily expanding interaction and cooperation in the fields of trade, industry, science and technology. This cooperation has assumed a new dimension with India becoming a summit partner of ASEAN, of which Thailand is a founder member.

The people of India are full of admiration for Thailand’s accomplishments in both traditional and hi-tech areas of the economy. We especially marvel at Thailand’s success in promoting tourism, while retaining its unique cultural personality. I am convinced that deepening and broadening all-sided relations between India and Thailand will not only be mutually beneficial, but also serve as a factor for prosperity, stability and peace in Asia.

Q. After 9/11 the world has changed a lot. How did it affect India’s foreign policy? Do you agree with the on-going war on terrorism?

The horrific terrorist acts of 9/11 aroused the consciousness of the world to the global menace of terrorism. They showed that distance and power provide no immunity or security from the depredations of terrorism. As a victim for over two decades, India has always proactively supported international efforts in the fight against terrorism.

We believe there can be no justification for terrorism on any grounds – religious, political, economic, ideological or any other. Democratic societies are the most vulnerable, since terrorism exploits the freedom of speech, expression, faith and movement available in these countries. The effort
against terrorism has, therefore, to be global and comprehensive; all democratic countries should join wholeheartedly in it. It is with this conviction that India joined the international coalition against terrorism.

India has been arguing that some of the members of the coalition are themselves part of the problem. We cannot overlook this, or apply double standards to terrorist acts depending on where they occur, or who perpetrates them. Instead of getting diverted by futile debates on the definition of terrorism or on its root causes, we should focus on choking off all sources of support - sustenance, arms, training or finances for terrorism.

Many countries share these perspectives, but immediate political considerations sometimes discourage firm and unequivocal actions against some perpetrators or accomplices of terrorism.

Q. Why did India choose not to send troops to Iraq?

India had been consistently calling for a resolution of the Iraq issue without military conflict. We were very disappointed that the five permanent members of the UN Security Council could not reach agreement on the means of its resolution, though they shared the same objective of keeping Iraq free of weapons of mass destruction. Now that the conflict is over, it is futile to go into the rights and wrongs of the situation.

The situation in Iraq now is very complex. There is an urgent need for the United Nations to assume a central role in the humanitarian efforts, in the economic rebuilding of the country, and in promoting the political process of handing over sovereignty to the people of Iraq. We hope that the ongoing discussions in the United Nations on all these aspects would reach an early and satisfactory conclusion.

To your question about the possibility of Indian troops in Iraq, I can only say that this would depend on all the factors I have mentioned, as well as our own domestic security considerations.

Q. How can you describe the relationship between India and Pakistan right now?

The process of normalization of diplomatic and other links with Pakistan, which was set in motion by my peace initiative in April this year, has made some progress. Diplomatic relations have been restored to the level of High Commissioners. We have recently proposed to Pakistan that we
could reciprocally increase the staff strength of the respective High Commissions. The Delhi-Lahore passenger bus service has resumed and is running to its full capacity.

There have been important exchanges in business, culture and people-to-people contacts, including exchange of Parliamentarians from both sides. Our decision to provide free medical treatment to 20 Pakistani children at our cost was well received both here and in Pakistan. Eleven children have already benefited from this facility.

This is not to overlook the political differences between the two countries, which would naturally need to be addressed through bilateral dialogue. At the same time, it is logical that difficult issues can be more effectively addressed in an atmosphere of understanding and cooperation. But the crucial point is that we will not negotiate with terrorism or its sponsors. Until the sponsorship of terrorism from across our borders stops, we cannot have a meaningful dialogue with Pakistan.

India’s nuclear policy is firmly predicated on the principle of no first use policy. Our nuclear weapons are meant to deter irresponsible military adventurism; not to fight a nuclear war.

The danger in South Asia today is not so much of a nuclear war, as of the disruption of peace and security by unabated cross-border terrorism.
203. Address by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the Special Session of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Bangkok, October 9, 2003.

Your Excellency, President of the House of Representatives
And President of the National Assembly,
Your Excellency, President of the Senate
And Vice President of the National Assembly,
Distinguished Members of the Thai National Assembly,

It is a great honour to have this opportunity to address the Parliament of a fellow democracy in Asia. I am deeply touched by the knowledge that this is the first time any foreign leader has been given the privilege of addressing the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Thailand. It is a symbol of the traditional ties and cultural affinities between our two countries and an expression of your warm friendship and gracious hospitality.

Excellencies,

As a Parliamentary colleague, I bring you the greetings of the Indian Parliament, and of the people it represents. For me, Parliament has been a second home for 46 years. Of course, I spent forty of these years on the Opposition benches, so I can speak with knowledge of both sides! It has shaped my appreciation of the precious gift of parliamentary democracy, which both India and Thailand enjoy.

While we are both democracies, the structures of governance in our countries are based on our unique national characteristics. Our country is a Republic; yours is a Constitutional Monarchy, guided by His Majesty the King. For you, this is ‘Rama Rajya’, an expression that has profound meaning for all Indians.

Excellencies,

Relations between India and Thailand go back into antiquity. They are based on the firm foundations of a shared heritage. We still share similar cultural traditions, including festivals.
In some weeks, we in India will celebrate the festival of lights, which we call Deepavali. Two weeks after that, the rivers of Thailand will be alight with lanterns for Loy Krathong, which we observe as Kartik Purnima.

Over centuries, the profound message of Lord Buddha has motivated generations of scholars, monks and pilgrims to visit holy Buddhist shrines in India.

Over the last century, we appreciated the quiet support of the Thai people for our struggle for freedom. Our great freedom fighter, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, and – before him – members of the revolutionary Ghadar Party, found understanding, support and shelter in this city.

Today, our two countries are dealing with similar issues of governance. Our approaches and solutions may differ, but our objectives are the same. Even while accepting the economic discipline of globalisation, both our nations have pursued policies aimed at lifting our people from poverty. We have sought to harness science and technology to accelerate growth and development. Both our countries seek to achieve these goals through the democratic process.

We are both grappling with complex matters in this era of globalisation. We are contending with questions on the right approach to crucial – and sometimes painful – issues of reform and restructuring. We face the challenge of preserving our cultural identity and environment in an age of rapid development and change.

Excellencies,

We in India admire Thailand's many strengths. You have optimally utilized the abundant natural resources of this land to ensure food security. Thailand is now recognized for the export of world-class agricultural produce, as well as products such as rubber, flowers, fruit, and processed foods. Your country is justly famous for establishing global benchmarks for tourism. Modern technology has been successfully combined with the Thai tradition of commerce to make Thailand a source of quality manufactured products. Sustainable development has been promoted through the Royal Projects under His Majesty's guidance.

We have also valued the policies that have enabled the community of persons of Indian origin to flourish here and to make a contribution to economic growth, cultural interaction and charitable work in Thailand. They serve as a bridge between our countries.
India has rejuvenated its policy of comprehensively upgrading ties with its eastern neighbours. Thailand is an important link in India’s increasing engagement with its extended neighbourhood in East and South East Asia. We are determined to increase our mutually beneficial partnership both bilaterally and multilaterally. It is in our common interest to promote regional cooperation through the Asian Cooperation Dialogue, in BIMST-EC, and in the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation initiative.

I am coming here after participating at the second India-ASEAN Summit in Bali. Thailand’s support has been crucial in enabling us to widen and deepen our interaction with the nations of South East Asia.

The expansion of our bilateral partnership has a self-evident logic. Our population of one billion people makes for a large and diversified market for Thai firms. Our economic reform programme is transforming India in significant, and even dramatic ways, creating new openings for Indian and foreign players.

Our complementary strengths provide us with a solid foundation for developing cooperative ties. Our skills in the software industry are well-matched by your emerging strengths in the hardware segment of the Information Technology industry. As one of six countries in the world with indigenously developed end-to-end space capabilities, we can cooperate with you to utilize space technology for development. And as Thailand’s expertise in infrastructure development and tourism promotion continues to grow, your firms will find that there is massive demand in India for such capabilities.

Excellencies,

As open democratic societies, India and Thailand are also increasingly at risk from the forces that exploit the freedoms of our societies to wage war on us. The scourge of terror is not limited to a few regions of the world; it is a global problem. The ugly face of terrorism is now seen increasingly even in South East Asia. It has been with us in India for over two decades.

Being maritime neighbours, we have a common interest in both the economic development of our neighbourhood, as also in the security of the waterways. We need to eradicate organized crime, piracy, drug trafficking, counterfeiting and other such elements from our region. We should join forces to ensure that the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea area becomes a zone of genuine peace and development.
Excellencies,

Earlier today, our two countries signed several agreements, including a framework agreement to develop a free trade area between our countries. This is the first such Agreement that we have signed with an ASEAN country. It is our conviction that it will profoundly transform our bilateral economic relations.

Our two governments also signed several documents for cooperation in fields ranging from agriculture and biotechnology to tourism. India has suggested a twin-city relationship between Phuket in Thailand and Port Blair in India, which face each other across the Andaman Sea. This can promote the idea of cross-regional tourism linkages which we should promote in all of Asia. We have taken important decisions to strengthen air connectivity between our two countries. We have also decided to set up cultural centres in our respective capitals. Together, these elements reinforce the substantive framework of cooperation between our two countries.

Excellencies,

The historical traditions and ideas that have linked us also inspire us in crafting our modern relationship. Let our nations move towards a convergence of the ancient and the contemporary in a manner that strengthens the confidence of our peoples through mutual support and respect. In the concluding words of our respective anthems, let me say SÉÉäÉÉä and VÉÉ-cä.

✦✦✦✦✦
204. Media briefing by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha during Prime Minister’s visit to Thailand.

Bangkok, October 9, 2003.

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN (SHRI NAVTEJ Sarna): I have the pleasure of welcoming the honourable External Affairs Minister to the Media Centre in Bangkok accompanied by Mr. Abhyankar and our Ambassador Ms Ponnappa. May I request the honourable Minister to kindly brief the press after which we will take questions in our usual fashion.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): Thank you Navtej.

Friends, I thought I will come and brief you about the bilateral discussions that the Prime Minister of India had with the Prime Minister of Thailand today forenoon and then reply to any questions that you might have.

The Prime Minister of Thailand, Mr. Thaksin, had visited India for the first time in November, 2001. After that there have been high-level visits and highest level contacts from both sides over the last nearly two years. Prime Minister of India had made a very brief visit to Thailand in November last year, and he had used the opportunity for bilateral discussions. This is his first full bilateral visit to Thailand.

In this bilateral visit there are many firsts which are taking place not only between Thailand and India but even on a global basis, if I could use that expression. The building in which the bilateral meeting was held today was readied only last evening, as the Thai Prime Minister told us. This is their version of our Hyderabad House. They had renovated this building, and this was the first meeting with any visiting dignitary which was held in this building. Later on, it is going to be used for the APEC Summit in Bangkok.

The Prime Minister of India will be addressing the joint session of both Houses of Thai Parliament today afternoon. This is again the first time that any visiting dignitary is being given this honour. There are many other firsts which we will see as I go along.

I would like to mention to you broadly the structure of the discussion. There was a restricted meeting, four eyes meeting where only the two
Prime Ministers were present, and delegation level talks. I will give you a summary of what happened in these three meetings.

The issues covered were over a widest possible range. Bilateral cooperation was discussed in all areas. Both leaders agreed to the doubling of trade exchanges between the two countries by 2005. From the present one billion dollars, it ought to go up to two billion dollars. Cooperation in the area of technology was discussed. Cooperation in the area of tourism was also discussed. We will give you some details of these. In the field of culture, we agreed that both countries will set up cultural centers in each other’s countries.

The open-skies policy which the Prime Minister has offered to ASEAN yesterday came up for discussion again. Thailand responded by saying that reciprocally they will also offer open-skies policy for Indian companies to visit not merely Bangkok but other cities in Thailand. It was agreed that similar facilities will be extended to air cargo operations also - a point which had been made yesterday - but bilaterally. Thailand was one of the five countries in ASEAN which had initiated this move. So, they would like to immediately implement it bilaterally with India.

The Asian Cooperation Dialogue, which Thailand had initiated some two years ago, came up. India has played a very important role there, as the Thai Prime Minister mentioned. The Rice Pool Initiative of Thailand and the cooperation that they have received from India was also mentioned by the Thai Prime Minister.

In tourism, he invited Indian businessmen to come and set up hotels in hailand. The idea of combined destinations for tourism was discussed. The sister-city relation between Phuket and Port Blair was agreed to. In order to promote liberalization of visa regime we have signed an agreement today as far as official and diplomatic passport holders are concerned. However, the Thai Prime Minister has suggested that the two foreign offices should discuss extension of similar facilities to business people visiting each other’s country, and artistes and students where exchange programmes have been agreed to.

On the bilateral front, we also discussed joint ventures in fisheries, an annual cultural exchange programme, cooperation in the field of biodiversity, investments in other areas especially in food-processing, and information technology. We also discussed cooperation in the field of combating terrorism where the Joint Working Group which is functioning
between the two countries will meet in December in Delhi for information and intelligence sharing. The Prime Minister complimented the Thai Prime Minister for the arrest of Hambali in Thailand. The Thai Prime Minister also said in this connection that he will not permit the territory of Thailand to be misused by any terrorist organization operating in India, or by terrorists.

Defence cooperation between the two countries was discussed, especially training, joint patrolling. From our side we offered to Thailand our defence equipments, which are manufactured in India.

Thailand requested for safe passage of their fishing vessels which pass through India’s Exclusive Economic Zone on their way to African waters. All in all, on the bilateral front Thailand and India are entering into a new partnership. This is the beginning of a new era in our relationship.

The issue of trilateral cooperation between Myanmar, Thailand and India also came up. On the road project, the three Foreign Ministers agreed yesterday to meet in India in December. Technical studies for the trilateral road project have been completed. So, we will meet in December in India to find out how we can now fund the project and take it up as soon as possible now that technical studies are complete.

Similarly, a very important project which is under discussion between the three countries is the modernization of the Tavoy Port in Myanmar, and a road from there to Kanchanaburi in Thailand, and ultimately linking it to Bangkok which will connect the Andaman Sea with the Gulf of Thailand and will reduce the journey time for ships. This will be another major project of trilateral cooperation between the three countries.

As you are aware, we have another organization called the BIMSTEC, which is Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The Summit of that is going to be held in Phuket in February. The Prime Minister of Thailand has suggested - like the Asian Car Rally which the Prime Minister of India suggested yesterday - that we could have a football tournament of the five countries and the final match could be played at the time of the Summit meeting. This will bring the youth into this movement of integration. We have accepted this suggestion. We have said we could probably take it into other areas also. Now that we are champions in hockey, maybe we will have an interest there also. So, this five-nation cooperation was discussed.

Thailand has studied the speech which the Prime Minister made at ASEAN-India Summit yesterday. Today the Thai Prime Minister was ready
with his study of the Prime Minister’s speech and his response. He identified five points on which he decided to respond. The first is, as I said, open-sky policy on which Thailand will reciprocate immediately. Another point is granting of multiple-entry visas. Mr. Narayana Murthy of Infosys was the first foreigner to be issued a multi-entry visa for five years by Thailand, and the only one so far. Hopefully, this will multiply in the future.

The Thai Prime Minister was full of praise for Prime Minister’s forward-looking, constructive speech of yesterday. Cooperation in the health sector is a point which Prime Minister made yesterday. Bilateral cooperation between Thailand and India, apart from the multilateral cooperation at the ASEAN level is the other point. Thailand was full of praise for India’s support to the ACD, I mentioned to you, and especially our promise of a contribution of a billion dollar for the Asian Bond Scheme.

So, if you look at the overall picture, there is cooperation between ASEAN and India where Thailand plays a very important role, cooperation in the other multilateral forums like BIMSTEC, like Mekong-Ganga, like the trilateral with Myanmar. Bilaterally, in the morning, I mentioned to you, there has been a very comprehensive engagement between Thailand and India at the level of the two Prime Ministers. What is most important is the sincere desire which came out very clearly in the meeting on the part of both the countries to move forward in promoting the relationship in all areas and on all fronts.

This more or less sums up the discussions that we have had. Now we are looking forward to the Prime Minister’s address to the Business Meeting, Prime Minister’s address to the Parliament, Prime Minister’s meeting with the King of Thailand tomorrow, then further private dinner that Prime Minister is hosting for him in Chiang Mai and further discussions with him in Chiang Mai. He will also be visiting the Royal Project in Chiang Mai.

Now I am ready to take your questions.

QUESTION: Did Indian Prime Minister make any specific point or suggestion...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: In fact at the Delegation-level talks the Indian Prime Minister in a way was the first to speak. He was invited to take the floor and make the suggestions. Then the Prime Minister of Thailand responded. It is quite the other way round because it is normally the host Head of Government who makes his presentation first and then the visiting Head of Government responds. These points that I am
mentioning to you about doubling the trade by 2005, cooperation in the area of technology, tourism, cultural center, air cargo liberalization, cooperation in the field of combating terrorism, defence, are all suggestions which were made by our Prime Minister to which the Thai Prime Minister responded.

**QUESTION:** Has the Framework Agreement on Free Trade been signed?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** It has been signed. Five agreements have been signed today. We are giving you a piece of paper with regard to each agreement and some explanation of what it contains. That will be in writing.

**OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN:** That is available at the back of the room after the meeting.

**QUESTION:** Could you just spell out how exactly the combined destinations concept would work?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** We get about three million tourists a year. I think, they get about eleven plus. If we were to join up with them and they could visit destinations in Thailand and also visit destinations in India, that will be a combined destinations visit. It could be a win-win for both. Tourists who come to India could come to Thailand; tourists who come to Thailand could also visit India. That is the kind of promotion that we have in mind.

**QUESTION:** Is there any scope for Indian software technocrats in Thailand, as India has gone with an agreement with other countries regarding transfer of technology in software and hardware?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** There is great interest in Thailand in Indian software technology. There is a natural synergy because Thailand has strength in the hardware field. Therefore, if Indian software and Thai hardware could come together, it will again be a win-win situation for both countries. When I mentioned Mr. Narayana Murthy’s visa, the indication was that there is tremendous interest in Thailand in India’s information technology sector. The technology area is quite clearly a very important area of cooperation, though there will be other areas of cooperation also like biotechnology, including cooperation in biodiversity, and other technologies.

I could also mention to you that from our side the Prime Minister has suggested early finalisation of three agreements between India and
Thailand which are under discussion at the moment. One is the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, another is the Extradition Treaty and the third is the Transfer of Convicted Offenders Treaty.

QUESTION: Talks on Extradition Treaty have been going on for a very long time. Is there any hitch?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I do not think it has been going on for a very long time. As far as I am aware, Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition is where we have given them the drafts and they are examining them.

INDIAN AMBASSADOR IN THAILAND (Ms. PONNAPPA): On extradition, Thailand is in the process of amending its 75 year-old extradition law. They have requested us and all other countries with whom they are in the midst of negotiations – I think there are about eight countries – to please wait till they complete their legislation.

On mutual legal assistance, drafts were exchanged late last year. The first round of talks took place from the 6th to the 8th and have concluded successfully. We expect to see a very early conclusion of this process.

Transfer of convicted offenders is awaiting completion of our legislation. I understand the Bill has passed both Houses and is due to be notified.

QUESTION: There is so much of cooperation on combating terrorism. We do not have an Extradition Treaty with Thailand now. If we want someone to be extradited from Thailand, what are the chances of getting them?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: You can always extradite without a Treaty also. Extradition Treaty will facilitate it; it will make it easier. Even before that, there is no bar to extradition.

QUESTION: Why are they wooing us? What are they looking for?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Because we are also wooing them.

Look at it in very broad terms - India’s look-East policy, much greater and more effective implementation of that look-East policy in recent times. India started with the Summit with ASEAN only last year and this year we were able to sign three agreements. In fact, they were saying that the only other Summit partner which has signed three agreements is China. Japan signed one agreement which is a reiteration of the agreement.
they signed last year. Republic of Korea did not sign any agreement. So, the feeling in ASEAN was that India has started late but India has caught up. Apart from that, as you are aware, we have the trilateral with Thailand and Myanmar; we have the BIMSTEC; we have Mekong-Ganga which includes Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. In all this, Thailand is geographically the springboard in a way for India.

Second, Thailand is one of the more advanced economies of East-Asia. So, for us, Thailand is important bilaterally, in the ASEAN context, and in the other regional contexts in which we are operating with them. For Thailand, they have a look-West policy like our look-East policy. The Thai Prime Minister referred to the look-West policy. In their look-West policy, they look at India as the most important country with which they want deeper engagement. I am not qualified to define their look-West policy but clearly under the Asian Cooperation Dialogue they have countries like Pakistan and Qatar. Kazakhstan in Central Asia they have included now. So, they are also expanding their engagement with the countries to the west of Thailand in Asia. So, it is a convergence of interests between India and this region, principally with Thailand. Thailand wants to play its role in this engagement.

QUESTION: Last time when Prime Minister Thaksin had gone to India, he visited ISRO and Thailand expressed its keen interest in space technology. Was there any discussion on that?

Secondly, India and Thailand are both key neighbours of Myanmar. So, I was wondering if the situation in Myanmar figured at all in the discussions between the two Prime Ministers, and if there is any common view on the situation relating to Ms Aung San Suu Kyi.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: On the first, the Prime Minister of India did mention cooperation in the area of space, especially in the launching of space vehicles. You are quite right in saying that there is a great deal of Thai interest in this. There is a bilateral MoU, I am informed, on cooperation in the space between the two countries.

On Myanmar, this issue did not come up today. However, ASEAN itself had discussed the Myanmar issue in great detail in Bali. I think they had found a comfort level with what Myanmar had to say. That is where the matter is.

QUESTION: You have mentioned about the road link between India passing through Burma. It has been in the pipeline for quite some time.
What exactly are the problems? There appears to be a delay if I am not mistaken. You say the technical studies have been complete. Is there a time frame you are looking at? And, how long did the meeting between the two Prime Ministers last?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: The four-eyes meeting lasted about 20 minutes.

On the road project there has been some delay. There has been some time frame which had been fixed which has been, unfortunately, exceeded. It was an indicative time frame when the three Foreign Ministers met in Myanmar. However, now it is a matter of some satisfaction that the technical level studies have been completed. Now we have to meet. Myanmar has been very keen on this. When I met the Myanmar Foreign Minister in New York during the UNGA recently he suggested that maybe he could find time for the three of us to meet in Bali. That could not materialize because everyone was busy with various other things. That is why the three of us agreed that - it was their suggestion - that the two other Ministers could be invited by me to meet in India. I invited them and they have agreed to come. Looking at the calendar it was decided that we will meet in December. Therefore, the December meeting should be decisive because after the technical studies have been completed, as I said, it is only a question of finding the funds. There was a Subgroup on Finance also whose report will be available to us and we will take a view. But now, we are ready after the technical study to take the actual project work in hand.

QUESTION: What is the estimated cost of the project?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I would not be able to tell you at this stage. Technical studies have been completed but I do not have any idea of it.

QUESTION: ... There has been some interest in Bali in terms of cutting out ... from trade, in terms of ... trade contacts in ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: It is not discussed here. This is an idea which is under discussion in the ACD, the Asian Cooperation Dialogue.

QUESTION: ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I am told Thai Baht is a little stronger.

QUESTION: Mr. Sinha, are some of these infrastructure projects that
have been talked about - the road project, the rail project - going to be commercially viable or are these going to be more political, diplomatic, subsidized kind of projects?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: As far as a road project is concerned, unless you have a toll way, a road project does not become commercially viable. Railway could be looked at as commercially viable but it depends on what internal rate of return you fix over which period of time. So, those are the issues on the viability front. Quite clearly there is a much greater purpose that we are seeking to achieve through better connectivity, a point which the Prime Minister emphasized in his ASEAN speech yesterday. Better connectivity is the soul of the whole thing. Therefore, the open-skies policy; therefore, the road project; and therefore, the rail project. In fact, the President of Indonesia yesterday suggested better shipping services between Indonesia and India. So, this connectivity with all the countries in East-Asia will have to be established. It is in our interest; it is in their interest.

QUESTION: Will India take a role in this by putting in more money?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Yes, certainly. When we are looking at it, we are looking at not only the road project but also the rail project and every other project. We will make our contribution.

QUESTION: Prime Minister has already ... road project ... last year. ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: This is something which we will discuss when we meet in the trilateral in India.

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN: There appear to be no more questions. We thank the Hon. Minister for joining us. Thank you.

Bangkok, October 9, 2003.

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand hereinafter referred to singularly as the “Contracting Party” and collectively as the “Contracting Parties;”

CONSIDERING the interest of both countries to strengthen their friendly relations; and

DESIRING to facilitate the entry of the citizens of the Republic of India and the citizens of the Kingdom of Thailand, who are holders of diplomatic and official passports into their respective countries;

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE I

1. A citizen of either Contracting Party holding valid diplomatic or official passport shall be permitted to enter into, exit from and transit through the territory of the other Contracting Party through their respective international points of entry without visas.

2. A citizen of either Contracting Party holding a valid diplomatic or official passport shall be allowed to stay in the territory of the other Contracting Party for a period not exceeding ninety (90) days.

ARTICLE II

1. A citizen of either Contracting Party, who is assigned as a member of the diplomatic or consular staff in the territory of the other Contracting Party holding a valid diplomatic or official passport shall be permitted to enter into and stay in the territory of the other Contracting Party without a visa for a period not exceeding ninety (90) days. Such period of stay will, upon request of the embassy of either Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party, be extended until the end of his/her assignment.

2. A citizen of one Contracting Party being the representative of his/her country in an international organization located in the territory of other Contracting Party holding a valid diplomatic or official
passport shall also enjoy the rights mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article.

3. The families of the members of the diplomatic Mission or Consulate or the representatives to an international organization mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall be permitted the same entry or stay, if they are holders of valid diplomatic or official passport of the Contracting Parties or the names of their children are entered in their parents’ passports.

ARTICLE III

1. Each Contracting Party reserves the right to refuse the entry into or shorten the stay in its territory of any citizen of the other Contracting Party whom it may consider undesirable.

2. If a citizen of one Contracting Party loses his/her passport in the territory of the other Contracting Party, he/she shall inform the authorities concerned of the host country for appropriate action. The diplomatic Mission or Consulate concerned will issue a fresh passport or travel document to its citizen and inform the concerned authorities of the host Government.

ARTICLE IV

Citizens of either Contracting Party, being holders of diplomatic or official passports shall abide by the laws and regulations of the other Contracting Party while crossing its frontier and throughout the duration of their stay in its territory.

ARTICLE V

1. For the purposes of this Agreement, each Contracting Party shall transmit to the other, through diplomatic channels, specimens of its respective passports, including a detailed description of such documents, currently used, at least thirty (30) days before the entry into force of this Agreement.

2. Each Contracting Party shall also transmit to the other through diplomatic channels, specimens of its new or modified passports, including a detailed description of such documents, at least thirty (30) days before it is brought into force.

ARTICLE VI

Each Contracting Party reserves the right for reasons of security,
public order or public health to suspend temporarily, either in whole or in part, the Implementation of this Agreement, which shall take effect thirty (30) days after notification has been given to the other Contracting Party through diplomatic channels.

**ARTICLE VII**

Either Contracting Party may request in writing, through diplomatic channels, a revision or amendment of whole or part of this Agreement. Any revision or amendment which has been agreed to by the Contracting Parties shall come into effect on a date to be mutually agreed upon and shall accordingly form part of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE VIII**

Any difference or dispute arising out of the implementation of the provision of the Agreement shall be settled amicably by consultation or negotiation between the Contracting Parties without reference to any third party or an international tribunal.

**ARTICLE IX**

This Agreement shall enter into force on a date to be mutually agreed upon by the Contracting Parties, which shall be notified through the exchange of Diplomatic Notes. This Agreement shall remain in force for an indefinite period and may be terminated by either Contracting Party by notification through diplomatic channels, which shall enter into force sixty (60) days after the date of such notification.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present Agreement.

**DONE** at Bangkok on this 9th day of October in the year two thousand and three in two (2) originals; in Hindi, Thai and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In the event of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA**

(Yashwant Sinha)

Minister for External Affairs

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND**

(Surakiart Sathirathai)

Minister of Foreign Affairs

✦✦✦✦✦
206. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet hosted in his honour by Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Bangkok, October 9, 2003.

Thank you for your kind words. It is always a pleasure to visit Thailand. My delegation and I thank you for the warm welcome, the elegant reception and the most attentive hospitality, which we have received from you.

Our interactions and discussions in the recent past have paved the way for a new and vibrant engagement between India and Thailand. There has been an impetus, not just at the Governmental level, but also between our peoples. There is a zest and energy in our relations today. Our dialogue spans trade and investment, education and culture, science & technology, defence and security.

As democratic and pluralistic nations in Asia, we are both involved in implementing economic, political and social measures for the upliftment of our people through open debate and discussion.

We are ancient neighbours linked by the Bay of Bengal.

Both our peoples are now seeking development and progress by combining the strength of our agricultural base with the force of industry and the power of knowledge.

These are commonalities in our agenda, which we wish to strengthen.

Our talks today, and the agreements that we have signed, will pave the way towards our objectives.

The Framework Agreement on Free Trade should impart a fresh momentum to our economic and commercial relationship. India-Thailand joint ventures have done remarkably well in this country, and are expanding. We need more of them in India.

Closer cooperation in agriculture and biotechnology will supplement our ongoing efforts towards cost-effective programmes for mutual benefit.

India can learn from your remarkable success in developing tourism. We would like to work with Thailand in the development of tourist infrastructure.
Excellency,

We would also like to intensify the educational and cultural interaction between our peoples. Thai university students have travelled to India. Our high schools in Darjeeling, Shillong and Mussourie have long been familiar with Thai pupils.

We can enrich our exchanges by evolving exchange programmes between our authors, archaeologists, art historians and linguists. We agreed this morning, that the establishment of Cultural Centres would promote this effort.

At another level, we need to intensify cooperation on a number of shared security concerns. The threats to security from terrorism confront all nations. India has been plagued by terrorism for over 20 years. We know the importance of international cooperation in tackling this menace. We also know from our bitter experience the dangers of selectivity in combating terrorism or its sponsors.

Excellency,

This visit has afforded me the opportunity to convey India’s perceptions, experiences and policies. I am gratified by the positive response from Thailand. We have embarked on the major endeavour of bringing our countries closer together, drawing sustenance from the past as we craft a contemporary relationship for the present and the future.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In this Santi Maitri Hall – which celebrates peace and friendship – I invite you to join me in a toast:

· To the health and well-being of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra;
· To the progress and prosperity of the people of Thailand, and
· To eternal friendship between India and Thailand.

Thank you.

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I thank you for the opportunity to address this distinguished gathering of business leaders, jointly convened by the apex trade and industry organizations of India and Thailand.

During my recent visit to Bali, I had the pleasure to attend an ASEAN-India Business and Investment Summit, with a combined group of businesspersons from ASEAN countries and India. Some of you in this audience were also there. Just over a month ago, we hosted an India-ASEAN business summit in India. That also had a strong representation from ASEAN countries, including Thailand. Two months ago, Deputy Prime Minister Korn visited India with a delegation of over 100 business representatives and officials from Thailand's economic ministries.

The success of all these events, even though they have been held in such quick succession, illustrate graphically how the landscape of the India-ASEAN economic relationship has been transformed in recent years. Business, industry, and governments are waking up to the vistas of opportunity, which have opened up with the spread of technologies, the advance of globalization and the complementary strengths and needs of the economies of ASEAN countries and India.

India-Thailand economic cooperation has been one of the important contributors to this trend. In our case, there is firstly the compelling logic of geography. We are maritime neighbours. It is perhaps not so well known that India’s Andaman and Nicobar Islands are much closer to the Thailand coast than to the Indian mainland! It is therefore natural that India’s “Look East” orientation should have a sharper focus on the country which lies just beyond our eastern islands.

Our two countries have inherited common traditions and share cultural and spiritual affinities. In the last few years, we have worked to give contemporary content to this historical legacy. The increased frequency in our high-level contact has improved bilateral understanding and mutual awareness. Our engagement is expanding across a range of political, security, economic, technological, social and cultural fields.

There are important convergences of interest and economic
complementaries between India and Thailand, which should accelerate this process. I shall enumerate five of them.

Ø Thailand can be India’s commercial bridge to Southeast Asia, while India provides Thailand with a huge domestic market and a low cost, high skill manufacturing base for Thai businesses for their global access.

Ø Thailand’s acclaimed competence in infrastructure— including ports, airports, highways and urban amenities—match our growing requirements in these fields.

Ø In the knowledge economy, India’s software skills can usefully support the rapidly developing hardware capabilities of Thailand. Our growing skills in biotechnology can be combined to utilize the range of biodiversity in our two countries.

Ø India is among six countries with the ability to provide end to end capabilities in space—from design and fabrication, tracking and control, to launching of satellites. We have a special expertise in the area of harnessing space technologies to developmental applications.

India can benefit from Thailand’s outstanding skills in developing world-class tourism facilities. The Thai hospitality industry has lucrative opportunities in India, particularly in the cultural and pilgrimage centres of common interest to both peoples.

Friends,

What we need to be asking ourselves - particularly at a gathering such as this – is, why have these complementarities not translated into performance? When we look at our current trade turnover of about a billion dollars, we can only be astonished at the under-achievement.

If we look at two-way investment figures, there is a similar mismatch between potential and reality. India, which is a net capital importing country, has invested about 1 billion dollars in Thailand. The figures of Thai approved investment in India are only about 700 million dollars. When we look at the actual investment, this figure drops to less than 70 million dollars.

Prime Minister Thaksin has talked about Thailand’s desire to use the “economies of speed” to commercial advantage. With a market of
one billion and the second-largest skilled workforce in the world, India offers economies of scale. I would suggest that the ideal strategy is to link the economies of speed and scale. India should therefore be a logical destination for Thai investment.

During my current visit, we have discussed ways to raise our partnership to higher levels. We have signed several important agreements, including a Framework Agreement on establishing a bilateral Free Trade Area. We have also signed other Agreements on cooperation in the fields of Tourism and Biotechnology.

The FTA Agreement will eliminate some of the major barriers to trade and investment. We have worked out an Early Harvest Programme for immediate tariff reductions for some products. We have to expand on this. I am aware that there will always be those who are not satisfied with the pace of our bilateral tariff reductions. Businessmen will find such measures too slow or too fast, depending on their interests. For some, tariffs can never be low enough; for others, they can never be high enough. It is therefore a delicate problem of balance. We will have to find a mutually convenient pace to move forward.

We need to promote the connectivity which enhances the quality of economic cooperation. India has offered rights to Thai Airways for daily flights between Bangkok and our four major cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata. We have also offered an unlimited number of flights to and from 18 other cities in India. I was happy to hear from Prime Minister Thaksin that Thailand would reciprocate this offer. Our bilateral Tourism Agreement will give further impetus to our tourism exchanges.

We have also agreed to promote the idea of cross-regional tourism linkages to enhance the attractiveness of Asian destinations to tourists. As a beginning, we will set up a twin-city relationship between Port Blair, in the Andaman Sea, and Phuket.

Friends,

The process of establishing a closer economic relationship relies on the quality of interactions between our business communities. Governments should take the necessary steps to increase connectivity, to intensify people to people exchanges, and to strengthen the architecture of the partnership. But eventually, increased trade, investment and joint ventures can only be achieved through the efforts of the business community.
There must be more involvement and interaction between you to identify available opportunities. You should participate in trade fairs, exhibitions and business events. You need to form strategic alliances to develop markets in our common neighbourhood. Bilateral economic relations will acquire a dynamic of its own, when they are driven by business interests. Governments will then no longer need to set targets for trade turnover.

Friends,

We are today at a happy confluence of India’s “Look East” posture and Thailand’s “Look West” strategy. Our partnership is not solely economic. We are located astride the sea lanes for energy supplies from West Asia to markets in the East. Therefore we have a common stake in peace, security and stability in this region. We also have important interests in regional and sub-regional cooperation. These perspectives can result in significant spin-offs for business. The India-Myanmar-Thailand highway project is one such example.

In our discussions with the leadership of Thailand, it was evident to us that there is commitment in the two governments for our multi-faceted cooperation. We need stronger government-industry partnerships to give this process a quantum jump. I hope your deliberations today and in future business conclaves will explore ways of enriching such partnerships.

Thank You.

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Joint Press Statement on the official visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Thailand.

Chiang Mai, October 12, 2003.

1. H.E. Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, paid a four day official visit to the Kingdom of Thailand from 8-12 October 2003 at the invitation of H.E. Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was accompanied by a high-level delegation consisting of H.E. Mr. Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs, H.E. Mr. Arun Jaitley, Minister of Commerce and Industry, H.E. Mr. Brajesh Mishra, National Security Adviser, and other high-ranking officials, apart from leading representatives of Indian business and industry.

2. On 10 October 2003, the Prime Minister Vajpayee was received in audience by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej at Klai Kangwol Palace, Hua-Hin.

3. On 9 October 2003, the Prime Minister of India addressed a Special Joint Session of the National Assembly of Thailand, chaired by H.E. Uthai Pimchaichon, President of the National Assembly and Speaker of the House of Representatives. In his address, the Prime Minister of India underlined the shared democratic traditions and cultural affinities between the two countries and expressed his vision for closer partnership between the peoples of the two countries.

4. On 9 October 2003, the Prime Minister of India and the Prime Minister of Thailand and their delegations held talks, covering all aspects of bilateral relations as well as regional and global issues. The two Prime Ministers expressed their commitment to build a strong bilateral relationship. They discussed measures to diversify and strengthen relations in a wide range of areas, particularly with regard to security, trade & investment, science & technology, tourism, civil aviation and cultural cooperation.

5. Both leaders witnessed the signing of five bilateral agreements:

1. The following are the brief details of the Agreements signed between India and Thailand, in the presence of the two Prime Ministers:-

i) **Framework Agreement for establishing a bilateral Free Trade Area**: This Agreement has been prepared after six meetings of a joint negotiating group. The Agreement provides for a Free Trade Area (FTA) in goods, to commence by the year 2010, an FTA in
(1) Framework Agreement for Establishing a Free Trade Area between the Kingdom of Thailand and the Republic of India.

(2) Agreement for Exemption of Visas for holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports.

(3) MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Agricultural Science, Technology and Economy.

(4) Agreement on Tourism Cooperation.

(5) Programme of Cooperation in Biotechnology.

6. Both leaders hailed the signing of the Framework Agreement on Free Trade, the first between India and an ASEAN country. They agreed that the two countries should make every effort to eliminate tariff and NTBs within or before the agreed timeframe. The two

Services from 2006 and an FTA in Investment, also from 2006. Agreement has been reached on a list of products which would receive tariff free-entry on a fast-track basis from March 2004. These are described as ‘Early Harvest Scheme’ items. The Agreement also contains a provision regarding emergency measures to protect domestic producers, in case of sudden surges in imports. However, agreement was not reached on the modality of defining ‘Rules of Origin’, this matter is being left for future negotiations.

ii) MOU on Agricultural Cooperation: This Agreement provides for joint activities between the two States, covering agricultural and forestry research; biotechnology; soil and water conservation; watershed management; land use planning; sericulture; horticulture and livestock production. It creates a Joint Working Group (JWG) to implement Agreement. The JWG would meet every two years to review progress in bilateral cooperation. The Agreement would be valid for five years from the date of signing.

iii) Agreement on Tourism Cooperation: The Agreement aims to create conditions for long-term bilateral cooperation in tourism, including through reciprocal establishment of Representative Offices of the Tourism Departments of the two countries. It encourages the two sides to expand exchanges of expertise in operation of tourism business and in expanding exchanges in tourism studies.

iv) Visa Free travel for holders of diplomatic and official passports: This is a standard Agreement which India has signed with several countries to facilitate travel by holders of diplomatic and official passports. We have already signed similar agreements in the ASEAN region with Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Cambodia. (Document No. 205)

v) Cooperation in the field of Biotechnology: This Programme of Cooperation is based on the earlier agreements signed in February 2001 on ‘Scientific, Technological and Environmental Cooperation and Transfer of Technology’. It identifies specific areas for cooperation including genomics of shrimp and cassava; studies of infectious diseases; setting up of a Biotechnology Incubation Centre; and prospecting for biodiversity, with a specific focus on medicinal and aromatic plants. It calls for the setting up for the establishment of an India-Thailand Biotechnology Panel for formulation, approval, monitoring and review of action plans. The Programme of Cooperation will be valid from the date of signature for a period of three years.
leaders agreed to expedite Mutual Recognition Arrangements and the Early Harvest Scheme so that trade volume between the two countries could reach 2 billion US dollars by the end of 2004. The two sides agreed to expand cooperation in marketing of rice production.

7. Both sides agreed to facilitate bilateral commercial interaction by liberalizing the visa regime for business travelers. The two Prime Ministers agreed to task their Foreign Ministers to look into the matter.

8. The two Prime Ministers agreed to give full support to private sector enterprises to establish joint ventures in promising areas such as autoparts, food processing, construction, IT and fisheries. The Prime Minister of Thailand requested Indian cooperation to enable Thai fishing vessels to enjoy the right of free passage through India’s Exclusive Economic Zone. The two sides agreed to work out agreed modalities in this regard.

9. Both sides gave top priority to cooperation in Biotechnology and IT, space applications in developmental areas and ICT. They agreed that Thailand’s expertise in hardware industry complements India’s advanced software industry. The Thai side invited India to participate in the Thai Government’s initiative to promote Phuket as an IT city, welcomed Indian IT professionals, and agreed to streamline immigration and work permit procedures for them.

10. The Thai Prime Minister welcomed India’s offer of the facility of daily air services to Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai by Thailand’s designated airline, and an unlimited number of flights to 18 other tourist destinations in India. Thailand reciprocated by offering including Chiang Mai and Phuket. Both sides agreed to work together, along with other ASEAN countries, for liberalization of their air cargo services sector.

11. The two leaders agreed to speed up the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway project and noted that India will hold a Meeting of the three Foreign Ministers in December 2003 to discuss this matter further. The meeting would also discuss other trilateral project proposals of common interest.

12. The two Prime Ministers agreed on the need to expedite the development of a landbridge linking Dawei in Myanmar with
Kanchanaburi in Thailand, which is a part of the trilateral project including the development of a deep sea port in Dawei. The Thai side noted with appreciation India’s support for this project. It was also noted that the Thai private sector is interested in the construction of the road between Dawei and Kanchanaburi. India and Thailand are willing to offer financial support to these projects.

13. The Thai Prime Minister also introduced to the Indian Prime Minister another landbridge project to link the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand for gas and oil transportation.

14. Thailand supported India’s proposal for establishing twinning arrangements between Phuket in Thailand and Port Blair in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in India. The two Prime Ministers assigned their respective Ministers of the relevant Ministries to work closely on combined destinations to promote tourism between the two countries. The Thai side invited Indian hotel chains to operate hotels in Thailand.

15. The two leaders agreed to support the establishment of Cultural Centres in the respective countries.

16. Both leaders recognized the threat of terrorism to global security. They condemned recent acts of terror in Mumbai, and stated that there was no justification whatsoever for such acts. They expressed confidence that the Joint Working Group on Security Cooperation would enable closer cooperation in combating the global scourge of terrorism. Both sides stressed the importance of cooperation against drug trafficking and agreed to intensify cooperation in joint naval patrolling against narcotics and piracy.

17. Both leaders expressed satisfaction on the development of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue. The Thai Prime Minister appreciated India’s active role in ACD and its offer to contribute US $ 1 billion to the Asian Bond Fund. Appreciation was also expressed for the Indian Technical Paper on Designing Products for the Asian Bond Fund to be considered by the ACD Group on Financial Cooperation.

18. The two leaders agreed to intensify cooperation within BIMSTEC framework. The Indian Prime Minister confirmed his participation at the first BIMST-EC Summit to be hosted by Thailand in February 2004. India welcomed Thailand’s initiative to organize a Football
Youth Tournament during the Summit to promote people’s awareness of BIMST-EC.

19. The two Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the conclusion of discussions on the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters. They agreed that the treaty should be signed at an early date. Both sides also agreed to expedite the conclusion of the pending Agreement on the Transfer of Convicted Offenders and of the Extradition Treaty.

20. The two sides expressed satisfaction with the direction and pace of India’s enhanced engagement with ASEAN. India expressed appreciation for Thailand’s support in this regard. The Thai side appreciated the new initiatives for India-ASEAN cooperation, suggested by the Indian Prime Minister at the 2nd ASEAN-India Summit in Bali. Both sides agreed to coordinate in preparing an India ASEAN Vision 2020 document which will draw up a long-term strategy of cooperation. Thailand also welcomed India’s proposal of an ASEAN-India Motor Car Rally.

21. The two sides expressed satisfaction about their close cooperation at the recent WTO Ministerial Review Meeting on the Doha Agenda at Cancun and affirmed their intention to continue working closely on international trade issues.

22. On October 10, 2003, the Prime Minister of India addressed the Thai-India Business Luncheon Meeting organized by the Thailand India Economic Relationship Enhancement Committee, at which over 700 Thai and Indian businessmen participated.

23. While in Bangkok, the Prime Minister of India visited the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and the Grand Palace. During his stay in Chiang Mai on 11-12 October 2003, the Prime Minister of India visited Huai Hong Krai Royal Development Study Centre and expressed his deep appreciation of the work being done for afforestation and ground water management under His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej’s guidance.

24. The Indian Prime Minister thanked the Thai Prime Minister for gracious hospitality in making his visit to Thailand both memorable and fruitful. He extended an invitation to the Prime Minister of Thailand to visit India. The invitation was accepted with pleasure.
Timor Leste

209. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Senior Minister of Foreign Affairs of Timor Leste Jose Ramos Horta.

New Delhi, January 24, 2003.

He (the visiting Foreign Minister) had detailed discussions with Shri Yashwant Sinha and his delegation and EAM hosted a lunch in his honour. During the discussions EAM gave his appreciation of the current situation prevailing in Timor Leste after its independence in May 2002 and identified areas of bilateral cooperation between India and Timor Leste. In particular the areas which came up for discussion were Human Resource Development, Agriculture, Fisheries and provision of scholarships. Already India has given 20 scholarships under ITEC and another ten scholarships in addition to the ITEC scholarship in Indian universities. Two experts have also been deputed to work on rural development. After the exchange of views several areas were identified and cooperation on all these areas can be expected to be strengthened over the coming months. Mr. Horta will be in India from 24 – 31 January. Besides staying in Delhi and witnessing the Republic Day Parade he will be visiting Goa and Agra. The interaction of both India as well as Timor Leste with the regional bodies was also discussed. They are looking at seeking observer status with ASEAN at this stage but are looking for immediate membership to the ARF. They also signed today a formalization of the setting up of diplomatic relationship between the two countries.

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New Delhi, January 24, 2003.

*Desirous* to promote and strengthen the friendship and cooperation between the two countries, therefore contributing to peace, stability, cooperation and development in the region and the world,

*Guided* by the principles and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961,

Have decided to establish diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level.


For the Government of the Republic of India
Yashwant Sinha
Minister of External Affairs

For the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste
Jose Ramos-Horta
Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

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211. Statement by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN on the Situation in Timor-Leste in the Security Council.


Please see Document No. 475

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Vietnam

212. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meetings of Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam with Indian leaders.

New Delhi, May 1, 2003.

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

This morning after the ceremonial welcome the External Affairs Minister called on H.E. the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam¹. As you know in March we had the 11th Session of the Joint Commission between India and Vietnam. The External Affairs Minister led the Indian side for that meeting. The progress made by the Joint Commission, the agreements reached during that visit were reviewed by the External Affairs Minister with the General Secretary. These are indicative of greater interest from both sides in intensifying bilateral economic cooperation. To recall, some of the areas which the Joint Commission had agreed to work are mining and industry, agriculture, science and technology, IT, telecom, oil and gas, pharmaceuticals, transportation and so on. It has been decided to set up a sub committee on education under the Joint Commission as well as a Joint Working Group on energy. These issues were reviewed along with the matters of regional and international interests in particular India’s close and intensifying collaboration with ASEAN and India’s commitment to assisting in the Integration to ASEAN Initiatives for the newer ASEAN countries particularly through assistance in the field of human resource development. These were some of the issues which were discussed in today’s morning call. This evening there will be talks between the Prime Minister and the visiting General Secretary as well as the delegation level talks which will be followed by signing of a Joint Declaration on the

¹. The General Secretary was accompanied by a high level delegation including:  
Mr. Vu Khoan, Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPV and Deputy Prime Minister;  
H.E. Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Nguyen Van Son, Member of the Central Committee of the CPV and Chairman of External Relations Commission; Mr. Ngo Van Du, Member of Central Committee of the CPV and Head of Office of the Party Central Committee; Mr. Ho Tien Nghi, Member of the Central Committee of the CPV and Assistant to General Secretary; Mr. Vo Hong Phuc, Member of the Central Committee of the CPV and Minister of Planning and Investment; Mr. Hoang Van Phong, Member of the Central Committee of the CPV and Minister of Science & Technology.

This Declaration is yet to be signed. I can give you only an indicative field of the areas. This declaration would be aiming to regularise high level meetings with the aim of further cementing bilateral ties. It will aim to increase cooperation in the UN and other international fora and also reaffirm the intention of the two countries to coordinate their positions in regional and sub-regional organisations specially in the ASEAN, ARF and the Mekong-Ganga cooperation. In trade the two parties are likely to seek a target turnover of US$ 1 billion by the year 2015. India will aim to continue its assistance in the human resource development field particularly through provision of short term and long term scholarship for Vietnamese under graduate and post graduate students.


New Delhi, May 1, 2003.

The Republic of India and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (hereinafter referred to as the ‘Parties’) are bound by traditional and long-standing ties of friendship which have been continuously nurtured by President Ho Chi Minh and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and succeeding generations of leadership of the two countries. The historic visits of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to Hanoi in October 1954, immediately after liberation of Hanoi and of President Ho Chi Minh to India in February 1958 opened a new chapter in the history of close and time-tested relationship between the two countries and constituted a strong inspiration for our two peoples in their struggle for independence and freedom and in the building of a new life, thus contributing to the preservation of peace in Asia and the world.

Building upon this tradition, the leaders of both sides have exchanged State visits and established a firm foundation for mutual understanding and trust and comprehensive cooperation between the two peoples. After establishment of full diplomatic relations on 7 January 1972, and particularly after the reunification of Vietnam, the two countries
have cooperated closely and effectively to build a comprehensive, long-
term and reliable partnership. The bilateral relationship has been
increasingly deepened in each other’s interest as well as for peace,
stability, cooperation and development in the region and beyond. Through
mutual support for each other in times of adversity, the relationship
between the two countries has become an abiding factor amidst the
changing currents and cross-currents of international affairs.

Entering the 21st century, the two Parties are resolved to bring
into full play this traditional and friendly relationship and raise their
cooperation to new heights to meet the new challenges posed by
globalisation, the menace of international terrorism and the significant
challenges to the international system. Both sides endeavour to develop
a strategic dimension to their partnership for the mutual benefit of their
peoples, and to contribute to peace, stability, cooperation and prosperity
in the Asia-Pacific region and the world at large.

The two Parties reaffirm their respect for the fundamental principles
of the United Nations Charter and international laws, particularly those of
mutual respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-
interference in each other’s internal affairs, doing no harm to each Party’s
relations with a third country, equal and mutually beneficial cooperation,
and mutual support and assistance in the spirit of fraternity. In this context,
the Socialist Republic of Vietnam always highly values India’s traditional
role in the United Nations and supports its entry as a permanent member
of an expanded UN Security Council.

Pursuant to the above-mentioned objectives, guidelines and
principles, the two Parties agree to implement a Comprehensive
Cooperation Program in the next 15 years with the major thrusts as follows:

(i) The two Parties undertake to conduct regular high-level meetings
with the aim of further cementing the existing political ties and
creating new momentum for bilateral multi-sided cooperation. Aware
of the strategic importance of their bilateral cooperation, Ministries,
Parliamentarians, agencies, local authorities, business communities
and mass organizations of the two Parties will increase friendly
exchanges and contacts in order to further consolidate their
partnership.

(ii) The two Parties agree to closely cooperate in the UN and other
international fora. Recognizing the importance of the regional
dimension in their bilateral relations, the Parties reaffirm their
intention to coordinate their positions in the regional and sub-regional organizations, especially in ASEAN, ARF and Mekong-Ganga Cooperation.

(iii) The two Parties also undertake to assist each other in protecting their respective interests in the international arena and to contribute to the common efforts for democratizing international relations. They condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and agree to strengthen cooperation in the implementation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions against terrorism and for opposing all forms of violence and terror, attempts to force one’s will on others or interfere in internal affairs of sovereign nations. To these ends, the Foreign Ministries of the two countries shall hold annual political consultations on international political developments, measures to help each other fully integrate into regional and international arrangements, and on coordination in international fora.

(iv) The two Parties shall endeavour to maintain and improve the efficiency of the biennial meetings of the Vietnam-India Joint Commission to make it more responsive to the economic reforms in the two countries and set new directions in keeping with the needs of each country’s developmental goals.

(v) The two Parties resolved to raise their economic cooperation, inter alia, in the following areas:

1. In trade, the two Parties are committed to diversify the content of their bilateral imports and exports and promote trade promotion activities so as to reach a trade turnover target of US$ 1 billion by 2015. They also agree to take measures to grant tariff preferences to each other in conformity with their international obligations so as to promote a balance in their trade exchanges;

2. In investment and management consultancy, the two Parties pledge to create every favourable condition for their investors and consultants, including small and medium sized enterprises, to expand investment and business management and consultancy activities in the areas such as oil and gas, chemicals, petro-chemicals, fertilizer, power, pharmaceuticals, information technology, agricultural processing and light industries, telecommunications, ship-building and seaports, railways, steel and mining;
3. In order to facilitate trade and investment relations between the two countries in a fraternal spirit, the Republic of India is committed to continue providing the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, to the maximum extent possible, concessional credits and grants to import equipment from the former. The latter is committed to use these resources effectively and to give preferences, in other non-credit/grant financed requirements of its industry, to import similar equipment from India on the basis of competitive price offers.

(vi) The two Parties view cooperation in science and technology as driver of their bilateral cooperation. They will promote R&D cooperation in the areas of agriculture, biotechnology, new material technology, information technology, remote sensing and other space applications, hydrography, meteorology, oceanography, peaceful uses of nuclear energy and other areas of frontier technologies.

(vii) The two Parties agree to take gradual steps to expand cooperation in security and defence, anti-piracy measures, preventing terrorist acts targeted at each other and early signing of a bilateral agreement on countering crime. They will encourage exchange of delegations and sharing of information and experience on combating international terrorism and its support mechanisms, particularly organized crime, illicit arms and drug trafficking.

(viii) The two Parties recognise that cooperation in human resource development constitutes a pillar of their bilateral cooperation and undertake to further expand and diversify such cooperation. The Republic of India pledges to continue providing on a yearly basis 120 short-term and long-term scholarships for Vietnamese undergraduate and post-graduate students to study in the Republic of India. The two Parties shall also work closely to facilitate Vietnamese students to study in the Republic of India with scholarships provided by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and funded by themselves. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam will create every favourable condition for establishment of branches of Indian high educational institutions and for Indian undergraduate and post-graduate students to study in Vietnam.

(ix) The two Parties undertake to increase exchange of and cooperation in culture and information, archaeology, conservation, museology, tourism, public health and sports at the central and local levels.
The two Parties will also encourage and create favourable conditions for youth and mass organisations to foster people-to-people contacts to consolidate their mutual understanding and eternal friendship.

Done in Hindi, Vietnamese and English, all texts being equally authentic. In case of divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

At New Delhi on 1 May 2003,

For THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA For THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

YASHWANT SINHA NGUYEN DY NIEN
MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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(iv) CENTRAL AND WEST ASIA


Please see Document No. 397

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New Delhi, March 7, 2003.

India has noted with growing dismay the recent escalation of violence in Israel-Palestine theatre. In the last week alone, nearly a hundred people have died, most of them young and innocent civilians. This spiral of violence and counter-violence defies the international community’s conviction of there being no military solution to this essentially political problem. It also exacerbates an already serious socio-economic crisis on both sides, as evinced by falling living standards and growing unemployment levels.

India is also deeply concerned that this heightened level of violence would adversely impact on the prospects for revival of the Middle East Peace Process. Consequently, India calls for all concerned sides to observe utmost self-restraint so as to facilitate an early resumption of the serious negotiations for a just and durable peace in this strife-torn region.

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New Delhi, June 6, 2003.

India is pleased to note the positive and constructive developments in West Asia which have led to the Aqaba Summit on June 4. We are heartened by the stated intention of all parties to endeavour for a negotiated settlement between Israel and Palestine on the basis of the Quartet Road-Map. India renews its calls for efforts to arrest the vicious cycle of violence and counter-violence and hopes for a just and durable peace where both Israel and Palestine live side by side in peace and security.¹

We are also glad to note that the preceding Summit in Sharm-el-Sheikh on June 3 provided regional support to the peace initiative. We

¹ In a landmark summit at Aqaba Israelis and Palestinians, decided on a peace process. Not only did the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, and the Palestinian Prime Minister, Mahmoud Abbas, declared their political support for the peace road map, they went far ahead to address each other’s core concerns. Mr. Abbas directly addressed Israel’s anxieties about the security of its citizens who had been the victims of suicide attacks and other forms of terror. “We repeat our denunciation and renunciation of terrorism and violence against Israelis wherever they might be,” he said in a statement read out at the end of the summit. Mr. Abbas further announced his intent to end the “Intifada” (armed uprising) against the Israelis. There was “no military solution to our conflict” and resistance to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands must now acquire a non-violent form. Signaling that the Palestinian groups would be disarmed, a major Israeli concern, Mr. Abbas declared “we will exert our full efforts using all our resources to end the militarization of the Intifada and we will succeed”. Only designated law enforcing authorities would be allowed to possess weapons. In a signal to other countries that have been funding extremist Palestinian groups, media quoted Mr. Abbas to urge all states fighting terrorism to block “financial and military assistance” to such organizations. On his part, Israeli Prime Minister Mr. Sharon went on to accommodate Palestinian concerns. Palestinians have been demanding that the Israelis pull out Jewish settlements from the Palestinian administered areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These settlements had segmented Palestinian land, making the realisation of an independent state in this area unviable. The Palestinians have also been asking the Israeli leadership to unequivocally accept the concept of an independent Palestinian State. Aware of Palestinian sensitivities, Mr. Sharon declared Israel’s “strong support” for the U.S. President, George W. Bush’s vision of “two states — Israel and Palestinian State — living side by side in peace and security.” “Unauthorised outposts” of settlers, which were usually on the fringes of bigger and permanent settlements, would be dismantled, MR. Sharon pledged. But more significantly, he reassured his “Palestinian partners” that the Israeli side understood the importance of “territorial contiguity for a viable Palestinian state.” By making this remark, Mr. Sharon signalled his intent to dismantle at least some of the controversial settler colonies situated in considerable depth, mainly inside the Palestinian West Bank area. He also indicated his intention to ease the hardship of Palestinian people brought about by frequent armed blockades and Israeli military incursions into Palestinian territories.
laud the declaration of the assembled leaders of five Arab states affirming their position to oppose terror and violence and their resolve to fight terrorism and reject extremism and violence in any form, from any source regardless of justifications and motives. India has consistently opposed all acts of terrorism, including cross-border terrorism.

We urge all concerned parties to persevere with sincerity and sagacity to convert the noble intentions into deeds for achieving a comprehensive peace in the West Asian region.

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217. Keynote Address of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Third India-Central Asia Conference.

Tashkent, November 6, 2003.

Your Excellency, Mr. Sadik Salikhovich Safayev, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Excellencies and Distinguished Guests,

It gives me great pleasure to be with you at this third and the most ambitious India-Central Asia Conference. I would like to commend the Institute of Strategic and Regional Studies, Tashkent and the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi, for their efforts in organising this conference at short notice. The participation from more than 20 countries is a tribute to the growing ties between India and Central Asia. I am delighted to see that Indian industrialists are also here. Their participation should provide a useful, new dimension to the deliberations.

I propose to divide my talk today in four broad parts – an introductory portion on the history and the range of our relations with Central Asia, a second part on the energy and economic potential of Central Asia, a third on the new bilateral initiatives and a concluding part on the international security situation.

I have been in Tashkent for just a few hours, but already I can see why this beautiful city was chosen by the Indian organisers as the venue for the conference. Great cities like Tashkent, Bukhara and Samarkand are daily reminders to the world of the kind of civilisations that have flourished here.
India’s connection with these splendid cities, indeed entire Central Asia, has deep roots in history. Trade between us pre-dates the Silk Road by at least three thousand years. And Aryans provide a link between Central Asia and India. Some scholars maintain that the Vedas are a blend of the adventurous ‘Central Asian’ spirit and the cultural genius of the Indus Valley Civilisation. We in India, still use the Saka Calendar as a sort of daily reminder of the deep bonds between Central Asia and India.

During the so called great game, Napoleon and later the imperial ambitions of Russia and Britain, were engaged in a tournament of shadows where Central Asia was the chess board and the prize was India. But a lesser known and less commented upon effect of this great game was to cut off Central Asia, for nearly 150 years, from its cultural neighbours to the south.

In more recent times, few regions have changed as dramatically as Central Asia has since 1990s. The transition from communism to democracy has been made without major convulsions. It will be fair to say that this was expected of a region where the literacy rate is over 98% and where the constitutional liberty carries with it secularism as an article of faith. India and Central Asia share these national strengths.

There are new developments in international economic environment too. Thanks to dramatic changes in technology, transportation and communication systems, Central Asia is bound to wield far more influence in global economy, than it ever did earlier. If Central Asia was once famous for its good horses, it was also known for men of substance like Al Baruni, Olog Bek and Ibn Sina. In my view, Central Asia is once again poised for greatness.

In so far as Central Asia and India are concerned, greater economic engagement is needed. We have taken some steps already, there are now sound institutional linkages in place. India was one of the first countries to set up Embassies in each of the Central Asian countries. After Tajikistan has opened its mission in Delhi in October 2003, all the Central Asian countries are represented in India. And after Tajikistan commenced direct flights to India from February this year, we are connected by air with all of the Central Asian states. For some years now, we have also been paying attention to land and sea connectivity. The trilateral arrangement, and the North-South Corridor have made the flow of goods to Central Asia faster.

Earlier this year, India, Iran and Afghanistan decided to open a
new sea and road route through the port of Chahbahar. India hopes to construct 200 kms of the road linking Zaranj and Delaran. Once this road is complete, it will reduce by 1500 kms the distance from India to Central Asia.

Our desire for multiple transport links with Central Asia is in tune with our economic progress. Over the last decade, India has transited from a mixed to a largely market economy. During this momentous period of change, the GDP has grown at around 6% annually. The foreign exchange reserves are nearly $ 90 bn. Technologically too, it has been a period of achievement. India has become a major centre for outsourcing. Its manufactured products compete with the best in the world. Two years ago we launched a satellite into geo-stationary orbit, and we propose to send a spacecraft to Moon within the next five years.

Indian companies have also become major investors abroad. They are investing in oilfields too - in Sakhalin in Russia with an investment of $ 2 bn; in Sudan with an investment of $ 1 bn; in Vietnam, Libya, Syria and other countries. And they are looking keenly to invest in oilfields in Central Asia.

It is remarkable that while the energy resources are getting increasingly scarce in rest of the world, new oilfields are being discovered with great regularity in Central Asia. Some experts maintain that Central Asian resources may be difficult to reach, because it is the largest landmass in the world which is landlocked. But this is both a challenge and an opportunity, because in the technology driven world of today it is not always necessary to transport material. That is the logic of investment abroad and organising production facilities there. Therefore, no part of the world today can remain on the margins, every part is capable of becoming the centre of the world. Central Asia, with its rich resources, has definite potential to become so.

Moreover, Indian companies are also interested in setting up refineries and new pipelines. The presence at this conference of the representatives of Indian energy industry is proof that they wish to participate and develop the energy infrastructure in the region.

Our cooperation with Central Asia includes cultural, economic, defence and security relations. For us Central Asia is our ‘immediate and strategic neighbourhood’.

Thus, we are currently engaged in setting up, with our aid funds, Institutes of Excellence in IT education in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and
Uzbekistan. A Fruit Processing plant is being set up by India in Tajikistan. Earlier this year, a complete Industrial Training Centre was commissioned and handed over to Government of Turkmenistan. Currently India provides 1000 man-months of training to senior Central Asian professionals every year.

I am happy to announce that from now onwards, we will also be providing at the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) ten scholarships every year. Two senior researchers from each Central Asian state would be invited to undertake projects on regional cooperation and security related issues. I hope this new dimension to our cooperation would provide a diverse and long term perspective to India’s relations with Central Asia.

I would also like to announce that from this year, 30 full scholarships will be provided by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations to students from Central Asia.

Our cultural links need constant attention. Therefore, we are currently engaged in finalising with Central Asian states a major cultural project. We propose to host “A Festival of Central Asia” in major cities of India in 2004.

There are a number of new economic initiatives under way. On 1st April 2003, the Government of India announced that the year 2003 would be the ‘Focus CIS Year’. Central Asia is therefore the centre point of Indian exhibitions, buyer-seller meetings, seminars and special studies. To give just one example, there are three exhibitions being planned in Tashkent over the next three months. A total of 100 Indian businessmen will be participating in these events.

Friends, ours has never been a one-sided relationship. We want to export, but we want even greater exports from Central Asia to India. And in that spirit, we would welcome and support in India a ‘Made in Central Asia’ exhibition at a time of their convenience.

I am convinced that Central Asia, with its oil, gas, gold, silver, other mineral wealth and water resources, can become a new silk road of prosperity once again.

But we need peace and stability for full economic progress. Unfortunately, both India and Central Asia have been victims of terror for a long time.
Hizb-ut-Tahrir, IMU, Lashkar-e-Toiba and others who threaten Central Asia or India, represent a transnational threat. They have no interest in bargaining. They seek to cripple nations, it is impossible to imagine them apologising for mass destruction.

Terror - trained, financed and sponsored - is now striking globally with no desire to negotiate. The current circumstances are even more alarming when one considers the bumper drug crop and resurgence of Al Qaeda and others. For us in the region, the concern is even greater because the epicentre of terror lies in our common neighbourhood. These trends are worrying, and a more determined and coordinated fight against terrorism is needed by the international community. Ladies and Gentlemen, India is ready to stand shoulder to shoulder with its Central Asian neighbours in confronting and overcoming this menace.

If our neighbourhood is peaceful and stable, if the only interference from outside is one of economic inputs, then Central Asia can once again be a bridge between East and West. That bridge can contribute to peace, prosperity and energy security in the wider world too. India's increasing engagement with Central Asia is aimed at promoting peace and mutual prosperity. We are civilisational partners, we want our ancient links to have contemporary colour.

I am sure the deliberations of this Conference will point us towards that direction and I take great pleasure in wishing your efforts success.
218. Statement by Ambassador V. K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question in the Security Council.


Please see Document No. 459

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219. Statement by Ambassador V. K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on Agenda Item 37: “The Situation in the Middle East” in the General Assembly.


Please see Document No. 500

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Afghanistan

220. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on Afghan President Karzai’s discussions in New Delhi.

New Delhi, March 6, 2003.

...After the ceremonial welcome and the visit to Rajghat by President Karzai, the Deputy Prime Minister had called on President Karzai. During this meeting the assistance in the police-training sector also came up for discussion. As you know training was imparted to 250 Afghan police officers and cadets in 12 different courses in India from July to September 2002. DPM indicated that India would be happy to continue this training assistance and from the other side President Karzai indicated that Afghanistan wanted to use more of India’s assistance and institutions for providing such training. The other point which was discussed is that Afghanistan is in a situation in which it is moving towards Constitution building and elections. Related
asian to that is the issue of Indian experts being used in both these areas. President Karzai indicated that Afghanistan would be happy to use Indian expertise and contribution when they move towards Constitutional Loya Jirga towards the end of the year and elections in next year.

The EAM called on President Karzai this afternoon and the call was immediately followed by the talks at Hyderabad House. There were restricted delegation talks for about half an hour. This was followed by one to one talks between Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Karzai for half an hour and then by full delegation level talks, which lasted for another half an hour. After that a bilateral Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) was signed between India and Afghanistan. It was signed by Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Arun Jaitley and on the Afghanistan side it was signed by the Minister of Commerce Mr. Syed Kazmi.

During the discussions the Prime Minister announced a grant of further 70 US million dollars to Afghanistan for the reconstruction of the Zaranj-Delaram road which has been taken up by India. This is in addition to the US$ 100 million financial assistance which is already in the process of being operationalised. A reconnaissance, survey cutting and tracing team is expected to go to Afghanistan and then finalise a detailed project report. The President of Afghanistan greatly appreciated and positively assessed this gesture of grant of 70 million dollars. He felt that this would enhance the value of Afghanistan as a transit alternative and for a landlocked country like Afghanistan it was almost like bringing Afghanistan down to the sea. The PTA was also greatly appreciated. It would lead to income generation amongst the Afghan traders and economic recuperation in the country. It would also provide a fresh impetus to the traditional trade links that exist between the two countries. The other areas which came up for discussion for cooperation between the two countries were the training of police forces which would be a continuing factor, cooperation in building up Afghan National Army, building up civil services and constitution building as well as in the electoral processes. Indian expertise and institutions would be used for this cooperation. Indian assistance in general was assessed as being highly effective in Afghanistan particularly in the areas of transportation in which we have provided, to date 192 buses, provision of aircraft - the third one is to be gifted tomorrow and 2 have already been handed over, provision of assistance in terms of high protein biscuits, medicines, vegetable seeds. There was a request from the Afghan side that India should also be looking at infrastructural areas like water, power, irrigation and road construction. There was some concern which was shared on elements leading to insecurity, the reference
being to the regrouping of the Taliban and al-Qaeda in some parts of Afghanistan and it was agreed that it was important to completely eradicate the scourge of terrorism.

As far as the Preferential Trade Agreement is concerned India is granting 50-100% tariff concession on 38 items of dry fruits, fresh fruits, seeds, medicinal herbs and precious stones and in turn Indian is receiving duty free access on 8 tariff lines of our export interest which include black tea, pharmaceutical products, ayurvedic and homeopathic medicines, refined sugar, cement, etc.

(These were essentially the areas covered this evening. Tomorrow President Karzai goes to Shimla where will be honoured an honorary doctorate by the University of Himachal Pradesh.)

**Question:** Tariff concession in PTA. Does it include dry and fresh fruits?

**Answer:** India is granting 50-100% tariff concession on 38 items of dry fruits, fresh fruits, seeds, medicinal herbs and precious stones and in turn India is receiving duty free access on 8 tariff lines of our export interest which include tea, pharmaceutical products, ayurvedic and homeopathic medicines, etc.

**Question:** Any discussion on Pakistan?

**Answer:** No

**Question:** Anything on Al-Qaeda and terrorism?

**Answer:** In the context which I told you about - the regrouping of Taliban and al-Qaeda.

**Question:** About this Afghan National Army does India has any role in that?

**Answer:** The immediate role is that 300 vehicles are to be supplied. The supplies will start next month. These are basically trucks, ambulances and jeeps.

**Question:** Any value of this supply?

**Answer:** No. I don’t have a value figure.

**Thank You**
Speech of President A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of the President of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai.

New Delhi, March 6, 2003.

Mr. Hamid Karzai, President of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to welcome you, Mr. President, once again to India. You have had personal association with our country for a very long time and our people too empathise with your efforts and difficulties, and rejoice and share in your achievements.

I extend my welcome to the other distinguished members of your delegation and also welcome you as representatives of a nation and a people with whom we have interacted since time immemorial. Our language, art, music and the crafts have been enriched by this interaction. Ancient Indian epics have references to people and places in what constitutes modern day Afghanistan. According to some, one of the great linguists of ancient India, Panini, wrote his famous grammar of Sanskrit language on the Pashtoon highlands.

In the more recent times, we had the unfortunate experience of seeing the territory of Afghanistan being used as a safe haven for training, equipping and indoctrination for the purposes of terrorism and subversive activities directed against India. The Taliban, which we believe reflected an effort alien to the Afghan tradition, was sought to be used to drive a wedge between India and Afghanistan. The changed situation today has provided us with an opportunity to renew our relations and to interact intensively once again to mutual benefit.

Mr. President, no one can underestimate the magnitude of the challenges your country faces. After more than twenty years of severe disruption, displacement and internal differences, you have to virtually re-build the nation from the base. We are extremely happy to see the progress which you have made since December 2001. We wish you success in your efforts during the forthcoming Constitutional and electoral processes and the development of your indigenous security structures. In view of our close interaction in the past, our cultural similarities, historical legacies and relevance of the development experience, we believe that India could productively contribute to your efforts in these areas.
It is with this in mind that our Prime Minister, Shri Vajpayeeji had announced, even before the contours of the Interim and Transitional structures in Afghanistan were clear, that India would make available US $ 100 million and one million tonnes of wheat. I am glad that there has been a quick and effective implementation of this commitment. Our approach has been to respond to the needs and priorities articulated by the Afghan Government itself. We have also implemented these projects through your Government and agencies. We believe that this would also contribute to institution and capacity building.

Responding to your recommendations, we have decided to concentrate during the next phase on the infrastructure sector. This will include projects for irrigation, water supply, power, warehousing and road construction. We hope that our efforts on the Zaranj-Delaram road segment will, besides contributing to employment and income generation in that region, will enhance the trade and transit alternatives for Afghanistan. Our endeavour would be that it should also contribute to the fulfillment of Afghanistan’s potential of being a bridge connecting different countries of our region.

I would specially like to highlight the role which education plays in nation-building. Imparting education, particularly to women is very crucial for the future development of any society. India would definitely like to extend its assistance to Afghanistan and particularly in women’s education, be it school, professional, technical or medical education.

The Preferential Trading Agreement that we have concluded reflects our mutual desire for a higher level of economic engagement for the benefit of our peoples. The successful ‘Made in India’ exhibition organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry last September in Kabul, was interpreted by many as India’s assessment of and commitment to stability and progress in Afghanistan.

I welcome the regular exchanges between our Governments. This has served to deepen our understanding and diversify the areas of cooperation. Your visit last year had set the new framework for our relationship. This visit will help establishment of new benchmarks for cooperation.

Excellency, we are not unaware of the challenges and dangers that the Afghan people continue to face. The periodic incidents of terrorism, attacks on security forces and reports of regrouping of the forces of terror
and obscurantism, remind us of these. We are with you as you thwart these attempts. Terrorism and extremism are a threat not only to Afghanistan but to others in the region and even beyond.

Permit me Excellency, to raise a toast to:-

- enhancement of Indo-Afghanistan friendship;
- progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Afghanistan;
- vanquishing of the forces of terror and instability; and
- to your personal health and well-being.

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222. Statement by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN on the Situation in Afghanistan in the Security Council.


Please see Document No. 456

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223. Press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the discussions with the visiting Iranian Foreign Minister on Afghanistan.


Please see Document No. 233

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224. Statement by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal at the High-level ad hoc meeting on Afghanistan.


Please see Document No. 461

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225. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on safe release of the two Indian nationals abducted in Afghanistan.

New Delhi, December 24, 2003.

The Government of India welcomes the safe release of the two Indian nationals who were abducted on December 6, 2003. The two Indian nationals were working on a road construction project in Zabul province of Afghanistan.

We thank the Afghan authorities and others who worked continuously and tirelessly for the safe release of the two Indian nationals. Their release is a reflection of the fact that all sections of the Afghan people recognize the contribution that India is making towards the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan.

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Armenia

226. Speech of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of the President of the Republic of Armenia Robert Kocharian.

New Delhi, October 31, 2003.

Your Excellency, Mr. Robert Kocharian, President of the Republic of Armenia, Madame Bella Kocharian, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On this occasion of Your Excellency’s State visit to our country, I extend to you, to Madame Bella Kocharian and all the other members of your delegation, a hearty welcome on behalf of myself, my Government and the people of India. I am confident that your visit will usher in a new era of cooperation in areas of bilateral, regional and international importance and will further consolidate the tradition of understanding and cooperation between our two countries.

Our relations Excellency, are based on common ideals and democratic principles which we value as fundamental to world peace and international conduct. India’s ancient philosophy has given to its people many eternal truths and the strength to face challenges.

From time immemorial, India’s ancient sages and great souls like Lord Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi have spoken and worked ceaselessly for equality, human dignity and eradication of poverty.

India and Armenia have always enjoyed warm, close and friendly relations. With the concerted efforts of both sides, these relations have diversified over the past twelve years and I am happy to see that there is a steady flow of contacts and visits taking place on a regular basis. We recall with pleasure the State visit of your former President His Excellency Mr. Levon Ter-Petrossian in December 1995. Last year, we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries. Our economic and commercial ties are growing and it is our sincere belief that this visit by Your Excellency will provide a further fillip to these relations.

Although the first Armenian Thomas Cana landed on the Malabar Coast in 780 A.D., it was only in the 16th century that an Armenian community emerged in Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai and Agra. We are
indeed glad to see that this community has quietly been making contributions to India’s social and cultural mosaic. Your visit now gives us an opportunity to celebrate these age-old ties and traditions.

Excellency, we are happy to note that Armenia has made rapid progress after its independence in 1991. Your growth rate of nearly 13 percent in 2002 is indeed impressive. Yours, was one of the first countries of the former Soviet Union to introduce very rapid economic reforms. Today, Armenia has one of the most liberal trade environments among the CIS countries. You are a member of several regional groupings and have contributed significantly to the economic development of the south Caucasus region.

We too, in India, have been taking our second generation of economic reforms forward. There are certain areas of our core competence in which we could cooperate mutually. India could share its experience and expertise in the areas of agriculture, animal husbandry and information technology with Armenia. On the other hand, India can have a partnership with Armenia in the mining of gold and molybdenum to which value addition could be made within the country itself.

Excellency, our cooperation at the United Nations gives us the opportunity to share perceptions on issues that are important to both of us. This world body was meant to represent the world community, inclusive of all and its primary aim was the preservation of peace.

Recent events have reinforced the urgent need for the restructuring of the UN Security Council so that it can play its vital role of reducing tensions by basing its actions on the principles of non-discrimination, consensus and transparency. India has a role to play in working towards a safer, saner and a more equitable world order based on cooperation and interdependence. We stand irrevocably committed to peaceful co-existence, non-alignment and international cooperation. We are grateful to Armenia for its continued support for India’s candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

Excellency, today, the biggest threat to peace and stability in the world is terrorism. India continues to be a serious victim of cross-border terrorism for more than two and a half decades now. Terrorism has no justification whether religious, ideological or political. There is therefore, the need to fight not only the perpetrators but also those who sponsor and support it. India condemns all acts of terrorism wherever they occur, by whomsoever and in whatever form. The threat of this menace has made it all the more essential for like-minded countries to cooperate in all
possible ways to deal with it.

I wish to assure Your Excellency the fullest cooperation of my government in enhancing our bilateral cooperation and of our deep interest in further strengthening the very warm and friendly relations that exist between our two countries.

Finally, I would like to convey our sincere good wishes for your personal health, happiness and welfare and that of your family and for the health, happiness and prosperity of the people of Armenia.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now request all the distinguished guests to join me in raising a toast:

- to the personal good health and happiness of His Excellency President Robert Kocharian and Madame Bella Kocharian;
- to the well being and prosperity of the people of Armenia; and
- to the everlasting friendship between India and Armenia.

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227. Joint Declaration issued at the end of the visit of the Armenian President Robert Kocharian.

New Delhi, October 31, 2003.

1. At the invitation of the President of India, H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of Armenia, H.E. Mr. Robert Kocharian, paid a State visit to India from October 29-November 1, 2003.

2. Within the framework of the visit, H.E. Mr. Robert Kocharian held fruitful discussions with H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of India, and H.E. Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India. The Vice President of India, Mr. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat called on President Kocharian.

3. During the wide-ranging discussions held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere, both sides exchanged views on various bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. The two Sides noted the high level of interaction and cooperation between Armenia and India at the United Nations and other multilateral fora and
expressed their intention to further cooperate in this field.

4. Both sides noted with satisfaction that the close relations between India and Armenia, which have a cultural and historical basis, are marked by warmth and a high degree of understanding as well as shared interest in current principal issues. Both sides reiterated their desire to strengthen even further the bilateral relations and close ties between the two countries and peoples.

5. The two sides emphasized the continuing relevance of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of India signed in 1995. The treaty has served both countries well and provided a solid foundation for further development of bilateral relations and cooperation on regional and international level in the years ahead.

6. While discussing possible ways of invigorating Indo-Armenian relations in trade, economic, scientific, technological and humanitarian spheres, the Sides noted the considerable untapped potential of mutually beneficial cooperation between Armenia and India in these spheres. The two sides agreed to explore further, ways and means of increasing, intensifying and diversifying bilateral trade and investment to mutual benefit, in particular in the areas of Information Technology, small and medium scale industries, textiles, food processing sector, pharmaceuticals and foodgrains.

7. The Sides marked with satisfaction the functioning of the Indo-Armenian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological, Cultural and Educational Cooperation which held its last meeting in May, 2003 in New Delhi. Both sides agreed to give high priority to intensifying cooperation in all areas identified during the last session of the Inter-Governmental Commission.

8. The two sides acknowledged the vital importance of the role of the United Nations in world peace, stability and development. They remained determined to continue their efforts in strengthening the UN system as the central mechanism for ensuring international peace and security as well as democratizing international relations. They reiterated their support for the need to reform the UN, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They stressed, in particular, the need for equitable balance in the expanded Security Council to provide a constructive voice to the aspirations of the
developing countries. They believed that piecemeal and discriminatory approaches to such expansion would be inconsistent with the objectives of that world body. Considering that India is the largest democracy in the world and in view of its past contributions to the promotion of peace and its role in advancing the interests and concerns of developing countries in international fora, Armenia reaffirmed its full support to India for permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council.

9. The two sides expressed their concern over the increase in international terrorism, religious extremism, trans-border organized crime and illicit trafficking in arms and drugs. They viewed this upsurge as a serious threat to sovereign states, international peace, development, security and stability. They affirmed that terrorism was a grave violation of human rights and a crime against humanity and that no excuse could justify it in any form. They agreed that the fight against terrorism by the international community has to be global, comprehensive and sustained, with the ultimate objective of its total eradication from the world. Action should be taken against those states, entities and individuals who support, finance, harbour or abet terrorists or provide them shelter, safe havens or asylum to engage in cross-border terrorism. In that regard it was essential that every State be made to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting, training or participating in terrorist acts in another state or acquiescing in organized activities within its territories directed towards the commission of such acts. In this context, they stressed the importance of strict, full and unconditional implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution on the fight against terrorism and reiterated in particular their commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution 1373. They stressed the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through the early finalization and adoption of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

10. The Armenian side appreciated the evolving security concerns of India in the light of recent local, regional and global developments. It appreciated the initiatives taken by India to resume diplomatic relations with Pakistan. In this connection, the Armenian side supported the resolution of differences between India and Pakistan through bilateral dialogue in the spirit of the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration.
11. The Indian side appreciated the security concerns of Armenia in the light of local, regional and global developments. It welcomed the efforts undertaken by the Armenian side toward the establishment of lasting peace in the region. In this connection, the Indian side confirmed its support for finding peaceful and negotiated solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh problem.

12. The two sides reaffirmed their allegiance to the principle of peaceful and negotiated resolution of disputes as opposed to the use of force or the threat thereof, pursuant to the applicable rules of international law.

13. In the field of culture, the two sides reiterated the long standing historical ties between the two countries. They expressed satisfaction over the fact that they have the necessary framework for regular and diverse cultural exchanges. Both the Educational Exchange Programme and the recently concluded Cultural Exchange Programme are in place and would help to institutionalize cultural exchanges and ties. The two sides expressed their appreciation regarding the many and significant contributions made by the Armenian community in India to Indian national life.

14. On behalf of the Government and the people of Armenia, H.E. President Kocharian expressed sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of India for all the hospitality extended to him and his delegation and the excellent arrangements made for their visit and stay in India.
Iran


SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Friends, it is a great pleasure to have President Khatami and his Delegation here with us in India. We specially value his presence as the Chief Guest at our Republic Day Celebrations.

His visit reflects the importance both our countries attach to the consolidation, expansion and diversification of our bilateral relations. Our bilateral relations have strong historical and cultural roots and there is a specific potential in our common search for equitable globalisation and a multi-polar world order.

Our discussions today covered a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual concern. The New Delhi Declaration and the Road Map to Strategic Cooperation, which we have just signed, indicate our commitment to establish a target-oriented framework to progress mutually identified objectives to our bilateral relations.

We agreed that the energy sector would develop into an important area of multi-faceted cooperation. There is a natural partnership between Iran’s abundant energy resources and India’s growing energy needs. We have to work out a mutually acceptable, secure and stable arrangement for transfer of gas. We have also agreed to broaden our cooperation beyond the mere buyer-seller relationship by exploiting investment opportunities in upstream and downstream projects in this sector. Several projects are already under discussion.

The recent award by Iran of the Pharsi Oil exploration block to an Indian consortium marks a good start.

The convergences between India and Iran also need to be more fully reflected in our other economic exchanges.

President Khatami and I have agreed that India and Iran should focus on diversification of our trade basket, activisation of the existing
200 million dollar line of credit that would provide many new opportunities to our business communities.

The Joint India-Iran Initiative to develop the Chahbahar Port in Iran and to link it by road to Afghanistan commences a welcome new trend of investment in infrastructure development.

India and Iran have cooperated closely on Afghanistan, especially in the shared objective of ridding that country of the evil Taleban forces. We agreed that our joint effort should now be to promote strong construction and rehabilitation work in that country including through development of alternate trade routes to Afghanistan through Iran as well as by undertaking a joint rail and road reconstruction project.

President Khatami and I discussed the threat to global and regional security from terrorism. We agreed to widen our cooperation against terrorism in bilateral and multi-lateral fora. We will work to strengthen the international legal regime against terrorism.

President Khatami has invited me to visit Iran. I have accepted the invitation with pleasure.

Thank you.

H.E. SAYYED MOHAMMED KHATAMI: In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful!

Tomorrow is the national day of India, the day when the new history of India starts. The newly established democracy and the republic of India give a new picture to our region. On the national day of India the spirit of the great nation of India, the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi becomes manifest.

Mahatma Gandhi is the manifestation of peace and compassion at the time of prevalence of violence, war, terrorism and tyranny. Even against the enemies he adopted the same approach and he used peace and compassion and nonviolent methods in order to force out the enemy from the country. The message of Gandhi and the great nation of India is freedom, independence, peace, compassion and coexistence.

We have also started the new stage of our history by the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Our Islamic Revolution in Iran, contrary to other revolutions, did not rely on weapons. Our Revolution was the revolution of rhetoric, the revolution of guidance and peace. We are doing our best in the light of this revolution and despite all the problems that we face to
present a new image of democracy. We wish to see peace and security all around the world. The greatest message that I have during my visit to India, to the nation of India is the message of peace and also rejection of hegemony and also unilateralism.

The two great nations of Iran and India relying on their historical cooperation are once again next to each other and they will continue their cooperation on Afghanistan. In order to be able to assume our true historical position at the international level we should once again become strong. This cooperation and this strength is not in order to interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries to suppress people or to be tyrants. Rather, we want to defend peace, coexistence, security and stability.

The basis and the pillars of power in today’s world are founded by science and technology and strong economy. Therefore, the major fields of cooperation between Iran and India would be in economic, scientific and technological fields. We wish to become strong in order to be able to proceed with the principle of dialogue among civilizations to reject both violence and terrorism and to promote peace and coexistence.

I have had a fruitful discussion with my counterpart Mr. Vajpayee. My Delegation has had good discussions with their counterparts in a very sincere and friendly environment. I hope that this visit of mine to India would be a blessing for both countries – the Islamic Republic of Iran and India. I would be expecting with happiness and pleasure to receive Mr. Vajpayee once again in Iran.

Thank you.

QUESTION (IRANIAN MEDIA): My question is addressed to Prime Minister Vajpayee.

You visited Iran and our President is in India now. Both of you have had discussions. In the energy sector, did you both discuss the issue of gas pipeline? If you did, what stage has it reached now? What decision has been taken with regard to the investment that is required to be made in this project?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: The discussion took place in a friendly environment. We tried to understand the viewpoint of each other. Iran has gas: we need gas. But there are some hurdles in the way. We are trying to remove those hurdles. Discussion is on. We wish to resolve this in a way which makes both the countries happy, meets the needs of both the
countries, and results in a good agreement for the future also. I am confident that we will be successful in this. As to the cost of this pipeline, in that regard also discussions are going on and I am confident that that also will be decided early.

**QUESTION (INDIAN MEDIA):** My question is addressed to the Iranian President.

Mr. President, today you have announced the Road Map to Strategic Cooperation between the two countries. Could you tell us the essential elements of that strategic cooperation, particularly in the context of the new roads, transport links that you are building through Iran that will link India through Afghanistan Central Asia?

You also talked about a North-South Corridor which connects India to Europe through Iran. How do you assess the significance and impact of this cooperation for regional economy and politics in the coming years?

**H.E. SAYYED MOHAMMED KHATAMI:** The document signed between the two countries under the name of Road Map to Strategic Cooperation is indicative of the resolve of the two countries to expand their relationship in all fields and to make it sustainable. It covers all fields. Of course, the interests of both sides should be well taken care of our cooperation. Such cooperation would not be against the interest of any third country. Rather, it would be in the field of cooperation between the two countries of India and Iran in order to accelerate cooperation in achieving progress and development in all fields.

We welcome the presence of India in the economic, scientific and cultural fields in Middle East and Central Asia. We are not only ready to secure the transit presence of India in Middle East, Central Asia and Europe through Iran, but also we are ready and we have had discussions in order to have cooperation together for our presence in the third countries.

The North-South Corridor in which India, Iran and Russia play a pivotal role could be quite important for promoting peace and security in the region as also trade and economic development. India has very good programmes to implement in Chahbahar. We hope that we would be able to finalise our agreement in linking India to Chahbahar and through Chahbahar to the National Iranian Rail Road, and this would enable India to be connected to Central Asia and Europe.

Cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and India in the
reconstruction of Afghanistan is also quite important for promoting peace and stability in the region and bringing about progress and development. Not only the interests of the two countries would be in the rapid development of Afghanistan but also peace and stability of the whole region would rely on it. What is important is the will and resolve of the two countries and the two nations to deepen such relationship and cooperation. I am sure that through the various programmes that we have before us, such a resolve and will would be well shown and would well become manifest.

**QUESTION (IRANIAN MEDIA):** My question is both to Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Khatami. I am from the IOIB of Iran. Since the visit of H.E. Mr. Vajpayee to Iran there have been discussions on the strategic cooperation between the two countries and today we see that the Road Map to Strategic Cooperation document has been signed between the two countries. I want to know what new developments have taken place in order to strengthen such a strategic cooperation between the two countries. My question is specially addressed to H.E. Mr. Vajpayee.

**SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:** As I mentioned in my preliminary remarks, the road map has been drawn. It is a long-term measure and its significance will come out after some time. Looking at the situation in the region and all over the world, Iran and India have come closer to cooperate with each other and work for stability and peace in this region.

**QUESTION (INDIAN MEDIA):** My question is addressed to the Iranian President.

How do you view the present political situation in Afghanistan? In the political situation in Afghanistan, and in order to cooperate in the task of reconstruction of Afghanistan, in what concrete aspects can India and Iran cooperate with each other?

**H.E. SAYYED MOHAMMED KHATAMI:** First of all, we both believe that we should strengthen the Central Government in Afghanistan. We should help the Central Government in Afghanistan to reconstruct that country, the country, which has been inflicted with great calamities in the past 25 years. Iran has allocated 560 million dollars as the budget to be spent for the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan during five years, and this year it has allocated 50 million dollars of this budget for the same purpose. Apart from that, Iran provides various facilities to Afghanistan and the Afghan Government including facilitation of transit of goods into
Afghanistan. Also, we are working to have Iran used as a transit route for India in order to help Afghanistan. This is a programme under study and implementation. We hope that in the future it would extend further.

Allow me to mention one point about the future of Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan should come to understand that the world is ready and determined to help them and to reconstruct their war-ridden country. What would endanger peace and security in Afghanistan is the despair of the people. If the people of Afghanistan would feel disappointed and would feel that the world has just used Afghanistan as an excuse and is not trying to save the people in that country from all its calamities, then there is the danger of the problem emerging again.

Those who are familiar with the history of Afghanistan well know that the people of Afghanistan hate being dependant upon foreign countries, and they do not even accept the presence of the foreign people as the ones who wish to rule their country in their lands. If the people of Afghanistan would come to the understanding that developments of the past two years including the war has just led to the presence of the foreign forces in their country without any effort to reconstruct that country, seriously this may lead to the disappointment of the people and to a new problem. We should try to have Afghanistan reconstructed as soon as possible. We should try to facilitate the possibility of implementation of the right of self determination by the people in Afghanistan and that they would be able to decide for their future. It would be only in such a way that in Afghanistan peace would be secured and peace and stability of nowhere would be threatened because of Afghanistan.

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229. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Road Map to Strategic Cooperation.


Government of the Republic of India and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran (hereinafter referred to as Parties);

Having expressed their commitment to expand and consolidate the cooperative framework of multifaceted bilateral ties;

Conscious of the need to build a framework for strategic cooperation, and its potential for contributing to peace and prosperity in the region and beyond;

Recalling and reaffirming the Tehran Declaration issued on April 10, 2001 jointly by H.E. Shri A.B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India and H.E. Hojjatoleslam Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran;

Recognizing the importance and agreeing to advance bilateral ties in a time bound framework; and

Following upon the New Delhi Declaration signed jointly by H.E. Shri A.B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India and H.E. Hojjatoleslam Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran;

Have agreed as follows:

Article I

The Parties will work through the existing frameworks and mechanisms constituted between the two countries to establish clear time frames to achieve mutually identified targets in various areas of bilateral cooperation.

Article II

The Parties will utilize the institutional linkage between the Security Councils of the two countries, regular Strategic Dialogue, and mechanism of Foreign Office Consultations to further political dialogue and decide on modalities of cooperation on bilateral, regional and international issues that are of strategic significance.
Article III

The Parties will work towards forming a Joint mechanism in order to enable mutual identification of targets for a broad-based bilateral cooperation in the field of Oil and Gas, including exploration projects and projects in Iran in upstream and downstream industries. The matters relating to the transfer of Iranian gas to India would continue to be discussed under the existing Joint Committee.

Article IV

The parties will make use of the bilateral mechanisms to explore opportunities for cooperation in defence in agreed areas, including training and exchange of visits. This cooperation is not aimed at any third country and would contribute to regional peace and stability.

Article V

The Parties will work through the existing framework of bilateral Joint Commission, and other mechanisms between the two governments and the private sectors of the two countries to decide on methods to expand bilateral trade and economic ties, including expansion of trade in non-oil sector, and encourage joint efforts to invest in infrastructure projects, including the ongoing discussions between India and Iran to develop Chahbahar port complex, Chahbahar-Fahraj-Bam railway link and Marine Oil Tanking terminal at an agreed location, as well as Iranian interests to invest and participate in infrastructure projects in India.

Article VI

Through various provisions of existing cooperation frameworks in Science and Technology, the parties would identify sector specific targets for cooperation in the mutually agreed areas in this field.

Article VII

The parties agree that all efforts should be made to meet the targets for bilateral cooperation in specified areas in a mutually defined time frame. They also agree that the identification of targets and their implementation should be achieved within a five-year period.

Article VIII

The External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India and the Foreign
Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran would undertake regular review of progress made in achieving the targets in bilateral cooperation.

This MOU is signed in New Delhi on 25th day of January, 2003 corresponding to 5th of Bahman, 1381 in two originals each in, Hindi, English and Persian language. In case of divergence, the English text shall prevail.

On behalf of the Republic of India
(Yashwant Sinha)
External Affairs Minister

On behalf of Islamic Republic of Iran
(Dr. Kamal Kharrazi)
Foreign Minister

230. Speech of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Khatami.


Your Excellency Hojjatoleslam Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a matter of great pleasure and honour for me to extend a warm welcome to you Mr. President and the other distinguished members of the Iranian delegation. Your visit marks an important and significant step in our growing and multifaceted cooperation.

Excellency, the history of India-Iran ties is one of an uninterrupted dialogue between our two ancient civilizations going back many centuries. Over millennia, the highways between India and Iran have been travelled by scholars and statesman, traders and artists, by man of piety and learning, and those searching for opportunity and adventure. In so doing,
our civilizations have interacted and enriched each other in diverse fields including language, religion, art, architecture, music, philosophy and other traditions.

The linkages between the people of India and Iran and our common cultural affiliations were appropriately described by our first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in his book “Discovery of India”, where he wrote, “Few people have been more closely related in origin and throughout history than the people of India and the people of Iran”. The poet Rabindranath Tagore had described Persia as a great inspiration and after his visit to the tombs of the great poets Sa’di and Hafiz, had said that the silent voice of your ancient poets had filled the silence in his heart.

In contemporary times, the ties of the past have been strengthened by the opportunities of today in the fields of energy, technology and trade. It is our strong belief that our relationship can act as an anchor of stability in our region and beyond. Our high level political exchanges, given an impetus by the visit of our Prime Minister in April 2001, have continued.

The institutionalization of contacts between our Security Councils and the regular Strategic Dialogue has offered us channels for in-depth exchange of views and better appreciations of each other’s positions on issues of regional and international importance.

I would like to personally pay tribute to your Excellency for highlighting the global need to engage in “Dialogue Among Civilizations”. The concept exposes the dangers of all doctrines and theories that are premised on the inevitability of a clash of civilizations, as if, humanity does not have a shared sense of history and destination. Technology, the communications revolution, the intermeshing of interests through trade and investment, international political and financial institutions, the spreading idea of more humane societies based on the rule of law and the will of the people, the idea of modernity itself, have all brought different civilizations together. Differences of belief, thinking and priorities remain but it is only through dialogue among different viewpoints that the international community can reconcile discord and disharmony. This approach was also ably embodied in the ‘Tehran Declaration’, signed between our two countries two years ago.

Excellency, as we have both recognized, in today’s world, besides political linkages and cultural ties, the economic underpinnings of a relationship are equally vital. I am happy that our bilateral trade and
economic linkages have seen some diversification and consolidation, but still remain below potential at around US$ 2.2 billion. We need to actively encourage the non-oil trade segment. In the energy sector also, efforts need to be made to expand our ties beyond a “buyer-seller” relationship. Some welcome initial steps have been taken, but more needs to be done. The private sectors of the two countries have made a useful contribution in the expansion of our bilateral trade. India and Iran have also worked out and implemented meaningful programmes of cooperation in the fields of education, agriculture, science and technology.

On the issue of energy security, we are fortunate that the huge hydrocarbon reserves of Iran, and India’s growing energy demand, position us ideally for a mutually complementary relationship. In this regard, the matter of transfer of Iranian gas to India is of strategic importance to us. Our serious efforts must continue to select a mode of transfer that is long-term, cost effective and secure. We hope to take an appropriate decision in this regard, as soon as all the feasibility studies on various route options are available.

We also regard Iran as an important transit country for access to Europe, Central Asia and Afghanistan. Our cooperation has already led to successful operationalization of the North-South Transport Corridor transiting through Iran. We have also worked together to develop an alternative route for the movement of goods to Afghanistan via the Iranian port of Chahbahar.

The scourge of terrorism and extremism continues to threaten regional and international peace and stability. The forces of terror must be dealt with and eradicated. The international community also has to be unequivocal in its condemnation of states that aid, abet and directly support international terrorism. India firmly believes that for the fight against the international terrorism to succeed, it should not be selective or based on double standards. India, on its part, has been in the forefront of efforts to strengthen international consensus and legal regimes against terrorism.

India seeks a relationship of trust, friendship and cooperation with all its neighbours, with countries in the region and beyond. In this context Iran has an important place in our foreign policy approaches. We want the framework of our friendly relationship to be long term and mutually beneficial, as well as substantive and diversified. We are committed to advancing our bilateral cooperation with Iran in all spheres, including matters of regional and international security.
Excellency, I am confident that your visit will offer you the opportunity to experience personally the strength and depth of our ties, as well as the warmth and affection that the people of India have for Iran, and for you.

I wish you a very successful visit and success in your endeavours for your country and your people.

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231. New Delhi Declaration between the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the occasion of the visit of the Iranian President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami.


Vision of a strategic Partnership for a more stable, secure and prosperous region and for enhanced regional and global cooperation

The Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Iran:

Conscious of the vast potential in the political, economic, transit, transport, energy, industries, science and technology and agricultural fields and of the benefits of cooperative endeavour,

Determined to build a strong, modern, contemporary and cooperative relationship that draws upon their historical and age-old cultural ties, the advantage of geographical proximity, and that responds to the needs of an inter-dependent world of the 21st Century,

Aware that their strengthened bilateral relations also contribute to regional cooperation, peace, prosperity and stability,

Recalling and reaffirming the Tehran Declaration issued on April 10, 2001 jointly by H.E. Shri A.B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India and H.E. Hojjatoleslam Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which resulted in further strengthening of dialogue aimed at strategic cooperation.

Declare as follows:

1. International developments since the adoption of the Tehran Declaration have reinforced their faith in and reconfirmed the values
of pluralism, diversity and tolerance within and between societies.

2. International peace and stability, harmony between different religions, ethnic and linguistic groups, cultures and social systems can best be promoted through dialogue and acceptance of the right to ones' own beliefs and values expressed and exercised without injury or slight to those of others and without a desire to impose them on others. In this context, they positively assessed the contribution made by the concept of Dialogue Among Civilizations to address discord and differences in international relations.

3. They evaluate positively the consolidation of Indo-Iranian bilateral relations since the Tehran Declaration. Meetings of the Joint Commission, the Strategic Dialogue, interaction between the Security Councils of the two countries, discussions on energy and security, and cooperation based on existing complementarities and diverse possibilities, including supplies, exploration, investment, exchange of technical expertise, and other interaction at government and private sector levels have all contributed to deepening of mutual understanding and confidence, which has provided, in turn, the basis for further consolidation.

4. The two sides welcome the fresh impetus given to Science and Technology cooperation as also to cooperation in education and training since last year. They also note the potential of technologies, such as IT, to improve the lives of people in developing societies and agree to promote cooperation efforts to exploit this potential. They agree to promote fuller utilization of available capabilities for human resource development.

5. The two sides affirm that their growing strategic convergence needs to be underpinned with a strong economic relationship, including greater trade and investment flows. The Ministerial-level Joint Commission, the Joint Business Council and economic and commercial agreements signed recently in this regard will play a critical role in this regard. They exhort the entrepreneurs in both countries to harness each other's strengths for mutual benefit and promote the process of economic rapprochement actively, including through expert studies on trade and investment facilitation, holding of exhibitions and seminars, promotion of business travel, and joint ventures.

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1. The following agreements/MoUs were signed during the Iranian President's visit:

1. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Road Map to Strategic
They note that the enabling legislations to promote vigorous trade and economic exchanges are primary requirements to promote business confidence between the entrepreneurs of the two countries. Many arrangements have already been concluded in this field. To consolidate the bilateral business environment further, they agree on the need to undertake expeditious negotiations, inter alia, for the conclusion of the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement and MoU on Energy Cooperation.

Cooperation: The MoU is signed by Shri Yashwant Sinha, External Affairs Minister from the Indian side and Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Foreign Minister from the Iranian side. Following from the vision for a strategic partnership embodied in the New Delhi Declaration, this MoU sets a five year target oriented framework for milestones towards the strategic partnership. The two sides have agreed to work through the existing frameworks and mechanisms where they exist and to create additional ones where necessary, to achieve mutually identified targets in various areas of bilateral cooperation within clear time frames. Political dialogue and modalities of cooperation on issues of strategic significance would be promoted through the mechanisms of Strategic Dialogue, Foreign Office Consultations and the institutional interactions between the National Security Councils of the two countries.

Among significant areas of bilateral cooperation, in the field of Oil and Gas, the two sides would formulate a joint mechanism to promote broad-based cooperation, including promoting project participation in Iran in upstream and downstream industries. The matters relating to transfer of Iranian gas to India would continued to be discussed under the existing Joint Committee for this purpose. India and Iran also agree to explore opportunities for cooperation in defence in agreed areas, including training and exchange of visits. They declare that India-Iran defence cooperation is not aimed against any third country.

The two sides would also make concerted efforts to encourage bilateral trade and economic cooperation. This would also involve boosting non-oil trade and investment in infrastructure projects including in the ongoing discussions between India and Iran to develop Chahbahar port complex, Chahbahar-Fahraj-Bam railway link and Marine Oil Tanking terminal at an agreed location, as well as Iranian interests to invest and participate in infrastructure projects in India. (Document No. 229)

2. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology: The nodal ministries are the Ministry of Science and Technology from the Indian side and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology of Iran. The Agreement is signed by Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister of Science and Technology and Dr. Mostafa Moeen, Minister of Science, Research and Technology of Iran. The Agreement identifies diverse fields of cooperation including information technology, bio-technology, pharmaceutical research, food technology and other fields as mutually agreed upon. The two sides would organize training programmes, research, exchange of scientists and scholars and hold seminars and workshops etc. The Agreement is expected to strengthen cooperation between the scientific institutions and scholars of the two countries. The Agreement would be valid for five years with provision of further automatic extension for similar periods.
7. India and Iran have a complementarity of interests in the energy sector which should develop as a strategic area of their future relationship. Iran with its abundant energy resources and India with its growing energy needs as a rapidly developing economy are natural partners. The areas of cooperation in this sector include investment in upstream and downstream activities in the oil sector, LNG/natural gas tie-ups and secure modes of transport.

8. They also decided to explore opportunities for cooperation in defence in agreed areas, including training and exchange of visits.

3. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Labour of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran on cooperation in Vocational Training: The MoU has been finalized on the basis of discussions held during the visit of Union Minister of Labour to Iran from January 8-12, 2003. The MoU is signed by Union Labour Minister Dr. Sahib Singh and Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Foreign Minister from the Iranian side. The two sides have agreed to mutual cooperation in the field of training and skill enhancement of the workers and exchange experience in this regard. Specific programmes of cooperation would be developed as follow up to the signing of the MoU.

4. Executive Programme of Cultural Exchange between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the years 2003-2005: Nodal ministries from both sides are Department of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Culture and Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance from the Iranian side. The Cultural Exchange Programme 2003-2005 encompasses the fields of Art and Culture, Radio, Television, Press and Films and Sports. The emphasis is to promote exchanges between leading cultural institutes, libraries, media persons and films, sports organizations and participation of teams from the two sides in each other’s sport tournaments. Translation in each other’s languages of literary works from the two countries are also included. Exchanges also include joint participation of children and teenagers in activities like paintings and other creative works. The Cultural Exchange Programme is expected to strengthen friendship and cultural bonds between the two countries.

5. Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of India and Islamic Republic of Iran on Cooperation in Urban Water Management and Hydrological Studies: The MoU is concluded on the basis of discussions held between the Ministry of Water Resources from the Indian side and the Ministry of Water Affairs from the Iranian side. Under the MoU, the bilateral cooperation would be directed towards the activities of the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management (RCUWM), Tehran established under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The two sides have agreed to cooperate, exchange experience and organize training and seminars of experts in the field of Urban Water Management and Hydrological Studies. The programme would follow the framework of the 6th International Hydrological Programme charted by the UNESCO. The two sides will establish a Joint Committee for this purpose to implement the programme and would hold regular meetings.

6. Framework Agreement between Export Import Bank of India and seven Iranian banks to operationalize USD 200 million line of credit to Iran: The Framework Agreement to operationalize the USD 200 million line of credit to Iran is aimed at encouraging India’s exports to Iran, particularly India’s participation in Iran’s infrastructure
9. They agreed to explore mechanisms to preserve and maintain the common cultural heritage, rooted in history, of the two countries. As part of efforts dedicated to preservation of this heritage, they agreed to release a commemorative postage stamp.

10. Terrorism continues to pose serious a threat to nation States and international peace and security and should be eradicated. States that aid, abet and directly support international terrorism should be condemned. The international community should intensify its efforts to combat the menace of terrorism. They reiterate their resolve to strengthen the international consensus and legal regimes against terrorism, including early finalization of a Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism. They agree that the combat against international terrorism should not be selective or based on double standards. Iran and India agree to continue joint cooperation to address the issues of international terrorism and trafficking in narcotic and psychotrophic substances.

11. Both sides stressed that the interests of peace and stability in the region are best served by a strong, united, prosperous and independent Afghanistan. They assess highly the past and continuing cooperation between India and Iran in support of a united,
sovereign and independent Afghanistan. They urge the international community to remain committed on long-term basis to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan, to controlling re-emergence of terrorist forces, and spread of narcotics from Afghanistan. They agree that stability of Afghanistan is vital for the stability of the region. The recent trilateral agreement between the Governments of India, Iran and Afghanistan to develop the Chahbahar route through Melak, Zaranj and Delaram would facilitate regional trade and transit, including to Afghanistan and Central Asia, contributing thus to enhanced regional economic prosperity.

12. The two sides note with satisfaction the operationalisation of the North South transit arrangement and the growing interest among other States in the region to participate in it. They reaffirm their commitment to develop the full potential of the North South arrangement, its infrastructure, desired certification and customs harmonization, expert studies and regular evaluation to aid its growth.

13. India and Iran support efforts to resolve the situation relating to Iraq peacefully through political and diplomatic means under the auspices of the United Nations.

14. The two sides reiterated their commitment to commence multi-lateral negotiations for nuclear disarmament under effective international control. They expressed their concern about restrictions imposed on the export of materials, technology and equipment to developing countries and acknowledged the right of these countries to research, production and use of technology, material and equipment for peaceful purposes.

15. The two countries are resolved to exploit the full potential of the bilateral relationship in the interest of the people of the two countries and of regional peace and stability, and recognizing that the 21st Century holds unbound promises of welfare and progress through peaceful application of science and technology, promoting knowledge based societies, and tackling fundamental problems such as disease, hunger and environmental degradation.

16. They directed that a time bound framework be worked out in agreed areas of cooperation, through the existing mechanisms of Joint Commission and Joint Working Groups, so that a firm and substantial
economic and political underpinning would be provided for a strategic and long-term orientation to the bilateral relationship.

Signed on the 25th Day of January 2003 at New Delhi in two originals, each in Hindi, Persian and English languages.

Prime Minister
Republic of India

President
Islamic Republic of Iran

232. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting of the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister with Foreign Secretary.


The Official Spokesperson gave the following briefing points on the visit of Iranian Deputy Foreign minister Mr. Aminzadeh.

- Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran Mr. M. Aminzadeh had extensive discussions with Foreign Secretary lasting 5-hours as part of the 3rd round of strategic dialogue between India and Iran. This dialogue was initiated after the 2001 visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee to Iran.

- DFM Aminzadeh also called on External Affairs Minister and National Security Adviser.

- Discussions reflected the confidence and strategic orientation of bilateral relationship. Focus of discussions was on bilateral relations and it was agreed that the Joint Commission would meet in December at the Foreign Ministers level. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha is likely to visit Iran in October. The Joint Committee on transfer of Iranian Gas to India is expected to meet soon. This committee would examine the status of the feasibility studies for transfer of gas to India. From the Iranian side the Interior Minister as well as the Chief of Judiciary will visit India soon.

- Discussions also covered Afghanistan and Iraq.

- On Afghanistan the two sides shared concerns at the security situation and reports of regrouping of Taliban and Al Qaeda with
support from outside.

- On Iraq they shared perspectives on the situation. Iranian DFM elaborated on constructive role that they believe Iran can play. EAM reiterated that GOI is ready to contribute to the restoration of infrastructure as well as to the medical, health, educational, communication and other civilian needs of the Iraqi people.

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233. Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi.


The Foreign Minister of Iran, H.E. Kamal Kharrazi, visited India on August 24. He called on Prime Minister and had meetings with EAM. During the discussions, there was a review of the progress in bilateral cooperation since the visit of President Khatami. Satisfaction was expressed at the progress made, particularly on issues related to transit and energy cooperation. It was agreed that effort would be made to convene a meeting of the Joint Commission in December 2003.

There was an exchange of views on the situation in Afghanistan. Both sides expressed full support to the Government of President Karzai and looked forward to the Constitutional Loya Jirga scheduled for later this year and elections next year. Concern was expressed at the security situation and the support that the Taliban remnants continue to receive from outside. They also shared their respective assessment of the situation in Iraq.

The Iranian Foreign Minister also conveyed his country’s approach to the question of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

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234. Opening Statement by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the 13th session of the India-Iran Joint Commission.


Excellency, distinguished colleagues from Iran,

It is a privilege for me to be in this ancient land, which has been a cradle of human civilization. It is a further honour to chair with you this forum which aims at providing a contemporary colour to our historic, civilisational ties. It is a matter of great satisfaction that India-Iran Joint Commission has met at regular intervals and has ably guided our trade and economic cooperation as well as our relationship in other spheres such as culture and science and technology.

Excellency, with the recent visits of Prime Minister Vajpayee to Iran and that of President Khatami to India, we have consolidated our political and diplomatic ties setting the ground for a strategic engagement. Happily there are no discordant notes in our relationship. Our views on a range of regional and international issues - be it Afghanistan or Iraq - are congruent and our cooperation is contributing to the stability of the region. Our biggest challenge is to transform this identity of views, this historic mutual affinity and understanding, into a vibrant economic relationship and a strategic partnership in areas such as energy and transit. I look forward to a comprehensive review with you of progress in defined areas since the last Joint Commission Meeting. During the course of our discussions, I hope to discuss with you ways and means to move from the general to the specific, from proposal to project and from idea to execution in a range of areas.

Excellency, our bilateral trade has been consistently over US $ 2 billion in the last couple of years. Traditionally, oil imports by India has dominated our trade exchanges. It is encouraging that the recent trend of our bilateral relations is reflecting more of a partnership being forged between two large growing economies. The non-oil segment of our bilateral trade has shown appreciable growth and we are happy that Indian exports to Iran have considerably increased. Some of the Indian goods identified for greater import by Iran at the last Joint Commission Meeting such as automobile components, drugs and pharmaceuticals, engineering goods etc. have contributed to this growth. As regards Iranian exports, we are your 7th largest non-oil export market.
We may still say that we have hardly begun to realise the vast potential of our bilateral trade. We must work harder to diversify the basket of trade, remove psychological barriers to purchase of each other’s items and explore aggressively the potential of investment driven trade. I may say that in a number of areas like engineering goods, chemicals and petrochemicals, automobile and automobile components, drugs and pharmaceuticals, steel etc., Indian products today match the best in the world and are being successfully exported to many countries at very competitive prices.

In the services sector, consultancy and executing projects, Indian companies have made a name for themselves with vast availability of skilled manpower and best managerial practices. Indian companies have offered their services in various fields – railways, telecommunication, water and power sector, paper and pulp, textile, cement, and small and medium enterprises sector. Several offers for various projects of signalling, electrification, developing master plan for transport for the country etc. have been submitted in the field of railways by RITES and IRCON. The two sides are in the process of establishing a Joint Railway Committee and we hope that it would enable greater focus in this area of cooperation. In the field of telecommunications, Indian companies like TCIL and ITI have participated for tenders in Iran after being short-listed. They have also secured purchase orders from Iranian companies of communications equipments and material. There is a need to move forward on these projects and encourage this trend. India can claim having best skills in the world in modernization and capacity enhancement of cement manufacturing plants and can help Iran in this field. There are some very successful partnerships already operating between the two countries. In all these fields, human resource development by training and skill enhancement form an important part of our bilateral cooperation and the two sides should take advantage of exchanging experience in their respective areas of strength.

The growth of trade and commercial links require facilitation of smooth movement of cargo, development of transit infrastructure, simplified and harmonized procedures along the transit route. Iran’s unique geographical position makes it a natural transit hub for South Asia, Afghanistan and Central Asia with multiple transit routes that bring down costs, provide multiple options to landlocked countries and encourage trade. The development of North South Corridor founded by India, Iran and Russia is proceeding along these lines and has demonstrated that when fully developed, it would cut transit time considerably. It is a great
example of regional cooperation which shows how such a vision can galvanize trade and economy of the whole region. India, Iran and Afghanistan are working together to develop the Chabahar-Milak-Zaranj-Delaram route to Afghanistan. India has committed USD 70 million for the construction of the Zaraj-Delaram road and we would start executing the project once we have examined the detailed project report already available with us. An Indian consortium has been engaged by Iran’s Ports and Shipping Organization for work on development of Chabahar port and railway link between Chabahar-Fahraj-Bam.

All these developments in different fields indicate that we are on the right track. Support from the two governments is already there and the business communities of the two countries should be encouraged to exploit available opportunities. Their interaction can be catalysed by high-visibility projects and events. We can now begin actively the utilisation of the US $ 200 million line of credit for infrastructure projects in Iran. I am happy to learn that an exclusive India fair was organised earlier this month in Tehran. There has been greater participation from both sides now in each other’s trade fairs. Speedy finalisation of the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement and the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement can contribute to enabling environment of trade and investment.

Excellency, let me touch upon the issue of energy sector cooperation which has seen rapid progress after the visit of President Khatami. It is an area of strategic potential. You have the upstream resources and we have the nearest downstream market of such size and diversity that the blending of the two is inevitable. The MoU on hydrocarbons sector cooperation has laid down the framework of development of our partnership in this field. There have been negotiations between the two sides on the sale purchase agreement for LNG. India has world-class engineering and refining expertise and we can help you upgrade your refineries and execute downstream projects. We were informed of your decision to clear Indian Oil’s proposal for building a marine oil tanking terminal at Qeshm. While an Indian consortium was awarded a contract for development of Farsi block last year, some other oil exploration blocks have been offered for Indian companies on competitive basis. We have directed our oil companies to study the details of south and north Azadegan and other oil fields and submit competitive offers. In the field of CNG, India can offer its expertise in promoting CNG use for vehicles. There are great prospects in training and exchange of expertise in
hydrocarbons sector. We have continued with the feasibility studies of various options of transfer of Iranian gas to India. We would like to get a sense of results of these feasibility studies. The India-Iran Joint Committee on transfer of gas comprehensively reviewed the progress of feasibility studies during its recent meeting in New Delhi. It plans to meet in Tehran soon to further discuss these issues.

Excellency, science and technology form an important field of our cooperation. Both of us have resources available for research and development with a large pool of scientists and researchers. The Joint Working Group on cooperation in Science and Technology held its first meeting in Tehran in October and has finalized a Programme of Cooperation that lists concrete proposals for cooperation in IT, Biotechnology and Technology Management. Apart from HRD, science and technology cooperation has its industrial applications too. Knowledge-enabled services and manufacturing, especially IT and Biotechnology, are the key today to economic dynamism and competitiveness. We are ready to share our experience in these areas with friendly countries such as Iran. I am happy to note that important progress has already been made. APTECH has entered into a joint venture with an Iranian company to provide quality IT education in Iran; another Indian company TRANSGEL has begun collaboration with an Iranian partner in the pharmaceuticals sector. I believe that substantive interaction is also planned between NASSCOM and Iranian IT companies early next year. Again we could provide visibility to this process through one-or two projects, such as the development of an IT Park in Iran.

In the field of agricultural cooperation, there is a great potential of mutually beneficial scientific exchanges. A Joint Working Group has been formed which held its first meeting in Tehran in May this year. The Indian side has recently finalized a Work Plan for the next two years and it has been submitted to the Iranian side for comments and suggestions. We are happy that a large number of Iranian agricultural scientists pursue higher research in India’s various agricultural universities. We would be happy to accommodate greater numbers of your experts for research in India. I would like to draw your attention to ban in Iran on import of wheat from India due to apprehension of Karnal bunt infestation. In fact, Karnal bunt is found in a limited geographical region in India. We would welcome an Iranian expert team to visit India where we can demonstrate the availability of disease-free wheat in large parts of India. There are other varied spheres of potential cooperation in agriculture. We have prepared
for the visit of your Agriculture Minister to India this month and we hope to introduce him to Indian capabilities.

Excellency, the private sector in India has come a long way since we began economic reforms more than a decade ago. Indian companies can hold their own against the best in the world in several areas like IT, pharmaceuticals, textiles, steel and automobiles. Foreign exchange is no longer a problem and the Government is encouraging investment abroad. Therefore we have to look at commercial cooperation in a new manner. We must encourage joint ventures that exploit on the one hand Iran’s abundant energy resources, its skilled population and its strategic location at the heart of important markets, and India’s large market and emerging capabilities on the other. In fact Indian and Iranian companies can come together to exploit opportunities available in Central Asia, Afghanistan and Iraq. At the same time we must provide an enabling framework for trade to grow. There is a regional and global context to trade liberalization. Private businessmen need to be kept constantly on their toes and need to be encouraged to look at areas of opportunity.

I look forward to hearing from you on these and other issues during the course of our discussions.

I would conclude by reiterating that India views its relationship with Iran from a long-term perspective of stability and growth in India’s extended neighbourhood. The Indian leadership is determined to expand areas of our cooperation and dialogue. We firmly believe that strengthened economic linkages between our two countries would provide the necessary ballast to our efforts to forge strategic links. Such links are also to the long-term benefit of our two peoples whose socio-economic development is the primary goal of the two governments.
235. Joint press release issued at the conclusion of the 13th India-Iran Joint Commission meeting.


1. H.E. Mr. Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India visited Iran from 13th to 14 December 2003 to take part in the 13th Joint Commission between Iran and India at the invitation of H.E. Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

2. During this visit Mr. Yashwant Sinha held meetings with H.E. Mr. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran; H.E. Ayatollah Shahroudi, Chief of Judiciary; H.E. Mr. Hashemi Rafsanjani, Head of the Expediency Council; and H.E. Mr. Hassan Rouhani, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council. Mr. Yashwant Sinha also held two rounds of talks with H.E. Dr. Kamal Kharrazi in Tehran. The Indian Foreign Minister delivered a speech at the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Mines at a meeting of the Joint Business Council.

3. Both sides laid emphasis on strengthening relations in the political, economic, trade, technical, communication and cultural fields and expressed satisfaction at the trend of expanding relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and India especially during recent years. They called for expediting the implementation of documents signed during the visits of H.E. Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India, to Tehran and of H.E. Mr. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the Memorandum of Understanding on Road Map to Strategic Cooperation.

4. Both sides agreed that stability, security and regional advancement could only be achieved through good relations and cooperation between all states. It was agreed to further promote mutual cooperation in order to preserve regional peace and security, eradicate terrorism and hinder the illegal movement of narcotics and drugs.

5. Both sides emphasized that a united and strong Afghanistan will contribute to peace and stability in region. In order to achieve this, it was necessary that all countries signatory to the Kabul Declaration should continue to support an independent and stable Afghanistan. Both sides, likewise, called upon the international community to
fulfill its obligations and commitments for the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. This is important also for combating terrorism and the increase in drug trafficking. Both side agreed that the Islamic Republic of Iran, India and Afghanistan shall continue their cooperation in order to promote peace, stability and economic development in the region.

6. Both sides expressed their support for a democratic Iraq, at peace with its neighbours and representative of its people, which can develop socially and economically. They called upon the United Nations and the international community to contribute to this process.

7. The two sides reiterated their principled support for the Palestinian cause and for the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people.

8. Both sides emphasized that developing countries have the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Indian side appreciated the voluntary suspension by the Islamic Republic of Iran of its enrichment and reprocessing programmes and welcomed its decision to sign the Additional Protocol.

9. In view of the vast complementary potentials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and India in the field of energy, the two sides agreed to continue and increase their cooperation in the field of export of gas to India and to actively promote investments in the oil and gas sector.

10. Both sides emphasized the need for active utilization of the potential of transit routes via the Islamic Republic of Iran linking the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean to Central Asia, Afghanistan and Russia. They expressed satisfaction at the implementation till date of commitments related to the North South Corridor by the Islamic Republic of Iran, India and Russia. It was agreed that the two countries would make all efforts to make this route more economically viable.

11. Both sides likewise emphasized exploring and laying the ground for more opportunities for cooperation in mutually agreed fields of defence, namely training, information and delegation exchanges.

12. The two sides welcomed the holding of the Exclusive Indian Industrial and Trade Exhibition in Tehran in Tehran over December 3-6, 2003 and the meeting of the Joint Business Council held concurrently
with the 13th Joint Commission. They called for further expansion in cooperation activities of the private sectors.

13. The Indian side expressed its appreciation to the Iranian hosts for the arrangements made for the meetings and thanked them for the hospitality extended to the Indian delegation.

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236. Speech of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the 7th India-Iran Joint Business Council Meeting.


Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to be amidst you in Tehran today addressing this dynamic forum of businesspersons of India and Iran which has been contributing a great deal to the strengthening of India-Iran relations. The India-Iran Joint Business Council is holding its seventh meeting today. It has met at regular intervals and has proved its worth by taking advantage of the support being extended by the two governments to promote trade and economic relations as the major component of India-Iran bilateral ties.

India-Iran relations are marked by uninterrupted civilizational exchanges spanning centuries. This has profoundly influenced history and culture of the two countries. The two countries today perceive their relations to be of strategic dimensions driven by commonalities of culture, history and geography, coincidence of views on a range of regional and international issues and shared commitment to global peace and stability. Regular high level exchanges between the two countries, the visits of Prime Minister Vajpayee to Iran and that of President Khatami to India have consolidated our relations.

During the visit of President Khatami, The New Delhi Declaration was signed at the Summit level which puts forth the vision of strategic partnership between India and Iran for a more stable, secure and prosperous region and for enhanced regional and global cooperation. It was also recognized by the two sides that their growing strategic convergence needs to be underpinned with a strong economic
relationship. It is the task of the business communities of the two countries to harness each other’s strength for mutual benefit and promote bilateral trade and investment. The governments from the two sides are taking steps to ensure the enabling environment and appropriate juridical framework for our business interaction.

We held the 13th session of the India-Iran Joint Commission Meeting yesterday and reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral economic relations as well as some other areas. I also met the Iranian leadership. Right through our discussions, the two sides reiterated emphasis on the importance of taking our economic and commercial cooperation forward, harnessing its immense potential for the development of opportunities and prosperity for our people.

I must say that I see a lot of activism today in India-Iran business relations; much more than ever before. The commitment of the two governments to bolster trade and economic relations is there but it is the private sector of the two countries, the actual market forces which are realizing this task. There has been an upsurge in the bilateral trade reaching around USD 2.8 billion in the Financial Year 2002-03. Though import of Iranian crude oil worth USD 1.4 billion retains its pre-eminent position in bilateral trade volume, Indian exports registered a substantial increase reaching, according to Indian figures, USD 655 million of non-petroleum products. As regards petroleum products exported to Iran by India, Iranian sources put the figure at USD 550 million. Given the increasing diversification of our bilateral trade basket, this shows a healthy trend and maturing of our trade and commerce.

In the era of globalisation and increasing regional networking of trade and economy, economic relations must become the prime mover of any country’s foreign policy concerns. India seeks to build vibrant economic relations with countries in its extended neighbourhood and important regional blocks in Europe, East Asia, Americas and Africa. India has started reaping the mutual gains of such relationships and has become more and more confident in seeking solid economic content in its relationship everywhere. The Indian example in about last ten years or so has demonstrated how developing countries can make their presence felt in the globalized economy participating as equal partners and at the same time seeking an equitable order in the world economy dominated by rich and developed players.

Since India launched its economic reforms in early 1990s, it has
recorded an average annual growth rate of over 6%. It is now the world's fourth largest economy on purchasing power parity. Our external reserves are about USD 90 billion and are increasing by a billion dollars every two weeks. Our foreign trade is growing at double digit rates. We are rapidly reducing our external debts. There is a strong business confidence in recent months. Our reserves of food stock stands at over 30 million tonnes. Starting from scratch a few years ago, Indian software exports have reached USD 10 billion per annum. Our determined thrust for infrastructure modernization emphasises on building of roads, ports, increase in power generation etc. There is a tremendous opportunity for foreign investors in these opportunities in India.

The Indian economy comprises a strong and growing middle class of 300 million people with rapidly increasing purchasing power. The phase of liberalization in India has entered its second decade. This is the phase of consolidation backed by strong domestic consensus.

Buoyed by these factors, a resurgent India seeks fruitful economic engagement everywhere. India embarked on a Look East policy in mid 1990s starting with greater engagement with ASEAN countries. Today, India’s Look East policy has entered its Phase-II characterized by an expanded definition of ‘East’ extending from Australia to China and East Asia with ASEAN as its core. We have worked out many arrangements of Free Trade Areas and establishing of institutional economic linkages between the countries of the region and India. India has become a member of ASEAN Regional Forum and a summit partner with ASEAN. Already this region accounts for 45% of our external trade. That is a remarkable achievement in a short time and shows that with economic logic and sound fundamentals of economy, nations can embark on mutually beneficial economic cooperation across large geographical regions. In fact, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has been associated with India-ASEAN Business Summit right from its inception and we can all benefit from their experience and wisdom at this Joint Business Council meeting also.

The European Union is India’s largest trading partner and very important investor of capital. We have now been holding regular India-EU Summits and the fourth Summit was held last month in New Delhi. Bilateral trade has almost touched 27 billion Euros. The EU accounts for 26% of our exports and 25% of our imports. We are also addressing problems with EU in the form of non-tariff barriers against Indian products. We have fought some unjust anti-dumping measures successfully under
WTO provisions. This exemplifies how we are ready to form an equitable partnership with one of the most developed trading blocks of the world confidently.

Our relations with China are following a positive course and there is a steady effort to overcome past differences. India and China are amongst the fastest growing economies of the world, the two largest developing countries. Both have realized the advantages of forging close economic ties. India-China bilateral trade is expected to touch almost USD 7 billion this year.

Compare the march of regional trading blocks everywhere, in South Asia, SAARC has so far failed to catalyse significant economic exchanges among its seven constituents. I have repeatedly favoured a movement for South Asian Union. I believe that South Asia, with one currency, one tariff regime and single movement of goods, services and people is well within the realm of possibility and reap the tremendous economic benefits of trade with the unified region.

All the examples given just now have enlightening lessons for potential of India-Iran relationship. In line with our strong emphasis on economic relations, I sincerely hope that we have all the wherewithal and political will for a qualitative transformation of India-Iran relationship. We are on a road to strategic partnership but our existing bilateral trade of USD 2-3 billion is much below its potential. It is encouraging that it is picking up and businesspersons from the two sides are cooperating in a range of fields realizing each other’s areas of economic strength.

A wide information gap still exists between us regarding capabilities of the other side. Iranian business and industry must look to its east, to India in areas where Iran has traditionally depended on the west for technology, equipment, machinery and industrial projects. Iranian manufacturing sector should take note of the progress made by Indian industry in the manufacturing sector. Indian machinery, equipment and industrial products today match the best in the world and are cost competitive. Vast potential exists for industry-level cooperation in pharmaceuticals, textile machinery, automobile components, agricultural equipment, power plants and equipment, telecommunications and railway equipment. A joint effort by industry and government is needed in raising awareness about each other. Frequent exchange of business delegations and participation in each other’s trade fairs should be promoted. I am happy to note that Confederation of Indian Industry organized a solo
India exhibition in Tehran earlier this month which evoked great interest. I also learn from Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) that Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines has proposed to organize a similar exclusive Iran exhibition in India. These exchanges are welcome.

Another prospective field of our cooperation is information technology and yet it also points to an awareness gap. Out of our USD 10 billion of software exports and a range of IT products, the share of Iran is negligible at present. Both India and Iran are rapidly becoming knowledge-based societies bringing modernization in a range of services. This environment should become ripe for greater IT cooperation. The two sides have constituted a Joint Working Group which has discussed some of requirements of Iran like establishment of an IT Park, creation of a National Software Design Centre, training, drafting IT curriculum etc. The Indian side has introduced its some of the best commercial companies in this field to the Iranian side. Software companies like EIL, TCS, APTECH and others have become active in Iran. I believe that substantive interaction is also planned between NASSCOM and Iranian IT companies early next year. There is a need for a perspective plan for cooperation in this sector. We expect the Iranian side to clearly indicate their requirements and expectations from the Indian IT sector.

In the services sector, consultancy and executing projects, Indian companies have been doing very well with vast availability of skilled manpower and best managerial practices. Indian companies have offered their services in various fields – railways, telecommunication, water and power sector, paper and pulp, textile, cement, and small and medium enterprises sector. The key to mutual benefit and success in these fields is to form one-to-one partnership between consultants and the local companies active in these fields. Projects around the world are tendered on competitive basis and the partnership of a local company which executes the project with knowledge of local conditions and availability of equipments and resources and that of a consultant which works as adviser with technical expertise is best suited to bid for such opportunities. I hope that during one-to-one meetings being organized under the framework of this JBC meeting today, both sides would be able to find matching partners in their fields of interest. Such partnerships can undertake projects in third countries also, especially, Central Asia, Afghanistan and war ravaged Iraq where reconstruction is needed badly. I would make a special mention of Small and Medium Enterprises sector in which India has a vast experience of ancillarization and HRD facilities. We would invite
Iranian companies to especially take note of practices being followed by large Indian companies in ancillarization.

Let me touch upon infrastructure projects and joint ventures. Some biggest opportunities lie between India and Iran in the development of transit infrastructure. India and Iran have very wisely embarked upon a policy of promoting transit along the route from Persian Gulf towards north to Central Asia, Russia and northern Europe. India, Iran and Russia have established the North South Corridor which when fully operational would transform the face of our region. Harmonization of procedures, customs matters etc. are being discussed within the Expert Groups and the Coordination Council formed by the three governments. There is an immense need for development of road and rail links, shipping, increase in the capacity of ports, requirement of containers etc. Similarly, India, Iran and Afghanistan have come together to develop the Chabahar-Milak-Zaranj-Dealram route to Afghanistan. India has committed USD 70 million for the construction of Zaranj-Delaram road. An Indian consortium has already been engaged by Iranian Ports and Shipping Company to undertake development work at the Chabhar port and that of Chabahar-Fahraj-Bam railway link.

I also draw your attention to the USD 200 million Line of Credit being extended by India primarily for the purpose of financing capital goods and related services from India to Iran which allows a repayment period of up to 8 years. The Line of Credit has become effective since September and you are welcome to contact Exim Bank for utilization of credit. I understand that under the Exim Bank’s earlier short term credit refinancing agreement of USD 20 million with five Iranian banks, half of the amount has been disbursed for utilization of chemicals, pharmaceuticals, steel and other sectors. During the last Joint Commission Meeting at New Delhi in May 2002, Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) of India and Export Guarantee Fund of Iran had entered into an MoU under which ECGC has placed Iran under open cover category. ECGC cover is available under short term for political risks for all transactions under Iran irrespective of limit on buyer or bank. ECGC continues to offer cover for all exporters whoever exports to Iran and you are welcome to utilize this facility.

For facilitating trade exchanges and business transactions, there is a need to establish banking facilities on reciprocal basis. Domestic business laws etc. need to be reviewed by both sides wherever required to remove bottlenecks. The two governments are making concerted efforts
to finalise Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement and Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. With such regimes, we would be able to provide concrete legal framework to boost investors’ confidence.

I have chosen to remark on the hydrocarbons sector cooperation in the very end. Much has been achieved in this sector since the push provided to cooperation in this sector since the visit of President Khatami to India. We have complementarity of interests in the energy sector and it has been chosen to be developed as a strategic area of our future relationship. India and Iran have agreed on a variety of measures including import by India of LNG from Iran on long term basis; participation of Indian companies in oil fields on competitive basis; investment by Indian companies in upstream and downstream of gas. Negotiations between Indian and Iranian companies on all these aspects are proceeding satisfactorily. India has world-class engineering and refining expertise and it can help Iran upgrade its existing refineries. There could be profitable joint ventures established in these fields. In the field of transfer of Iranian gas to India, the Joint Committee between the two sides has been studying all aspects of the issue. Feasibility studies of route options are going on. Sincere efforts to develop normal approach to trade and economic relationship by all the countries of the region can tremendously boost energy sector and all other areas of cooperation across our region.

Friends, I would like to end here by expressing my confidence in a bright future of India-Iran relations and our enduring economic partnership. I believe India and Iran can become engines of economic growth for the entire region. I wish all the best to the Joint Business Council in its work.

Thank you.
Iraq

237. Response of Official Spokesperson to questions from journalists on Iraq at his press briefing.

New Delhi, February 3 and 6, 2003.

February 3

**Question:** You said that Iraq situation was discussed¹. What is our latest assessment on Iraq?

**Answer:** It was not an exchange on specific details. It was on overall assessment of the situation. And our position remains the same as we have stated earlier.

**Question:** What is India’s position on Iraq?

**Answer:** India has taken a considered and principled decision on Iraq that has taken into consideration all the elements. You know the elements. The position is well known to you. It is available on our website. If you like, I can reiterate it.

**Question:** There have been some reports that India is maintaining silence on Iraq. Do you think that this is a tactic, which will benefit India in the long run?

**Answer:** I have given you the fact that we have a position, which we have conveyed to the world. If we have conveyed a position, then we have conveyed a position.

**Question:** There is a news report that India is maintaining silence on the issue.

**Answer:** I am not going to comment on the newspaper reports. But I must say that non-comment on a newspaper report does not mean that we do not have a position. I have given you the position.

**Question:** Can you give us that position?

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¹ The reference was to the discussions that the EAM had with the visiting Uzbekistani Foreign Minister that morning. The Spokesperson had mentioned that the two Ministers (Indian and Uzbeck) discussed the situation in Iraq.
**Answer:** I can. If you give me a minute.

The elements of our policy on Iraq are well known. We recognize the validity of the unanimous decision of the United Nations Security Council in its Resolution 1441 under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. We note that Iraq has accepted the terms of the Resolution and that the UN inspectors have commenced their work. Iraq has to faithfully comply with the provisions of this Resolution.

We have consistently stated that if Iraq complies fully with the provisions of the Security Council Resolution, sanctions against that country should be lifted.

If Iraq does not comply with UNSCR 1441, the Security Council should decide on the action to be taken. We sincerely hope, in the interests of all humanity, that this matter can be resolved peacefully through the United Nations.

Trust that answers your questions.

**On February 6, in response to questions on India’s reaction to U.S Secretary of State’s presentation to UNSC providing the evidence of WMD in Iraq, the Official Spokesman said:**

1) Iraq has to faithfully comply with provisions of UNSC resolutions. Iraq should also respond to the facts and evidence, which have been presented to the UNSC by the U.S Secretary of State.

2) The work of the inspectors is continuing in Iraq and a further report by UNMOVIC and IAEA to the Security Council is scheduled for 14.02.2003. We are sure that the inspectors will take note of and comment on the evidence which has been presented by the U.S Secretary of State.

3) The Security Council should decide on what further action needs to be taken.

4) All concerned should fully cooperate in finding a peaceful resolution to the issue.
238. Statement by Ambassador V. K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on the Situation between Iraq and Kuwait in the Security Council.


Please see Document No. 449

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Please see Document No. 451

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240. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in both Houses of Parliament on the situation relating to Iraq.

New Delhi, March 12, 2003.

The situation relating to Iraq has been rapidly evolving over the past few weeks. India has consistently stood for a peaceful resolution of the Iraq issue. The peace and prosperity of the Gulf is of vital interest to India given our long standing political, cultural and economic ties with the countries of the region. There are over 3.5 million Indians working in the Gulf, whose welfare is of great concern to us. Their remittances are an important source of foreign exchange for the country. Over 60 percent of India’s crude oil imports are sourced from the region. The Gulf countries have also emerged as important destinations for our exports.

India recognizes the validity of the unanimous decision of the UN Security Council in its Resolution 1441, which provides for the disarmament of Iraq and also reaffirms the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, Kuwait and the neighbouring States. Resolution 1441 provides a stringent regime of inspections designed to meet the international community’s desire that Weapons of Mass Destruction are eliminated from Iraq. We believe that Iraq must cooperate actively with the inspection process and comply fully with all relevant Security Council Resolutions. If the pace of this cooperation had been quicker, it may have enabled UNMOVIC and IAEA to certify to the UN Security Council that Iraq was in full compliance of Resolution 1441.

The work of the inspectors is continuing in Iraq. The Security Council should decide on what further action needs to be taken. The international community must take a very careful look both at the objective of achieving Iraq’s full compliance with UN resolutions and at the means to be adopted to reach this goal. This can best be achieved by a collective decision through the United Nations. If permitting more time and formulation of clearer criteria can facilitate a decision within the UN framework, we believe this option should be given a chance. We hope that the members of the Security Council will harmonise their positions to ensure that its final decision enhances the legitimacy and credibility of the United Nations. If unilateralism prevails, the U.N. would be deeply scarred, with disastrous consequences for the world order. The Government of India would strongly urge that no military action be taken, which does not have the collective concurrence of the international community.

India has voiced its concern on various occasions about the difficult
humanitarian situation in Iraq. The Iraqi people have suffered severe shortages and hardships for over a decade. We have consistently stated that if Iraq complies fully with the provisions of relevant Security Council resolutions, then sanctions against that country should be lifted.

While we sincerely hope, in the interest of all humanity, that the matter can be resolved peacefully through the United Nations, my Government has drawn up contingency plans to deal with any eventuality. There are less than 50 Indian nationals in Iraq at present and they have all been advised to leave the country in the coming days. It is unlikely that there would be any large-scale dislocation of the Indian communities in the neighbouring countries on a possible outbreak of hostilities. Nevertheless the Ministry of Civil Aviation has drawn up plans to evacuate Indians, if necessary. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has taken steps to shore up our inventories of crude oil. While no major dislocation in crude oil imports is envisaged, India has adequate foreign exchange reserves to meet a higher crude oil import bill if prices continue to rise in the short run.\footnote{Earlier on March 11 the Official Spokesperson Navtej Sarna was asked some questions on Iraq at his daily press briefing and they were:}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Question: Any further development on the Iraq situation?
  \begin{itemize}
    \item Answer: I understand that the decision has been taken that the Indians would be moving out. The External Affairs Minister himself yesterday has spoken to the press. I don’t have any more details to add to that.
  \end{itemize}
  \item Question: Are we thinking in terms of air lifting them from Iraq? Are the Indians leaving?
  \begin{itemize}
    \item Answer: All eventualities will be prepared for. But as you know that there are only about 40-50 Indians in Iraq and appropriate plans for their movement would be made by the Embassy there and by the other agencies which would be involved in this.
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Again on March 12 the Official Spokesperson Navtej Sarna took some more questions on Iraq at his press briefing and they were:
  \item Question: Is it true as reported in the Times of India true that the US had offered “a piece of their Iraq pie” if India holds its counsel?
  \begin{itemize}
    \item Answer: Let me deny that any such conversation (that US has offered…..) has taken place.
  \end{itemize}
  \item Question: Are you denying ….. (inaudible) that US has expressed the hope that India will play an important role in post (war) reconstruction of Iraq and …..?
  \begin{itemize}
    \item Answer: That is a hope expressed by the Ambassador. I am not denying his hope. I am denying the statement that….. raised by PTI … that …
  \end{itemize}
  \item Question: Which portion?
  \begin{itemize}
    \item Answer: That US has offered India …..
  \end{itemize}
  \item Question: The headline?
  \begin{itemize}
    \item Answer: Yes, that US has offered India a piece of the Iraq pie if India holds its counsel, “I am denying that any such conversation has taken place”.
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}
241. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson about the situation in Iraq.

New Delhi, March 17, 2003.

A number of you have been calling me up on various aspects of the evolving international situation related to Iraq. I would like to inform you about the formation of a crisis management group under the chairmanship of the Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs Mr. R.M. Abhyankar. This group had its first meeting today in which it sought directions and guidance of the External Affairs Minister Mr. Yashwant Sinha. Besides MEA officials there were also representatives from the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Ministry of Defence and it is also planned to invite the representatives of the Ministry of Petroleum as well as the Ministry of Labour. This group will be looking at all aspects of the situation as it evolves, taking note of all the updates and taking action as may be required. In this context the group discussed the situation regarding the Indian Embassy in Baghdad. Our Ambassador accompanied by the skeletal group which was with him have moved to Amman. But the Embassy in Baghdad remains open. Local staff is taking care of the premises. The lines are functional and the Ambassador and his colleagues from Amman will be in constant communication with the Embassy to take care of any queries that may be received or to give direction that may be required. They are a short distance away always ready to go back if the situation so demands. A control room has been set up in the Ministry of External Affairs. This should be functional very shortly. Telephone numbers and the email ids of the control room will be available so that if there are queries about safety of Indian nationals in case the situation arises then these can be answered. As you know the Embassy has been advising the few people who remained in Baghdad - there were 50 odd people to begin with a couple of months back -we have been advising the Indian community to leave as and when it becomes necessary and this has resulted in thinning out of the Indian community there. There are however some people there who are staying on of their own volition. We have for instance 3 nuns in Baghdad belonging to Missionaries of Charity group who have decided to stay on. There are 8 charity workers in Karbala who are staying on as well as 4 students in Najaf. There are also 14 businessmen who deal regularly with Iraq as part of contracts under the oil for food programme and they keep travelling in and out. They are continuing to stay there or move around. I also understand that there were two correspondents staying there. So these people have decided to stay on for their own reasons. This is the position today.
Question: How many local staff are remaining in our Embassy in Baghdad?

Answer: I am not sure of the numbers. But a handful of local staff are there.

Question: Including Saleh Ramadan?

Answer: Yes he is very much there.

Question: President Bush had given a 24 hours ultimatum to UN to decide on Iraq. India has been saying that action should be taken through the UN. Don’t you think that such ultimatum …..

Answer: We are not responding to any statement here. But You are absolutely right, our position has been that the supremacy of the multilateral process must be maintained.

Question: You said that crisis management committee has representatives from Petroleum Ministry. Was the issue of oil crisis in case of war discussed in today’s meeting?

Answer: No. The representative from the Ministry of Petroleum will be with us from next meeting onwards.

Question: Is this group going to have meetings regularly?

Answer: It will meet as and when required. By its very nature, such a group may be required to meet more than once a day depending on how the situation evolves.

Question: Any contingency plan for the Indian nationals in Kuwait?

Answer: I think the expectation is that there is no need for panic among the Indian community in different parts of the region. But yes this crisis management group which includes people from Civil Aviation and Labour, etc will be in constant touch with our embassies and the group will react appropriately to whatever need arises. The Government of India is committed to take care of the welfare of its citizens all over the world including in that region.

Question: Have we decided to give logistical support to the US?

Answer: Let me not get into speculative issues.
242. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs regarding the Cabinet discussions on the current situation in Iraq.

New Delhi, March 18, 2003.

1. The Cabinet was briefed by the Minister of External Affairs about the current situation in relation to Iraq.

2. As the latest Iraqi crisis has unfolded, India has taken the consistent position that Iraq must fully comply with UN Security Council Resolutions for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction from its territory. Our counsel has been against war and in favour of peace. We have emphasized that all decisions on Iraq must be taken under the authority of the United Nations. We have stated that any move for change in regime in Iraq should come from within and not be imposed from outside. We have also been drawing attention to the precarious humanitarian situation of the Iraqi people which war would only aggravate.

3. We are deeply disappointed by the inability of the UN Security Council to act collectively, specially the failure of the Permanent Members to harmonise their positions on Iraq.¹

4. As long as the peaceful disarmament of Iraq has the slightest chance, we would continue to urge caution, self-restraint and high sense of responsibility on the part of concerned parties.

1. India was referring to failure of the emergence of consensus at the UN Security Council with France threatening to veto any resolution contemplating any action in Iraq by US. “We have had to conclude that Council consensus will not be possible,” the British Ambassador, Jeremy Greenstock, said. “We regret that in the face of an explicit threat to veto, the vote counting became a secondary consideration,” the American Ambassador John Negroponte, remarked. At the U.S. State Department, the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, maintained that a judgment had been made that “no further purpose would be served” by continuing with the tabled resolution.

Meanwhile reports suggested that President George W. Bush contemplated an address to the nation in which he would give the Iraqi leader Sadam Hussein a small time frame for himself and his immediate family members to leave the country to avoid war.

The U.N. Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, has announced that all the weapons inspectors will be pulled out of Iraq and that the Security Council has been so informed. Mr. Annan, in remarks after the Council meeting, said U.N. efforts in Iraq such as running the Oil-for-Food programmes would also be suspended in the wake of withdrawal of personnel.
Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the work of the Iraq Crisis Management Committee set up in the Ministry of External Affairs.

New Delhi, March 20, 2003.

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

I wanted to give you an update on the work of the crisis management committee set up in the Ministry of External Affairs under the chairmanship of Secretary (MEA) Shri R.M. Abhyankar with representatives from Labour, Civil Aviation, Defence and Petroleum Ministry. The Committee met this afternoon and reviewed the situation after the commencement of military action and also what has happened in the last couple of days. The control room in South Block is fully functional. All the details of the control room like the telephone numbers, email, etc are on our website and it has been in contact with our embassies in the region. It has also been answering queries received from Indian citizens in India and from the region. The feedback from all our embassies and ambassadors as of today is that there is no cause for panic. They do not really see an eventuality of major dislocation of the Indian community and they are prepared for any eventuality in case a need were to arise. In this context I should clarify there was some confusion this morning and I got some phone calls about the Air India flights which were coming in. These flights were laid down by Air India as a response to increased demands. Number of people wanted to come back. Some schools in Kuwait were closed and people wanted to come back – some companies were sending their workers back. But I must clarify and reiterate that the air space is open, the airports are functional. Air India, Indian Airlines as well as foreign airlines are running and seats are available. Therefore these flights are not evacuation. These are special flights to meet the increased commercial demand and that is how these people have come back. There was also some news report on the delay in baggage, etc. The reason for that I understand is due to the congestion, the conveyor belt in Kuwait airport was not working and because of the congestion at the airport the Kuwaiti authorities wanted that the aircraft should not wait for the baggage. Therefore the baggage was delayed. Air India, I understand is making efforts to pelletise and to seal this baggage and send it back in the next couple of days and MEA has been touch with customs and the other agencies involved to ensure that once this baggage does come it does not lead to any undue delay in clearance. These are the details I thought I would share with you.
**Question:** These flights are from where?

**Answer:** I understand two flights were from Kuwait to Mumbai, one flight to Cochin and one flight to Calicut and if there is demand Air India is ready to send another flight. But I understand at the moment its not really on the cards.

**Question:** How many people are back so far?

**Answer:** As I understand from a report on the wires, its 768. Exact figures would be with Air India. But these are not evacuees.

**Question:** US has now suggested that war may go on longer than anticipated......

**Answer:** On the issue of the military action we have already made our statement. The CMG was looking at operational details and on the news that were coming in from our missions.

**Question:** Will India call for an end to the military action?

**Answer:** I will refer you to the statement. It definitely does address all these issues.

**Question:** It cuts short of calling .......

**Answer:** I am not answering question on the statement as I didn’t do at 3’o clock.

**Question:** Any telephonic conversation between New Delhi and Washington?

**Answer:** Not to my knowledge

**Question:** Will India consult with Russia and China on Iraq?

**Answer:** We would definitely be in touch with all our interlocutors as this is an important international development. But we will have to see how the specifics work.

Thank You

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244. Statement by Official spokesperson on the commencement of Military action in Iraq.

New Delhi, March 20, 2003

It is with the deepest anguish that we have seen reports of the commencement of military action in Iraq.

India recognizes the full force and validity of the objective of the international community to disarm Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, which is set out in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1441, under chapter VII of the U.N. Charter. Recent weeks have seen serious divergence of opinion among members of the U.N. Security Council on action in respect of Iraq's compliance with Resolution 1441. It is a matter of grave concern that continuing differences within the Security Council prevented a harmonization of the positions of its members, resulting in seriously impairing the authority of the U.N. system. The military action begun today thus lacks justification. It also appears from the various pronouncements of Dr. Hans Blix and Dr. Al Baradei that military action was avoidable.

We also have to pay special attention to the humanitarian situation in Iraq. We sincerely hope that the Iraqi people will not be subject to further hardships, sufferings, loss of lives and damage to property from an extended military operation. The international community must already begin large-scale effort to alleviate the human suffering. India will be ready to play its part in such an effort.
245. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting of the Iraq Crisis Management Committee.

New Delhi, March 21, 2003.

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

Let me begin by briefing you on the updates that we have out of this afternoon meeting with the Iraq – CMC. There was some news stories this morning once again regarding what exactly is the position in Kuwait Airport and Air India flights. This has been clarified by Air India but let me reiterate that Kuwait Airport is open and all the regular Air India and Indian Airlines flights are in operation. There was a rescheduling of one Air India flight this morning. But the rescheduling also included an upgradation. Normally Air India was flying an airbus, they changed it to 747 which have a capacity of 400 passengers and this is now on its way. Let me again clarify that this is not an evacuation. This is a normal flight which Air India is flying and I also understand from them that there is no backlog of passengers at Kuwait Airport. There is an Indian Airlines flight scheduled for late night or early morning with a 145 seat capacity which is only booked up to 118 seats. Once again there is no cause for panic. The Kuwait Airport airspace is open and normal air operations by commercial airlines are carrying on.

Let me also brief you on the visit of Dr. Ali Akbar Vilayati, former Foreign Minister of Iran and presently the Special Advisor on International Affairs to the Supreme Leader Mr. Khameinei. He is here as a Special Envoy of President Khatami of Iran and he has called on the External Affairs Minister. He has also called on the Prime Minister for whom he was carrying a letter from President Khatami. There was an exchange of views on the evolving situation in Iraq in these meetings.

Question: What was the content of the letter?

Answer: I don’t have details. This is a communication between the two leaders which we are not privy to.

Question: Any decision taken in today’s CMC?

Answer: There were no other decisions today. It was a review of the feedback from the missions. As I stated there was no cause for panic, there was a review of airline operations and the somewhat contradictory media reports that we have seen this morning.
Question: What was the report from our mission in Baghdad?

Answer: Let me tell you that we spoke to our Ambassador who is now in Amman. He was in touch with our mission in Baghdad and said that the premises are secure and safe.

Question: The US has asked to shut down its Embassies in many countries.......

Answer: I have heard of this report but I have not seen anything which I can give it to you as a official reaction or confirmation.

Question: Dr. Ali Vilayati has been Islamabad yesterday and he is in Delhi today. Was this part of Iranian diplomacy over Iraq?

Answer: That I think you should ask them. But as far as we are concerned, yes the Iraq situation was discussed.

Question: Are we advising Indians in Kuwait to come back?

Answer: I think I have been spending the last three briefings contradicting exactly what you are saying. There is no cause for panic, there is no evacuation. People who are coming back are coming back on their own volition as commercial passengers.

Question: How many Indians are there in Kuwait?

Answer: There are 350,000 Indians in Kuwait and the 3.5 million in the Gulf region.

Question: How many people have come back?

Answer: I think you should better check with Air India because these are actually commercial flights. But Air India has told me that 1235 persons have come on their special flights.

Question: How many people you think have come back due to their own volition (and) due to Iraq war?

Answer: These are people who are coming back on their own. This is not evacuation. It is not possible to ascertain nor is it our job to ascertain exactly why each person is travelling.

* * * * *

Question: Any more calls from any world leader on Iraq?
Answer: There was a call last evening on which we briefed you on. After that I have not heard of any calls.

Question: Is the visit of the Iranian envoy specifically on Iraq?

Answer: He came here as a Special Envoy of President Khatami bearing a letter and that was the reason of the visit and the Iraq situation was discussed. I am not aware if other issues were discussed.

Question: Was it a pre-scheduled visit?

Answer: I am not aware of when it was actually planned. But by their very nature, visits by the special envoys are undertaken on special occasions.

Thank You

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New York, March 26, 2003

Please see Document No. 452

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247. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to SAB TV.

New Delhi, April 3, 2003.

[Coordinator : Shri Karan Thapar]

1. [Experts : 1.Prof. Kanti Bajpai, School of International Relations, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; Headmaster Designate, Doon School.

Shri C. Raja Mohan, Strategic Affairs Editor, The Hindu.]

Shri Karan Thapar: Hello and welcome to Court Martial where each week a single leading personality is questioned by two of the country’s top experts. Today in the chair is the External Affairs Minister of India Yashwant Sinha, and to ask him questions we have Professor of International Relations at Jawaharlal Nehru University and the Head Master Designate of the Doon School, Kanti Bajpai; and the Strategic Affairs Editor of The Hindu, C. Raja Mohan.

Minister, so far the Indian Government has refused to condemn the US-led invasion of Iraq. Now, 15 days after the war started, with the death toll crossing six hundred and almost five thousand injured, will you change your mind?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Change the mind about what?

Shri Karan Thapar: And condemn the US-invasion of Iraq?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I think the whole issue is sought to be defined by just one word, which is unfortunate. We have been opposed to this war; we have been opposed to this war from before the war started; we have said so after the war has started. We have expressed our anguish at the casualties, especially the civilian casualties. I do not know why everyone is just hitched on to this one word. I cannot understand this!

Shri Karan Thapar: Perhaps because by refusing to use it you are suggesting that you are not as forthrightly opposed to what the Americans are doing, as your countrymen would like you to be.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I think we also understand our countrymen as well as others do. I would like to tell you that we have the mood of the people very much in our mind in projecting the language, in which we are
projecting our views. You will also agree with me that the Government of the day at least should have the freedom to use the language that they want. If that language also is dictated to the Government, I think it will be very difficult to run any foreign office, country.

Prof. Kanti Bajpai: Are you saying, Minister, in effect, that there is a split amongst Indians; as well that what has been called perhaps the Indian middle path in this matter of neither criticizing the Americans overly nor of supporting the Americans reflects something of a division in this country?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I do not think so. Where did all this begin? It began when we had, during the inter-Session, an all-party meeting. When you hold an all-party meeting you would do it in order to understand what the other political parties have to say on a very important issue, and you explain your point of view. Some of the political parties represented in that meeting did suggest that a statement could be issued or a resolution could be adopted using the word ‘condemn’. We told them that that meeting had been called to understand each other’s point of view and not necessarily to pass a resolution or issue a statement.

Ever since then, the entire policy approach on this issue has got, as I said a little while ago, hitched on to this one word. Just as one issue cannot define a concept or a whole relationship, similarly one word cannot define the whole policy. I do not think the polity is divided; I do not think the Government or the people are divided. I think what has happened is this overemphasis on the use of this one word. You can express the same thing in a different language. There is a language of diplomacy that everyone understands. The language of diplomacy, I am sorry to say, is not always the language which is used in popular parlance.

Shri Karan Thapar: What you are saying is, ‘Let’s be diplomatic. Let’s not give offence’.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: You can state your point of view in a language which is direct, which is forthright and still polite. Your language need not be harsh, condemnatory, or meant to create, what shall I say, a difficult situation.

Shri C. Raja Mohan: Mr. Minister, the point about using the right language, keeping our interests in mind, the Governments look for flexibility, is well taken. Constructing a safe position, which did not seem to condemn the US, and at the same time not really aligning with Mr. Saddam Hussein, was clearly designed to take into account different outcomes. But, do you
not think that the policy, while minimizing risks, has also minimized the rewards, and that in the end it might look a fairly timid policy in terms of not really being bold enough?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** We are not looking for any rewards in this particular case. There was an impression created that we are following all this policy because we wanted a pie of the post-conflict Iraq cake. That is not our policy. Our policy is to look at the situation as it evolves, and respond to the situation as it is evolving in a language which will enable us to play a role, if such a role came our way, without necessarily creating a situation where you will have to opt out of it. I suppose you understand what I mean. I am not merely referring to reconstruction. After this conflict is over there will be peace and we will have to negotiate, the international community will have to negotiate, for peace. The peace negotiations are going to be much more difficult than the war has been. Therefore, if we want to play a role, we must be in a position to play that role.

**Shri C. Raja Mohan:** Just one follow-up question. It is not just the reconstruction and what we get after the war. The fact is, here is a historic conflict unfolding right next door to us. Has India missed the opportunity to emerge that, in our neighbourhood if a conflict takes place, India inevitably must have a defining role in that war?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Let me again clarify that we are not looking at opportunities in the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. That is not guiding our policy. When I was referring to peace, I was referring to what kind of dispensation will take over Iraq after the conflict is over; what is going to happen to the people of Iraq; how are they going to participate. These are all difficult issues which will have to be negotiated. The international community will have to play a role and we would like to play our role in that.

In response to this question that you have asked, of course yes. But you should look at it in terms of responsibility of nations. Who has the primary responsibility? Which body has the primary responsibility? It is the Security Council of the UN. The Permanent-5 of the Security Council have a greater responsibility. The Non-Permanent-10 also have a responsibility because they are the current members of the Security Council. Which agency in the world today, which body in the world today, can call upon the US or anyone else to cease fire, to stop the war? It is only the Security Council of the UN. Nobody else can do it. So, where is any statement going to lead you? If you look at the response of most countries in the world to the
situation which has arisen, including the members of the Security Council, you will find that we are not out of sync. We are in touch, we are playing our role in whatever manner one can play a role in the given situation.

Shri Karan Thapar: Can I ask you to be clear about one thing? You mentioned a moment ago that only the UN could call for a ceasefire. But the UN pointedly has not. I would like your comment on the failure of the United Nations Security Council to call for a ceasefire. Secondly, connected with that, I would like your comment on the statements made (1) by the German Foreign Minister that he hoped that the regime would collapse, (2) and by the Russian President that he was hoping for an American victory. Are you also hoping for the regime to collapse and for the Americans to win?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I will not comment on what the German Foreign Minister and the Russian President have said. But we have said that we want the war to be brought to an end as quickly as possible. We are not using the words ‘brought to a conclusion as quickly as possible’. We want the hostilities to end. We want the suffering of the people of Iraq to come to an end. I will also like to make another point

Shri Karan Thapar: Is that a call for a ceasefire, an immediate ceasefire, or not?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: That is a call for ceasefire.

Shri Karan Thapar: Immediately?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Immediately means what? This is where you are forcing a situation. Suppose we call for an immediate ceasefire? What will be the impact of this?

Shri Karan Thapar: I asked you for a clear-cut answer and you are giving me...

Shri Yashwant Sinha: You can give a clear-cut answer in a clear-cut situation. The clear-cut situation is not there today. But I would like to explain one more thing and that is that some of these countries which are saying that the international community should act in this way or in that way are in the Security Council, and they are in a position to take the initiative. The question that arises is, why they are not taking the initiative?

Prof. Kanti Bajpai: Are we working with any such countries?
Shri Yashwant Sinha: We are in touch with everyone. We are in touch with the Non-Aligned group of countries. We are in touch, in New York and through the Capitals, with almost all countries on this issue. But what I am saying is that we are asked to take a responsibility which rightfully belongs somewhere else. There those actions are not being taken.

Prof. Kanti Bajpai: In effect, does not all this amount to saying that really India has no role in Iraq? We have not asked Saddam to step down; we cannot criticize the Americans overly; we play no role really in the Security Council; we have difficulties of our own in the Non-Aligned Movement and we have not really worked with the Non-Aligned Movement to push a position either. Would it not have been bolder and wiser perhaps just to admit publicly that probably we do not have much of a role, we just hope for the best and we should keep our heads down, and that is about it?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I think the way you have painted the picture is something with which I will not be able to agree fully. We have played whatever role we can play in the given situation. There have been four open debates in the Security Council. On all the four occasions India had participated and stated its point of view. It is true that we are not in the Security Council. It is also true that we are not the Chairman of NAM today. So, I will go along with this that India has a role to play but I will not be able to go along with the view that we are the leaders of the world and that the world is just waiting for the words of wisdom to fall from our lips and hang on to them. That situation, which some people in this country believe exists, I do not think exists. So, you have to work together with groups of countries. We are in touch with them. Surely, if Malaysia is the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, it carries a greater responsibility than India which is a member of the bureau.

Shri Karan Thapar: Mr. Minister, we will take a break there but we will continue with this subject after the break and perhaps bring up certain issues which have arisen during the last 15 days of the war in Iraq.

Shri Karan Thapar: Mr. Sinha, the Americans began this war with a conscious and deliberate attempt to kill Saddam Hussein, what they called decapitation. In your eyes, is this justified and legitimate? Or is it tantamount to assassination, perhaps even terrorism?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Let us be very clear about one thing. The whole effort at the UN and the Security Council Resolution 1441 was meant to locate and deal with the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The
Americans were always clear in their mind that they wanted regime change. I think the confusion has arisen because of this duality of objectives. Clearly if they were aiming for regime change, regime change can be achieved through various means including the ones that you have described.

**Shri Karan Thapar:** So, is that “It is legitimate - yes” or “It is illegitimate - no”?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** If your objective is regime change, you will achieve regime change by decapitating or by getting the person thrown out.

**Shri C. Raja Mohan:** Mr. Minister, earlier you were saying that India is interested in doing something even with our limited resources. There has been some talk of appointing a special envoy to take into account the full range of issues involved. Secondly, could you summarise what would be your preferred outcome at the end of this war? What is your political preference in terms of the outcome in a post-war Iraq?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** In a post-war Iraq, clearly we would want the Iraqi people to take charge. We would want a regime which is based on the wishes of the Iraqi people. We would want the Iraqi people to play the most important role in the reconstruction of Iraq. We would like to help them both in a humanitarian way and in other efforts as we have done in the case of Afghanistan.

Shri C. Raja Mohan: Unity and territorial integrity. Is that of importance?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** That is very important. We have always said that Iraq’s territorial integrity, Iraq’s independence, Iraq’s secularism are all values which must be fully protected.

**Prof. Kanti Bajpai:** Mr. Blair has emphasized very recently that he wants to hand over power to Iraqis as quickly as possible. This does not seem to quite fit with the statements coming from the United States, some of which have indicated a potential pro-council which would be there for years. Are you saying then that India in effect, in this debate, would be on Blair’s side quite decisively?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** I am aware of these statements that you are referring to. Independent of them we have had this position right from the beginning that even in the case of the conflict taking place unfortunately, the primacy of the people of Iraq has to be ensured. We would not be in agreement with any other dispensation in Iraq which is based on any other consideration.
Shri C. Raja Mohan: Mr. Minister, there are a couple of problems with this. I think in theory it is nice to say that the Iraqi people should decide their own future and the role of the UN must be to facilitate it. But now the Americans say, ‘Look! We have shed our blood to make this transition here. Now those who opposed this war want to sit at the table and want a piece of the post-war settlement.’ I do not see how the Americans are going to agree even if Mr. Blair keeps saying that. Secondly, to get the people’s will, to create conditions for the expression of people’s will, there is going to be a transition period in which the Americans are saying they are going to run the place. How will you deal with this?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I referred to Afghanistan. In Afghanistan also we went in for an interim arrangement. There could be an interim arrangement until the people have been given an opportunity to express their preference through a democratic election. The Interim also need not be foreign, the Interim also could be Iraqi. That is what I had meant.

Prof. Kanti Bajpai: You have referred earlier to the reconstruction effort both in terms of material things and also in terms of other efforts. At some point this is likely to be the situation that faces us. One possibility is that the United States and Britain essentially will lead that effort and will invite countries such as India, potentially, to be a part of that. The other is, the international community will have an expectation that this would be essentially run by the UN. Under what circumstances will India be prepared to join a reconstructive effort – an American and British-led, or a UN-led?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: There have been some opinions which have been expressed already by some countries on this. I think we will agree with the view that any arrangement which grants any kind of legitimacy to the military conflict will be difficult to accept. Therefore, we will prefer the whole thing to be directed through the UN rather than by any group of countries.

Prof. Kanti Bajpai: Coming back to Raja Mohan’s question, surely there will be some period of time when it will be very difficult to have stability on the ground. Yet the Americans and the British might say, ‘Well, we need to do something immediately. Would you please help us and join us given India’s material and …

Shri Yashwant Sinha: In other words you are saying that the conflict will continue, in whatever form.

Prof. Kanti Bajpai: Yes. At a lower level.
Shri C. Raja Mohan: Like more of an internal conflict.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: As long as the place does not become safe you will not have this kind of reconstruction effort in any case. But what I am saying is that all these are questions for the future. At this point of time I would like to make it clear once again, lest this also be misunderstood, that we are not looking at the reconstruction part. We are looking at the humanitarian part most certainly. But we are looking at very early peace.

Shri C. Raja Mohan: Mr. Minister, I am a bit surprised as to why is India emphasizing so much about the UN role that everything should be done through the UN. I can understand the French saying it; I can understand the Chinese saying it because they sit in the decision-making structures of the UN. We do not have that position in the UN. Secondly, the UN record on core issues of peace and security is a dismal one. So, why is that we want to sort of hold the flag for the UN? Is it just the same diplomatic position or do we really believe in this?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: However imperfect UN may be and whatever its record, and especially its record with India is, one has to concede that it is the only multilateral organization in the world which is available to the international community with any degree of respectability. Therefore, unless we shift completely to unilateralism, we will have to work through the UN.

Shri Karan Thapar: Can I briefly, take you back to the actual war and the outcome that is emerging? Even though American forces are said today to be just 19 kilometres outside Baghdad, so far Saddam Hussein has not used any chemical or biological weapons. In fact, the Americans have not found any evidence of the possession of such weapons. How do you, as Foreign Minister of India, interpret those facts?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: The only way in which it can be interpreted is that so far they have not had any evidence of Iraq possessing weapons of mass destruction.

Shri Karan Thapar: Does this mean that in your eyes Iraq does not have them?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I cannot jump the gun. Everything has not got exposed yet. So, it will not be fair for me to answer that question when the war is far from over.
Shri Karan Thapar: Is the American claim that they were going in to remove weapons of mass destruction now looking somewhat less credible?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I mentioned to you that the Americans have never concealed the real intention of regime change. Did not I mention that a little while ago?

Prof. Kanti Bajpai: So, you do not think this is about weapons of mass destruction at all?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: It could be both. It could be weapons of mass destruction but regime change clearly was one of the objectives of this. Let me also at this point of time tell you we have talked a great deal about the other countries. Many of these countries which are opposed to the war are opposed to the war but they are not for President Saddam Hussein. This also is something that you must remember.

Shri C. Raja Mohan: Mr. Minister, since we are talking about the weapons of mass destruction, the other day Tony Blair said that the biggest threat to the international system in the coming decade is really the combination of weapons of mass destruction and rogue regimes and extremist non-State actors. That is borne out by our own experience with Pakistan. Why is it that in spite of our experience that a combination of nuclear weapons and terrorism is a threat, we are so hesitant to articulate this point and say, ‘Look, if this is the core threat to the world we should be in the forefront fighting the threat, not just about Pakistan, across the world?’

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I do not think we have been cagey about this, or reticent about this at all. We have always said, and we have agreed with others who have said, that weapons of mass destruction with rogue regimes, irresponsible regimes, is a threat to mankind. We have also said that we find these attributes in our immediate neighbourhood. We have said that. We have not been hesitant about it at all.

Shri Karan Thapar: It is the time for one more break at the end of it we are going to come back and switch the subject away from Iraq but much closer to home, the India Pakistan situation. That is the subject for the last part.

Shri Karan Thapar: Mr. Sinha, although the Britain and the US immediately corrected their initial response to the Nadimarg massacre, the fact is that they continue to stress the need for the resumption of political dialogue
between India and Pakistan which is a principle and in fact a policy they clearly do not follow themselves with regard to their own concerns vis-à-vis Iraq. So, are you really sure that the Americans and the British understand and appreciate the Indian viewpoint on terrorism?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** We have tried to explain it to them as clearly and as often as possible. But I would agree with you and I do not think that they understand it 100 per cent.

**Shri Karan Thapar:** How much short of 100 per cent is that understanding? Fifty per cent? Twenty-five per cent? Are you concerned?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** I think they understand most of it. The only point on which we may have different points of view is with regard to the so-called dialogue. We have said clearly to them that cross-border terrorism and dialogue cannot go on simultaneously and together. Therefore, cross-border terrorism will have to stop before a climate for dialogue is created.

**Prof. Kanti Bajpai:** Is not urging dialogue then, in the wake of the massacre of Pandits in Nadimarg, in fact unhelpful, almost provocative to India?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** It clearly was insensitive.

**Prof. Kanti Bajpai:** Given that, what kind of policies do we have towards Pakistan? Essentially if there is no dialogue until terrorism is over, in the intervening period would see a complete stasis with really nothing going on?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** I would say that this itself is a policy, and a very effective policy. You must remember that Prime Minister Vajpayee took the initiative to have a dialogue with Pakistan on two occasions. That is history now. When Pakistan responded after the Agra summit by stepping up the terrorism, we had to adopt this policy. It is not a lack of policies. It is our policy (1) that we will not have a dialogue with Pakistan as long as Pakistan indulges in cross-border terror; (2) that we will fight this, that we will do whatever is needed to be done, in order to ensure the safety and security of our people.

**Shri C. Raja Mohan:** Mr. Minister, while this policy sounds very tough, it seems actually you have lost control over the whole process in the sense that it is virtually left in the hands of terrorist groups and an incident engineered by them is going to produce the reactive policy that the moment that happens you will be under pressure to cross the Line of Control to
take some military action and then the whole things is going to unravel. So, by saying, ‘I won’t talk’, you actually have no control on how things will develop.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** The slight correction to the statement that you have just made is, that these are not disjointed terrorist groups which are operating without a plan or without a direction. They are all operating at the behest of powers that be across our borders. That is where the instructions are coming from. So, the message is not to an individual terrorist as much as to the powers that control those terrorists. That I think has to be there all the time. Secondly, we are tackling the terrorists both at the Line of Control and when they are inside the country. It is not that we do not have a policy there either. We have a defence policy, a security policy which is taking care of this problem. The fact remains that for every incident of terrorist violence which has taken place I would say that ten-twenty terrorist incidents have not taken place because of the alertness of the security agencies.

**Shri Karan Thapar:** You are talking about terrorists. George Fernandes, your colleague, the Defence Minister, said – it is in the papers - 24 or 36 hours ago that he has reports that up to two lakh jihadis are amassing on the Pakistani side of the Line of Control. Can you verify whether these reports are correct or not? If they are correct, how much of a threat do they pose to India?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** I would not be able to comment on the Raksha Mantri’s statement. I have not frankly seen a statement about two lakh terrorists being poised on the Line of Control. There might be two lakh terrorists more within Pakistan. But we are aware of terrorists who are waiting on the Line of Control, for them to be launched by the Pakistani Army into India. We are aware of it and we have taken our steps to counter it.

**Shri Karan Thapar:** What steps are these?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** That will not be disclosed.

**Prof. Kanti Bajpai:** Some people have said that the Indian Government’s policy towards Pakistan is kind of two-pedaled. Sometimes we talk to people within Kashmir or hold out the possibility of dialogue within Kashmir and try to solve the problem as it were internally. When that does not seem to succeed we open up a dialogue with Pakistan. If you go back to
1999, it seems to follow that kind of pattern. Mr. Advani at one point said we will have a dialogue with Kashmiris, anyone who gives up the gun. A ceasefire ensued but that did not work and we invited Musharraf, and so on. If we go back earlier to 1999, Mr. Vajpayee went to Lahore and when that did not seem to work then we opened up lines of communication. Is that a fair representation? Are we now in a phase of mostly focusing on what we can do within Kashmir and essentially sending a message to Pakistan that we will solve the problem internally if you are not more reasonable and do not wind up ...

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** I think the desire to solve the problem internally was always there. If there are some elements who need to be convinced or need to be persuaded, I think it is our responsibility as a democratic society to do that. We will continue to do that. It is not merely in Jammu and Kashmir elsewhere also, if people have taken arms and if they are prepared to talk, you talk to them. We have done it in the North-East, if you are aware, we are doing it elsewhere in the country. But in terms of the Shimla Accord which recognizes Jammu and Kashmir as an issue between Pakistan and India to be sorted out, I think we are a party, Pakistan is a party, to this issue. Therefore, in order to be able to find a permanent solution to this issue, we have to talk to Pakistan. That has always been our point of view.

**Shri C. Raja Mohan:** Mr. Minister, on this, in your recent speeches, I think two important points have stood up. One thing you are suggesting is that we really cannot do business with Pakistan as long as the military remains the dominant player in the society. Secondly, you are also for the first time raising questions about the Pakistani record in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. So, are these two new elements that you have introduced?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** I do not think I have introduced any new element. I might have emphasized these elements in some of my statements, I think correctly, that somehow the world has not looked at the record of Pakistan in Pak-occupied Kashmir. That is a very dismal record. I think the world ought to know about it. I think it is our responsibility also to make the world aware of this. The second is, I am not saying, ‘We will not do business as long as there is army in Pakistan.’ But the role of the army in Pakistan is a role which we have watched over a period of five decades. As long as Pakistani army continues to play that role, it will be very difficult for any dispensation in Pakistan to come to an understanding with India, and to that extent it will be difficult for India to reach an understanding with Pakistan. The army in Pakistan is not merely a professional army, it is
a huge, what shall I say, moneymaking machine. There are a whole lot of other things which Pakistani army is engaged in doing, which gives them the wherewithal to indulge in the kind of things they are indulging in today.

Shri Karan Thapar: While you are talking about the army in Pakistan, can I ask you as to how do you respond to a report in the Washington Times of the 31st of March wherein it was stated that Pakistan has been trading nuclear weapons technology for missiles from North Korea, and as recently as August, 2002, just nine months ago when Gen. Musharraf was very much in power, it received ready-to-use Nodong missiles flown in on an American C-130 Hercules aircraft?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I am not surprised at all. I think we have known all along that there has been some nexus between the Pakistani nuclear establishment and the North Korean missile establishments.

Shri Karan Thapar: But now in fact American equipment like C-130 is being used for this purpose. Have you raised this issue with the Americans, with their Ambassador in Delhi?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: We raise a lot of issues with Ambassadors in Delhi and that must be between their Governments and us.

Shri Karan Thapar: Do you know what the American response was? The Americans responded by slapping the sanctions on the Khan Laboratories, sanctions that do not affect them because that laboratory does not import anything from America. So, it is a meaningless thing that looks as if it is severe but it is not. How do you respond to that?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: We are aware of it.

Shri Karan Thapar: That is all you say?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Yes.

Prof. Kanti Bajpai: One other way of dealing with Pakistan is to open up the second track, people-to-people contacts, and so on. There is a general feeling that your Government has pretty decisively turned its back on this element. Yet, there is a view that this is perhaps our strongest card in the long run.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I do not think the time for that card has come yet. We cannot weaken in our resolve that we will not have anything to do with
Pakistan as long as the Pakistani establishment is promoting cross-border terror.

**Prof. Kanti Bajpai:** But this is punishing ordinary Pakistani people.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** It is not punishing ordinary Pakistani people. It is punishing Pakistan and it is not availing ourselves of an opportunity of track two.

**Shri C. Raja Mohan:** Mr. Minister, if Americans cannot deliver Musharraf on terrorism, and if the infiltration levels are going to rise in the next few weeks and months, are we headed for another war with Pakistan this summer?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** The only thing Mr. Raja Mohan, that I can tell you is that we will deal with the situation.

**Shri Karan Thapar:** But you are not saying no.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** I have said what I had to say.

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248. Statement of Ministry of External Affairs giving India’s response to U.N. Emergency Appeal on Iraq.

New Delhi, April 4, 2003.

Responding to the UN Emergency Appeal for immediate humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq, Government of India will make available US$20 million, in cash and kind, which would include 50,000 MT of wheat to the World Food Programme. The modalities are being worked out with the UN and its agencies.

1. Answering questions at a press briefing the same day as to how the assistance offered to Iraq was going to work, since there was some confusion about the whole question, the Spokesman Navtej Sarna said: “You are quite right. The processes need to be worked out. The wheat would go through the World Food Programme and the other modalities will be worked out by our mission in New York with the UN and its different agencies”.

There were some more question asked at the briefing and they were:

Question: To which one of the UN appeal is India responding to?

Answer: This is the UN’s appeal for immediate humanitarian assistance for the people of Iraq. Its in response to that. The overall figure of the appeal is 2.2 US$ billion. As you know we have been committed for humanitarian assistance, we have called for it in our earlier statements and this is a follow up to that.

Question: Earlier Iraq claimed that Indian ship with sugar was turned back Umm Qasar. Can you confirm this?

Answer: I have to tried to check up this through the commercial channels. I think FICCI and Indian Sugar Mills Associations have given clarifications which have appeared in the press. I have seen news reports from the exporters. From what I understand that was a ship which had already docked at the port before the break out of hostilities and had unloaded a part of the cargo and then the port authorities told them to leave. So that was the clarification which was given. But our announcement today is in response to the emergency appeal. This has got nothing to do with the Oil for Food programme.

Question: The 50000 MT of wheat will amount to how much?

Answer: I understand that the value of wheat is 8 million dollars.

Question: What would be the preferred method to reach this assistance to Iraq?

Answer: Well that’s where we have to work with the UN and its agencies. Whatever method work will work for everybody because there are several other countries that have responded to it. It is for the UN and its agencies to coordinate all the responses and work out the modalities.

Question: What will happen to the rest of 12 million dollars?

Answer: The rest of assistance will be in kind and cash. I don’t have the details right now.

Question: What would happen to all the existing contracts under the oil for food programme?
Answer: I think you should see the UN Security Council Resolution 1472, which has addressed this issue of the remaining contracts. There is a process going on which aims to reorder the priority of contracts already in the pipeline so as to bring forward the contracts which will provide humanitarian assistance under the existing oil for food programme.

On April 10, the Spokesperson Navtej Sarna was again asked about the developments in Iraq and he answered the various questions raised at his press briefing which were:

Question: What is GOI doing about the latest developments in Iraq?
Answer: We are watching the developments very closely as the rest of the world is. It is a very complex situation not only in military terms but also in the management of peace, maintenance of law and order and preserving the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Iraq and the humanitarian concerns for the people of Iraq. It is a situation, which has not yet decanted fully, not yet crystallised.

Question: What is GOI’s main concern about Iraq?
Answer: We have expressed our concerns for the immediate end to the war, for the early withdrawal of the forces, for the humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq, the question of maintaining unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. These have been our concerns all along and these are the concerns at the moment in an extremely fluid and evolving situation.

Question: France had opposed the war on Iraq earlier. But now President Chriac has welcomed the ouster of Saddam Hussein. What is India’s view?
Answer: I have just given you our reaction as it stands at the moment on a very quickly moving and evolving situation.

Question: India has announced its aid to Iraq. Have we thought about the modalities?
Answer: We are in touch with the UN and its various agencies through our mission in New York to work out the modalities.

Question: Have we been in contact yesterday and today with the UN and anybody in Baghdad?
Answer: Our mission in New York has been in constant touch with the UN. More than that I am not aware of any contact which has taken place with anybody in Iraq or in Baghdad.

Question: Any plan to close the Iraqi Embassy in Delhi?
Answer: There are standard international practices which prevail in these issues. So we will watch the situation and take our decisions and make our moves as and when demanded in whatever appropriate fashion it is demanded.

Question: What are these standard international practices?
Answer: These are standard international practices – once there is a new government, which is legitimately recognised government, it takes a view on its international representation and then other countries take steps. Its early days. We will have to see how these things go.

Question: As of now do we…. (inaudible)
Answer: As of now I have not made any announcements.
249. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with the New Delhi based daily the *Hindustan Times*.

**New Delhi, April 6, 2003.**

[India’s Foreign Minister was all business at his South Block office, clad in a safari suit, his table clear save a half-a-dozen colour-coded letters he read before answering questions. He was fluent and fluid, though his throat needed clearing before each Iraq-related answer. The mention of opposition to the NDA Government’s Iraq policy by an NDA ally riled him — he later asked that some acerbic remarks be stricken from the record. He also treated the Hindustan Times to an impassioned history lesson after the tape was switched off. Excerpts from an interview:]

**Do you think that recent polls (including HT’s) — showing that 87 per cent respondents opposed the US war on Iraq, and that they wanted the government to condemn it — reflect the opinion of the Indian people?**

I can’t comment on the polls, but the fact there was overwhelming opposition to the war is not surprising. The government never said it was in favour of the war. It has always said it was opposed. So the government here is not out of sync with public sentiment.

**A senior Cabinet minister was recently quoted saying India’s position was pragmatic, de-emphasising principles for the sake of national interest. Are you aware of these remarks?**

I don’t know who the senior Cabinet minister was. But I’m already on record that throughout independent India’s history, foreign policy has always been an amalgam of principles and pragmatism, of combining ideology with national interest. Therefore nobody should be surprised if they notice the same policy being followed at this point of time.

Let me be very upfront. I think the confusion about the government’s position is because in the all-party meeting held recently, some members of the opposition — but not all — wanted the government to actually use the words that they were using (‘condemn’). The language of diplomacy should be left to the government of the day. If the language is also dictated, then it becomes very difficult.

India stated its position very clearly before the war; India stated its position very clearly when the ultimatum was issued; and India stated its position very, very unambiguously after the war started.
Will the Government state clearly whether the action against the current regime in Iraq is illegal? And will any regime that replaces it be as illegal?

The second part of the question is hypothetical at this point of time. So I won’t be able to comment on that. As far as this action is concerned, I have said it does not have the sanction of the UN, and it is not in conformity with the UN charter.

What is the process of recognising an alternate regime?

The situation is still evolving, but we have well defined rules. The government is not recognised, the country is recognised. You must understand this difference. We recognise Iraq and the country, and unless something very untoward happens, we don’t de-recognise a regime. We did not, for instance, withdraw the recognition of Pakistan when General Musharraf took over, or when there were army takeovers earlier.

So you would not be de-recognising Saddam Hussein’s regime until what point?

This question is too far in the future. It can’t be determined at this point in time.

Is India prepared to do reconstruction business, not humanitarian, under a force of occupation led by the US?

I don’t think we should even talk of reconstruction at this stage. Because we are opposed to destruction and then reconstruction. And many of the questions with regard to reconstruction are far in the future.

Even members of the NDA, especially the Samata Party, are not supportive of your stand on the Iraq war. Some say that for the first time India is not supportive of a friendly country. Why?

Those who think this should look at our history. What happened during the Suez crisis, when England and France moved against Nasser’s Egypt — Nasser and Nehru were two of the pillars of the non-aligned movement. Look at when Soviet forces entered Hungary in 1956. Look at the Czechoslovakia in 1968. And Afghanistan in 1980, then what happened? (India said nothing on the aggressions against these countries).

Could have condemning the war really hurt national interests? Was it just a matter of words?
I wish to point out that our foreign policy is not restricted to Pakistan or Iraq. But today, everything has not come down to even Pakistan or Iraq, but the word ‘condemnation’. If tomorrow suppose we use that word, will everything become alright? Will the war in Iraq end if we condemn it? If tomorrow we want to play a role there, then will it help us?

US Secretary of State Colin Powell said he’d give his attention to the India-Pakistan dispute after the Iraq war. Is this not ominous for India?

You can’t infer from Colin Powell’s statement that they are necessarily going to sit at the negotiating table and dictate what India and Pakistan should do. Even today, the stated US position is the dispute is a bilateral issue and has to be sorted out by the two countries. To the best of my knowledge, there is no change in the US position.

Secondly, India will accept nothing else. So irrespective of what other people’s intentions may be, or what they might be stating, there is no reason for panic in this country. We are capable of holding our own, against anyone.

USA and UK, without UN support, attacked Iraq. Is not Pakistan, which has weapons of mass destruction, a lack of democracy, and shelters international terrorists, a fit case for such action?

It is a fit case. I won’t oppose it. But whether they will is up to them. We can’t go to someone and ask them to attack another country. We keep pointing out the activities in Pakistan, and in them, the role of the Pakistan army; the drug business centred in Pakistan; and third, how, in PoK, people are repressed and trampled upon.

Powell also said the US had to work very hard to avert nuclear war between India and Pakistan last year. Isn’t dialogue the correct way to avoid America working hard to avert nuclear war?

I don’t know what hard work America had to do, but I know that they told us they had put a lot of pressure on Musharraf, and that he would do everything to completely end forever terror from across the border. If this is the hard work, then they did it.

Secondly, India had time and again told all the entire world that dialogue and cross-border terrorism can’t co-exist. And to re-start the process of dialogue, cross-border terrorism has to end completely forever.

You also say cross-border terrorism is something India has to fight alone, then why go to the international community?
After 9/11, the whole world decided that fighting terrorism has to be an international effort, and to that end, the war began in Afghanistan against Al Qaeda and the Taliban. In that resolve the war against terrorism is now being fought in other countries. The international coalition is against terrorism; since India has been a victim of cross-border terrorism for long before that, then it follows that the international coalition has responsibilities. If they carry out those responsibilities, then we will be satisfied. If not, then we’ll have to fight it ourselves.

Is the government happy with the US action on the Kahuta Research Lab\(^1\)?

It’s not a question of our being happy or unhappy. They have taken a decision which perhaps they should have taken much earlier.

Will the Iraq war and the new world order have an impact on our elections?

Polls are too far away, and who knows what issues will come up by then. I myself have said that the world after the Iraq war will be different than the world before the Iraq war.

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1. Pakistan's nuclear research facility.
250. Resolution adopted by the Lok Sabha on Iraq.

New Delhi, April 8, 2003.

Mr. Speaker: I am putting before the House the following Resolution regarding Iraq which has been unanimously approved by all the political parties.

“Reflecting national sentiment, this House deplores the military action by the coalition forces led by the USA against a sovereign Iraq. This military action, with a view to changing the Government of Iraq, is unacceptable. The resultant suffering of the innocent people of Iraq, specially women and children is a matter of grave human dimension. This action is without the specific sanction of the UN Security Council and is not in conformity with the UN Charter. The House, therefore, expresses profound and deep sympathy for the people of Iraq.

This House expresses its satisfaction at the quick response of the Government of India to the UN appeal for immediate humanitarian relief to the suffering people of Iraq and for the decision of the Government of India to commit Rs. 100 crore cash and kind to the UN including 50,000 metric tonnes of wheat to the World Food Programme and trusts that, if required, additional assistance will also be provided.

This House calls for the immediate cessation of hostilities and quick withdrawal of coalition forces from Iraq.

This House also calls upon the UNO to protect the sovereignty of Iraq and ensure that the reconstruction of Iraq is done under UN auspices.”

The Resolution was adopted unanimously.
251. Statement by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha in Rajya Sabha on the situation in Iraq prior to the adoption of the unanimous resolution on Iraq.

New Delhi, April 9, 2004.

Sir, I rise in support of the Resolution, which you have very kindly moved from the Chair. I do not rise; let me clarify, to participate in a debate because I do not think we have debated here an issue in the spirit of Treasury Benches and Opposition. It is a Resolution, which has the support of all Members of this House, cutting across political party lines. I am sure at the end of it, it will be passed by acclaim.

Sir, as I mentioned in the beginning, I rise in support of the Resolution and to say a few words which need some clarification. But before I proceed to do that, Sir, I would like to deeply mourn on my behalf, on behalf of the Government of India and I am sure the whole House will join me – the precious lives of media people which have been lost in this war in Iraq. Lots of lives have been lost. I believe at which have been lost in this war in Iraq. Lots of lives have been lost. I believe at least a dozen media people have lots their lives in this war. Three journalists died only yesterday when the hotel in which they were staying was attacked. I would also like to compliment the Doordarshan Team of Satish Jacob and Syed Nizami who despite all these dangers in Baghdad have stayed on to report on what is happening in Baghdad. I am sure the whole House will join me in complimenting them for this courageous act. Sir, the world has been deeply divided on the issue of Iraq. I am not sharing a secret with this House when I say that the United Nations is divided, the Security Council of the United Nations is divided, the Non-aligned Movement is divided, the OIC is divided, the Arab League is divided, the NATO is divided, the European Union is divided. Think of any major group of nations and we find that there is a deep fissure, a deep division which has prevented them from speaking in one voice on this issue. I am, therefore, particularly, particularly happy that the Iraq issue has not succeeded in dividing us. The whole House, the entire Parliament of India stands as one person behind the Resolution, Sir, that you have moved. Once again, we have demonstrated that when it comes to national interests, when it comes to a matter of such importance as the present Iraq crisis, then we have the genius to demonstrate our wisdom and also our unity. And this has been proved repeatedly in our history.
Sir, therefore, I will not like on this occasion to reply to some of the issues which have been raised vis-à-vis the attitude of the Government of or any other political party. I think ultimately we need to compliment you. Sir, and we need to compliment ourselves on the fact that it has been possible for us to agree on a Resolution, which is cast in a language, which meets the requirement of all shades of thinking.

Sir, there have been one or two issues which have been raised and specially by my distinguished colleagues Shri Natwar Singhji, Ramachandraiahji and others. I think it will create misunderstandings if I do not respond to those issues. And that is why I am responding to them so that those misunderstandings, if any, are removed. Sir, the first is the question, the right of pre-emptive strike and did I say that India had the right of pre-emptive strike against Pakistan, and therefore, was I supporting the American led pre-emptive strike against Iraq even by implication? I would like to clarify, Sir, that in this age and time wherever you go, there is media waiting for you. They ask you questions. You cannot always say that will not answer any questions. Questions are asked which are of immediate topical interest and are of importance.

It was in that spirit, a question was put to me that if weapons of mass destruction, terrorism or export of terrorism and absence of democracy are reasons for a country to go into another country, military, then don’t you think that Pakistan is a fitter case and don’t you think that India has got all the arguments in its arguments in its favour to do what the US had done or the US led coalition has done? And, I am quite sure, nobody in this House will disagree with me when I say that I genuinely believe that if the possession of weapons of mass destruction, absence of democracy and export of terrorism are the criteria, then no country deserves more than Pakistan to be tackled in this way compared to any other country in the world. We have said, and, I am not trying to conceal anything, that we, in the Government of India, have not come across any evidence to link either weapons of mass destruction or export of terrorism. And, therefore, we have differed with many other powers on this particular issue. But, we know from experience, we know on the basis of evidence, that Pakistan does not fall in the same category as Iraq, it is in much worse category. And, therefore, it was in that context, that this reply was given by me that if these are the criteria then Pakistan is a fitter case.

I am sure the media will correct it. That is why I am stating this on the floor of this House. But, I would like to say, Sir, ever since the issue of a pre-emptive strike against Iraq has been talked about, there have been
commentators, there have been writers, not only in India but elsewhere in the world, who said that if there was a pre-emptive attack case, India has a better case against Pakistan than any other country. This is an opinion which has been expressed, repeatedly, in articles that have been written even in the foreign media.

Now, having clarified that point, Sir, I would like to say, again, an issue was raised that the US Secretary of State has said that after they had done with Iraq, they are going to turn their attention to the Indian Sub-continent. When that question was put to me, I responded by saying that the only issue, according to us, which we are discussing with the international community, is the issue of cross-border terrorism and I would like everyone in this House, in this country, to be clear about it that there is an international coalition after 9/11. There is a Security Council Resolution No.1373 against international terrorism. And, under this Resolution and within the international coalition, there is supposed to be an ongoing global war against terrorism. We are partners in that. Therefore, when we find that another country is in clear violation of Resolution No. 1373 that ‘another country’ is indulging in cross-border terrorism with impunity, then this is an issue, under that international coalition, under the UN arrangement, within the ambit of Security Council Resolution. We have not hesitated in discussing that with other countries.

We have discussed with them the issue of cross-order terrorism. But, let me be very clear that what is not discussed and what will not be discussed is the issue between India and Pakistan, whether it be Jammu and Kashmir or any other issue. Under the Shimla Accord, that is to be resolved bilaterally between India and Pakistan and that is how, if at all, it will be resolved. There is no third party role in these bilateral issues between Pakistan and India and we will not permit any third party to play any role. Having said that, I would also like to say that we should not, perhaps, be too sensitive about these things. We are a nation of over a billion people. We are a nation with a great deal of confidence. We should be able to reflect the confidence. If somebody says, “We will try to take care of India and Pakistan”, let them say what they want to say. Let us also not be too sensitive about who is responding to a statement that I have made. Let me tell you that when a joint statement was made by the US Secretary of State and the British Foreign Secretary, it was our Official Spokesperson who responded to that. This is something – Mr. Natwar Singh will bear me out – which happens repeatedly across the world.

The Foreign Offices respond to statements, which are made by Ministers, Heads of Governments, Heads of States. So if somebody has
responded from the US State Department, however mistakenly, to a statement, which I have made or which purported to have been made by me, I don’t think we should take it as a snub or a great humiliation of India or anything of that kind. We have also responded in a similar manner. Therefore, Sir, I would say that we should show the confidence that we have, as a nation. Yesterday I had said in the other House that we have economic strength, we have military strength but more than any other strength we have the strength of Indian democracy. This is the strength that will stand us in good stead. Therefore, nobody can cast an evil eye on India. If anyone tries and does anything that we are not willing to accept, India has the capacity to resist with the same degree of unity, which this House is demonstrating today, passing and adopting this Resolution. The same unity will come to our help in tackling that problem. I will also hasten to add that our Foreign Policy has never been Pak-centric. It is not Pak-centric even today. We tend to talk about Pakistan all the time.

When I held my first Press Conference as Minister of External Affairs of the Government of India, I had to plead with the media three-fourths of the way that let’s talk about other issues because Pakistan is not the only issue in Indian Foreign Policy. Today we are discussing Iraq. Pakistan came in tangentially. We will have an opportunity to discuss issues of Foreign Policy, I am sure, sometime within this session, or, at some other session. Then, I will get an opportunity to clarify so many other points that have been raised in the course of the discussion today. But let me, once again, compliment the entire House, the membership of this House, and you, Sir, in particular, for the wisdom that has been demonstrated by us, for the unity that has been demonstrated by us. And, I am quite sure that the world will take notice of the Resolution, which is going to be adopted unanimously by this House. And I would like to assure the House, through you, Sir, on behalf of the Government of India that it is an exceptional situation that the Parliament of India is adopting a Resolution. We have adopted Resolutions, in the past, Sir, in equally exceptional situation. We are bound by those Resolutions. And, we will continue to work energetically; we will continue to work sincerely in the Government of India to ensure that the sentiment of this Resolution is translated at the international level.

Thank you.

✦✦✦✦✦
252. Statement by the External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha in Lok Sabha on the situation in Iraq.

New Delhi, April 10, 2003.

(Prior to adoption of a unanimous Resolution on the situation in Iraq.)

Sir, I am not aware under what circumstances this decision was arrived at because I was not present. But as my colleague, Shri Digvijay Singh pointed out right in the beginning, the tradition of this House has been that if a Resolution comes from the Chair, it is adopted without discussion. Now that we have started the discussion, I think it will be only fair that everyone is allowed to speak and then at the end of it, we can pass this Resolution.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not rise to give a reply because this was not a debate. Sir, on this Resolution there has been complete unanimity in this House and we are happy that it has been possible for us to agree on a unanimous Resolution reflection not only the feelings within this House, but also the feelings and the sentiments in the country as a whole. We are particularly happy that we have expressed ourselves in a language which is consistent with the dignity of this House, a language which is consistent with the importance of the occasion.

Sir, Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra was saying that Indian Foreign Policy has always been based on national consensus. I think we have demonstrated once again that when it comes to important issues of foreign policy, this nation has the capacity and the genius to stand together and forget our immediate differences. I have no doubt in my mind that this unanimous Resolution of Indian Parliament, of this House, will send the message to all concerned throughout the world which it is meant to. More than anything else, I see in this Resolution, a resolution in favour of peace and humanity. We have expressed our concern at the suffering of the people of Iraq. We have seen that suffering because the war has been brought to every home through the reporting of television channels.

I would also like to say that what we are doing today, what this House is doing today, is consistent with policy that this country has followed all through its independent existence. India’s foreign policy has been based on principles. It has been based on pragmatism and above all, it has always promoted India’s national interest. Therefore, whatever differences
there might have been, however difficult the negotiations outside this House may have been with regard to the language in which we wanted to express ourselves, I owe it, on behalf of the Government, to record in this House our compliments of your genius, for your leadership, that it has been possible through you good offices for all of us to agree on a language of dignity, on a language of restraint.

India has been using this language over a period of time. It is not something new. We have also been one of those rare voices in the world which has always said that the sanctions against Iraq should be lifted and the most important reason for that has been the suffering, once again, of the people of Iraq. For eleven-twelve years, Iraq has been subjected to these sanctions and we have always spoken in favour of lifting them. We hope that whatever may have happened, it will be the people of Iraq who will take control of their future once again and it will be the people of Iraq who will control their own destiny. This is not only our wish, it will be our effort to work in that direction.

Sir, I have no wish at all at this moment to join issue with anyone. As I said we have, in a rare show of unity and unanimity, decided to pass this Resolution. I will just like to refer to one point and I will be done. Some hon. Members have expressed an apprehension that some countries may be subjected to the same unilateralism, which we are witnessing today in Iraq and India has also been mentioned. Let me hasten to add that India, a country of a billion people, cannot be treated so lightly and let us have that confidence. Our confidence arises from the unity that we have demonstrated here today. Our confidence arises from the fact that we are a democracy and I cannot think of a single example where a large democracy and we are the largest democracy in the world – has been subdued by any power on earth. India cannot be subdued. Therefore, let us not entertain any apprehension about our capacity to be able to meet the challenge which might lie for us in future. I would like to say not only on behalf of the Government, I would like to say this on behalf of this whole House, on behalf of the whole nation that anyone who think that India can also be subdued by any other nation in the world is living in a dream world and that is not going to happen.

Our policy, as I said Mr. Speaker Sir, has been based on pragmatism. I will still like to hold that because you know that relationships between nations is not defined by single issues.

India has been and India has always had the friendliest of relations with the Arab world, with Iraq. We would like that friendship to continue.
We would like that friendship to flourish, India also has had a very friendly relationship with the US to develop. The United States is a democracy and there is a community of democracies in the world. There should be this feeling between democracies. I would like to assure you that in whatever we do in future, we will continue to keep our national interest uppermost in our mind. India will always be the voice of morality in this world. On that, there should be no doubt. Whatever and whatever role we are capable of playing, whatever leadership we are capable of providing, India will not flinch from providing that leadership, India will not flinch from playing that role.

Sir, with this, on behalf of the Government, I would, once again, like to compliment you, I would like to congratulate you and congratulate the entire Membership of this House for having come to this unanimous Resolution, which I am sure we will adopt without any dissenting or discordant voice.

Thank you.


We welcome the unanimous adoption of the resolution for several reasons. The long-suffering people of Iraq deserve all the help that they can get from the international community. Secondly, the adoption of the resolution would enable intensification of efforts in this direction. The adoption of the resolution shows that despite the differences on the issue of war, all the members of the UNSC including the permanent five have come together on the post war issues. The resolution reaffirms principles which are important for us: it reaffirms the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their political future and control their natural resources. Further, there is now to an extent an internationally accepted road map for rebuilding and reconstruction activities in Iraq. We also welcome the elements in the resolution which recognise that it is for the Iraqi people to determine their political future after an interim period and with the involvement of the UN Secretary General’s representative. Specifically I may add that from India’s point of view it should also enable us to deliver through the UN the humanitarian assistance in cash and kind amounting to US $ 20 million that we had pledged. We can also explore India’s participation in the rebuilding and reconstruction of Iraq.

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Spokesperson adding said “these are some of the points I thought I would share with you as to our reaction. Of course the Resolution is still being studied in all its aspects.”

Question: What’s India’s position as far as sending its troops to Iraq is concerned, I understand that the resolution appeals to countries to assist to rebuild and to contribute stability and security under the authority constituted, basically under the US and the UK?

Answer: I don’t have a specific response for you on that aspect, we are studying the UN Resolution.

Question: Which means we are considering to send troops?

Answer: No, which means what I said - we are studying the resolution.
**Question:** You also said that India is exploring the possibility of participating in rebuilding and reconstruction of Iraq. Does that also include sending of troops?

**Answer:** I don’t think rebuilding and reconstruction translates to anything other than rebuilding and reconstruction.

**Question:** Has there been any instance where India has sent troops other than under the blue helmet UN peacekeeping force?

**Answer:** I have to check our records for that.

**Question:** Was there any request from UK and US for deployment of Indian troops?

**Answer:** On this issue I have already given our response several days ago.

**Question:** There was resolution passed by Parliament call for early withdrawal of coalition forces. Would sending troops be in conformity to the resolution passed by the Parliament?

**Answer:** I think you are presuming several steps in that. I have already said that we are studying the resolution. But there is an aspect in what you say about withdrawal of troops, etc. This UN Resolution is not about the war, but about the post war situation. In a way it conveys the acceptance of the present realities in Iraq and is made up of elements by which the international community could help the people of Iraq.

**Question:** So you did not rule out the fact that India might send troops to Iraq?

**Answer:** I have answered your question at least three times. We are studying the resolution.

**Question:** Pakistan Foreign Secretary has said today that Pakistan is wiling to formalise nuclear test ban with India...

**Answer:** India has any way in place has a unilateral commitment not to test.

**Question:** On this composition of the authority there is a very limited role for the UN. So do we have any quarrel with that.... but are we happy with the composition of the authority?
In its meeting of May, 26th, the CCS considered matters relating to Iraq. India welcomes the fact that the UN Security Council has reached agreement on the way forward in Iraq, as expressed in the United Nations Security Council’s Resolution 1483. We note that in the Resolution, which is under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, the United Nations has appealed to all its member-States to assist the people of Iraq in their efforts to reform the institutions in their country and rebuild their country, and to contribute to the conditions of stability and security in Iraq. The CCS decided that (a) India’s Ambassador to Iraq will return to Baghdad, and (b) the Ministry of External Affairs will initiate consultations with the United Nations including the UNSG Special Advisor, the Authority in Iraq as recognized in UN Security Council Resolution 1483, and the concerned countries to obtain clarifications on the parameters and scope of the appeal mentioned above. MEA will report back to the CCS on these consultations. That is it on that.

**Answer:** I wouldn’t like to go into or try to give a reaction on each part of the resolution. As I said earlier the resolution which has just been adopted last night needs to be fully studied and all its implication, all aspects of it have to be studied, the impact on the ground realities, etc. But as a whole the unanimous adoption of the resolution has been welcomed for several reasons arising from the fact that it provides a way for the international community to help the people of Iraq.

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Media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security about the UN Resolution on Iraq.


“In its meeting of May, 26th, the CCS considered matters relating to Iraq. India welcomes the fact that the UN Security Council has reached agreement on the way forward in Iraq, as expressed in the United Nations Security Council’s Resolution 1483. We note that in the Resolution, which is under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, the United Nations has appealed to all its member-States to assist the people of Iraq in their efforts to reform the institutions in their country and rebuild their country, and to contribute to the conditions of stability and security in Iraq. The CCS decided that (a) India’s Ambassador to Iraq will return to Baghdad, and (b) the Ministry of External Affairs will initiate consultations with the United Nations including the UNSG Special Advisor, the Authority in Iraq as recognized in UN Security Council Resolution 1483, and the concerned countries to obtain clarifications on the parameters and scope of the appeal mentioned above. MEA will report back to the CCS on these consultations. That is it on that.”

Question: Would you please clarify the whole business regarding the CCS? You said that CCS has decided to seek clarifications on the parameters and scope of the appeal. What exactly do you mean by these parameters and scope?

Shri Kanwal Sibal: If you read the exact text of the Resolution and this operational part para 1 which speaks of this, it simply is an appeal to member-States to assist the people of Iraq in their efforts to reform the institutions and to rebuild their country and to contribute to conditions of stability and security in Iraq. The point is that we have to understand exactly the parameters under which, countries to whom this appeal has been made will be expected to contribute or assist in the reformation of institutions, in the rebuilding of the country, and conditions of stability and security. Now, how does one do it? After all it is clear that the situation on the ground is currently not fully stable. There are law and order problems. The political process has not yet acquired any clear definition. We are not yet clear as to when the interim government might be formed, what will be the process that will be followed in the formation of this Government. Although there is a reference, there is an article in the Resolution which
speaks about the special representative of the UN Secretary-General and his role, there would be need to understand precisely what that role would be with regard to the political process, the building of institutions and also conditions of security and stability. So, before, as I said, any country responds to the appeal, there would be certain issues that would need to be clarified. That is what the CCS decision says that MEA will initiate consultations with the UN, with the Authority, with concerned countries to obtain clarifications what you said other parameters and scope of the appeal.

**Question:** As and when this clarification comes, will the Government of India put it before all parties?

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** MEA will report back to the CCS on these consultations. This is what the decision is.

* * *

**Question:** I am just asking you regarding India sending its stabilizing force to Iraq.

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** I did not say anything of that kind.

**Question:** I think in principle India has accepted that.

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** No, you are saying that. Who said that?

**Question:** Anyway, you said that India will consult the authorities. Which authority do you mean?

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** We said, ‘the Authority in Iraq as recognized in UN Security Council Resolution 1483’. We are talking about ‘the Authority’ which figures in the UN Security Council’s Resolution – that authority.

**Question:** Do you think there is a shift in the Indian stand regarding sending of troops outside India?

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** No, no, no, we are not talking about that at all. We are not talking about that. The appeal is to assist the people of Iraq in their efforts to reform their institutions and to rebuild their country and to contribute to conditions of stability and security in Iraq. This is the language. This is not talking about the troops or anything of that kind. And it is not only talking about the security, it is also talking about reform of institutions, rebuilding the country, etc. Now, for us to be able to understand the scope
of this appeal and the parameters - to repeat once again – of this appeal, we need to consult and understand things better because of the very fluid situation and unstable situation on the ground and the respective roles of all concerned parties. It is a fact that the UN Security Council’s Resolution does speak about the role and responsibilities of the authority, it speaks about the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, it speaks about the setting up of the Development Assistance Fund and then who will control the Fund. There are so many, so many things that are talked about. But the exact modalities of all this, how would all these elements that are going to be present in the Iraq of tomorrow and what would be the basis of this interaction, we need to understand that. Once we have clarity, then we can take appropriate decisions about what part India can play. We have in any case, insofar as humanitarian relief and reconstruction is concerned, we have already announced decisions in that regard. But even with regard to operationalising of those decisions, it is not easy on the ground. It has not been, because we have not been able to so far either send wheat or send the other things on the medical side because of the difficulties on the ground. When our Ambassador goes there, and that is the reason we have mentioned that he will return to Baghdad, he will be able then to give us a feedback on what exactly is the situation on the ground. His input will be very useful in terms of clarifying our own thinking as well as our own perspective on the months to come in Iraq.

Question: We understand that informally the US has asked India to send its troops to Iraq as a part of the stabilizing force.

Shri Kanwal Sibal: I think the situation has gone far beyond that. Here the UN has appealed to all its member-States. So, that point is not terribly, terribly relevant.

Question: Has CCS asked India to report back on the modalities? Is that why India has postponed its decision to send troops?

Shri Kanwal Sibal: No, no. I think we are jumping the gun. It is a fact that the United States has approached many countries for contributing forces to maintain law and order in Iraq and some countries have responded, etc. But now the situation is very different. It is not a US appeal; it is an appeal by the UN Security Council’s Resolution 1483. So, the whole context and the parameters of the appeal have changed. Since we are members of the United Nations and since it is a Chapter 7 Resolution, we have to address this. How do we address this? In the first instance, by
understanding what is implied by this appeal and what are the conditions under which this appeal can be responded? We must understand that fully. So, we will have two sources – one is our Ambassador who will provide inputs and the other the Ministry of External Affairs will initiate consultations with the UN as well as the authority and the concerned countries to obtain clarifications.

**Question:** Mr. Sibal, the Resolution also speaks of deploying of the personnel also and makes it clear that it will be under the authority. In the past, as far as I know, the Indian troops have taken part in the peacekeeping operations under the command of the UN itself. So, if troops are to go, it looks as if they will be under the command of either the British or the United States, which would be the authority. It is clear from the Resolution that it would be under the charge of the authority.

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** You have used the word if. When that condition is met, we will see.

**Question:** Everyone knows that CCS met to discuss this issued of troop deployment.

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** No, no. The CCS met to look at the content of this Resolution and to have a position on this appeal. How do we have a position, unless we understand the nuances of everything and especially unless we have a better grip on what is happening on the ground? Very importantly, we have to have an idea about the political process which is going to be carried forward in Iraq because all these things are interlinked.

**Question:** Was there any discussion on the Parliament Resolution ... April 8 which calls for a speedy withdrawal of coalition troops and the fact that ... did not even in ... Iraq against ...

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** That is all very well, but now you have a UN Resolution which, without specifically addressing the military action that took place in Iraq, has come to terms with the presence of coalition forces. Their presence has been recognized by accepting them in the Resolution as the authority. So, now it is a different ballgame.

**Question:** I just have a follow-up Question on India’s role in Iraq. You keep saying that the UN Resolution has come to terms with the authority in Iraq. What is it then that is stopping India? You are saying that we are sending the Ambassador back and we have to check the situation on the ground, but you still have not explained what it is today. You seem to be quite happy with it.
Kanwal Sibal: What do you mean by quite happy? This is not a matter of emotion.

Question: I am not talking about emotion Mr. Sibal. What is it that is preventing India today from acceding to the UN request?

Shri Kanwal Sibal: We do not know what the parameters and the scope of this request are. There are things that we need to clarify to ourselves as to what is the situation on the ground, the law and order situation. What about, as I said, the political process? They are talking about an interim government, Iraqi government. What are the perspectives on that? There are so many fundamental Questions that one has to ask about what is going to happen on the ground in Iraq in terms of the politics of it, the economics of it, and the security aspect before not only India but other countries can assist the people of Iraq in their efforts to reform their institutions and rebuild their country and to contribute to conditions of stability and security.

Question: Have you had any consultation with other countries after the UN Resolution?

Shri Kanwal Sibal: No.

Question: I have two Questions. Firstly, do you think that in Evian they will pass any Resolution on Iraq? Secondly, has India to say anything on Israel’s acceptance on Palestinian State in principle.

Shri Kanwal Sibal: Are you talking in reference to Evian?

Question: Yes.

Shri Kanwal Sibal: Evian, I told you what the themes are.

Question: Is it about to discuss this Iraq only, as to who will get what, etc?

Shri Kanwal Sibal: No, Iraq is not mentioned at all. I just told you what the themes are.

* * *

Question: What is the timeframe for the MEA to get back to the CCS? Is it a week or a fortnight? Secondly, in seeking the clarifications from UN as well as other organizations, are you not precluding the option of sending troops to Iraq outside the banner of UN Plan?
Shri Kanwal Sibal: It has been said earlier also. What I say is that you are raising Questions which are terribly premature. What the MEA has been asked to do is to make an assessment exercise. After we make an assessment exercise, we will know how we should respond to this appeal.

Question: How long will it take for this exercise?

Shri Kanwal Sibal: I do not think one works that way. There is no ultimatum to us that we have to take a decision in one week or ten days. Where is the scope for saying that MEA will report back in a fixed period of time? No. I think since we all work hard, we will work hard and try and come back as quickly as possible.

Question: Before the UN Resolution, was India among the many countries which were was approached by the USA...

Shri Kanwal Sibal: I think these are not very pertinent Questions. You know that the United States had approached many countries. Now, I would understand the relevance of this Question if India was one country US had approached and, therefore, we were in some *sui generis* special position, it is not true. Now, we should address the issue of the UN Security Council Resolution because the appeal is now coming from the UN Security Council.

Question: One of the appeals made by the UN is requesting the personnel from the member-countries. It seems clear from the Resolution that these will be under the command and control of the authority. What precisely is the clarification that India is seeking in this regard? And, are we open to the idea of contributing personnel under the authority?

Shri Kanwal Sibal: There are certain things in the Resolution which are very clear. Therefore, we will also draw very clear conclusions. Since we have clarity of policy with regard to some of these issues, things are very clear. So, I think that is trying to trap me into saying something. I think let us not get into that.

Question: Is there a sort of minimum bottom line that India has set for itself on to what extent it will go in cooperating?

Shri Kanwal Sibal: Let me put it in perspective. India has had longstanding relations with Iraq. Before the 1991 Gulf War, 30 per cent of our oil supplies were coming from there. We had a very large population, very large expatriate community in Iraq, excellent economic relationship, etc., etc. Of course, if you look further backwards, there are longstanding historical,
civilizations, cultural, religious links with Iraq. So, all that is there. Then, we are present, in a very major away, in the whole of this area in terms of the number of expatriates, the amount of remittances that come back, energy supplies from this region. We have a very good network of political relationships with some of these countries. So, we have a longstanding interest and a long-term interest to be present in this area. So, we cannot walk away from Iraq. Now, the whole thing is, ‘How do we walk back in to Iraq so as to protect our future interests political, economic, security, energy and what ever?’ The situation in Iraq, especially after the second conflict, is very difficult. In the intervening years, of course, our relationship with Iraq virtually collapsed for obvious reasons. Then this military action has taken place and the consequences of the military action on the ground are there for all of you to see. Now the UN has come back into play and the process of the normalization of the situation in Iraq will, hopefully, begin. On the political side, the international community will hope to see the emergence of an interim government and eventually a representative government in Iraq which is internationally recognized. On the economic side, everybody will like to see the rebuilding of Iraq, its infrastructure and everything else so that the basic needs of the people are met. Insofar as security is concerned one hopes that the current report that one gets about instability, of turmoil, of street demonstrations, some actual firings on the ground that will be brought under control.

Now, when our Ambassador returns there, hopefully he will be able to monitor all this and keep track of all this and feed us information, vital information, about the process of normalization in Iraq. Once that process of normalization begins to take root and becomes effective, then it is not only India but I think so many other countries would find that they will be able to play their role in contributing precisely to what the UN Security Council Resolution 1483 says about reforming the institutions, rebuilding the country and contributing to conditions of stability and security. So, we have this long-term interest clearly.

**Question:** Are you saying that India will only go back to Iraq when it is completely safe?

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** I am not saying that. What I am saying is that the situation on the ground is a matter of concern. In conditions of instability I think those countries that may wish to respond to the appeal may actually find it difficult to do so. This is part of various elements in the situation, which have to be monitored and looked at.

**Question:** Will India no longer give Iraq things that it needs urgently?
Shri Kanwal Sibal: It is not as if there is no external presence in Iraq. There is. There are many countries that are there present on Iraqi soil at the moment and they are doing what they have to do. Hopefully, the authorities would be able to discharge this obligation as occupying powers in the various areas that this Resolution speaks about. With the UN endorsement of the current developments in Iraq, it opens the door for other countries to come in. Now, we have to examine the best possible conditions under which other countries can respond to the UN appeal. So, we are not foreclosing or prejudging anything.

Question: Coming back to Iraq, in business we have a term called first level advantage. Opportunity ...

Shri Kanwal Sibal: Yes, but one should not be an opportunist either. Without being an opportunist, one should definitely exploit opportunities

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255. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of a U. S. Team to discuss the follow up of the UNSC Resolution 1483.

New Delhi, June 16, 2003.

The UN Security Council Resolution 1483 of May 21 issued an ‘appeal to member States to assist the people of Iraq in their efforts to reform their institutions, rebuild their country and to contribute to conditions of stability and security in Iraq’. The U.S. has asked India to consider possible contribution.

A U.S. team led by the Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security Affairs Peter Rodman held discussions with the Indian delegation led by Joint Secretary (UNP) B.S. Prakash. Assistant Secretary Rodman also called on Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and National Security Adviser and Foreign Secretary.

The U.S. delegation gave a briefing on the current political, economic and security situation in Iraq and the role that India can play in contributing to security and stability in Iraq. We sought clarification on a number of issues, including the development of a responsible Iraqi Interim Administration, future political evolution in Iraq and the humanitarian relief and reconstruction activities. The nature of forces that would be required for stability operations, their role and mandate and the relationship with the U.N. were also discussed.

These discussions were part of the process of wide-ranging consultations that the Government proposes to hold to have a better appreciation of the situation and take appropriate decisions as necessary.
256. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs regarding Indian troops for Iraq.

New Delhi, July 14, 2003.

The Government of India has given careful thought to the question of sending Indian troops to Iraq.

Our longer term national interest, our concern for the people of Iraq, our long-standing ties with the Gulf region as a whole, as well as our growing dialogue and strengthened ties with the U.S. have been key elements in this consideration.

India remains ready to respond to the urgent needs of the Iraqi people for stability, security, political progress and economic reconstruction. Were there to be an explicit UN mandate for the purpose, the Government of India could consider the deployment of our troops in Iraq.

In the meanwhile, Government of India is ready to contribute to the restoration of infrastructure, medical, health, educational, communications and other civilian needs of the Iraqi people. As a concrete gesture of our support to the Iraqi people, we are already planning to set up, jointly with Jordan, a hospital in Najaf in Iraq.

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257. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the situation in Iraq.

New Delhi, July 18, 2003.

Question: Do you have any reaction on the news report\(^1\) today that US was let down by India’s decision of not sending troops to Iraq?

1. Separately in response to another query from the press regarding the report in the *Indian Express* that morning, the official spokesperson made the following comment:

   “The report that has appeared this morning in *Indian Express* suggesting that the United States has asked India to show “1998 (Pokhran) guts” is baseless. Furthermore, to suggest that Indian troop deployment in Iraq was linked by the U.S. to specific quid pro quos mentioned in the article, such as progress on trinity issues, reimbursement of cost of troop deployment or recovery of Indian investments in Iraq is equally baseless and false.”
**Answer:** I don’t know which particular report you are referring to but any such report if it has appeared is factually incorrect and several statements from the US side have made that quite clear. There has been an ongoing dialogue between India and US on this issue for a long time and from all their statements it is clear that they understand the difficulties involved. They would have of course, preferred a positive decision on this request, but as they have stated on several occasions, the State Department Spokesman has said yesterday that India remains an important strategic partner for the United States and the continuation of the transformation of Indo-US relations is something that is important to us and what we expect to see; the US Embassy spokesman in Delhi made a statement to the same effect and today I see on the wires that the US ambassador has made a statement saying that yes, there is disappointment but there is no aftermath. So I think the position is quite clear.

**Question:** Russia has demanded that there should be discussion on Iraq in the UNSC. Will India support such discussion?

**Answer:** We are not member of Security Council so this is to up the UNSC members to have a session and naturally this is an evolving situation which we would be watching like the rest of the world.

**Question:** In the last 24 hour there have been couple of statement, Colin Powell saying that UNSC resolution 1483 is not sufficient for some nations to consider to send troops to Iraq and need more enabling UN mandate and Kofi Annan has said that are actually moving towards that. Do you think that it is opening the door for sending Indian troops to Iraq?

**Answer:** Firstly, these are developing circumstances. These are statements being made by various people reacting to the reality there, so I have no specific comments on these statements while we are listening to them watching the developments. As far as your question is concerned I think the CCS decision speaks for itself. It has a very clear sentence there that ‘Were there to be an explicit UN mandate for the purpose Government of India could consider the deployment of troops in Iraq’. So I would not like to say anything more than the entire statement that you have heard some days ago.
258. Question in the Lok Sabha: “Deployment of Indian Troops In Iraq”


Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US Government has requested the Indian Government to send its troops for the stabilisation process in Iraq;

(b) if so the decision taken by the Union Government on the said request;

(c) whether the Government sought a UN Security Council Resolution on deployment of troops to Iraq; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Vinod Khanna)

(a) Yes,

(b) to (d) Government of India has decided, after careful consideration, that it could consider the deployment troops in Iraq, were there to be an explicit U.N. mandate for the purpose.

Shrimati Nivedita Mane: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister through you as to whether this Government are aware of the number of American army personnel killed since USA occupation of Iraq....(Interruptions).

Mr. Speaker: Now, enough is enough, not more than this.

Shrimati Nivedita Mane: When we remained aloof during the war, then where does the need to endanger the lives of our army men arise now after the U.N. resolution. That is all I want to (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: I will permit you to speak when the discussion starts.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Mr. Speaker, ‘Sir, I do not deem it fit to furnish the figures regarding the number of casualties from the American Army since the time the war called off till date. But in response to the second part of his question as to why we would peril the lives of the Indian soldiers by
deploying them in Iraq. I would like to say in response that the Government have arrived at this decision after taking stock of the entire situation and commit to follow suit in future also wherein it would take note for sure the place as well as extent to which the Indian army is exposed to risk under the U.N mandate.

**Shrimati Nivedita Mane:** Mr. Speaker, Sir the Government have decided to depute Indian troop after the U.N. resolution. This has been stated by the hon Minister and mentioned in the reply too. Whether the Government have held discussion with other parties also in this regard. If so, the attitude of other parties thereon and if not; the reasons therefor and .the policy, of the Government in this regard.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** As I have said in the reply to the question...(Interruptions)

**Shri E. Ahamed:** Sir, when the question is in English, why does not the hon. Minister reply in English

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** If the supplementary is asked in Hindi, I will reply in Hindi and if the supplementary is asked in English, I will reply in English...(Interruptions)

**Mr. Speaker:** You are right.

**Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav:** Does not she know English.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** No, I know both languages and i will reply according to the languages understood by the hon. Members.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Hon. Minister you please give reply. You are right...

(Interruptions)

**Mr. Speaker:** This is a very important issue, please keep silence.

**Shri Yashwant Sina:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, in response to the question asked, we have made it clear through the press release and divulged it in the answer to the question also. The Government has clearly said that they would consider the matter only if the explicit U.N. mandates comes to them.

As far the second question is concerned, I would like to say that the leader of the opposition wrote a letter to the hon. Prime Minister in this regard on June, 4 and the hon. Prime Minister in view of that letter held
discussion with the leader of the opposition and some of her colleagues on 15th June and our coalition partners also participated therein. Thereafter we considered the matter in its entirety and since unanimous decision was taken, so the need to hold further discussions over the matter was not felt. If such occasions arise in future wherein it deems fit to the Government to hold discussion on the question to arrive on a national consensus, the Government are committed not to go back from their words ...(Interruptions)

Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I heard the reply of the hon. Minister with rapt attention. In view of the fact that this very House, at your behest, passed a unanimous resolution involving all the parties, in Hindi, where the deliberate unilateral action on Iraq by the United States and the UK was called Ghor Nind then the House took further decision urging that the troops of the United States and the UK should forthwith withdraw from Iraq and the entire administrative command be given to the United Nations.

The recent exercise in Iraq is reported everyday in the electronic media and in the newsprint media as to what is happening inside Iraq, how many troops of the US and the UK have been killed during the last fortnight? I do not want to question the bona fides of any Government, either the US or the UK. That is their business. This Parliament is not competent to discuss it. My simple question to the hon. Minister is this. By violating the UN mandate, the aggression took place. Since the House stands with a clear resolve that the troops of the UK and the US should withdraw from Iraq, till the withdrawal is not done, in what capacity the Government of India, even remotely, consider or even if the UN mandate comes to the Government of India for considering sending our troops against all the established traditions of Indian democracy? We only send troops when there is a popular agreement between the Governments of two nations, or in a composite Army command of the United Nations, not under the command and rule of an aggressor who had deliberately thrown out a power. According to the Prime Minister, who made it very clear in this House-we are opposed to any outside force which throws out a regime.”

Taking all these into account, the Minister must clarify in the House whether, at all, in response to the united resolve of this House moved by you till the withdrawal of the UK and US troops from Iraq, until the UN command is established there to take care of the interim measure, will the Government,
at all, remotely consider an advice or anything from the United States, if there is a UN mandate?

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, after the Resolution which was adopted by both the Houses of Parliament, there was further development at the inter-national level. The Security Council of the United Nations adopted a Resolution on the 22nd of May. The number of the Resolution is 1483. In this Security Council Resolution - because it is a published document, everyone is aware of it-the Security Council put certain responsibilities on the occupying powers. In putting those responsibilities, the UN Security Council recognised the occupying powers. There are international laws which recognize the responsibility of occupying powers. In this particular Resolution, there was a further step in that direction because the UN Security Council recognised not only the occupying powers but it also appealed to other Member States with regard to reconstruction, humanitarian assistance, stabilisation etc., in Iraq. Now, after that, as far is the question of sending UN troops is concerned, the Government of India has clearly stated: “We need a more explicit UN mandate.” Now, whether we should do it or not, I would like to remind Shri Das Munishi that when the hon. Leader of the Opposition wrote this letter to the Prime Minister on the 4th of June, 2003, in the last paragraph this is what she said:

“The Congress Party would be totally opposed to the deployment of Indian troops under any arrangement other than a UN Command or as part of a multinational peace-keeping force that has the explicit mandate of the UN.”

I do not think in the decision that Government of India has taken and in what the hon. Leader of Opposition has stated, there is any divergence of position. So, the question of even after there is a UN mandate, whether we could send our troops is a question for the future. Let us see whether there is a UN mandate. If there is no UN mandate, the question of sending UN troops will not arise. If there is a UN mandate, then we will only consider. This is what we have said. In the past, the Government of India, as the hon. Member himself had said, has responded to the call of the UN. The question of command, the question relating to the ground situation and the question relating to the political process in Iraq are all issues which will be considered once again, once there is more explicit and clearer UN mandate. But that is what we have said is the starting point for consideration.
Shri Rupchand Pal: Sir, the US is trying to legitimize the occupation through various ways - pressuring and hijacking the United Nations and all these things. Even yesterday, there was a telephone call from Mr. Colin Powell to our External Affairs Minister, where Mr. Powell had made a request. Under a broader UN mandate, India he thinks, should be ready to participate in the reconstruction, in the humanitarian assistance and also sending troops for maintaining law and order. The unanimous Resolution of this Parliament was withdrawal of the occupying forces. Until the occupying forces are withdrawn, how can the Government of India proceed even a step further?

Secondly, I would like to know how this Government communicated the Resolution of this Parliament to various parts of the country, various nations and various members of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Mr. Speaker: Please come to the question.

Shri Rupchand Pal: What steps the Government of India has taken to communicate this unanimous Resolution, about the demand of the unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces in Iraq?

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Sir, the Resolution of the Indian Parliament is sacrosanct. Everyone, I think, all political parties, every Member of this House and the other House is bound by that Resolution quite clearly. The occupying forces will be able to withdraw only when they are replaced in the current situation in Iraq by some other forces. What is that we have said? We have said that there must be a clear view, an explicit UN mandate. If there is a UN mandate, then we will see in what form that mandate is given. Does it talk of the occupying forces being side by side with the UN forces? We do not know at this point of time. We will not like to anticipate what the Security Council of the UN decides.

As far as the question of telephone call is concerned, the hon. Member has said that he is aware that we keep talking to each other and we are in regular touch. Yes, day before yesterday, when the Secretary of State of the US telephoned me - he was aware of the decision - what he suggested was, would we be ready to consider if there was a broader UN mandate, and I said: “That is exactly what the Government of India by making a statement has said. We will be in a position to consider this request if there is an explicit UN mandate.” And that is our position. So there is no question of... (Interruptions)

Shri Anil Basu: Under whose request? Is it from the USA or the UN? Please explain this to the House. ...(Interruptions)
Shri Yashwant Sinha: I do not have to explain the obvious. But if you ask me, we are clearly looking for a request from the UN under UN auspices.

Shri Rupchand Pal: What steps have been taken to communicate the Resolution of this Parliament to various nations? ...(Interruptions)

Shri Yashwant Sinha: The Resolution of the Indian Parliament is well known to the rest of the world.

Shri Ram Vilas Paswan: Mr. Speaker, Sir, till now this House has not been able to comprehend as to what is meant by U.N. mandate. The resolution was moved when you were in the Chair and four points were stated. First was that USA is an aggressor. The word ‘war’ was not used. Secondly, it stated that we deplore it and the operative part stated that USA troops should be withdrawn there from while the fourth one was about the reconstruction work to be undertaken there under the auspices of UNO. Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra was very much vocal while speaking on the matter.

Sir, the USA has not withdrawn its forces yet. The UNO is not playing any role there. Under such circumstances, the Government first make commitment there and then seek mandate from the opposition and put stamp of approval thereon. How it all started and when this matter was raised as to whether we should send our troops to Iraq or not. Why it was not echoed at that moment that the proposal has been passed by our Parliament that unless USA does not call his troops back, we cannot commit to send our army. But it was not done. You have made commitment there. You are acting under the influence of America. America have become our boss and we are following their dictates in whatever we do. You want to make the opposition a party to that and play with the sentiments of the country ...(Interruptions)

Shri Yashwant Sinha: I have not been able to make out your question. But I have been able to understand the bitter remark made by him....(interruptions) I want to make it quite clear that in no way the Government have disregarded the Resolution of the Parliament.... (Interruptions)

Shri Ram Vilas Paswan: They have disregarded it... (Interruptions)

Shri Yashwant Sinha: This is untrue. Ever since Ram Vilasji has crossed over to that side he has become a bit more critical... (Interruptions) Only
this much I would like to say that the Government of India have taken this decision after due deliberations and taking into account all the things, and the Parliament Resolution is certainly one of them. The Government will certainly keep in mind the Resolution of the Parliament while taking a decision about sending troops to Iraq even in future... (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: No, I am sorry I cannot permit you (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: What sort of a new thing are you starting?

(Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: I have permitted Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav.

Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have only one question to ask. So far as the disregard of the Parliament Resolution is concerned, the Government have done that and if not, the hon. minister may please throw light on the news reports which have appeared in all the newspapers that the Prime Minister has talked to the Defence Minister of America at least six times in this regard. The Minister of Defence was engaged in some other programme. He immediately cancelled his programme and called for the chiefs of our armed forces and others who were to be consulted and talked to them. What was the view of the Prime Minister and what was the reply of the Minister of Defence? You are the Minister of External Affairs and my first question is whether you were also taken into confidence in this regard or not. The second question relates to the UN Security Council. When Iraq was attacked, the UN, the Security Council, all were ignored and America had his way. Now if the UNO ask you to pass this resolution, are you in a position to disregard them? Why is it that troops have been requisitioned from India only while the Government have virtually begged for help so many times in connection with Pakistan sponsored terrorism in our country and you see what Pakistan has done.....(interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: Mulayam Singhji, ask your question quickly, the time of Question Hour is running out.

(Interruptions)

Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav: I want to know whether they have asked for troops from Pakistan also or from India alone. ... (Interruptions)

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of the Government I would like to make it quite clear to the House that India has no pressure
on it and India never works under any pressure. I would request the hon. members on the other side to remove the American-ghost from their minds. It is not proper to brand any request of America as a pressure. A country like India should never lose self-confidence in this case. As per the latest information, troops from many countries apart from America; and United Kingdom have been deployed there; America had requested them to contribute their troops if they thought that the security Council Resolution, 1483 was in that favour. We differed on this issued, so we did not send our troops. As per our information they have also requested Pakistan and Pakistan has not yet taken any decision in this regard. ....(Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are fighting against terrorism on our own and we do not need anyone’s help in that. India is potent enough to fight this war on its own.

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259. Letter from External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to UN Secretary General condoling the death of UN Special Representative in Iraq

New Delhi, August 20, 2003.

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

On behalf of the Government and the people of India, and on my own personal behalf, I wish to convey to you our heartfelt condolences on the demise of your Special Representative for Iraq and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello, following the dastardly attack on the UN office in Baghdad yesterday.

No words can be strong enough in condemning the reprehensible act of terrorism that took away the lives of several dedicated UN personnel

1. On the same day the Government of India in a statement issued in New Delhi said: “We are shocked by the news of the attack in Baghdad on Tuesday which claimed the life of Mr. Sergio Viera de Mello, the Special Representative of the UNSG and many other UN personnel. Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and the UN team were in Iraq to assist the people of Iraq and to carry out the role of the UN in this regard. This outrageous act resulting in the loss of their lives is reprehensible. We believe, as a matter of principle, that the UN and its personnel involved in the pursuit of peace should not be a target of violent action, which is why this particular incident is all the more tragic. India conveys its condolences to the UNSG and to the bereaved families.”
including that of Sergio de Mello, a distinguished professional, who had served the cause of the United Nations and international peace, security and development throughout his career. Sergio de Mello had so many promising years ahead of him. His loss will be keenly felt all around the UN community.

India joins nations in reiterating that such mindless acts cannot undermine the determination of the international community to further intensify efforts through the United Nations to help the people of Iraq.

Yours sincerely,
(Yashwant Sinha)
H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan,
Secretary General,
The United Nations, New York.

260. Interview of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal with the Russian newspaper Kommersant.


*Interview by Sergey Strokan, Kommersant*

[Yesterday (September 9) was the last day of Indian Foreign Secretary Mr. Kanwal Sibal’s visit to Moscow. On the eve of UN General Assembly, Moscow and Delhi announced the beginning of their trilateral talks among India, Russia, and China. The Indian diplomat talks about it in the interview to Sergey Strokan.]

**Question**: This is your third visit to Moscow this year. Your last stay here coincided with the beginning of the Iraq war, because of which the Iraq issue dominated at the talks. What issues have been discussed during this visit?

**Answer**: This time our consultations took place two weeks before opening of the next UN General Assembly in New York. This largely predetermined the agenda of the talks I conducted with FM Igor Ivanov and his deputy Vaycheslav Trubnikov. On the eve of discussions in the UN we synchronized our positions on many issues including Iraq, Middle East,
the last year’s initiative of conducting trilateral meetings India-Russia-China, and new Russian-Indian summit planned for November of this year.

**Question**: UN draft resolution on Iraq has become a highly controversial subject. What is Delhi’s attitude to the resolution and what role can India play in restoration of Iraq?

**Answer**: I would like to clarify something first. We are not members of the UNSC, and that’s why we are not able to influence the process of working on the new resolution. At the same time, being a member of the international community, India cannot be unconcerned by what is happening in Iraq. We firmly believe that the key role in restoration of Iraq should belong to the UN. Just like the Russian side, we think that the situation in Iraq is rapidly becoming worse, which demands collective efforts of the international community to normalize life in Iraq. We are prepared to contribute to restoration of the infrastructure and solving humanitarian problems. For instance, in association with Jordan we are building a hospital in Najaf. In addition to that, we announced about giving $20 mln for restoration of Iraq and delivery to the country 50 metric tons of wheat.

**Question**: Let’s speak frankly. Americans don’t need your wheat in Iraq; they need your troops to relieve them from their burden. Is it possible that under certain circumstances Indian troops will be sent to Iraq?

**Answer**: I think it’s too early to ask this kind of question.

**Question**: You mentioned the initiative of conducting trilateral meetings among India, Russia, and China. What is it, a new triangle of force or new Asian axis?

**Answer**: Let us not use such an expression. This understanding is of another era. This approach is not applicable here. The talk is not about creating an axis of power or a ‘triangle’. The basis for such a relation is that substantial population; resources and potential belong to India, Russia and China - the major powers in the world. Therefore, with some key areas if we begin to synchronize our positions, it allows each of us to achieve much more. It is important to note yet another aspect, all the three countries are interested in improving relations with the United States. Hence all the talk that this is an axis of power or friendship against some one is misplaced.
Question: You already have reminded us about the November meeting of President Putin with Prime Minister Vajpayee. What are the areas that need more attention and which are the priority tasks?

Answer: Trade and economic relation is the area, which needs more attention. Just for comparison, our trade with China few years ago was USD 200 million, which now has grown up to USD 6 billion dollars. Bilateral trade of India with the United States, a strong economic partner, is USD 26 billion. Bilateral trade with Russia is USD 1.2 billion dollars, which is as much as our trade with Sri Lanka. We have a very strong cooperation in the field of defence, which is a very important area of cooperation, but should not be the only field. The task in front of us is to take our bilateral trade (from rupee - rouble) to a freely convertible currency, simplify custom procedures, develop transport corridors, create of banking channels, allow faster and effective transfer of funds etc.

As far as new areas of cooperation are concerned then - fight against international terrorism is one of them and during the meeting of two leaders this area will assume a significance place.

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New Delhi, October 17, 2003.

The Government of India welcomes the unanimous adoption of Security Council Resolution 1511 on Iraq on October 16, 2003, as a positive step towards the restoration of sovereignty of Iraq to the Iraqi people.

We have taken positive note of the re-affirmation in the resolution of the rights of the Iraqi people to determine their political future, and in this context the mandate to the Governing Council of Iraq to draw up a time table and programme by 15 December, 2003 for the drafting of a new constitution and holding of democratic elections under that constitution. However, the resolution lacks specificity on the timing of transfer of sovereignty.
SCR 1511 envisages strengthening of the role of the UN in Iraq in areas of humanitarian assistance, economic reconstruction and in the political transition leading to establishment of representative government.

We have taken note of the appeal in the resolution to UN member states to assist the Iraqi people in their efforts in the reconstruction of Iraq. In this context, we reiterate our readiness to contribute to the restoration of infrastructure, medical, health, education, communication and other civilian needs of the Iraqi people. We will therefore be participating in the international Donors Conference in Madrid later this month.

1. Replying to the question about sending Indian troops to Iraq the Spokesman said at his press briefing: “We have noted the mandate given for the setting up of a Multi-National Force under unified command as also the immediate reaction of several important countries such as Germany, Russia and France on the question of commitment of troops. In so far as troop deployment by India is concerned, there have been several developments since our decision on 14 July, 2003 (Document No. 256) and any future decisions in this regard will be taken keeping in mind the realities of the situation on ground, our international responsibilities and domestic needs and security concerns.” When asked to further elaborate it the Spokesman said “I would rather not elaborate.”

On October 28 the Official Spokesperson answered some questions on Iraq which were:

**Question:** Situation in Iraq is getting worse day by day like yesterdays incidents ......... and what is Government of India’s plan with regard to humanitarian assistance?

**Answer:** As far as the first part of your question is concern India like rest of the world is watching whatever happens on ground with concerns specially the violence that has taken place. As far as the humanitarian assistance and reconstruction are concerned we remain committed to our assistance. You may like to refer it to the Madrid Donors Conference. We have announced that our assistance for humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq and the reconstruction efforts till 2004 will now be 30 million US Dollars, aimed at bringing humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq and we certainly hope that circumstances will prevail which will allow this assistance to reach the people that it is meant to and have maximum effects for their betterment.

**Question:** Do you details for these 30 million US dollars?

**Answer:** The detail are going to be worked out at another Donor Conference were priorities are going to identified and then specific projects are going to be worked by several countries who have announced the assistance. Our assistance includes were on the maternity and paediatric hospital on which we are working with Jordan.
262. Statement by Minister of State Vinod Khanna in the International Donors’ Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq.

Madrid, October 24, 2003

Please see Document No. 481

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263. Question in the Lok Sabha re: Recognition of the Iraqi Governing Council as the Legitimate Executive Body of Iraq.


Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:-

(a) whether the Union government has recognised the Iraqi Governing Council as the legitimate executive body of Iraq;
(b) if so, the reasons therefor;
(c) whether India has pledged a substantial amount for the rebuilding of Iraq at the International Donor Conference;
(d) if so, the details thereof and the manner in which this amount is to be disbursed to Iraq;
(e) whether Iraq has sought foreign direct investment for its projects; and
(f) if so, the decision taken by the Union Government in the said matter?

ANSWER

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Vinod Khanna):

(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

1. India is vitally interested in the peace and prosperity of the Gulf
region and has, therefore, been monitoring the developments in Iraq very closely. The unanimously adopted UN Security Council Resolution 1511 determines that the Governing Council and its Ministers are the principal bodies of the Iraqi Interim Administration until an internationally recognized representative government is established in Iraq. India has taken positive note of various elements of the Resolution.

2. In response to the UN Secretary General’s Flash Appeal, early this year, India had committed US$20 million for humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people. At the Donors Conference held in Madrid on October 23-24, 2003, India has committed an additional amount of US$10 million through Trust Funds being coordinated by the UNDP and IMF respectively for reconstruction needs of Iraq. A number of proposals including medical assistance, provision of computers, assistance in the Constitution development process and training of Iraqi personnel including those from Foreign Ministry are being processed.

3. A set of rules and regulations to attract foreign direct investment in Iraq has been announced. Indian business community particularly CII & FICCI are aware of it. During August this year, a 30-member business delegation from FICCI undertook a successful visit to Iraq. FICCI also organized a Conference “Focus Iraq” on October 7, 2003. The Union Government continues to facilitate the Indian business community in their efforts.
264. Statement by Official Spokesperson on External Affairs Minister’s telephonic conversation with the US Secretary of State on Iraq.


The US Secretary of State Colin Powell called up External Affairs Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha at 8.00 am this morning to share his thoughts, following the arrest of former President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein. Secretary of State expressed the hope that this would bring about a change in the psychology of whole situation, lead to rebuilding and reconstruction and greater respect for the Iraqi Governing Council.

External Affairs Minister expressed the hope that these developments should contribute to the stabilization of Iraq.

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Question: What is our reaction to Saddam Hussein’s arrest.

Answer: We have taken note of the arrest of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. We hope for early improvement of the security situation in Iraq leading to early transfer of sovereignty to the friendly people of Iraq.

Question: Is our view changed after the arrest to the whole scenario?

Answer: I have just given our views as well as the views expressed on the issue by External Affairs Minister this morning during the telephone conversation. I think that speaks for itself.

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Israel

266. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with the Israeli newspaper *Ha’Aretz*.

New Delhi, September 8, 2003.

Please see Document No. 20

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267. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting between the Israeli Prime Minister and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.


The two Prime Ministers met for forty minutes in a restricted session and exchanged views on bilateral relations, the fight against terrorism and the situation in the Middle-East (West Asia). The exchange of views continued in a larger format with the presence of all delegates from both countries. It was a fruitful exchange and helped in a much better understanding of the views of both sides.

Six bilateral agreements were signed. They are:

1. Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Protection of the Environment.
2. Agreement on Cooperation in the fields of Health and Medicine.
3. Agreement on Cooperation in combating illicit trafficking and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
4. Agreement on Waiver of visa requirements for holders of diplomatic, service and official passports.
5. Exchange Programme on Cooperation in the field of Education.
6. Exchange Programme on Culture Education.
In addition the spokesman mentioned that trade & economic relations had been discussed. Trade, which currently stands at USD 1.3 billion, is expected to grow by 25% this year. There remains tremendous potential to increase economic cooperation. It was agreed that the Joint Economic Committee can identify new measures to stimulate trade. Israeli industry can also take advantage of India’s advances in telecom, information technology and biotechnology.

Cooperation in agriculture was also discussed. We proposed setting up of a Joint Committee on Agriculture and this was agreed to by the Israeli PM. They proposed setting up of a second demonstration farm and this was agreed to by us. Framework for cooperation in development applications of space technology was also discussed.

Earlier the spokesman had briefed the Press on the call by EAM on PM Sharon. The call had lasted for 75 minutes. Bilateral economic cooperation had been discussed, specifically innovative strategies for increasing this cooperation through joint marketing, co-production and joint research & development. Need to diversify trade was underlined. Cooperation in science & technology and space had also been discussed. Need for all countries to cooperate in the global war against terror was discussed, as also the middle-east peace process.

New Delhi, September 9, 2003

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel hereafter referred to singularly as the “Contracting Party” and collectively as the “Contracting Parties”;

CONSIDERING the interest of both countries to strengthen their friendly relations; and

DESIRING to facilitate the entry of the citizens of the Republic of India and the citizens of the State of Israel who are holders of diplomatic, official and service passports into their respective countries,

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE - 1

1. A citizen of either Contracting Party, who is in possession of a valid diplomatic, official or service passport shall be permitted to enter into, exit from and transit through the territory of the other Contracting Party through their respective international points of entry without visas.

2. A citizen of either Contracting Party, holding the said passport shall be allowed to stay in the territory of the other Contracting Party for the maximum period of ninety (90) days of his/her official mission.

ARTICLE - 2

1. A citizen of either Contracting Party, who is assigned as a member of the diplomatic or consular staff in the territory of the other Contracting Party and in possession of a valid diplomatic, official or service passport may travel to the territory of the other Contracting Party and shall be granted upon request a residence visa for period of his/her official stay within ninety (90) days of their arrival.

2. A citizen of one Contracting Party being the representative of his/
her country in an international organization located in the territory of other Contracting Party holding the said passport shall also enjoy the rights mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article.

3. The provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall also apply to the spouse of a member of the diplomatic Mission or Consulate and other members of the family, provided they are holding a similar category of passport and forming part of his/her household.

ARTICLE - 3

1. A citizen of either Contracting Party, who is in possession of a valid diplomatic, official or service passport and is attending a meeting or conference convened by an international organization or Government, which is held in the territory of the other Contracting Party, shall not be required to obtain a visa.

2. The holders of diplomatic, official and service passports of either Contracting Party who are employed by an international organization, body, agency or any other such entity, would be required to obtain visa prior to their travel to the territory of the other Contracting Party for official visits.

ARTICLE - 4

1. Each Contracting Party reserves the right to refuse the entry into, or shorten the stay in its territory of any citizen of the other Contracting Party for reasons of national security, public health, public order or in other exceptional, extra ordinary circumstances.

2. If a citizen of one Contracting Party loses his/her passport in the territory of the other Contracting Party, he/she shall inform the authorities concerned of the host country for appropriate action. The diplomatic Mission or Consulate concerned will issue a new passport or travel document to its citizen and inform the concerned authorities of the host Government.

ARTICLE - 5

Citizens of either Contracting Party, being holders of diplomatic, official and service passports shall abide by the laws and regulations of the other Contracting Party while crossing its frontier and
throughout the duration of their stay in its territory.

ARTICLE - 6

1. For the purposes of this Agreement, each Contracting Party shall transmit to the other, through diplomatic channels, specimens of its respective passports, including a detailed description of such documents, currently used, at least thirty (30) days before the entry into force of this Agreement.

2. Each Contracting Party shall also transmit to the other through diplomatic channels, specimens of its new or modified passports, including a detailed description of such documents, at least thirty (30) days before it is brought into force.

ARTICLE - 7

Each Contracting Party reserves the right for reasons of security, public order or public health to suspend temporarily, either in whole or in part, The implementation of this agreement, which shall take effect thirty (30) days after notification has been given to the other contracting party through diplomatic channels.

ARTICLE - 8

Either Contracting Party may request in writing, through diplomatic channels, a revision or amendment of whole or part of this Agreement. Any revision or amendment which has been agreed to by the Contracting Parties shall come into effect according to the provisions of Article 10.

ARTICLE - 9

Any difference or dispute arising out of the implementation of the provision of the Agreement shall be settled amicably by consultation or negotiation between the Contracting Parties without reference to any third party or an international tribunal.

ARTICLE - 10

1. This Agreement shall enter into force ninety (90) days from the date of the second of the diplomatic notes by which the Contracting Parties notify each other that their internal legal procedures for the entering into force of the Agreement have been complied with.
2. This Agreement shall remain in force for an indefinite period and may be terminated by either Contracting Party by a written notification through diplomatic channels. In this case, the Agreement shall cease to be in force six (6) months from the date of notification of termination.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present Agreement.

Done at New Delhi on this 9th day of September in the year 2003 which corresponds to the 12 day of Elul the year 5763, in two(2) originals each; in Hindi, Hebrew and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In the event of any divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of For the Government of
The Republic of India The State of Israel

✦✦✦✦✦


The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel (hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”);

Expressing the deep concern of both countries for the global environment;

Keeping in mind that sustainable development in India and Israel requires effective measures for protection and improvement of the environment;

Considering the documents adopted during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held at Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 and at the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002 and

Desirous of promoting the establishment and development of closer and long term cooperation between both countries in the field of protection and improvement of the environment;

Have agreed upon the following:

**ARTICLE - I**

The Parties shall cooperate in the field of protection of the environment on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

**ARTICLE - II**

1. The Parties shall mutually extend their co-operation which shall be carried out, inter alia, in the following priority areas:

   a) Afforestation in arid areas;
   
   b) Combating desertification;
   
   c) Pollution problems of mutual concern, their identification and an assessment of relevant control technologies,
   
   d) Water conservation;
e) Recycling of waste water-management and re-use of treated effluents;

f) Wildlife preservation and maintenance of diversity of species;

g) Low cost and environmentally sound technologies for pollution control;

h) Collaboration between academic and research institutions;

i) Environment awareness,

j) Environmental Impact Assessment;

k) Environmental monitoring methods and surveillance including the use of environmental information systems;

l) Environmental problems in their relation to other policy areas and the relationship between environment and development;

m) Exchange of information and data on research and development;

n) Promoting international cooperation in the field of the environment and cooperation on international environmental matters.

2. The Parties shall carry out the above mentioned co-operative activities, as per recognized national and international rules and regulations in the field of prevention of pollution, improvement of the environment and management of national resources.

**ARTICLE - III**

The cooperation between the Parties may be carried out in the following forms:

a) Preparation and implementation of joint scientific and technical programmes and projects;

b) Exchange of scientific and technical information, documentation and results of research, and information on the state of the environment;

c) Exchange of experience in the field of environmental management;

d) Organization and conduct of bi-lateral meetings and symposia;

e) Participation of experts from the Parties in international conferences,
symposia and training courses on the problems of the environment conducted in both countries;

f) Any other form of cooperation, as mutually agreed upon by the Parties.

ARTICLE - IV

1. The Parties, proceeding from the objectives of this Agreement, shall promote and facilitate the establishment and development of direct contact and cooperation between them and between public and private institutions and organizations in both countries.

2. The Parties shall encourage contacts between Government agencies, academic institutions and private economic enterprises of both countries interested in cooperation, including the signing of contracts and working agreements.

ARTICLE - V

1. The scientific and technical information, not protected by the intellectual property rights, that may be accumulated as a result of cooperation under the present Agreement, excluding information which may not be disclosed in view of national security or commercial and industrial considerations, may be provided to the international scientific circles unless otherwise agreed to by both Parties, through the usual channels and in accordance with the normal procedures of the participating institutions and organizations. In exchanging and disseminating it to third Parties, both Parties shall take into account existing legal provisions, the rights of third parties and international obligations.

2. The financial terms of cooperation and realization of joint projects shall be subject to consideration by the Parties in each separate case.

ARTICLE - VI

1. For coordination and implementation of this Agreement, an Indo-Israeli Working Group on Cooperation in the field of environmental protection shall be set up (hereinafter referred to as “the Working Group”),
2. The Working Group will meet, at intervals agreed upon by the Parties, alternately in Israel and India, shall examine concrete activities and programmes of cooperation, coordinate with the participating organizations responsible for the implementation of these programmes, and shall make recommendations to the Parties, through an accepted procedure. The composition, place of the meetings and procedure to be followed in the Working Group shall be determined by mutual consent of the Parties.

3. In India, the Ministry of the Environment and Forests of the Republic of India and in Israel, the Ministry of the Environment of the State of Israel, shall be the nodal agencies responsible for coordination and organization of cooperation under the present Agreement.

4. The practical work will be conducted on the basis of a plan of Action, formulated for period of three years, in accordance with the programmes of cooperation.

**ARTICLE - VII**

The present Agreement will not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties under other bilateral or multilateral Treaties and Agreements to which they are a Party.

**ARTICLE - VIII**

In case of deputation of experts and other specialists under this Agreement, the sending Party shall bear the expenditures for international travel. The receiving Party shall provide local hospitality, including internal travel.

**ARTICLE - IX**

Disputes arising out of interpretation or application of this Agreement which cannot be resolved in the spirit of accord between the agencies responsible for coordination and organization of cooperation shall be settled by consultations between the Parties.

**ARTICLE - X**

Each contracting Party shall notify the other Party on the completion of its legal procedures for the entering into force of the Agreement. The date of entering into force shall be the date of the last notification.
ARTICLE - XI

1. The Present Agreement shall continuously remain in force, unless either Party terminates the Agreement by giving a written notice to the other, through the diplomatic channel of its intention to terminate it.

2. The termination of this Agreement shall not affect the completion of activities under agreements and contracts concluded on the basis of the present Agreement, which may have not been completed by the date of its termination.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the following representatives duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments have signed this Agreement and affixed their seals thereto.

Done at New Delhi on the 9th day of September 2003, which corresponds to 12th day of Elul 5763, in two originals copies, each in the Hindi, Hebrew, and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

On Behalf of the Government of the Republic Of India

On Behalf of the The Government of the State of Israel

✦✦✦✦✦
270. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister of Israel.


Your Excellency, Mr. Prime Minister,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you and your delegation in India. The first ever visit of a Prime Minister of Israel to India is an important landmark in our bilateral relations.

The people of India and Israel have a long history of civilizational contact. Our lands have supported the birth of great and ancient religions and civilizations. Jewish communities in India have, over the centuries, painted rich colours into the mosaic of Indian society.

We also share commonalities in modern times. The people of India have great admiration for the tremendous achievements of Israel in diverse fields ranging from agriculture to high technology. In the relatively short span of 11 years of our formal diplomatic relations, we have established a vibrant partnership. India is one of Israel’s strongest trading partners in Asia today. Our scientists and scholars are together exploring the frontiers of knowledge in cutting edge areas. Our defence cooperation rests on a foundation of mutual understanding of security concerns. Our people-to-people interaction has been enriched through tourism, student exchanges and cultural contacts. All these strands are tied together by a political understanding between us.

Another aspect of our common experience is the menace of terrorism. Bilaterally and on the international plane, we are contributing to the global fight against terrorism. It is a menace that particularly targets democratic societies, which have to fashion a global and comprehensive response to tackle it.

Mr. Prime Minister,

We in India are today engaged in a determined struggle to defeat the terrorism against our country and to bring international pressure to bear on those who support it. Simultaneously, we are engaged in the process of improving relations with all our neighbours. West Asia and the Persian Gulf region are a part of our extended neighbourhood, with which we have long standing cultural and civilizational links. We would very much
like to see an end to violence and restoration of peace in these troubled lands.

Mr. Prime Minister,

Relations between India and Israel are rooted in antiquity and in contact between our civilizations. At the same time we are both young nations with democratic values, seeking economic progress by tapping the creative genius of our people. We have today discussed a number of new ideas to strengthen our bridges of friendship by more fully exploiting our comparative advantages. I have no doubt that your visit and our discussions will be a catalyst for faster movement in the right direction.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I request you to join me in a toast:

- to the health and success of Prime Minister Sharon;
- to peace and prosperity of the Israeli people; and
- to friendship between India and Israel.

Thank you

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271. Delhi Statement on Friendship and Cooperation between India and Israel issued at the end of the visit of the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

New Delhi, September 10, 2003.

1. At the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon, paid a State visit to India from September 10 2003, the first-ever by an Israeli Prime Minister.

2. Prime Minister Sharon was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice, Yosef Lapid, Minister of Culture, Education and Sport, Limor Livnat (-together with a cultural delegation) and
Minister of Agriculture, Israel Katz. The large accompanying business delegation underscored the importance the two countries attach to expanding their economic relations.

3. During the visit, Prime Minister Sharon called on President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, and held talks with Prime Minister Vajpayee. He also held separate meetings with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs Lal Krishna Advani, Minister of Defence George Fernandes, Minister of Finance Jaswant Singh, Minister of External Affairs Yashwant Sinha and Leader of the Opposition Sonia Gandhi.

4. As ancient cultures and societies, India and Israel have left their mark on human civilization and history. As democratic countries since their inception, both nations share faith in the values of freedom and democracy. Both countries gained independence during the same period and embarked on a course of nation building to advance the well being of their respective peoples and to build modern democratic states able to face difficult challenges.

5. The two Prime Ministers discussed a range of important bilateral, regional and international issues. They reiterated their commitment to further advance the bilateral relations between the two countries and increase the scope of trade and economic exchanges.

6. The shared ideals draw both peoples into a natural amity in pursuit of common goals. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992, there has been rapid expansion and deepening of bilateral relations. Both sides attach great importance to strengthening their long-term cooperation in the political, defence, economic, commercial, cultural and science and technology areas.

7. In the presence of the Prime Ministers, Ministers from both sides signed the following agreements:

   a. An agreement on Environment Protection.

   b. An agreement on Cooperation in Combating Illicit Trafficking and Abuse of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

   c. An agreement on Visa Free Travel for Diplomatic, Official and Service Passport Holders.

   d. An agreement on Cooperation in the fields of Health and Medicine.
e. Exchange Program on Cooperation in the field of Education

f. Exchange Program on Cooperation in the field of Culture.

These agreements will further enhance the institutional framework created by those which have already been signed between the two countries.

8. Both sides agreed to increase the frequency of bilateral visits by Ministers and officials and to consolidate the ties between business communities of the two countries. People-to-people relations will also be encouraged, in order to increase and deepen understanding between the societies.

9. Both sides expressed their satisfaction with the impressive growth in bilateral economic relations. They believe that there is considerable untapped potential to enhance these relations, particularly in fields such as hi-tech and infrastructure where there are synergies, in order to encourage the private and public sectors to expand the scope of mutual trade and investments. Israel expressed its interest in and willingness to participate in key national Indian Projects. Indian companies were invited to expand their activities in Israet-to encompass the field of investment-and to participate in the process of privatization in Israel. Both sides will explore together the best ways to strengthen and implement these goals.

10. Both sides noted the scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries and expressed willingness to enhance participation in the joint fund for scientific research established in 1994, as well as explore the possibility of the establishment of a bi-national research and development fund in the industrial fields, particularly in bio-technology, information technology, telecommunication, agricultural research and the civilian use of outer space.

11. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the relations between the countries in the field of tourism, and called for the expansion of these relations as an additional tool for strengthening the bond familiarity between their peoples.

12. Israel and India expressed their desire to work together, along with other countries and the international community, to create a new and better world- a world of peace, prosperity and welfare, for the benefit of all peoples and nationals.
13. Terrorism undermines the very foundation of freedom and democracy, endangers the continued existence of open and democratic societies and constitutes a global threat; therefore, cannot be any compromise in the war against terrorism. Together with the international community and as victims of terrorism, Israel and India are partners in the battle against this scourge. In line with their adherence to UNSCR 1373, they strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and call upon the international community to take decisive action against this global menace, and condemn states and individuals who aid and abet terrorism across borders, harbour and provide sanctuary to terrorists and provide them with financial means, training or patronage.

14. India and Israel called for the establishment of a just and durable peace in the Middle East. The two sides expressed their respective views, and called for a complete cessation of violence, so that a conducive environment is created for continuation of the dialogue.

15. India and Israel share the goal of advancing peace, security and stability in their own region and respect for democracy in the entire world, and will continue efforts to encourage this trend.

16. Both sides paid tribute to the contribution of the Jewish community in India and the Indian community in Israel in providing a bridge of understanding and in strengthening the ties of culture and trade between the two countries. The shining example of the freedom always given to the Jews of India to practice their religion and give expression to their culture is a tribute to India’s religious tolerance and secularism and sends a vital message of coexistence and harmony to the international community.

17. Prime Minister Sharon invited Prime Minister Vajpayee to visit Israel. Prime Minister Vajpayee accepted this invitation with pleasure.

18. India and Israel believe that the State visit of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon will further expand and enhance the framework of bilateral cooperation in various fields, and will contribute to strengthening the friendship between the two countries.
272. Reaction of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal to the
reported statement of Israeli Deputy Prime Minister on
the assassination of President of Palestinian Authority
Yasar Arafat.

New Delhi, September 15, 2003.

We have seen Israeli Deputy Prime Minister’s reported statement
on assassination of President Arafat being an option. We note that the
reported statement injects greater stridency in Israeli pronouncements
during the last few days. India, which has consistently regarded President
Arafat as the elected leader of Palestinian people and symbol of their
cause, cannot but take a strong exception to such statements. We hope
that the already tense and uncertain situation in Israel-Palestine theatre
would not be exacerbated by such irresponsible pronouncements. We
firmly believe that instead of dealing with symptoms through such actions,
sincere efforts must be made to address the malaise itself1.

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1. Israel described on September 14, 2003 Yasser Arafat as one of the “heads of terror”,
and added killing the Palestinian Authority chief was an option being considered following
the Israeli cabinet’s decision to “remove” him. “Killing Yasser Arafat is definitely one of the
options... We are trying to eliminate all the heads of terror, and Arafat is one of the heads
of terror,” the Deputy Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, said. Expelling Mr. Arafat or ensuring
that he was completely cut off in his Ramallah compound were also options before the
Government, he told the Israeli Radio. Earlier the Government of India in a statement
issued on September 12 reiterated that India “has always recognized President Arafat
as an elected leader of the Palestinian people and symbol of their Cause. We believe that
any restrictions on his movements and his forcible removal from Palestinian territory
would have serious negative consequences and strongly urge that no such moves be
contemplated.” It may be recalled that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon who was on a
visit to India had cut short his visit and returned to Jerusalem after the twin suicide
bombings killing many civilians.
Kyrgyzstan

273. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to Kyrgyzstan¹.


Shri Yashwant Sinha, announced at a largely attended function in Bishkek, the decision of the Government of India to set up an India Centre at the Kyrgyz National State University.

India’s Minister for External Affairs Shri Yashwant Sinha was conferred the title of Honorary Professor of the Kyrgyz National State University at a glittering ceremony this morning in Bishkek.

The ceremony was held in the Grand Hall of the University. It was attended, in an exceptional gesture, by the Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan Mr. Askar Aitmatov. Leading Kyrgyz intellectuals, the entire academic council and the Press corp packed the Hall as Kyrgyz students in traditional colourful attire led Shri Sinha into the Grand Hall.

Acad. A. Ch. Kakeev, the Rector of the University, reading out the citation emphasised that this special gesture is extended rarely. Former US Vice President Al Gore and former Pak Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto were among the few who had been conferred this title earlier.

Acad. Kakeev said that the decision of the academic council to extend this honour to Shri Yashwant Sinha was unanimous. It was as

¹ Briefing the media in New Delhi the Spokesperson said that in Kyrgyzstan EAM met the President, Prime Minister, Defence Minister as well as the Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan. A Consular Convention was signed between the two countries. In all the discussions Kyrgyzstan attached the highest priority to relations with India, a country that they see as a factor of stability and an inspiration for democracy. On the economic front exhibition is to be held by the CII with about 100 businessmen. Flights of Kyrgyz Air are supposed to be increased from one a week to three a week. Joint projects in hydroelectric and telecom will be studied. This winds up the first every visit of External Affairs Minister to the two countries.

Question: What is a Consular Convention?

Answer: Consular Convention is a bilateral convention between two countries, which essentially regularises the issues of visas, consular access, issue dealing with the citizens of each other’s country in terms of consular requirements, assistance to be given.
much in recognition of the initiatives taken by Shri Sinha in promoting Indo-Kyrgyz bilateral relations, as also in appreciation of his distinguished record that has included excellence in all disciplines of public life.

The Foreign Minister Aitmatov speaking on the occasion said that by accepting to become the Honorary Professor, Shri Sinha was symbolically uniting the spirit of tolerance, secularism and liberalism that are the hallmark of both societies.

Shri Sinha, in his acceptance address to the packed Grand Hall, said that he was taking this honour on behalf of India, because this gesture was also a recognition of historic ties.

The Indo-Kyrgyz association, he said, goes back to the times of Silk route and the great Kyrgyz Epic “Manas”. In that spirit, EAM announced the setting up of an “India Centre” at the Kyrgyz National University. This center would be equipped with Indian made computers, television sets, satellite receiving equipment and books on India.

Shri Sinha also announced an exchange programme for University Professors. To begin with, Kyrgyz Professors would be invited to visit Indian Universities, he said.

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274. Address of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Kyrgyz National State University.


Excellencies, Distinguished Rector, Members of the Academic Council, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to be here today amongst some of the finest minds of Kyrgyzstan. I also bring with me good wishes of the people of India for you. We have for long admired your great epic ‘Manas’. Delhi boasts of a road named after Manas.

Historically, our links with Kyrgyzstan have been strong since the time of Silk Route, and even before. It is said that two major branches of the Silk Route travelled through Central Asia and came down to India. Moreover, Central Asia also provided the meeting point for China and
India. Great names of history travelled between the two countries through Central Asia. It is said that at one point, the trade between India and China through the Silk Route was one of the highest in the World. So, your region has for a long time been India’s connection with the West and with the North. And in doing so, Central Asia has truly been at the confluence of civilizations.

Because it was not just trade which travelled down these roads. The teachings of Buddha also took this route and spread the message of peace all over Central Asia.

Later, through most of the twentieth century, culture also played an important role. Indian films and Indian artists became household names everywhere. But it was not only culture which was our calling card during this twentieth century. Our leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were known throughout Central Asia.

We have rejoiced in your Independence. We were amongst the first to recognize the independence of Kyrgyzstan, as also other countries in Central Asia. We were also amongst the very first to set up Embassies in Central Asian countries. Now, a decade later, the time has come for us to make an assessment of how much we have achieved, and what remains to be done.

India’s first focus during these past ten years has been to increase the reach of our cooperation programme. In Kyrgyzstan alone, this programme is providing training every year for about 300 man months in different fields. Information Technology, Mass Media, Management, Diplomatic and Administrative Training, are just a few of them.

A Dairy Plant was set up near Bishkek. I believe it is running well. Recently, the Prime Minister of India had announced the gift of 10 four-wheel drives for the Mountain Summit, which was held late last year in Bishkek. I am glad that these vehicles could arrive in time for the Summit.

Now, we are considering setting up an Institute for Information Technology and a Food Processing Plant, as a part of our cooperation programme.

Last year, for the first time, India had organized an Industrial Exhibition in Bishkek. Encouraged by the response received then, we are thinking of having a second exhibition. This time, a consumer goods show, with perhaps as many as 100 Indian businessmen.
All these are a part of our effort to reach out to Central Asia. We have already put to test the new transport corridors. The Trilateral Agreement between India, Iran and Turkmenistan, has started working. Faster clearances at Bandar Abbas and then at other check points have meant a reduction in transit and travel time from India to Central Asia. Similarly, the North-South Corridor is another attempt at making the flow of goods to Central Asia faster. But we are looking beyond these routes.

Recently, India, Iran and Afghanistan, have agreed to develop a new route. This will utilize the Chah Bahar Port of Iran to send goods through Afghanistan and to Central Asian countries. It is being estimated that this new route will cut distances by 1500 kms. India is going to construct 200 kms of this new road, and this might usher in an entirely new era of trade relations and people-to-people contacts between India and Central Asia. This new Silk Route of prosperity is India’s wish for its relations with Central Asia. As in the past, we hope that our cooperation would once again bring the best of cultures, prosperity and friendship to Central Asia. Once again, let us make this new Silk Route the lifeline of our friendship.

The areas of energy and hydroelectricity are two other areas where we can achieve a lot together. India would have one of the highest rates of growth of energy requirements over the next few decades. Central Asia is virtually sitting on lakes of oil and gas. There is therefore a lot that can be done together for import of oil and gas into India. We can also work together for new pipe-line routes and additional refineries.

Nature has blessed Kyrgyzstan with bountiful charms. It has also given it immense hydroelectric potential. This is an important area where Indian technology and Kyrgyz resources could work together for mutual benefit.

We must think of innovative ways to tap the traditional goodwill and our resources to best advantage. It is with that hope that I came to your beautiful country. And, it is in confidence of fulfillment of that hope that I bid goodbye to you. I do so with my best wishes.

Thank you.
Palestine

275. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of the Foreign Minister of the Palestinian National Authority.

New Delhi, August 29, 2003.

We also have the Foreign Minister of the Palestine National Authority in town who arrived early this morning. He has been to Rajghat, he has had his delegation level talks this afternoon. Currently he must be calling the Prime Minister and later will be calling the President, a dinner will be hosted by Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Vinod Khanna in his honour, and tomorrow morning he calls on the National Security Advisor.

Some read out from the afternoon talks: The two Ministers have signed a Memorandum of Understanding of cooperation between Foreign Service Institutes of MEA and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Palestine National Authority. Essentially this MOU looks at how we can cooperate further in training Palestine diplomats, firstly by increasing the numbers of slots that are allotted to them at our institutes and secondly by developing their training institutes. In this connection a study team is expected to go soon to examine the institutions and give suggestions and so on. Other issues which were discussed included closer cooperation at the United Nation, particularly on the issue of terrorism, so that we can coordinate our positions better. This is also aimed at forthcoming UNGA, where terrorism is likely to figure in a big way as a global concern. The discussions were held in the constructive spirit and traditional cordiality that has marked bilateral relations. The two sides agreed to be in regular touch on all-important issues. The Foreign Minister shared with the Indian delegation his perspectives on the Middle East peace process and the recent developments in that area. The discussions focused at length on economic cooperation between the two sides. They will examine the existing areas of cooperation as well as the areas where we could work further, amongst these some of the areas mentioned cooperation in small scale industry, increased cooperation in Information Technology and in the Energy Sector and complimentarities of trade which could be looked at to maximise mutual benefit.

The Palestine side was very keen on increasing the scholarship quota, for training their students here. This is particularly relevant as they
are keen to build their professional services and professional institutes and would look forward to greater Indian assistance in this regard.

So these are the points I have got, as they were rushing off for the next call. It may possible that we may have something to add later this evening.

**Question:** Who was heading the Delegation Level Talks from the Indian Side?

**Answer:** Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Vinod Khanna.

**Question:** What was Vinod Khanna’s assessment on the latest situation in West Asia?

**Answer:** There was an exchange of views and I don’t have details point by point but essentially we have a visitor from West Asia and we are listening to his views on the matter.

**Question:** Is this the first time that we have gone into such cooperation (training) with Palestine?

**Answer:** No, if you can go through my press release day before yesterday we have given very specific figures as to how many students there are and how many have been trained here before. It’s a very long-standing relationship particularly in Human Resource development. We have an extremely long record of cooperation.

**Question:** Any details on the question of terrorism?

**Answer:** As there are discussions in the UN and there is the issue of the Comprehensive Convention against terrorism and terrorism forms a subject in so many resolutions in UN, this is a build up to greater coordination at the forthcoming UNGA. We can have discussions in advance with the Palestine side and with other interlocutors with whom they may be talking, so as to better coordinate positions. There is a global necessity to come to a consensus on issues that would strengthen the world’s fight against terrorism.

**Question:** What is India’s view on the violence taking place in Palestine?

**Answer:** Well our standard view has been that terrorism cannot be justified for any cause, no matter what it is. It is our standard view—whether this...
matter in terms of specific cases came up in this afternoon’s discussions, I am not aware of it.

**Question:** Do you have a view on the violence in Gaza and West Bank?—occupation.....inaudible...

**Answer:** I don’t want to get into any specific cases at this stage- we have always called for peace in this area, we have always made it a point to say that anything that causes violence should be abjured, the cycle of violence must end.

(Later, the Spokesperson added that India like the rest of the international community (including NAM) subscribed to UNSC resolutions 242 and 338 on these issues.)

**Question:** When there is an agreement with Palestine, does that mean India is changing its position?…inaudible.

**Answer:** This is exactly what I am saying- there is a need to coordinate positions on terrorism. When you are in an international coalition, an international battle against terrorism and you have to move forward on a multilateral basis there is a need to understand each others positions, a need to understand where each side is coming from and then try to come to as close as we can on a matter which is an international concern. It’s no secret for you that there have been problems, definitional problems have beset these negotiations at a multilateral level. But now there is a greater need than ever to fight terrorism as a global scourge.

**Question:** Are you saying that there are differences between Palestine National Authority and India?

**Answer:** I am not getting into specifics on these issues. There could be a differences between any parties when you are translating these issues into a multilateral convention and trying to bring a large number of countries together to come up on a common idea of yes, terrorism must be abjured. Obviously there have been problems otherwise by now you would have had a Comprehensive Convention on counter terrorism at the UN. So we need to work with other countries on these issues and come closer. So we have agreed to have a greater coordination before the UNGA, just three weeks away. It is a natural idea that major issues are coordinated between countries and when you have a meeting at this level then this provides an excellent opportunity to prepare for the UNGA.

**Question:** Did the Palestine Foreign Minister brief on the current situation in Palestine?
Answer: He did share his perspectives of the recent developments and I am given to understand that he did give a briefing on that.

Question: How long was the meeting?

Answer: Meeting was for about two hours followed by the signing.

Question: Was Mr Sibal also there?

Answer: I don’t think so, I did not see him coming out of the meeting.

Question: They gave their perspective on Middle East peace process. What is our view on that?

Answer: I can brief you in detail later. I cannot give any more details in the context of today’s meeting. I do not think this is an occasion for a detailed briefing on the Middle East peace process.

Thank You

[Later the Spokesperson briefed press on the call of the Palestinian FM on the PM. PM had reiterated India’s support for the Palestinian cause and conveyed his greetings to President Arafat. He also conveyed to the Palestinian FM India’s decision to gift 12 Tata Safari vehicles to the PNA and Rs 10 million worth of medicines.]


New Delhi, August 29, 2003.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Palestinian National Authority and the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”;

Considering the spirit of cooperation that has traditionally existed between the two countries;

Desiring to promote greater cooperation between the two Parties,
especially by supporting the creation and development of the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and training of its personnel;

Have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**

The two Parties shall cooperate in mutually agreed areas of activity, which may include:

1. Exchange of information on structure and content of training programmes for diplomats;

2. Identification of experts in the areas needed by either of the two Parties;

3. Provision of Indian trainers, and training opportunities by the Foreign Service Institute to the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

4. Joint research in mutually agreed areas;

5. Advising and consulting support to the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Article 2**

The two Parties shall exchange information and publications on training programmes, curricula of studies and other activities of common interest.

**Article 3**

The two Parties shall promote the exchange of experts, scholars and diplomatic trainees.

**Article 4**

The two Parties shall encourage coordinated research on the subjects of mutual interest.

**Article 5**

The two Parties shall decide the specifics and logistics of every project they undertake together. For this purpose, a protocol laying down the financial terms and conditions of the proposed exchanges will be concluded, if necessary.
Article 6

This agreement of cooperation shall enter into force on signature and shall remain in force for a period of three years, automatically renewed for similar three year period at a time, unless terminated by any one party by giving a written notice of 90 days.

In Witness Whereof, the undersigned, being duly authorised by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement and affixed their seals.

Done at New Delhi on this 29th day of August 2003, in two originals each in Hindi, Arabic and English languages, all texts being equally authentic.

Minister of State
Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India

Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Palestinian National Authority

277. Statement by Ambassador V. K. Nambiar Permanent Representative at the UN on the situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian Question in the Security Council.


Please see Document No. 459
278. Statement by Saleem Iqbal Shervani Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN in the 10th Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly on illegal Israeli Actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.


Please see Document No. 479

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279. Statement by Aneil Mathrani Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN in the Regular Session of the UN General Assembly on Agenda Item 38 : Question of Palestine.


Please see Document No. 499

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Syria

280. Special media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Syria.


Please see Document No. 413

✦✦✦✦✦
281. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet hosted by Syrian President Bashar Assad.


Thank you for your warm words, and for the care, attention and hospitality, which my delegation and I have received here. We appreciate the special honour you have extended to us by accommodating our visit in this holy month of Ramazan.

It is a pleasure for me to visit this ancient land, after a gap of twenty four years. I see this as a continuation of our historical interaction, which has left its mark on the culture and traditions of both our countries. In the present day, India and Syria seek to achieve similar goals of modernization and national development.

Mr. President, During my visit, we have shared perceptions and experiences on our bilateral engagement and global issues. Our broad similarity of outlook gives us the opportunity of crafting a contemporary relationship for the present and future, drawing inspiration from our past.

Our discussions today, and the agreements we have signed, have shown that both our countries are ready to develop new areas of cooperation to exploit the potential created by the new economic environment.

We can now move decisively to create durable partnerships in specific areas of complementarities, like infrastructure, energy exploration, and services. The presence of Indian oil companies in Syria, and the establishment of concrete symbols of our partnership in biotechnology and information technology are pointers in the right direction. We can build on the many synergies between our two economies to promote investment flows.

With commitment to these objectives, we can build a new and expanded relationship, on the foundation of the existing mutual goodwill and exploiting objective economic opportunities.

Syria and India also have shared concerns on the volatile situation in this region. We welcome the persistent efforts to create a lasting solution to the age-old problems of the Middle East. We have consistently called for a comprehensive and lasting peace based on full implementation of

Mr. President, In times such as these, friends must meet and regularly consult with each other. I am happy that you have accepted my invitation to visit India in the near future. I look forward to continuing our fruitful dialogue on bilateral and global issues.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I request you to join me in a toast:

- to the health of President Assad;
- to the continues peace and prosperity of the Syrian people;
- to India-Syria friendship.

Thank you.

282. Speech of Prime Minister at the inauguration of Syrian National Biotechnology Centre.


“Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here today with the president of the Syrian Arab Republic at the inauguration of the National Biotechnology Centre. This Centre symbolizes the transition of India-Syria relations from its traditional roots to the contemporary age. One of the elements of the knowledge revolution of our era is the way in which advances in biotechnology have contributed to accelerated growth and development.

Humankind has a lot to benefit from biotechnology. Its discoveries and techniques are of crucial value to developing countries. It provides them with powerful tools to increase agricultural production, fight dreaded diseases, combat nutritional deficiencies, and protect the environment.

However, the development of biotechnology products is knowledge-based and capital-intensive. It involves extensive research and development. There is therefore an obvious logic for developing countries
to share experiences and research findings in the effort to develop the most cost-effective technology multiplier. Through scientific partnerships and alliances, our countries can create value-addition to innovation and commercialize technologies for products which increase human welfare.

India and Syria have already been sharing expertise in this field, training scientists and building capacities through programmes at the institutional and national level. It is this interaction, which has culminated in the establishment of this national biotechnology centre.

The Executive Work Plan which we have signed this morning has a five-year road map for further bilateral cooperation in this sphere, through increased institutional collaboration for joint research activities, and exchange of scientists and technical information.

To effectively implement this comprehensive Work plan, I am happy to announce that India will extend a grant of one million dollars to the national Biotechnology Centre of Syria. I hope this will help the Centre to establish a state-of-the-art facility. Such a facility would not only benefit the people of Syria, but also contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all people in the region. It would also be a powerful demonstration of the immense peaceful and developmental applications of biotechnology.

Thank you.
In the restricted meeting, among the issues discussed was the bilateral relationship. The President of Syria expressed his great happiness at the visit of the Indian Prime Minister. He repeatedly referred to the fact that they looked up to India more than any other country as a role model for the countries of the South. He said that India and Syria achieved their independence about the same time – Syria in 1946, India in 1947. He felt that in all these years India has come into the category of developed countries and, therefore, the developmental model that India has followed is far more relevant to the countries of the South generally and Syria in particular. He felt that India has played a very important role globally, will continue to play a very important role globally. According to the President’s thinking, he felt that China, Russia, the European Union, and India have to lead the rest of the world in solving the problems that the world is facing.

From his side the Prime Minister of India thanked the President for having received the Prime Minister and his delegation in the month of Ramadan. He agreed that our bilateral relationship has been very warm and friendly but there was need to add more substance to this relationship especially in the economic field. I will come to that a little later because there was some more discussion on the economic matters at the delegation-level talks.

The Prime Minister of India went on to tell the President that the situation in West Asia was a matter of great concern for India. He assured the President that India’s position on the Middle East peace has not changed; that we are fully with the Palestinian cause, that India had consistently called for a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace based on the relevant Security Council Resolutions and the land for peace formula. He also reiterated India’s position about the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian cities and other occupied lands. He went on to say that we had made our position on this issue clear to the Israeli Prime Minister when he visited India two months ago. The Prime Minister went on to add that India did not believe that violence and counter-violence can lead to the solution of a problem; and that heightened violence in this region will only delay the peace process.

The Syrian President thanked the Prime Minister for his views and agreed with them, especially with the Prime Minister’s statement that violence and counter-violence was counter-productive, and emphasized that Syria stood for a peaceful resolution of this issue.
Views were exchanged with regard to Iraq also because Syria is a neighbour of Iraq. Here again there was agreement that sovereignty needed to be reposed in the people of Iraq.

At the delegation-level talks, satisfaction was expressed by both sides that the Joint Trade Committee has been upgraded to the level of a Joint Commission headed by the Commerce Minister from our side, and the Minister for Education and Science and Technology from their side. This was an understanding that we had reached when I had visited Syria in early August.

The Prime Minister from his side suggested some areas where there could be cooperation between Syria and India. These include the area of hydrocarbons, railways, power generation and transmission, agriculture, IT and biotechnology.

The Prime Minister also announced a line of credit for Syria of 25 million US dollars, and a grant of one million US dollars for the Syrian National Biotechnology Centre.

In the discussions in which the Syrian Ministers participated, there was discussion with regard to collaboration in the area of fertilizers because we import rock phosphate from them. Irrigation was suggested by the Syrian side because they are thinking in terms of a modern irrigation system, and they felt that India could help them in organizing this modern irrigation system. Then, they wanted Indian investment in the manufacture of tractors. In IT there was emphasis on collaboration in hardware sector, particularly production of computers and on outsourcing. On agriculture, emphasis was on processing and increased production.

After the talks were over, we signed a total of nine agreements. The list of the nine agreements will be made available to you along with a brief write-up on what each agreement consists of. We have signed an agreement on exchange programme in the field of education. Of course, the biotechnology agreement has been signed. We signed an agreement on mutual cooperation in the small-scale sector, a cultural cooperation agreement between the Arab Writers Union and the Sahitya Academy of India, a cultural exchange programme, an MoU in the field of agriculture and allied sectors, an MoU on the programme of science and technology, IT, and an MoU on technical cooperation.

All in all, this visit of the Prime Minister is extremely important both from the point of view of the further strengthening of our bilateral
relationship as well as a measure of our continued support to the Arab world in general and Syria and Palestine in particular. The Prime Minister has invited President Assad to visit India. He has gladly accepted the invitation, and agreed to visit India very soon. Dates will be fixed through diplomatic channels.

We have agreed to set up a Group of Experts from both sides to look at the long-term complementarities of the two economies so that we could prepare a medium and long-term programme of economic cooperation considering that Syria was very interested in investments from India. A separate Group of Experts consisting of three experts from each side in the hydrocarbons sector will be set up. The three experts will represent (1) oil, (2) gas, and (3) the petrochemical sector generally. These three people from each side will meet to discuss cooperation in the area of hydrocarbons.

**QUESTION:** India has supported Syria on all its concerns whether it is Palestine issue, condemning Israel, etc. We have offered them loans also. You have not said anything about issues of concern to India. Has terrorism been discussed? Has Kashmir been discussed? Has there been discussion on the Jihadi elements coming from there? Agreements relating to fertilizers, etc., are all right. But what has India got in the context of important issues of concern to India?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** We did not come here to ask for something. I want to make one thing clear that we do not go around pleading. When we talk to the world leaders, we do not every time talk from a position of weakness to say, ‘See, Pakistan is troubling us’. India is capable of dealing with whatever is happening from Pakistan, and India is dealing with it too. It is not India’s policy to go around the world making appeals.

**QUESTION:** Has terrorism been discussed?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** Neither they raised the issue of Pakistan nor we. Terrorism was discussed. Syria condemns terrorism as we do.

**QUESTION:** Did President Assad from his side convey some type of apprehension of the Arab world about India’s growing ties with Israel or any type of doubts about India’s support to the Arab world?

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER:** I have made it very clear right in the beginning as to what the Prime Minister said. That was, as I mentioned, a
matter of great satisfaction for President Assad. He was fully satisfied with what the Prime Minister said. I just told you what the Prime Minister said. There was no further discussion on that.

QUESTION: Did the issue of US economic sanctions come up?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: They did not raise it. We did not raise it.

QUESTION: You referred to Palestine. The Prime Minister has previously condemned the Israeli attack outside Damascus publicly. Did the issue of Israel’s threatening posture towards Syria figure? Specifically, was there any comment by the Prime Minister on the issue of the Golan Heights?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: When the Syrian President was saying his words of welcome for the Prime Minister, he thanked him for what the Prime Minister had said when the Israeli attack on the outskirts of Damascus had taken place. When we talk of occupied territories, that includes Golan Heights. India has been consistently of the view that Israel has to vacate the occupied lands. So, it did not have to be reiterated again and again. It was sufficient for the Prime Minister to say that India was in favour of withdrawal of Israel from the occupied lands. The question of the situation in this region did come up and it was discussed. We exchanged views.

QUESTION:... Inaudible ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: It did not figure today in our discussions.

QUESTION: On Iraq, since Syria is a key country in the region, is there anything which President Assad may have told us about his views on the situation in Iraq?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I mentioned to you that broadly we agreed that there was need for early return of sovereignty to the Iraqis themselves. That is where it was left.

QUESTION:... Inaudible ...

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: These specific details will be talked about by both sides. This is a credit line which has been announced by the Prime Minister in the course of his visit today. But Syria will have to formulate its needs and then we will discuss it with them.
QUESTION: Any specifics about the IT cooperation, any Indian firms involved?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: This is what was agreed that in view of Syrian interest, and the personal interest of the President, definitely during the Joint Commission meeting, which will be early next year, or even before that there will be discussion between Indian firms and Syrian firms.

QUESTION: There was some speculation that India might sign an agreement with Syria through ONGC Videsh for exploration and production of oil and gas.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: I do not know where this speculation arose from. Such an agreement was not on the cards in this trip. But ONGC Videsh is already in touch with Syrian companies. It has already in that Block 24…

AMBASSADOR: Block 24 has already been agreed to by the two countries. They are still negotiating on the final contours of that Block between the OVL and the SPC, the Syrian Petroleum Company. ONGC Videsh is quite hopeful that they will be able to get that contract. That is why we have decided to set up this Hydrocarbons Committee, to explore more areas where - as we have been doing in Sudan and other places - we could look at this region also for exploration of oil and gas. So, that contract is very much sort of on line but not signed today in front of the Prime Minister. It is between ONGC Videsh and SPC. You are right.

QUESTION: If I can just ask a follow-up, given India’s growing relationship with Israel, was there any suggestion from the Syrian side that we should ask them to exercise restraint in their dealings with the Syrians?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: No, they did not ask us to intermediate or mediate. We have no such desire either. But I think - this is something which I had mentioned earlier - that there is far greater concern on our side on India-Israel relationship than there is perhaps in the Arab world.

QUESTION: Prime Minister’s visit comes at a time when the US Congress has passed some further sanctions against Syria. How do we expect America to see this visit and our growing closeness and economic cooperation with Syria?

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER: Every mature nation looks at its
relationship with another nation in the context of that particular relationship, unless it impinges directly in any manner on that bilateral relationship. I am quite sure that not only the US but also everyone else will take the India-Syria relationship, or India-Arab world relationship, in the same manner in which we take their relationship with other countries.

Thank you.

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284. Joint Statement issued on the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Syria.


1. At the invitation of the President of Syria H.E. Dr. Bashar Al-Assad, the Prime Minister of India H.E. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, paid a State visit to Syria on November 14-16 2003. The visit helped in establishing deeper understanding between the leaderships and renewed old historical links between the two countries.

2. Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee was accompanied by Minister of External Affairs of India, the National Security Advisor and a delegation comprising of senior officials from important Ministries.

3. During the visit, Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee had one to one meeting with President Dr. Bashar Al-Assad and held talks with Prime Minister Eng. Mohammad Naji Al-Otri and Cabinet Ministers.

4. In his meeting with President, Prime Minister had a cordial and comprehensive exchange of views on a wide range of important bilateral, regional and international issues, in a way that reflects the deep historical relations between India and Syria.

5. During the discussions, both sides expressed their satisfaction at the steady and comprehensive growth in bilateral relations. They, however, emphasized that enormous potential for further bilateral cooperation needed to be tapped for mutual benefit. They committed themselves to further strengthening and expanding their bilateral cooperation, especially in political, economic, commercial, cultural and science & technology sectors.
6. In the presence of the President Dr. Bashar Al-Assad and Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee, the following documents\(^1\) were signed:-

i. Executive Programme for Cultural Cooperation,

ii. Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in Information Technology and Services,

iii. Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and Allied Sectors,

iv. Memorandum of Understanding on Technical Cooperation,

v. Exchange Programme in the field of Education,

vi. Cultural Cooperation Agreement between the Arab Writers Union in Syrian Arab Republic and the Sahitya Academy in India,

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1. The following are the details of the documents signed:

**Agreement on Mutual Co-operation Between National Small Industries, India and Syria**

National Small Industrial Corporation, India a premier Public Sector Organisation is engaged in promoting and assessing growth of SSIs since 1955 by providing technical, financial and market support apart from facilitating international business partnerships in the small scale sector. Recognising the need for the SSI in Syria to modernize and be competitive, NSIC and SSI organisation of Syria have agreed to mutually carry out feasibility studies to identify thrust areas for the development of SSIs in Syria along with, facilitating technological transfer, enterprise to enterprise contact, technical workshops and seminars to promote Indian technology, investment from India for specific industrial projects for industrial partnership in Syria. Both countries will exchange and disseminate information on goods, services and hold trade exhibitions/ fairs in each country.

**MOU between the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Department of Technology) of The Republic of India and the Ministry of Higher Education of the SAR on Cooperation in Information Technology and Services**

Department of IT and The Ministry of Education, Syria have agreed to setup a Working Group on IT to realize the existing potential in IT sector between the two countries in more focused and comprehensive manner. The focus will be on IT software, e-commerce, information security, IT-related education and IT-enabled services. Working Group will undertake the activities related to the exploration, identification, implementation and finance in IT sector. It will promote joint training programmes, seminars, joint ventures in IT hardware and software and various exchange programmes between the two countries.


Pursuing further the agreement between the Department of Science & Technology and Syria Arab Republic of Feb 16, 1978, and taking note of MOU signed on July 27, 2000 on co-operation in the fields of S&T, both sides have agreed on the broad subject areas of joint co-operation in science policy, technical policy, biotechnology, information technology, R&D, industrial linkages and commercialization of technology transfer.
vii. Agreement of Mutual Cooperation between National Small Industries Corporation, India and Ministry of Industry of Syrian Arab Republic,

viii. Executive Work Plan: Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of Republic of India and the Ministry of Higher Education, Syrian Arab Republic, and

ix. Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology.

The two sides hoped that these documents would further enhance the bilateral legal and institutional framework and boost their cooperation in respective sectors.

7. Both sides agreed to hold periodic consultations between the two governments on topical issues. Both sides also agreed to increase the frequency of bilateral visits by Ministers and officials and to consolidate the ties between business communities of the two countries. People-to-people relations will also be encouraged, in order to increase and deepen understanding between the societies.

Both sides have agreed to establish an Indo-Syrian Joint Working Group for determining the areas of mutual interest and co-operation and further for implementation of joint activities and monitoring and review of the same. JWG will meet annually alternatively in India and Syria.

Apart from this, bilateral joint technical workshops, training programmes, annual science conference and exchange of scientists and research workers will be undertaken. The exploratory visit for the scientists will be held for 40 man-weeks per annum and bi-lateral exchange of scientists for 30 man-weeks per annum.

The possibility of training of Syrian scientists in reputed Indian institutes and affiliation of Indian experts with Syrian organisation, twining of Indian institutes with Syrian institutes will also be explored.

Executive work plan between department of Biotechnology, Government of India & The Ministry of Higher Education, Syrian Arab Republic

Department of Bio-Technology, Government of India and Ministry of Higher Education, Syrian Arab Republic have agreed on an Executive Work Plan (EWP) for the period of 5 years (2003-2008). The principle objective of the EWP is to facilitate and broaden opportunities for co-operation between the two countries in the field of bio-technology including strengthening of R&D activities of Syrian National Biotechnological Center, exchange of scientific and technological information, joint Research Programme in the areas of agriculture, biotechnology, animal biotechnology, medical biotechnology, microbial biotechnology, environmental biotechnology and bio informatics.

On Syrian request, Indian side would send one eminent expert with two visits of one week per annum to Syria for scientific and managerial
8. In view of the potential for cooperation in the Hydrocarbon sector, both sides decided to set up a Joint Hydrocarbon Committee, having three representatives from each side. This Committee will be mandated to suggest specific projects for joint cooperation in the Hydrocarbon sector within a specified timeframe. The two sides agreed to consider setting up an Institute of Petroleum with the assistance of the Government of India.

9. Both sides reviewed their economic and commercial cooperation and identified fields such as Biotechnology, Information Technology, hydrocarbons, Railways, Education and Agriculture where existing complementarities could be exploited for mutual benefit. They agreed to encourage the private and public sectors to expand the scope of mutual trade and investments.

10. Prime Minister of India also announced a Credit Line of US$ 25 million (US Dollar twenty five million) for development of bilateral trade. The announcement of credit line by India for the purpose of boosting bilateral trade was welcomed by Syria. Both sides agreed to double the bilateral trade by 2005 and decided to identify priority areas for this purpose.

11. Both the governments noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in bilateral cooperation in biotechnology sector. The establishment of Syrian National Biotechnology Centre at the University of Damascus with Indian assistance will further enhance their peaceful cooperation in this vital field. Both sides will undertake joint projects for mutual benefit. Indian Prime Minister announced a special grant of US$ 1 million to assist implementation of the agreed programme of cooperation and make the Centre an institute of excellence.

12. The two delegations held an in-depth exchange of views on the emerging international and regional security environment. Both sides condemned all acts of terrorism, of which they have been victims. Both delegations agreed that terrorism should not be linked to any religion and no attempt be made to tarnish any religion in the name of terrorism.

13. Syria welcomed the initiative taken by the Prime Minister of India aimed at fostering friendship and good-neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan. Syria supported resolution of India-Pakistan issues bilaterally through dialogue based on the Simla Agreement of 1972 and the Lahore Declaration of 1999. Both sides
supported strong cooperation for combating international terrorism according to the international law and the stand of the Non Aligned Movement taken in this regard.

14. India and Syria called for the establishment of a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East. The Prime Minister reiterated India’s principled support for the Palestinian and Syrian causes and for the legitimate rights and aspirations in the framework of the UN Security Council Resolutions No. 242, 338, 1397 and 497 as well as the “land for peace” principle. The Prime Minister also reiterated India’s view that the cycle of violence and counter-violence must end. In this context, he emphasized that action against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria, as happened last month, is not acceptable.

15. Both sides had a convergence of view on Iraq and felt that it was imperative that the people of Iraq should be empowered to determine their own future to rebuild their nation. Both sides also agreed that the UN had a crucial role to play in the process of political and economic reconstruction of that country. The immediate priorities in Iraq are ensuring security and stability, restoration of basic facilities and infrastructure, and a road map for the political process towards a representative government.

16. Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee thanked President Dr. Bashar Al-Assad for the cordiality and hospitality extended during the State visit and conveyed his good wishes to the leadership and people of Syria on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan. Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee invited President Dr. Bashar Al-Assad to visit India. President Dr. Bashar Al-Assad accepted this invitation with pleasure.

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285. Statement to the Indian media by Prime Minister at the end of his visit to Syria and other countries.


Please see Document No. 425

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Tajikistan

286. Address by External Affairs Minister to the Tajik National State University.


Excellencies, Distinguished Rector, Members of the Faculty, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am truly delighted to be here with you in your wonderful University.

I have been in Tajikistan for less than a day, but already I feel at home. That feeling is natural, because of a long history of friendship between our people. Our way of living, the strong family bonds, a secular and liberal outlook, have all drawn us close together through the previous centuries. That imprint of friendship clearly shines through in the manner we relate to each other.

We in India have heard of your magnificent Pamir Mountains and mighty rivers from the time of the Silk Road. Our traders who travelled through the Silk Road brought us fascinating accounts of Tajikistan. I wanted to cross the magnificent Himalayas, see the stark beauty of Hindukush, and then salute your Pamirs; the very rooftop of the World. And I wanted to reach Tajikistan in two hours.

But in today’s age, when communication has diminished distance, I had to travel the extra few thousand miles to reach you. Because sometimes politics can elongate distances.

This long journey gave me the time to reflect, to wonder over your trials and your troubles. I am conscious that for a full five years from 1992 onwards, the people of Tajikistan had to live in dark shadows and
gloomy times, with fears of what might happen the next day. A lot of what happened during the civil war in Tajikistan was unleashed from that epicenter of terrorism in our neighbourhood. A neighbour which has adapted cross-border terror as an instrument of state policy. Terror reached across Hindukush to trouble your tranquility.

But terror always fails in the long run. Tajikistan has come out successfully from its trial, with its ideals intact. In the process, you have no doubt suffered, but it has strengthened your democracy. That, in the ultimate analysis, is the test of democracy. Even as democracy is vulnerable to acts of terror, it has the resilience to stand its ground.

I am glad that the people of Tajikistan have given a fine example of the strength of democracy. I would like to congratulate you all on your perseverance, patience and for the triumph of your principles. While we celebrate your achievements, I would also like to share with you the conviction of people of India that together we can work for peace and stability in the entire region.

India wishes its friends in Central Asia well. And it wishes to contribute to a very prosperous tomorrow for all of you.

My long journey also gave me time to think of India’s own struggles. I'll start from the time before our independence. We were engaged for the first part of the twentieth century in our freedom struggle. It was an unequal fight. Mahatma Gandhi and millions of Indians were engaged in a peaceful struggle against the mightiest Empire on earth.

An Empire which claimed that Sun never sets on it. But an Empire whose Colonies lamented that the Sun of Happiness had stopped rising for them. We wanted to get out of that darkness of oppression. It was a time when the most basic of human rights were denied to a vast majority of the World; a time when people did not have the fundamental choice of determining their way of life.

We carried on struggling patiently. And we did so resolutely. The Indian nation made huge sacrifices then. Thousands died. Finally, our Sun rose above the horizon. It promised liberty on 15th August 1947. India was to become independent all over again. The Colonizers promised to sail home. But it was a flawed dawn.

India was arbitrarily slashed into two. Migration and murder followed. Millions were uprooted. At least a million died. Our people continue to
suffer the wounds of that bitterness. But India’s tolerance, that concept of treating the World as one large family, provided the balm.

Since then the wounds may have healed, but memories linger. Of needless destruction and avoidable deaths.

So on 15th August 1947, we had two choices. First, we had an enormous task of national development. We could have, ostrich like, shut ourselves to the outside World and engaged ourselves selfishly and single-mindedly to our own national tasks, to pursuing the economic greed of our prosperity.

We could have done so regardless of what went on in the rest of the deprived World! Because even in 1947, Colonialism had a huge Empire. Countries and populations across the World continued to live in shadows; under the dark veil of racism and segregation. With the passage of time, these terms sound unreal. Almost unbelievably so now. But, in 40s and through most of the 50s, they were daily reminders of a different, deprived way of life.

India decided against the first option. Its traditions did not let it adopt the easy ostrich like option. So, it chose the morally right but difficult second option. That of helping others. It championed the cause of the colonized and the suffering. India’s was a lonely voice then. But it was a loud and principled voice, and India insisted that the destiny-makers of the World should hear and heed it.

Gradually, India’s World vision began to emerge; a vision where all countries were equal and all people could choose freely. A vision which required dignity of life on equal terms. Slowly, but surely, the colonies were consigned to history. Independence blossomed all over the World; assertively and happily.

This was also a time when development was an experiment. It was a process of growth and learning. We stumbled along the way like others must have. But we learnt by experience, and we persisted. As we did so, we found new technologies. Technologies suitable to our needs. Technologies which could have been useful to other developing countries too.

Once again, we chose the path of sharing. Our ITEC Programme, the programme of cooperation, was set up to share our developmental
experience and our resources. We have become richer because we distributed. And we have the satisfaction for having shared; content that we could bring smile at least to some, across the World.

Nonalignment was another manifestation of the same desire. It was not an act of passivity. It was a desire for balance, for non-interference, and for independence of action. For most of 60s and 70s, we and others chose to walk together along this path. Our unity gave us strength. It also gave us ideas for economic cooperation. I think the time has come again for us to view its meetings with a renewed sense of purpose. New challenges have emerged. New directions have to be found against terror which wounds the borders, and strikes the innocent.

Nineties have also seen an altogether new harvest in India. Some call it a super bumper harvest. If once people identified oil boom with Gulf, today the frontiers of technology are being crossed repeatedly in India. IT, they say, is India.

Now, in this new IT age, we need a new agenda. An agenda for the 21st century. An agenda which spreads knowledge and shares prosperity. India stands ready to contribute.

From April this year, India would have a Focus Central Asia programme. Economic activities would be the high point of this programme. We wish to bring out the best, so that trade between Central Asia and India increases manifold. Not just in one direction, but in both directions.

We also are seriously looking at new modes of transport. Tajik Air would soon be flying to Delhi. This is a welcome development. Recently, India, Iran and Afghanistan, have decided to open a new sea and road route. Our goods will travel upto the Iranian Port of Chah Bahar. And from there through new roads in Afghanistan, the goods will travel to and from Tajikistan and other Central Asian countries. India is making 200 kms of this road which will be ready in two years time. I would like to call this the “Silk Road of Destiny”. A Silk Road which changes the destinies of our people with prosperity.

India would also like to share its strengths in technology to tap the huge resources of hydroelectricity in Tajikistan. We have built dams and power stations all over the World. We would happily do so for our friends in Tajikistan - because in sharing lies the positive action between nations. And that indeed, has been the message of India from ancient times.

India respects Tajikistan and wishes it well. In fact, our relations
were sketched out in a very fine poem by the great poet Bedil. He had said; Dilli Tajik Hindu Chun du Shami, Anjuman, Afrukht Ba Doghi In Du Shami, Anjuman Afroz, Bedil Sukht

“The heart of the Tajik and the Indians illuminated the World with twin flames. And in the flames of these two fires was glowing Bedil.”

It is with the feeling of similar warmth that I wish Tajikistan prosperity and happiness. I would also like to thank this fine University for giving me the honour today of sharing my thoughts with you. I wish it great success¹.

Thank you.

✦✦✦✦✦


The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, hereinafter referred to as “Parties”,

Bearing in mind the close and friendly relations between the two countries;

1. The Official Spokesperson Navtej Sarna in his media briefing in New Delhi on January 29 gave details of the other engagements of the EAM in Dushanbe. He said EAM had a 70 minute meeting with the Prime Minister of Tajikistan Mr. Akil Akilov and he also met at a lunch organised by the Ambassador, the Prime Minister, Cultural Minister and other Ministers of the Tajik Government. In the afternoon he was scheduled to meet the Defence Minister. High points of the discussion with the Prime Minister were the strong complementarities on the economic front. Possibilities of cooperation was discussed. (Tajikistan has one of the largest silver deposits and considerable potential for the generation of hydro electric power and in both these sectors India’s cooperation has been welcomed by the Tajik authorities as also joint ventures in other areas.) It was decided that an official level working group from the trade ministries from both sides would be set up that would report in the next two months on the possibilities of cooperation. Tajik-air was expected to start its flights soon to India and the CII was to expected to holding a consumer products ‘Made in India’ show in June in Tajikistan. It was decided that a Joint Business Council would be set up between the two countries.
Mindful of the dangers posed by the spread of terrorism and its harmful effects on peace, cooperation and friendly relations between States which may also jeopardize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States;

Recognising the need to prevent, eliminate and unequivocally condemn all acts, methods and practices of terrorism and deplore the impact of terrorism on the life, property, socio-economic development and political stability of countries and on international peace and security;

Recognising further the importance and the purpose of the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) on combating international terrorism;

Realising that the objectives of the Security Council Resolution 1373 can be achieved by mutual cooperation in a spirit of reciprocity within the framework of their respective domestic laws and regulations;

Have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**

Objectives

The Parties shall establish a Joint Working Group on International Terrorism with a view to:

(i) Share experience on combating international terrorism, organized crime and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (hereinafter referred to as “drug trafficking”) and their linkages;

(ii) Coordinate approaches to combat international terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking;

(iii) Exchange information on the activities of terrorist and organized criminal groups and their associates that may operate from or use the territories of the Parties;

(iv) Curb activities of terrorists and organized criminal groups and their associates, including those providing front or cover to individuals or groups engaged in the planning, promotion or execution of acts of terrorism against the Republic of India and/or the Republic of Tajikistan;
(v) Establish an institutional framework for such cooperation.

**Article 2**

**Scope**

The Joint Working Group shall;

(i) Consider the ways and means to enhance mutual cooperation in combating international terrorism pursuant to the Security Council Resolution 1373;

(ii) Seek to identify international linkages between groups that support terrorist activities and illicit trafficking in narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances. It will cover both State and non-State actors;

(iii) Examine procedures for exchange of operational intelligence in this area;

(iv) Suggest ways of enhancing mutual cooperation specially through;

(a) Arrest, extradition and prosecution of terrorists and their associates;

(b) Mutual technical assistance, *inter alia*, through training for police/security personnel and exchange of professional expertise;

(c) Identifying, monitoring and preventing the flow of financial resources to individuals and organizations engaged in terrorist activities.

(v) Examine ways of facilitating legal action to combat international terrorism, organized crime and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

(vi) Share experiences in areas of hijack termination, hostage rescue and protection of VIPs;

(vii) Join efforts aimed at preventing easy access to terrorist organizations, operating from either country of weapons of mass destruction;

(viii) Monitor and prevent money laundering indulged in by such individuals and groups;
(ix) Coordinate efforts with a view to early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism;

(x) Monitor the activities of Taliban, Al Qaida or any other terrorist or organized criminal group in Afghanistan and in Central Asia with a view to implement the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and in particular SCR 1267, 1333 and 1373;

(xi) Discuss ways of enhancing cooperation with the Interpol;

(xii) Address any other matter mutually agreed upon by the Parties.

Article 3

Cooperation in Multilateral Fora

(i) The Joint Working Group shall work towards coordinating and extending cooperation on matters relating to global campaign against terrorism in the United Nations and other specialized institutions;

(ii) Both Sides in the Joint Working Group shall also try to facilitate and assist each other in keeping the other Side informed of the important developments on this subject.

Article 4

Composition

(i) The Ministry of External Affairs will be the nodal agency on the Indian side responsible for the implementation of this agreement.

(ii) Similarly, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be the nodal agency on the Tajik side.

(iii) The nodal agencies of the respective Parties may have representatives from their Ministry of Home Affairs and other relevant agencies involved in counter-terrorism activities as well as those dealing with prevention of drug trafficking and money laundering.

Article 5

Modalities

(i) The Working Group shall meet at least once every year on mutually convenient dates. The venue of the meetings shall alternatively be in the Republic of India and the Republic of Tajikistan;
(ii) The Joint Working Group shall observe complete confidentiality in the conduct of its work;

(iii) Any confidential information provided by one Party pursuant to this Agreement shall not be passed on or disclosed to a third party without the express consent of the former Party;

Article 6

Duration

This Agreement shall come into force from the date of its signature and shall remain in force for a period of three years. Thereafter the Agreement shall be extended automatically for a similar period unless either Party gives to the other a written notice of its intention to terminate the Agreement at least six months before the expiry of its duration.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the following representatives being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments have signed this Agreement.

DONE at Dushanbe on Thursday the 30th day of January 2003 in two originals each in Hindi, Tajik and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of
The Republic of India

For the Government of the
Republic of Tajikistan

288. Special media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Tajikistan.


Please see Document No. 413
289. Remarks made to the media by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the joint press interaction with the President of Tajikistan. 


I thank the President for his warm words. I also thank the President and his Government for the warm reception and the gracious hospitality extended to our delegation.

We have just completed a wide-ranging discussion on our bilateral relations and the regional situation in a free and cordial atmosphere, as befitting a meeting between friends.

Ours is an ancient relationship, rooted in our historical traditions, common cultural inheritance and in geography. Our relationship in the present day is built on a shared commitment to democracy, secularism and the rule of law. We have common concerns in our region.

In the past few years, we have worked to raise our relationship to a new level. During President Rakhmonov’s visit to India two years ago, we signed a Joint Declaration on the principles of our mutual relations. The Joint Declaration we have signed today sets out the goals of our partnership in the coming years.

Our Governments are making efforts to promote people-to-people ties. We are happy that Tajikistan has opened its Embassy in Delhi last month. We have also recently established an Indian cultural center here. Air services between Delhi and Dushanbe have begun earlier this year. We have now offered Tajik Airlines the additional freedom to link Dushanbe and Kabul with Delhi, if the Afghanistan government agrees.

President Rakhmonov and I have agreed that the rapid development of our political relations must be matched by an equally vibrant economic partnership.

Trade can be raised to much higher levels. The “Made in India” exhibition, which the President and I will be visiting, should increase awareness of the possibilities.

India will be offering all the products at the exhibition to the Government of Tajikistan. We would like to see a similar promotion of Tajik goods in India. India will extend assistance to the Tajik Chambers of
Commerce to organize an exhibition of products from Tajikistan in India next year.

We have offered our Tajik friends an economic cooperation package worth about forty million dollars.

This includes waiving repayment of an outstanding Credit Line of five million dollars along with accumulated interest. It also includes a fresh grant of five million dollars, and a Credit Line of twenty five million dollars. Both the grant and the credit line can be used to implement mutually-agreed industrial and infrastructural projects.

We have also offered to extend assistance to the Military Training College in Dushanbe, for its infrastructure requirements.

We are cooperating well in the field of defence training. We have agreed to institutionalize contact between our armed forces in specialized areas.

My visit to Tajikistan is the first by an Indian Prime Minister since we established diplomatic relations. To continue developing our relations at this pace, we have agreed to maintain the frequency of interaction at all levels.

I have invited President Rakhmonov to India. We look forward to receiving him in New Delhi.


The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan Hereafter referred to singularly as the “Contracting Party” and collectively as the “Contracting Parties”,

CONSIDERING the interest of both countries to strengthen their friendly relations, and

DESIRING to facilitate the entry of the citizens of the Republic of India and the citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan Who are holders of diplomatic passports into their respective countries,

HAVE agreed as follows:

**ARTICLE 1**

1. A citizen of either Contracting Party, who is in possession of a valid diplomatic passport shall be permitted to enter into, exit from and transit through the territory of the other Contracting Party through their respective international points of entry without visas.

2. A citizen of either Contracting Party, holding the said passport shall be allowed to stay in the territory of the other Contracting Party for the maximum period of thirty (30) days of his/her official mission. This period may be extended by the relevant authorities of each Contracting Party beyond the said period.

**ARTICLE 2**

1. A citizen of either Contracting Party, who is assigned as a member of the diplomatic or consular staff in the territory of the other Contracting Party and in possession of a valid diplomatic passport shall not be required to obtain a visa to enter the territory of the other Contracting Party and shall be granted a residence visa for period of his/her official stay.

2. A citizen of one Contracting Party being the representative of his/her country in an international organization located in the territory
of other Contracting Party holding the said passport shall also enjoy the rights mentioned in paragraph-1 of this Article.

3. The facilities enumerated in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall also apply to the spouse of a member of the diplomatic Mission or Consulate and their children, provided they are holding a similar category of passport or the children’s names are entered in their father’s or mother’s passport.

**ARTICLE 3**

1. A citizen of either Contracting Party, who is in possession of a valid diplomatic passport and is attending a meeting or conference convened by an international organization or Government, which is held in the territory of the other Contracting Party, shall not be required to obtain a visa.

2. The holders of diplomatic passports of either Contracting Party who are employed by an international organization, body, agency or any other such entity, would be required to obtain visa prior to their travel to the territory of the other Contracting Party for official visits.

**ARTICLE 4**

1. Each Contracting Party reserves the right to refuse the entry into, or shorten the stay in its territory of any citizen of the other Contracting Party whom it may consider undesirable.

2. If a citizen of one Contracting Party loses his/her passport in the territory of the other Contracting Party, he/she shall inform the authorities concerned of the host country for appropriate action. The diplomatic Mission or Consulate concerned will issue a fresh passport or travel document to its citizen and inform the concerned authorities of the host Government.

**ARTICLE 5**

Citizens of either Contracting Party, being holders of diplomatic (and official dropped) passports shall abide by the laws and regulations of the other Contracting Party while crossing its frontier and throughout the duration of staying in its territory.

**ARTICLE 6**

1. For the purposes of this Agreement, each Contracting Party shall transmit to the other, through diplomatic channels, specimens of
its respective passports, including a detailed description of such documents, currently used, at least thirty (30) days before the entry into force of this Agreement.

2. Each Contracting Party shall also transmit to the other through diplomatic channels, specimens of its new or modified passports, including a detailed description of such documents, at least thirty (30) days before it is brought into force.

**ARTICLE 7**

Each Contracting Party reserves the right for reasons of security, public order or public health to suspend temporarily, either in whole or in part, the implementation of this agreement, which shall take effect thirty (30) days after notification has been given to the other Contracting Party through diplomatic channels.

**ARTICLE 8**

Either Contracting Party may request in writing, through diplomatic channels, a revision or amendment of all or part of this Agreement. Any revision or amendment which has been agreed to by the Contracting Parties shall come into effect on a date to be mutually agreed upon and shall accordingly form part of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE 9**

Any difference or dispute arising out of the implementation of the provision of the Agreement shall be settled amicably by consultation or negotiation between the Contracting Parties without reference to any third party or an international tribunal.

**ARTICLE 10**

This Agreement shall enter into force on a date to be mutually agreed upon by the Contracting Parties, which shall be notified through the exchange of Diplomatic Notes. This Agreement shall remain in force for an indefinite period and may be terminated by either Contracting Party by notification through diplomatic channels, which shall enter into force sixty (60) days after the date of such notification.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned being duly authorised by their respective Governments, have signed the present Agreement.


The Republic of India and the Republic of Tajikistan, hereinafter referred to as the “Contracting Parties”; Desiring to make more effective the cooperation of the two Parties in the suppression of crime by making further provision for the reciprocal extradition of offenders; Recognizing that concrete steps are necessary to combat terrorism; Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Obligation to extradite

1. Each Contracting Party undertakes to extradite to the other Contracting Party in the circumstances and subject to the conditions specified in this Treaty, any person who being accused or convicted of an extradition offence as described in Article 2 of this Treaty, committed within the territory of the Requesting Party, is found within the territory of the Requested Party, whether such offence was committed before or after the entry into force of this Treaty.

2. Extradition shall also be available in respect of an extradition offence as describe in Article 2 of this Treaty committed outside the territory of the Requesting Party but in respect of which it has jurisdiction, if the Requested Party would, in corresponding circumstances, have
jurisdiction over such an offence. In such circumstances the Requested Party shall have regard to all the circumstances of the case including the seriousness of the offence.

3. Extradition shall also be available for an extradition offence as described in Article 2 of this Treaty, if it is committed in a third State by a citizen of the Requesting Party and it bases its jurisdiction on the citizenship of the offender, subject to the provisions under Article 15 of the Treaty.

**Article 2**

**Extradition Offences**

1. An extradition offence for the purposes of the Treaty is constituted by conduct which under the laws of each Contracting Party is punishable by a term of imprisonment for a period of at least one year.

2. An offence may be an extradition offence notwithstanding that it relates to taxation or revenue or is one of a purely fiscal character.

**Article 3**

**Composite Offences**

Extradition shall be available in accordance with this Treaty for an extradition offence, notwithstanding that the conduct of the person sought occurred wholly or in part in the Requested Party, if this conduct and its effects, or its intended effects, taken as a whole, would be regarded as constituting the commission of an extradition offence under the laws of both the Contracting Parties.

**Article 4**

**Offences of conspiracy, incitement and attempt, and extra-territorial jurisdiction**

1. It shall be an offence under the laws of both the Contracting Parties for any person to abet, conspire or attempt to commit or incite or participate as an accomplice in the commission of, any extradition offence.

2. It shall also be an offence under the laws of both the Contracting Parties, for any citizen of a Contracting Party to commit any offence in any place beyond its territory.
Article 5

Grounds for refusal of extradition

1. A person may not be extradited if:

1.1 he is a citizen of the Requested Party; or

1.2 he satisfies the Requested Party that he might, if extradited, be prejudiced at his trial or be punished, by reason of his race, religion, nationality or political opinions; or

1.3 he satisfies the Requested Party that it would, having regard to all the circumstances, be unjust or oppressive to extradite him by reason of:

1.3.1 the expiry of the limitation-period for initiating the criminal proceedings under the legislation of the Requested Party or for execution of a sentence, or on other legal grounds;

1.3.2 the accusation against him having not been made in the interests of justice; or

1.4 the extradition is not permitted according to the laws of the Requested Party;

1.5 the offence of which he is accused or convicted is a military offence which is not also an offence under the general criminal law.

2. A person shall also not be extradited if in respect of the offence for which his extradition is requested, he has been previously proceeded against in the Requested Party, and convicted or acquitted.

3. The request for extradition may be refused by the Requested Party if the person whose extradition is sought may be tried for the extradition offence in the courts of that Party.

Article 6

Obligation to prosecute

1. Where the Requested Party refuses a request for extradition for the reason set out in paragraph 3 of Article 5 of this Treaty, it shall submit the case to its competent authorities for prosecution.

2. If the competent authorities decide not to prosecute in such a case, the request for extradition shall be reconsidered in accordance with this Treaty.
Article 7

Consequences of non-extradition of own citizens

If according to paragraph 1.1 of Article 5 of this Treaty, extradition is refused, the Requested Party shall initiate criminal prosecution against such person for the same offence according to its laws. For this the Requesting Party shall transfer to the Requested Party the relevant documents and evidence.

Article 8

Postponement of extradition & temporary extradition

1. If the person to be extradited is being prosecuted or serving sentence for another crime in the territory of the Requested Party, the extradition may be postponed till the end of the proceedings of the case, end of sentence or release, which shall be advised to the Requesting Party.

2. If the postponement of extradition can cause the expiration of the limitation or impede the investigation, the person can be extradited temporarily under a special request of the Requesting Party.

3. The temporarily extradited person must be returned to the Requested party immediately after the end of the proceedings of the case.

Article 9

Extradition procedures

1. The request for extradition shall be made through diplomatic channels.

2. The request shall be accompanied by:

2.1 The name and surname (petronym) of the person whose extradition is requested, information on his citizenship, place of residence or whereabouts and other pertaining data, as well as, if possible, the description of the person’s appearance, his photographs and fingerprints;

2.2 a statement of the facts of the offence for which extradition is requested; and
2.3. the text, of the corresponding law:

2.3.1. defining that offence; and

2.3.2. prescribing the punishment for that offence.

3. The request for extradition for the prosecution, besides the information specified above, must be accompanied by the warrant of arrest issued by a competent court or authority of the Requesting Party.

4. If the request relates to a person already convicted and sentenced, it shall also be accompanied by a certified copy of the judgement and a statement that the person is no longer entitled to question the conviction or sentence and showing how much of sentence has not been carried out;

5. If the Requested Party considers that the evidence produced or information supplied for the purposes of this Treaty is not sufficient in order to enable a decision to be taken as to the request, additional evidence or information shall be submitted within a reasonable time.

Article 10

Provisional arrest

1. In urgent cases a person may be provisionally arrested by the Requested Party, in accordance with its law, on the request of the competent authorities of the Requesting Party, made either through Diplomatic Channels or the National Central Bureau of International Criminal Police Organisation - INTERPOL, before the receiving of the request for extradition. The request shall contain an indication of intention to request the extradition of that person and a statement of existence of a warrant of arrest or a conviction against him; and if available, the data specified in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.3 of Article 9 of this Treaty and such further information, if any, as would be necessary to justify the issue of a warrant of arrest had the offence been committed, or the person been convicted, in the territory of the Requested Party.

2. A person arrested upon such a request shall be set at liberty upon the expiration of 60 days from the date of his arrest if a request for his extradition shall not have been received. This provision shall not prevent the institution of further proceedings for the extradition
of the person sought if a request for extradition is subsequently received.

**Article 11**

**Rule of specialty**

1. The extradited person may not without consent of the Requested Party, be prosecuted or punished in the Requesting Party for the offence other than that for which extradition has been granted and any lesser offence disclosed by the facts proved for the purpose of securing his extradition, nor may such a person, without consent of the Requested Party, be extradited to a third State.

2. The consent of the Requested Party is not required if:

2.1. the extradited person has not left, though had the opportunity, the territory of the Requesting Party within 30 days after termination of the criminal prosecution, serving of the sentence or release on any legal ground. Such period shall not be deemed to include the period of time during which the extradited person is unable to leave the territory of the Requesting Party for reasons beyond his control.

2.2. if the extradited person, once having left the territory of the Requesting Party, voluntarily returns there.

3. The provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article shall not apply to offences committed after the return of person to the Requesting Party or matters arising in relation to such offences.

**Article 12**

**Recognition of documents and evidence**

1. Documents issued or certified and statements recorded by competent Courts or other authorities in the prescribed form in the territory of one Contracting Party as per its laws shall not require any form of authentication in the territory of the other Contracting Party.

2. Documents considered as public in the territory of one of the Contracting Parties shall have the evidential force of public documents also in the territory of the other Contracting Party.
Article 13

Competing requests

If extradition of the same person whether for the same offence or for different offences is requested by a Contracting Party and a third State with which the Requested Party has an extradition arrangement, the Requested Party shall determine the State to which the person shall be extradited, and shall not be obliged to give preference to the Contracting Party.

Article 14

Capital punishment

If under the law of the Requesting party the person sought is liable to the death penalty for the offence for which his extradition is requested, but the law of the Requested Party does not provide for the death penalty for the same offence, extradition may be refused unless the Requesting Party gives such assurances as the Requested Party considers sufficient that the death penalty will not be carried out.

Article 15

Transfer

1. The modalities of transfer of the person to be extradited shall be agreed upon by the competent authorities of both the Contracting Parties as mutually convenient.

2. The Requesting Party shall take the person sought from the territory of the Requested Party within one month of the consent of Requested Party to extradite or such longer period as may permitted under the law of the Requested Party. If the person is not removed within that period, the Requested Party may refuse to extradite him for the same offence.

Article 16

Transfer of articles connected with crime

1. The Requested Party shall, within the limits of its legislation, transfer by the request of Requesting Party the articles used for committing crime by the person being extradited, articles bearing crime traces or crime proceeds.
2. The above articles shall be transferred also in cases when the extradition cannot be effected if the person died, fled or due to other reasons.

3. The Requested party may temporarily postpone the transfer of the articles referred to the paragraph 1 of this Article if they are required for proceedings instituted in connection with another criminal case till the end of such proceedings.

4. The rights of third persons to the articles transferred to the Requesting Party shall remain in force. Upon termination of the proceedings the Requesting Party shall return these articles to their owners in its territory. If the owners are in the territory of the Requested Party the articles are to be returned to it for the transfer to them. If the owners are in the territory of a third country the articles shall be returned to them by the Requesting Party without charge.

5. The transfer of the articles and of money shall be effected within the limits provided for by the legislation of the Requested Party.

Article 17

Mutual legal assistance in extradition

Each Contracting Party shall, to the extent permitted by its law, afford the other the widest possible measure of mutual legal assistance in criminal matters in connection with the offence for which extradition has been requested.

Article 18

Expenses on extradition

All expenses related to the extradition shall be borne by the Contracting Party in whose territory the same occurred. The expenses caused by the transit transportation of the extradited person by one of the Contracting Parties from a third State through the territory of the other Contracting Party shall be borne by the Contracting Party effecting the transit.

Article 19

Languages

While complying with the present Treaty, the Contracting Parties shall
use their national language attaching the translation in the national language of the other Contracting Party or in the English language.

**Article 20**

**International Conventions/Treaties**

The present Treaty shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Contracting Parties arising from other international Conventions/Treaties to which the Contracting Parties are signatories.

**Article 21**

**Ratification and termination**

1. This Treaty shall be subject to ratification and it shall enter into force on the date of exchange of the instruments of ratification.

2. Either of the Contracting Parties may terminate this Treaty at any time by giving notice to the other Contracting Party through the diplomatic channel; and if such notice is given the Treaty shall cease to have effect six months after the receipt of the notice.

In witness whereof the undersigned being duly authorized thereto by their respective Authorities, have signed this Treaty.

**Done** in duplicate at Dushanbe this 14 November 2003 in Hindi, Tajik, Russian and English languages, each version being equally authentic. In case of any interpretation difference, the English text shall prevail.

For the Republic of India

For the Republic of Tajikistan

✦✦✦✦✦
292. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the banquet hosted in his honour by President of Tajikistan.


Your Excellency, Mr. President,

My delegation and I thank you for your warm words and for your justly famous hospitality.

This is my first visit to your beautiful country. Tajikistan is a new country, but an ancient nation. I have spent less than a day here, but the extent of our cultural interaction is clearly visible.

These links date back to the days of Alexander the Great and the Kushan empire, and are practically as old as recorded history itself. The teachings and poetry of Sufi saints such as Amir Khusrau and Mir Sayyed Hamadani have forged an unbreakable bond between our cultures. From language, architecture and music to philosophy and even cuisine, there is much here which is very familiar to an Indian.

Mr. President, We are here to strengthen our bilateral relationship on the foundation of our historical associations and shared commitment to regional stability, democracy and secularism. I am happy to find an equal interest in Tajikistan for a multifaceted partnership with India.

We have agreed to sustain the rapid expansion of our bilateral relations. Over the last decade, we have already established excellent political relations and enduring cooperation for regional stability. There are still untapped complementarities between your resource-rich country and our technical capabilities.

The areas for potential interaction range from machine tools, food processing and consumer goods to hotels, hydroelectric power and road infrastructure. I hope the financial assistance which we have offered you can be used for mutually identified projects in some of these areas.

Mr. President, We have common perspectives on regional and international issues. We are both concerned by the effects of instability in our shared neighbourhood. We are aware that despite our successes in the recent past, the battle against terrorism and religious extremism is far from over. We need to remain vigilant to defeat terrorism and to stop those who support it in whatever form. India will continue to work closely with Tajikistan to achieve this vital objective.
Ladies and Gentlemen, I request you to join me in a toast:
To the health of His Excellency President Rakhmonov;
To the progress and prosperity of the friendly Tajik people;
To eternal friendship between India and Tajikistan.

Thank you.

✦✦✦✦✦

293. Joint Declaration on Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Republic of Tajikistan issued at the end of the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Tajikistan.


The Republic of India and the Republic of Tajikistan, hereinafter referred to as the sides,

RECALLING the historical affinity between the cultures and the traditions of their people,

RECOGNISING that they share the ideals of peace, democracy and secularism,

CONVINCED that cooperation between India and Tajikistan would further the cause of peace and security in Asia and globally,

SEEKING to establish qualitatively new and mutually beneficial relations in the political, economic, military, development cooperation and in other areas,

AGREE that:

The sides shall develop bilateral cooperation based on the universally recognized principles and norms of international law; respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the both states; non-interference in each other’s internal affairs and commitment to democratic values.
The sides affirmed that strengthened cooperation between the two countries is a positive factor for the maintenance of peace and stability. They also reaffirmed the importance of settling issues through peaceful dialogue.

The sides noted with satisfaction the formation of a Joint Working Group to combat international terrorism. They expect the group's work will aid cooperation in combating organized crime, money laundering, illegal trafficking in weapons, ammunitions and explosives, international terrorism and other trans-national threats. In this context, they reiterated that terrorism cannot be justified on any ground whatsoever. Terrorism is an attack on the human rights and civil liberties of the citizens of the world. It must be condemned unambiguously and eradicated wherever it exists. The sides also condemned the supporters of terrorism and those that finance, train or provide support for terrorists.

The sides were pleased to note the steady progress in defence exchanges and the intent to further intensify relations in this area in the future.

The sides noted with satisfaction the increased bilateral contacts and the frequency of exchanges at political and senior official levels between the two countries. The sides were pleased to note that India has opened cultural centre in Dushanbe and that its functioning since January 2003 has re-established the cultural bridges between the two countries. They also noted with satisfaction the commencement for the first time of direct flights between Dushanbe and New Delhi from 18 February 2003. The sides welcomed the establishment of the diplomatic mission of Tajikistan in New Delhi in October 2003. These measures are indicative of the mutual desire to promote greater people to people contact and bilateral exchanges.

The sides noted that the humanitarian cooperation has shown steady increase. They recalled the delivery of food aid worth US$ 5 million by India to Tajikistan is September-October 2003 and the placement annually on medium to long-term scholarships of nearly 70 Tajik students and professionals in India. They took note of the substantial progress in the plans to set up under Indian aid a Fruit-processing plant and an institute for Information Technology in Dushanbe.

The economic cooperation between the two sides is on increase. It was decided to help and promote this further though institutional
encouragement. Considering the vast hydro-electric potential of Tajikistan, it was felt that a beginning should also be made to cooperate in this sector. To encourage joint ventures and investment in Tajikistan, the Government of India has decided to extend a new package of economic assistance, including a line of credit.

The sides expressed readiness to widen cooperation in the fields of culture, mass media, sports and tourism. They also placed importance on cooperation in the fields of science and technology.

The Republic of India reiterates its support to the Republic of Tajikistan and its Government in its efforts at strengthening democracy and in promoting economic development.

The Republic to Tajikistan re-affirms its support to the efforts of the Republic of India, and its Government to promote and strengthen international peace and security, including mutual understanding and cooperation in South Asia.

The sides acknowledged the vital importance of the role of United Nations in promoting world peace, stability, and prosperity. They agreed that there is an urgent need to restructure and strengthen the UN Security Council to reflect the new international realities. The Tajik side, noting the role India plays in international affairs, supports India as an appropriate candidate for permanent membership in the expanded UN Security Council.

The sides also noted the progress being made by the Shanghai Corporation Organisation (SCO) as a regional body. Noting India’s geographical proximity and historical links with Central Asia, and its active participation on regional and global matters of cooperation, the Tajik side expressed its belief that India’s membership of SCO would add to the strength of that organization when it decides to take a new member.

The sides noted the positive development since the Bonn Agreement of December 2001, including the establishment of the Transitional Administration and the efforts towards a new Constitution and a strong, united, independent and sovereign Afghanistan free from interference from outside. They expressed concern at the challenges to security being mounted by the former Taliban and Al Qaeda elements with support from outside. They reiterated their determination to continue providing economic and other assistance to contribute to peace, stability and reconstruction in Afghanistan.
The Prime Minister of India thanked the President of Republic of Tajikistan for the warmth of reception and the hospitality extended to his delegation and to him. The Prime Minister of India invited the President of Republic of Tajikistan to visit India at an early date. The invitation was accepted with pleasure.

294. Statement to the Indian media by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the conclusion of his visit to Tajikistan.

November 16, 2003

Please see Document No. 425

United Arab Emirates

295. Media briefing by Ambassador K. C. Singh on the visit of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed AL Nahyan.

New Delhi, July 1, 2003.

Shri Navtej Sarna: We are joined by Mr. K.C. Singh, Ambassador of India to the UAE who is accompanying the visit of H.H Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chief of Staff of the UAE armed forces. I request the Ambassador to kindly brief you on the developments of today.

Shri K.C. Singh: Good Evening everybody.

I will just give you a background and come back to the programme today. This is the first time that we have set up a strategic dialogue with the UAE. We had one earlier with Oman. The idea of strategic dialogue is to raise to a level where there should be a framework for periodic high level consultations between the two countries because the leadership of the two countries felt that there had been a gap. The relationship is excellent.
Indian exports to the UAE last year crossed 3 billion US$. It is next only to our exports to USA. We have one million Indians living in UAE. Besides the remittance and the volume of trade we have good political and cultural links but the world has changed a lot. In the last three years we have seen a lot of changes and especially after 9/11 more changes have come. Then Afghanistan, now Iraq. It was felt that a framework is required where you cannot wait 2 or 3 years before political leaders consults. H.H Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan is the third son of Sheikh Zayed, the elder son of Sheikh Zayed is the Crown Prince, the second son the Deputy Prime Minister and the third son the Chief of Staff, but he is the de-facto National Security Adviser. He was accompanied by his brother who is the Cabinet Minister of Information and Culture Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and by the head of the Abu Dhabi Economic Department Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The first day’s meeting were with the Deputy Prime Minister in the morning within the confines of the cooperation that we have had in tackling transnational crimes and terrorism which is one of the components of this strategic dialogue. Then his delegation met the Indian delegation led by the External Affairs Minister which was followed by a working lunch. Today Sheikh Mohammad met the Prime Minister who made an exception to meet the UAE delegation in spite of all his programmes being cancelled due to health reasons. Shaikh Mohammad also carried a letter containing an invitation to the Prime Minister to visit the UAE. Following this there was a meeting with the Defence Minister and a signing of an agreement on Defence Cooperation. This itself is unprecedented because we don’t have this with any other GCC countries. This agreement provides a framework in which there can be unlimited cooperation ranging from joint exercises to more training slots to any other kind of technical or actual cooperation between the two countries. Both these framework, the framework for a strategic dialogue as well as military cooperation sets up a new architecture of relationship between India and the UAE. There was a good discussion with the Defence Minister covering specific areas of cooperation. There would be an exchange of teams to discuss these subjects further. The delegation had a depth of almost the delegation which a head of government carries. Yesterday his brother Sheikh Hamed visited the Ranbaxy Research Centre in Gurgaon, Appolo Hospitals and National Small Scale Industry Corporation Headquarter where he was briefed on India’s competence in small and medium enterprise sector. He after that remarked that he was not aware of the kind of reach that India has in all these different areas. India also has faced a difficulty in the past
in the export of pharmaceuticals to UAE because there is a very stringent registration requirement and the one who can help with lifting those restrictions is Sheikh Hamed. So we are confident that after the visit, after a better understanding of the way the licensing is done in India and India’s strength in Pharmaceutical sector, it will open up this new segment of exports. It was mentioned both by Hon’ble External Affairs Minister as well as in other meetings that there should be specific targets even for exports. The other significant thing about the strategic dialogue is that it has been decided that it will be held annually so that there is a constant consultations between the leadership of the two countries.

**Question:** How would you assess the improvement of relations with UAE in the context of its weather relations with Pakistan?

**Shri K.C. Singh:** All weather can also be applied to their relationship with us. What you are implying is in terms of any military links or military relations that they might have had with Pakistan. The very fact that they have signed an agreement with India on military cooperation speaks for itself. I leave you to draw your own conclusions but it indicates the direction in which they would like the relationship to go.

**Question:** What about extradition treaties?

**Shri K.C. Singh:** We have three treaties. There is extradition, mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and one on civil matters. Treaties provide a juridical framework for tackling transnational crimes but the actual cooperation is always at an agency level. On that they had brought along people from their National Security Network. They were in touch with our Home Ministry officials and are working towards coming towards an arrangement of a joint working group at the agency level. There is ample evidence from the statements from the two sides in the meetings that there is a sheer desire to quickly set up such a working group. Extradition is a very long tedious process when you need to bring a criminal out, etc. Today the way crime is moving, which was discussed in the meetings today, that with telecommunications, networks, etc, transnational crimes can move at a lightening speed. Therefore, it is very essential for the agencies to remain in contact. As you know UAE have shown tremendous cooperation in extraditing criminals and this was mentioned by DPM in his meeting with Sheikh Mohammad that the kind of unprecedented deportations that India has been able to secure from UAE is something which is perhaps not available with any other country.
**Question:** It was one of the Dawood Ibrahim's brother who managed to escape to Pakistan. Do you think India will get better cooperation in future?

**Shri K.C. Singh:** I am glad you raised this. This was in December 2002. It happened after Ramadan when lot of UAE's senior leadership were out of the country. Shaikh Mohammad was in Turkmenistan, Sheikh Mohammad of Dubai was in Jordan.... Anees Ibrahim case was treated a little differently by Dubai because it's an old case. In regard to that case they had earlier also applied their mind before we had a treaty apparatus. Obviously there was a decision which was taken at some level in Dubai. Subsequently we explained to them that they have a treaty obligation, there was some lack of communication in that, etc. What happened after that was a series of deportations including some of the close associates of Dawood Ibrahim. So that itself indicates that there was self correction that took place after we had a discussion with them. There was an aberration and this needed to be rectified.

**Question:** Just as India wanted lot of criminals from UAE, UAE also wants lot of criminals from India....

**Shri K.C. Singh:** I am happy you raised this. We need to correct the impression on this. The extradition treaty does not provide for the extradition of our own nationals. UAE does not have to extradite UAE nationals and India does not have to extradite Indian Nationals. But there is a concomitant responsibility to punish the individual in their respective countries for the crimes committed. So there is no such list of Indians who may be required. In the UAE constitution there are restrictions on their nationals being extradited and then on a reciprocal basis India also put in the same thing. So there is no question of an Indian being extradited. We may get Indians from there or third country nationals but not UAE nationals. Similarly likewise it does not apply to us.

**Question:** What sort of cooperation is expected in Defence?

**Shri K.C. Singh:** An agreement is always the beginning of a process. It is an open statement of intent. We have had some kind of cooperation in the past, we have had the visits of ships, we took part in ITEC 2003, we had Brahmos displayed there... We have also had separate flag flying visit of INS-Virat, INS Mumbai, etc. Indian ships have always been welcome there. They send each year an officer to the National Defence College (NDC). You can increase the range of that. They have indicated before the agreement that they would like to look at more courses for their officers in India.
**Question:** Does UAE require any Defence equipment from India?

**Shri K.C. Singh:** Let me put up this way. It should logically flow from this. There is no specific list at this moment. I would expect some urgent exchange of visits on this because this is at the highest level. So the exchange of visits will be at the operational level.

**Question:** inaudible

**Shri K.C. Singh:** It’s decided as part of the format that both countries will discuss bilateral relations, regional situation and any other global issue which impinges on the security of either countries or the security of the two regions.

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**Uzbekistan**

**296. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson regarding the discussions held by External Affairs Minister with the visiting Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan.**

*New Delhi, February 3, 2003.*

**Shri Navtej Sarna:** Good evening ladies and gentlemen. The delegation level talks between the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan and EAM just concluded. At the end of the delegation level talks, an agreement was signed between Uzbekistan and India to set up a Joint Working Group to counter International Terrorism. Uzbekistan thus become the third country in Central Asia with which we have signed this agreement; Kazakhstan earlier and recently during EAM’s visit to Dushanbe, Tajikistan and now with Uzbekistan.

The delegation level talks covered a wide range of issues, the entire gamut of bilateral relations as well as focal points of interest in international issues. Bilateral issues besides the issue of cooperating against the international terrorism, economic and trade issues were also discussed. Uzbekistan which currently has a credit line of US$ 10 m from India has requested for an extension of this credit line into the year 2003 and this was agreed to in principle. It was also felt that there should be more regular discussions and consultations not only at the political level
but also at the official level. Defence cooperation was also discussed as well as other projects that India could take up in Uzbekistan particularly following recent agreement with Iran and other Central Asian countries. One of the proposed areas of cooperation is in the road sector. CII is expected to have an Enterprise show in June 2003. The Joint Commission between the two countries is also expected to meet later this year. Mr. Kamilov also invited EAM to visit Uzbekistan later this year and the dates for this visit would be worked out through diplomatic channel. On the international issues, two areas which were discussed in detail were Afghanistan and Iraq. The two sides gave their appreciation of the internal situation prevailing in Afghanistan as well as possibilities of cooperation in the reconstruction efforts being carried out. Again one of the area of possible cooperation was construction of roads which would result in providing transit access to Central Asia besides the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan for India and would cut down distances by about 1500 Km from India to Central Asia, There was a commonality of views on Afghanistan and Iraq. Essentially, these are the points which were discussed. Mr. Kamilov is also calling on to President and Prime Minister and EAM will be hosting a dinner in honour of the Uzbek Foreign Minister. Total trade turnover between the two countries during the year 2001-2002 stood at US$ 23.8m.

New Delhi, February 3, 2003.

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, hereinafter referred to as “Parties”,

Bearing in mind the close and friendly relations between the two countries;

Mindful of the dangers posed by the spread of terrorism and its harmful effects on peace, cooperation and friendly relations between States which may also jeopardize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States;

Recognising the need to prevent, eliminate and unequivocally condemn all acts, methods and practices of terrorism and deplore the impact of terrorism on the life, property, socio-economic-development and political stability of countries and on international peace and security;

Recognising further the importance and the purpose of the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) on combating international terrorism;

Realising that the objectives of the Security Council Resolution 1373 can be achieved by mutual cooperation in a spirit of reciprocity within the framework of their respective domestic laws and regulations;

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Objectives

The Parties shall establish a Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism with a view to:

(i) Share experience on combating international terrorism, organized crime and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (hereinafter referred to as “drug trafficking”) and their linkages;
(ii) Coordinate approaches to combat international terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking;

(iii) Exchange information on the activities of terrorist and organized criminal groups and their associates that may operate from or use the territories of the Republic of India and/or the Republic of Uzbekistan;

(iv) Curb activities of terrorists and organized criminal groups and their associates, including those providing front or cover to individuals or groups engaged in the planning, promotion or execution of acts of terrorism against the Republic of India and/or the Republic of Uzbekistan;

(v) Establish an institutional framework for such cooperation.

Article 2

Scope

The Joint Working Group in accordance within its competence and the obligations of the Parties under other international agreements of which they are parties and the framework of the legislation of the States of the Parties shall;

(i) Consider the ways and means to enhance mutual cooperation in combating international terrorism pursuant to the Security Council Resolution 1373;

(ii) Seek to identify international linkages between groups that support terrorist activities and drug trafficking. It will cover both State and non-State actors;

(iii) Examine procedures for exchange of operational intelligence in this area;

(iv) Suggest ways of enhancing mutual cooperation specially through;

(a) Arrest, extradition and prosecution of terrorists and their associates;

(b) Mutual technical assistance, inter alia, through training for police security personnel and exchange of professional expertise;

(c) Identifying, monitoring and preventing the flow of financial resources to individuals and organizations engaged in terrorist
activities.

(v) Examine ways of facilitating legal action to combat international terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking.

(vi) Share experiences in areas of hijack termination, hostage rescue and protection of VIPs; as well as providing security for airports, railroad stations, subways and other public places;

(vii) Join efforts aimed at preventing easy access to terrorist organizations, operating from either country of weapons of mass destruction;

(viii) Monitor and prevent money laundering indulged in by such individuals and groups;

(ix) Coordinate efforts with a view to early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism;

(x) Monitor the activities of Taliban, Al Qaida or any other terrorist or organized criminal group in Afghanistan and in Central Asia with a view to implement the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and in particular SCR 1373;

(xi) Discuss ways of enhancing cooperation with the Interpol;

(xii) Address any other matter mutually agreed upon by the Parties.

Article 3

Cooperation in Multilateral Fora

(i) The Joint Working Group shall work towards coordinating and extending cooperation between parties on matters relating to global campaign against terrorism in the United Nations and other specialized institutions;

(ii) Both Sides in the Joint Working Group shall also try to facilitate and assist each other in keeping the other Side informed of the important developments on this subject.

Article 4

Composition

(i) The Ministry of External Affairs will be the nodal agency on the Indian side responsible for the implementation of this agreement;
(ii) The National Security Service will be the nodal agency on the Uzbek side responsible for the implementation of this Agreement;

(iii) The delegations of the Republic of India and the Republic of Uzbekistan to the meetings of the Joint Working Group on International Terrorism will be led by the officials of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs and the Uzbek Ministry of Foreign Affairs respectively;

(iv) The nodal agencies of the respective Parties may have representatives from their other relevant agencies involved in counter-terrorism activities as well as those dealing with prevention of drug trafficking and money laundering.

**Article 5**

**Modalities**

(i) The Working Group shall meet at least once every year on mutually convenient dates. The venue of the meetings shall alternatively be in the Republic of India and the Republic of Uzbekistan;

(ii) The Joint Working Group shall observe complete confidentiality in the conduct of its work;

(iii) Any confidential information provided by one Party pursuant to this Agreement shall not be passed on or disclosed to a third party without the express consent of the former Party;

(iv) The rank of delegates, agenda and dates of meetings shall be agreed through diplomatic channels preferably 30 days before the scheduled date of the meeting.

**Article 6**

**International Conventions/Treaties**

The present Agreement shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties arising from other international Conventions/Treaties to which the Parties are signatories.

**Article 7**

**Changes and Amendments**

(i) This Agreement may be amended or supplemented by the mutual
written consent of the Parties, through separate protocols which will be considered as its integral parts.

(ii) The protocols shall come into force on the basis of the procedure envisaged for the coming into force of this Agreement.

Article 8

Settlement of Disputes

Any dispute arising from the application or interpretation of the provisions of this agreement shall be resolved by the parties through consultations and negotiations.

Article 9

Duration

This Agreement shall come into force from the date of its signature and shall remain in force for a period of three years. Thereafter the Agreement shall be extended automatically for a similar period unless either Party gives to the other a written notice of its intention to terminate the Agreement at least six months before the expiry of its duration.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the following representatives being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments have signed this Agreement.

DONE at New Delhi the 3rd day of February 2003 in two originals each in Hindi, Uzbek and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of
The Republic of India

For the Government of
The Republic of Uzbekistan
298. Memorandum of Understanding between the Foreign Service Institute under the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the University of World Economy and Diplomacy under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Mutual Cooperation.

Tashkent, November 6, 2003.

The Foreign Service Institute under the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the University of World Economy and Diplomacy under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan (further referred to as Parties) in the spirit of cooperation that has traditionally existed between two countries and

Desiring to promote greater cooperation between the two institutions

Have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**

The Parties shall cooperate in mutually agreed areas of activity, which inter alia may include: -

1. Exchange of information on structure and content of training programmes for diplomats;
2. Identification of experts in mutually agreed areas;
3. Exchange of information on the use of IT in diplomacy;
4. Joint research in mutually agreed areas;
5. Mutual assistance in designing IT-based course content for distance learning.

**Article 2**

The Parties shall exchange information and publications on training programmes, curricula of studies and other activities of common interest.

**Article 3**

The Parties shall promote the exchange of experts, scholars and diplomatic trainees.
Article 4

The Parties will encourage coordinated research on the subject of mutual interest.

Article 5

The Parties will decide the specifics and logistics of every project they undertake together. For this purpose, a protocol laying down the financial terms and conditions of the proposed exchanges will be concluded, if necessary.

Article 6

This Memorandum shall enter into force on the date of its signature and shall remain in force for a period of three years. Thereafter, it may be automatically renewed for similar three years periods at a time, unless terminated by any one Party by giving a written notice of 90 days to the other Party prior to the date of termination of the Memorandum.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized by their respective Governments, have signed this Memorandum and affixed their seals.

Done at Tashkent on this 6th day of November 2003 in two originals each of Hindi, Uzbek and English languages, all the texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

FOR INDIAN SIDE FOR UZBEK SIDE
INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003
Section - VIII
AFRICA
299. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the meeting between the External Affairs Minister and Delegation of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.


I wanted to brief you on the meeting between the External Affairs Minister and the Delegation of Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation Mr. Anil Kumarsingh Gayan. The main event this morning was the signing of a MoU on Economic Cooperation between India and COMESA. It was part of our efforts to strengthen Economic Diplomacy and to open institutional links with an increasing number of regional economic fora. Particularly this is a economic and technological interaction with an important grouping in Africa with 20 member states. Significant areas earmarked for technological cooperation are pharmaceuticals, IT, agriculture which includes joint ventures in agro processing, biotechnology, etc. On our signed the External Affairs Minister led the delegation and led the MoU. Another important aspect of this MoU was that the two parties would cooperate closely in WTO processes. The important thing is 43% of India’s export to Africa goes to the COMESA countries dominated by textile, drugs and pharmaceuticals and machineries.

Question: What is the value of this 43%?

Answer: In the year 2000-2001 which are the latest figures which I have this amount to US $ 1065 million.

The Mauritian Foreign Minister also held one to one meeting with EAM before the delegation level talks. In delegation level talks the Mauritian Foreign Minister also took up the issue of starvation and famine in Africa and said that 1.5 million people were facing starvation in Southern Africa. Indian assistance has been sought for provision of food to various countries. Other High Commissioner and Ambassadors who were present in the meeting in particular the representatives of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Sudan also made this point. India has been providing assistance to these countries. For instance, India has donated 10000 tons of rice to Zambia, 50000 tons of rice to Zimbabwe, 10000 tons of wheat to Ethiopia, 5000 tons of wheat to Eritrea and 5000 tons of wheat to Malawi. The Ambassador of Ethiopia said that while food aid was very welcome and very useful they also wanted long-term involvement of India
in setting up the infrastructural plants particularly irrigation plants which will help them to overcome food deficit for a long-term. So an ITEC team will go to look into these issues. The External Affairs Minister was particularly emphatic about the fact that India’s involvement in economic development of Southern Africa should be increased. Bilateral, trade and investment should come up and Indian investment should be directed there in particular for the development of infrastructure.

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300. Opening remarks of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the Inter-Session Parliamentary Consultative Committee Meeting of Ministry of External Affairs on: “India-Africa Relations”.

New Delhi, May 2, 2003.

Friends, Let me begin by welcoming all of you to this Inter-Session Meeting of the Consultative Committee. One of the items that we have chosen for discussion today is India’s relationship with Africa. Last time we had discussed economic diplomacy as a subject and of course you will raise any issue, which you consider to be important. We have naturally little over an hour for discussion today but I hope that we will have focused and purposeful discussion on this issue. As you may be aware, I have just come back yesterday morning from a trip to two countries in Eastern Africa – Tanzania and Botswana and therefore the memory is fresh in my mind. For your information, Africa is a continent, which consists of 54 countries. It has a population of around 750 million people and our trade with Africa has gone up from US $ 839 million in 1991-92 to US $ 4.2 billion in 2001-02. Similarly imports have gone up from US $ 450 million in 1991-92 to US $ 2.7 billion in 2001-02 which means with African continent as a whole, we have two-way trade worth over US $ 6 billion.

Three countries of Africa at this point of time are non-permanent members of the UN Security Council. The Botswana Foreign Minister is the Chairman of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group. India’s relationship with the Continent of Africa is well known and is age-old. We have contributed significantly to the fight against colonialism and racism in Africa and countries in Africa are clearly grateful to India. They have
expressed their gratitude that India has played a significant role in ending colonialism and racism in Africa. We have very cordial relations with all countries in Africa and we worked with them together in international fora including NAM. This is the commitment of India which is also demonstrated in the fact that so far since the beginning of the programme under the Indian Technical Economic Cooperation, assistance worth US $ 1 billion has been extended to various African countries in terms of providing technical assistance and training of their personnel etc. and currently 500 people from the countries of Sub-Sahara receive training in civilian and defence fields. At any given point of time, there are about 10,000 African students who receive education in India. It is gratifying to visit Africa and find out that many people who are in top echelons of Government both at the civil and political levels have been trained in India. The current President of the Nigeria Obasanjo received advanced military training in India.

We have had support from Africa in large measure on issues of concern internationally, namely J&amp;K, our legitimate aspiration to become a member of the UN Security Council, democracy in Pakistan and things of that kind. There are two very important developments over there. One is the movement towards democracy. More and more African countries are democratizing. The second is that there was an Organisation of African States (OAU). They have now formed an African Union (AU) and the idea is that they want to develop it on the lines of EU. Separately, within Africa, one notices increasing trend towards regionalisation. And therefore we have organizations like the Eastern African Community, the SADC, COMESA. We have been watching these developments very very closely and we have been trying to develop relationships multilaterally and bilaterally as well as with the regional groups in Africa and African Union as a whole. I am glad to report that within the last six months or so, we have signed agreements for dialogue at the level of regional groups in Africa and India. We have signed agreements with the Eastern African Group. We already have MOUs with SADC and COMESA and we are talking to the African Union for a dialogue level partnership.

The Government of India has launched a Focus Africa Programme. There was a function held in the Indian Council of World Affairs, 10-11 months ago, in which many representatives of African Governments participated in the Programme and a combined group of African Ambassadors/High Commissioners called on me with a Charter of the African Union, when the Union was formed. We are trying to enhance and deepen the engagement with Africa in the political and economic
fields and the idea clearly is to be able to give increased economic focus to our links and ties with Africa. You will be happy to know that within the last six months, five Heads of States or Governments visited India – the Presidents of Tanzania, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda and Zambia recently and we have the President of Mozambique due to visit us in the next week or so. Many Foreign Ministers from these countries also visited India and we have held in the last six months, three meetings of Joint Commissions with Mozambique, Seychelles and Tanzania. There is a likelihood of the SADC Group visiting India in the next few days. Under the HIPC initiative, the Government of India has remitted the debts which were owed by all countries of Africa.

We have also committed a quantity of 100,000 tonnes of food aid to many African countries which have shortages of food because of drought and other reasons. In my recent visit, I was told that Zimbabwe was facing problems and we have committed food aid to Zimbabwe. We extend, apart from technical assistance and training, credit lines to various African countries as and when need arises. When the Zambian President was here recently, a credit line worth US $ 10 million was offered to Zambia. We are helping in set up in Mauritius a Cyber City and the Kofi Annan Centre in Ghana on Information Technology. Most of our involvement is in terms of upgradation of agricultural practices and setting up of Agro industries and small and medium scale industries.

Time has come for Indian industries to be in Africa as a very important part of investments. Africa has many countries with duty-free access in the EU and the US under the AGOA. This is an arrangement between them and the US. Therefore, Africa, as I see, is on the move. It is a continent on the move and it is a continent with which our engagement must increase considerably in all spheres so that we are able to contribute to African development.

After having made visits to South Africa and other countries in Africa, I am convinced that Africa is a continent of the 21st century. It is full of enormous possibilities. We should be there as things happen in Africa. This is the general policy approach of the Government of India towards Africa and I am quite sure that in this discussion today within the limited time available, we will benefit from the contribution that you all will make. We look forward to working with you with regard to our engagement in Africa. These were the remarks I wanted to make as far as the Africa is concerned. I would like to say that Members are free to raise any other
issues. Our relations with Africa is the focus of our discussion but separately time permitting, any other issue could be raised.

At the end in closing remarks EAM said:

I just have 2-3 minutes time. A question was raised as to how and what basis I said that Africa will be a very major player in 21st century. Nigeria supplies 25% of our total oil imports. Angola and Ivory Coast are major oil producers. We are aware of the minerals, not only diamonds, including the ......minerals in the African continent. As I said in my introductory remarks, conflicts in Africa are gradually coming to an end. There is an African Union Charter. One is that they are promoting democracy. The second is conflict resolution within the continent of Africa and even peace keeping by the African States themselves. So peace is returning, democracy is being encouraged and with all its vast resources, Africa has come into. China is doing much more than what we are doing in Africa. In fact, when we were there, there was a news item that the President of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, had handed over some of the farms taken over to the Chinese for development. They are making their presence which is not new. With regard to our perception towards Africans and their perceptions towards us based on not only the treatment here but also the behaviour of the Indian community in those countries. There are large Indian communities in these countries. But this issue we will have to deal very patiently. We cannot afford to be impatient. I was told in Botswana during our bilateral meetings about the contribution of 10000 professionals, old people of Indian origin and they are very well regarded. It varies from country to country. There were problems with Uganda during Idi Amin’s era and with Zambia also. All Indians were thrown out and all those things happened. Now Africa is also changing and learning to be accommodative of the Asian population including Indians. They will play a far more important role in the 21st Century given their size and numbers.

Minister of State also adding said: Friends, you all have heard Chairman’s remarks and the commitments we have for Africa. Despite our commitments, there are certain problems which we are facing and the problems raised was that the African countries play a passive role in the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and it is true also.
301. Statement by A. C. Jose Member of Parliament and a Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN in joint debate at the 58th session of the UN General Assembly on Agenda Item 39 (A) and (B): New Membership for Africa’s Development: Progress in implementation and international support.


Please see Document No. 473

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302. Opening statement by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the India-SADC delegation talks.

New Delhi, July 17, 2003.

Excellency,

I am happy to extend a warm welcome to you and your delegation. We consider your visit important in strengthening our links with Africa, a continent with which India shares historical links. In the post-colonial period, we have nurtured a symbiotic relationship in the economic development sector in the true spirit of South-South cooperation. Southern African countries were in the forefront of the anti-apartheid struggle and India was directly involved in this struggle through its moral and material support to the frontline states. We are closely monitoring the evolution of regional organizations in Africa as a corollary to globalization and as a structured response to the problem of market fragmentation. The solution to the many challenges that confront Africa today viz., poverty, food security, HIV/AIDS, illiteracy and political conflicts, lies in forging potent regional institutions. It is in this context that there is growing relevance of regional structures such as SADC.

It is indeed a reflection of our confidence in the economic potential of the SADC region, that an MOU on economic cooperation was signed between India and SADC as far back as in October 1997. This is a comprehensive agreement that envisages cooperation in diverse sectors such as agriculture, water resources management, human resource
development, promotion of SMEs, communications, commerce, banking, trade and investment. We need to activate this MOU through identification of relevant organizations and concrete programmes. We are interested to know areas where SADC has achieved full competence to deal with other governments so that specific programmes tailored to the needs of SADC could be evolved.

Currently, negotiations are underway to conclude a Preferential Trade Arrangement with the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and India, which will eventually lead to a Free trade Arrangement. We hope that eventually this arrangement will cover all the SADC countries who are also in the process of concluding an FTA by the year 2008.

There is great deal of complementarity between SADC countries which are abundant in mineral wealth and raw materials and India which has the necessary pool of technology, experience and entrepreneurs. SADC should take the lead in providing appropriate institutional mechanisms to exploit the full potential of this complementarity. This region is currently facing unprecedented challenge in the field of food security and health. The recent drought situation has exposed the vulnerability of this region to food shortages. More than 12 million people have been affected severely by the drought and are faced with the danger of death by starvation. This is an irony in view of the large fertile tracts of land and water resources available in the SADC region. With the population of more than a billion and a geographical area of 3.29 million square kilometers, India has been able to not only feed its growing population but has also managed to have surplus of food grains for export purposes. I see no difficulty in achieving such a green revolution in SADC which has a population around 200 million and a geographical area which is as large as India. We have extended modest assistance to a few countries in the region in the form of food grains. But we are ready to go a step further in making this region self-reliant in food production by sharing our expertise in the agricultural sector. I am happy to learn that the food security situation has considerably improved for the year 2003-04 due to increased rainfall and measures taken by the member states.

Similarly, the problem of HIV/AIDS has been a major focus of attention of SADC where about 15 million people are infected with this virus. There are other epidemic diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis for which African countries have to find affordable way of treatment. The Indian drugs cost less than one-tenth of the cost of other multinational companies. The speeding up of the ongoing efforts to harmonise
registration procedures for drugs and pharmaceuticals at SADC level would greatly facilitate investment from India in this sector. I suggest that a team from SADC in the drugs and pharmaceutical directorate could visit India to familiarize itself with quality assurance methodology being adopted in India. My government would be willing to offer assistance for such a visit and to offer technical assistance in evolving harmonization of registration procedures. In the field of human resource development, India has been training on an average 500 African candidates in diverse fields under its ITEC programme. We could extend this assistance to SADC Secretariat which could select candidates in areas which are of relevance to its regional programmes. In the area of SMEs, which is another focus area for SADC, India would be willing to set up a small scale industries information centre to promote SMEs in the region.

There are global issues of common interest to us, such as the ongoing debates in the WTO on agriculture and TRIPS where we both will benefit by coordinating our positions. We have also expressed our willingness to extend fresh credit lines to African countries to support projects under NEPAD. India has already established contacts with NEPAD Secretariat which is currently located in South Africa to identify projects for investment. SADC could coordinate with NEPAD Secretariat so that common projects that are of relevance to SADC and NEPAD could be identified for cooperation.

Apart from traditional areas, India has also achieved excellence in the field of information technology. We are collaborating with Mauritius, which is a member of the SADC, in setting up of a cybercity which would be the symbol of our partnership in the new millennium. India could collaborate in setting up of IT training facilities at regional level as a joint venture with SADC. I am very happy that India and SADC is formalizing the setting up of the India-SADC Forum which will provide a mechanism for regular dialogue on issues of common interest. We need to chalk out a well-defined road map to achieve the objectives that are enshrined in the MOU that we have already signed. I have no doubt that the setting up of the Forum would enable us to provide substantive content to our relations and make the interaction mutually productive and beneficial.
Congo


New Delhi, July 8, 2003.

Starting from July 12, an Indian Air Force contingent is being inducted as a part of the U.N. Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) called ‘MONUC’. India’s decision to send this specialized contingent of over 300 personnel underlines its continuing commitment to the Charter and the principles of the U.N. and to peacekeeping as an invaluable instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security. India is one of the longest serving and the largest troop contributors to U.N’s peacekeeping activities, with more than 65,000 Indian troops, Military Observers and Civilian Police Officers having served in 36 U.N. peacekeeping missions over the last five decades.

Our decision to contribute helicopters to the U.N. Mission in Congo is in response to a specific request by the U.N. for aerial support to the ground operations of MONUC. The present contribution is the largest that the IAF has ever lent to an U.N. Mission, the first case where IAF will be providing support to foreign military forces and also the largest Air Force contingent in Congo. As one of the few countries capable of participating in an U.N. mission on such a scale, our participation in a difficult mission like Congo effectively demonstrates the ability of the Indian Air Force to engage in a technically and operationally challenging mission.

The decision to send the IAF contingent was taken with the intent of assisting the U.N. in restoring peace and security in the strife-torn region of eastern DRC and in alleviating the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the suffering of the Congolese people. Presently troops from countries such as South Africa, Uruguay and Ghana are positioned in Congo. The Indian operations would lend crucial support in stabilizing the security situation in the region and in providing much-needed humanitarian relief to the beleaguered civilian population of the country.

Presently, Indian peacekeepers are also engaged in the U.N. Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), in the U.N. Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and several other operations.
Djibouti

304. Speech by President Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of President of the Republic of Djibouti Ismail Omar Guelleh.

New Delhi, May 19, 2003.

Your Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh,
President of the Republic of Djibouti,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On this occasion of Your Excellency’s State Visit to this ancient land of ours, I extend a hearty welcome to you and to the members of your delegation on behalf of the people of India. We are confident that your visit will further strengthen the tradition of understanding and cooperation that exists between our two countries.

Our friendship is based on common ideals and principles, which we value as fundamental to world peace and international cooperation. India’s ancient philosophy has given to its people strength to face all challenges. History has it that India’s ancient sages and great personalities like Gautam Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi have spoken and worked for equality, human dignity and for eradication of human suffering. Mahatma Gandhi taught us the way to peace and non-violence. His association with Africa has made Africa and its people very close to our hearts.

Excellency, Djibouti is fabled as the “land of the braves” and it has played a critical and important role in connecting people through the message of mutual tolerance, adaptability and common advantage. Djibouti has been known from ancient times to seafarers who have frequented its waters in search of gold and ivory. Thus, the Djibouti society has been a crucible of civilisations and cultures of East Africa, the Arab peninsula and the Indian sub-continent. It is, therefore, natural for Indians to find a common thread in your values, as these are the values, which we ourselves cherish.

Non-alignment is one such value that we share mutually. As members of NAM, we share perceptions on major regional and international issues. Our collective strength can be a great asset in facing
the common challenges that continue to be confronted by developing countries. The end of the Cold War has brought only cold comfort for most of the developing countries. It did not result in any appreciable reduction in the political and economic pressures exerted upon States. Pressures on developing countries rather increased and threats of conflicts in various parts of the world continued to surface from time to time. The need is to focus more on issues that unite us rather than those which divide us. NAM thus becomes relevant in the whole range of international affairs from disarmament to human rights, environment, restructuring of the UN and bringing in peace and progress around the world. More than ever, it is now that we need NAM to focus on contemporary issues and to adopt a forward-looking agenda to further the cause of developing countries.

Excellency, our cooperation at the UN gives us the opportunity to share perceptions on issues that are important to us. The UN was meant to represent the world community, inclusive of all and its primary aim was the preservation of peace. Recent events have reinforced the urgent need for restructuring of the UN Security Council so that it can play its vital role of reducing tensions by running on the principles of non-discrimination, consensus and transparency. India has a role to play in working towards a safer, saner and a more equitable world based on cooperation and interdependence. We stand irrevocably committed to peaceful coexistence, non-alignment and international cooperation. We stand committed to a UN that stands committed to a positive role - a role that of preservation of peace, independence, equality, equity, fair play and justice for all nations irrespective of their size and power.

Terrorism poses the biggest threat to peace and stability in the world. Djibouti is playing an important role by contributing to the international efforts to overcome this menace by offering its facilities. India continues to be a serious victim of cross-border terrorism for more than two-and-a-half decades now. Terrorism is crime and crime has no logic and anything illogical has no right to exist. India condemns all acts of terrorism wherever they occur, by whomsoever and in whatever form. Our cooperation assumes an added dimension here.

In this context, we feel that our efforts at developing joint cooperation between the two countries should be based on the areas of our core competence. The field of agriculture and especially, the area of dry land and semi-arid agriculture is one area, which we feel would be of great importance to Djibouti. Similarly, the development of small-scale industries
is an area in which India has developed a fair amount of experience and
given the relevance of both the sectors to your country, we would like to
offer assistance to develop the skills and also to provide technical
assistance for the development of agriculture and small scale industries
in Djibouti.

I am very happy to note that your visit to India has resulted in
agreements in the fields of civil aviation, bilateral investment and cultural
exchanges. A line of credit is being extended through the EXIM Bank
apart from disaster relief in the form of food grains and medicines. It is
also heartening to note that under the Indian Technical and Economic
Cooperation (ITEC) programme, the number of seats for students of
Djibouti has been increased substantially.

Excellency, I am confident that your visit will lead to progress in our
relations where opportunities and potentials for joint cooperation will be
explored, identified and realised. India is ever ready to assist Djibouti and
to work together for our mutual benefit. I am confident Your Excellency
that India’s core strength of a vibrant democracy, steady economic growth
and a diversified experience in development will provide a functional
framework for a sustained partnership between us.

I wish to assure Your Excellency the fullest cooperation of our
Government in the fulfillment of your mission and of our deep interest in
further strengthening the friendly and cordial relations that exist between
our two countries.

Let me convey our sincere good wishes for your personal health,
happiness and welfare and that of your family and for the health, happiness
and prosperity of the people of Djibouti.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now request all the distinguished
guests to join me in raising a toast:

- to the personal good health and happiness of His Excellency
  President Ismail Omar Guelleh,
- to the well-being and prosperity of the people of Djibouti; and
- to the everlasting friendship between India and Djibouti.
305. Joint Statement issued during the visit of the President of Djibouti Ismail Omar Guelleh.

New Delhi, May 19, 2003.

At the invitation of President APJ Abdul Kalam, Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti, paid a State Visit to India between May 18 and 23, 2003.

During the visit, President Ismail Omar Guelleh had useful discussions with President APJ Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister AB Vajpayee. Both sides noted with satisfaction the strengthening of historical bilateral contacts in the modern age, through their membership in the Non-Aligned Movement and through their common commitment to tolerance, democracy and peace.

Both sides expressed their common resolve to enhance cooperation and mutual consultations on bilateral, regional and international issues, so as to continue to contribute to peace, stability and prosperity of the Indian Ocean region and the world.

During the visit, talks were held with the President of India and the Prime Minister in a spirit of mutual friendship and understanding. New areas of mutually beneficial cooperation were identified. The following bilateral agreements were concluded during the visit:

1. The details of the agreements are:

1) Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA):

   Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) to be signed by HE Mr Ali Abdi Farah, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Djibouti and Hon’ble Shri Digvijay Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, New Delhi

   Djibouti is, though a small market, an open one; its membership of COMESA gives opening for a potentially large market in the region. It is also an entrepot for destinations like Ethiopia, Eritrea, etc. Djibouti is encouraging foreign investments and has liberal investment laws. This agreement would make it easier for our entrepreneurs to look at Djibouti.

2) Civil Aviation Agreement:

   Civil Aviation Agreement to be signed by HE Mr Elmi Obsieh Waiss, Minister of Public Works and Public Transport and Hon’ble Shri Sripad Yesso Naik, Minister of State for Civil Aviation.

   There are no direct links between the two countries. The agreement would lead to some progress in establishment of direct air links between the two countries. Djiboutian businessmen and students have shown interest in Indian expertise and air links could lighten this logistic difficulty.
(i) Civil Aviation Agreement.
(ii) Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement.
(iii) Cultural Exchange Programme.

India and Djibouti agreed to take effective measures to implement the understandings reached during the visit, to further strengthen cooperation in various spheres. In this context, to contribute to the economic development of Djibouti, India extended an EXIM Bank Line of Credit of US $ 10 million. India has also agreed to enhance the number of training vacancies under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme. India also agreed to provide assistance, in kind, worth US $ 1 million to meet humanitarian requirements arising from drought.

Both sides felt that bilateral relations had reached a stage at which an institutional mechanism, such as a Joint Commission, could be useful. The two sides would study the proposal for establishment of such a Commission to coordinate bilateral relations in political, commercial, economic, cultural and other fields.

India and Djibouti affirmed that no cause or reason could justify terrorism. Both sides reiterated their strong belief that the fight against terrorism has to be global, comprehensive and sustained so as to totally eliminate terrorism everywhere.

In this context, they reaffirmed their commitment to UN Security Council Resolution 1373. Both sides underlined the need for the global fight against terrorism to address those who instigate, support or assist terrorism, as much as those who perpetrate terrorism.

Djibouti welcomed the initiative taken by the Prime Minister of India aimed at fostering friendship and good-neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan. To create an appropriate atmosphere for a sustained

3) Cultural Exchange Programme:

Executive Programme of Cultural Educational and Scientific Cooperation to be signed by HE Mr Rachad Farah, Djiboutian Ambassador to India and Shri R M Abhyankar, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi In addition to an Indian Origin community of around 300 people, there is interest among Djiboutians towards Indian culture, cinema, education, etc. Education has been a recurring theme of expectations expressed by Djiboutian side. They are a francophone nation but would like education in English and we could meet their needs. An EdCil delegation (to be funded from ITEC) is likely to visit Djibouti soon for identification of their educational needs and suggest ways for meeting them.
dialogue, cross-border terrorism must end and the infrastructure of terrorism should be dismantled. Djibouti supports resolution of India-Pakistan issues through bilateral dialogue based on the Simla Agreement of 1972 and the Lahore Declaration of 1999.

India and Djibouti supported the resolve of the international community not to allow Afghanistan to be used again as a safe haven for terrorism. Both sides agreed on the need for the international community to strengthen the Government of Afghanistan in its efforts to address the long-term developmental needs of the country.

Both sides affirmed the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. The United Nations should play an important role and take early decisions concerning stability, security and reconstruction in Iraq. The humanitarian situation should be addressed expeditiously in order to meet the needs of the Iraqi people, who should be enabled to decide on a government of their choice at the earliest. The two sides were in favour of lifting UN sanctions on Iraq, which have worked to the detriment of the Iraqi people.

Both sides welcomed the recent appointment of H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Abbas as the Prime Minister of Palestine by H.E. President Yasir Arafat. It was hoped that this would spur the long-stalled Middle East Peace Process. India and Djibouti called for early implementation of the recently released 'Road Map.' The on-going spiral of violence should end. Sustained and purposive efforts for a just and durable peace need to be made.

Both sides also agreed to coordinate positions in the international fora. It is imperative to expanding the UN Security Council to make it more representative and efficient. The President of the Republic of Djibouti, noting the role being played by India in world affairs, supported India’s candidature as a permanent member of an expanded UN Security Council.

India and Djibouti acknowledged the importance of frequent consultations to promote peace, stability and prosperity in East Africa. The progress of the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) was noted with satisfaction. Both sides agreed that regional initiatives should be significantly stepped up in future. Considering India’s proximity to the Red Sea and its active participation in Indian Ocean Rim - Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) and other global fora for cooperation, Djibouti expressed the belief that India’s membership of the IGAD Partners’ Forum would add to the strength of that organization.
They also agreed on the need to promote regional economic cooperation for the common benefit of India and the Horn of Africa region. India’s economic prowess, especially in Information Technology, would be of great benefit to the needs of economy of the African Horn countries. They agreed that concrete projects in these sectors would be worked out with a view to early implementation.

India and Djibouti welcomed positive developments in the Sudan Peace Process, including the Protocols on Cessation of Hostilities between Government of Sudan and SPLA/M, under the auspices of the IGAD. Support was reiterated for Sudanese independence, unity and territorial integrity.

The Indian side welcomed continuation of the positive role played by the President of the Republic of Djibouti in resolving the Somali crisis, particularly the achievements of the Arta Conference, which has led to the formation of the Transitional National Government. Both sides reiterated their strong support to the IGAD-sponsored Somali National Reconciliation Conference currently underway in Mbagathi, Kenya, which is to enter its third and final phase. They emphasized the need to give serious consideration to the issues of disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation of militias to provide a conducive environment for the new government. In this regard, the two sides urged the United Nations to play a central role. The international community was called upon to continue assisting efforts to bring peace and stability in Somalia.

The Prime Minister of India noted with satisfaction that the State Visit of the President of the Republic of Djibouti had made a substantial contribution to strengthening bilateral relations in all spheres. He expressed confidence that it would promote the intensification of bilateral cooperation, and a search for new areas of cooperation.

The President of the Republic of Djibouti expressed his deep gratitude to the President, the people and the Government of India for the warm welcome offered to him and his delegation. The President of the Republic of Djibouti extended to the President and the Prime Minister of the Republic of India invitations for State Visits to the Republic of Djibouti. These invitations were accepted. Dates for the visit will be fixed through diplomatic channels.
Ghana

306. Remarks by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the inauguration of the India-Ghana Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence for Communications and I.T.


Your Excellency President Kufuor,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great pleasure to participate at this inaugural function. I would have loved to be with all of you in Accra today. When I met President Kufuor on Friday, I explained to him why I had to return home from Abuja, without going through with my scheduled visit to Ghana.

From another perspective, it is perhaps fitting that this Centre should be inaugurated through this inter-continental connection, illustrating the power and versatility we have today achieved in information and communications technologies.

It is also apt that this Centre is named after UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who is a great son of Ghana and a distinguished citizen of Africa. It was his original idea to set up such an institution of empowerment in Ghana, to serve the entire West African region.

It was only over a year ago, during President Kufuor’s landmark visit to India, that we signed an Agreement on cooperation in Information Technology. The remarkable speed with which this centre has been completed is a tribute to President Kufuor’s personal interest in the project and the dedication of the project team.

Mr. President; Dear friends,

This institution is a symbol of the strong and enduring partnership between India and Ghana. It is a partnership forged during our struggle for independence, cemented during our joint campaign against colonialism and apartheid, and sustained by our shared aspirations for democracy and development. On this auspicious occasion, I reiterate India’s desire to further enrich this relationship by strengthening and diversifying our bilateral cooperation in mutually beneficial directions.
Capacity building is an important catalyst of the development process. This institute will develop capacity in an area of technology, which is central to today’s knowledge economy.

The world market for IT products this year is estimated at 3 Trillion dollars, marking a growth of 20 per cent over last year. This market will grow exponentially in the years to come. India’s IT exports crossed 10 billion dollars this year, and we hope to raise this figure to 50 billion dollars by 2008.

Many factors contributing to our success also exist in Ghana. You have a high quality education system, a young English-speaking work force and a strengthening telecommunications infrastructure. This Centre can help Ghana increase its presence in the global IT market.

India is equally committed to human resource development in other fields in Ghana. Thousands of students from Ghana have, over the years, studied in Indian training centres or institutions of higher education. We would welcome more.

Under our international technical and economic cooperation programme, 30 seats are allotted annually in Indian institutions to Ghanaian students and professionals for training in a variety of scientific, technical, economic, commercial, management and other disciplines. In response to increased demand, we have now decided to double this figure to 60.

India also offers five scholarships annually to students from Ghana, who may wish to study in Indian universities.

We are progressing in other areas of development cooperation. Small and medium enterprises, agriculture, irrigation, pharmaceuticals and telecommunications are promising areas. We have already extended a line of credit of 15 million dollars for mutually identified projects. We can extend its scope to include purchases of equipment. We are finalizing arrangements for further enhancing the quantum of this credit.

There are many more vistas of India-Ghana cooperation yet to be opened. Our bilateral efforts are directed towards exploring them.

Friends,

I take this opportunity to send my greetings to the community of Indian origin in Ghana. Like other members of the 20 million strong Indian
Diaspora abroad, they have become productive citizens of their country of domicile, politically and economically integrated in their adopted homeland, while retaining their cultural affinities with the country of their origin.

In conclusion, I wish this India-Ghana Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence for Information and Communications Technology every success. I look forward to seeing it, when I fulfil my commitment to visit Ghana.

Long live India-Ghana friendship.

Thank you.

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Lesotho

307. Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit of the Prime Minister Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

New Delhi, August 6, 2003.

1. At the invitation of Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee, The Rt. Hon. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho paid a State Visit to India from July 31-August 7, 2003.

2. During the visit, Prime Minister Mosisili held fruitful discussions with President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee, Minister of External Affairs, Shri Yashwant Sinha.

3. Besides Delhi, the Prime Minister Mosisili and his delegation visited Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Goa and Agra, visiting establishments of interest to Lesotho. He also interacted with the Indian business community.

4. Discussions were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere. Both sides exchanged views on various bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

5. Both sides noted with satisfaction that India-Lesotho relations are
exemplary, marked by a high degree of understanding and mutual trust and confidence. Both sides reiterated their desire to further strengthen and diversify bilateral relations to the mutual benefit of both peoples.

6. The Government of India offered 5,000 tonnes each of wheat flour and rice to Lesotho as a gift in view of the prevailing food shortage. In addition, India offered to donate US$ 50,000 worth of anti-retroviral HIV/AIDS medicine to Lesotho. The Lesotho side expressed deep appreciation for this gesture of solidarity and friendship.

7. India applauded the efforts of Lesotho in meeting the challenge of creating peace and stability, to enable the Government to focus on welfare and prosperity of the people. In this context, the contribution of the Indian Army Training Team towards assisting the Lesotho Defence Forces in ensuring free and fair election in May 2002 was appreciated by the Lesotho side. The two sides also agreed to promote contacts and cooperation between their Election Commissions.

8. Lesotho has made commendable progress towards integration with regional organizations, such as the Southern African Development Community and Southern African Customs Union. It has also recorded progress in its efforts to integrate with the global economy. In this context, both sides recognized that considerable potential exists for India to undertake mutually beneficial cooperation with Lesotho in various sectors.

9. The two Governments agreed in principle to establish a bilateral Joint Commission, which would provide a framework for identifying and promoting concrete cooperation in diverse spheres.

10. Lesotho is pursuing the path to industrialization and growth with a focus on employment generation, agricultural development, education, tourism, and upgrading of infrastructure. Consequently, there are substantial requirements for investment in infrastructure and capacity building. India’s experience in human resource development as well as high technology and industrial areas could be shared in areas of priority for Lesotho, in the spirit of South-South cooperation.

11. To these ends, the Indian side agreed to increase the number of
short-term training slots for Lesotho under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme, from 5 to 20. The Government of India also agreed to separately offer 5 scholarships to Lesotho under the General Cultural Scholarship Scheme of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, for long-term professional courses. It was also agreed that the possibility of deputing Indian ITEC experts in key sectors identified by Lesotho would also be considered.

12. Both sides noted with satisfaction that a Preferential Trade Agreement was under negotiation between India and SACU, which would give an impetus to India-Lesotho commercial relations. Both sides emphasized the need for creating better awareness of each other's strengths within the private sectors of the two countries. Trade missions would be undertaken, and participation in trade/commercial exhibitions in both countries would be encouraged.

13. As employment generation, particularly in rural areas is a high-priority objective for Lesotho, the Indian side expressed its commitment to extend assistance, through training as well as supply of equipment, for establishing manufacturing units in the small scale industries sector.

14. In this context, to contribute to the economic development of Lesotho, India extended an EXIM Bank Line of Credit of US $ 5 million on concessional terms.

15. The two sides evinced interest in promoting cooperation in the health sector. They agreed to cooperate to facilitate the entry of Indian pharmaceutical products into Lesotho. The Indian side agreed to explore the possibility of providing training to Lesotho health officials in drug quality control.

16. The two sides reiterated the need to reform the UN, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They stressed, in particular, the need for an equitable balance in an expanded Security Council to provide a constructive voice to the aspirations of developing countries. They believed that piecemeal and discriminatory approaches to such expansion would be inconsistent with the objectives of that world body. Considering that India is the largest democracy in the world, and in view of its past contributions to the promotion of peace, Lesotho expressed support for India’s
candidature for permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council.

17. India and Lesotho affirmed that no cause or reason could justify terrorism. Both sides reiterated their strong belief that the fight against terrorism has to be global, comprehensive and sustained so as to totally eliminate terrorism everywhere. In this context, they reaffirmed their commitment to UN Security Council Resolution 1373. They stressed the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. Both sides underlined the need for the global fight against terrorism to address those who instigate, support or assist terrorism, as much as those who perpetrate terrorism.

18. The Lesotho side appreciated the evolving security concerns of India in the light of recent local, regional and global developments. It appreciated the restraint and sense of responsibility displayed by India. In this connection, Lesotho recognized Jammu and Kashmir to be an integral part of India, and supported the resolution of differences between India and Pakistan through bilateral dialogue. It also recognized that cross-border infiltration and terrorism had to end to encourage resumption of such a dialogue.

19. The Lesotho side expressed sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of India for the hospitality extended, and for the excellent arrangements made for their visit to India. The Prime Minister of Lesotho also extended an invitation to the Prime Minister of India to pay an official visit to Lesotho, which was accepted.
Libya

308. Statement by Official Spokesperson on lifting of UN Sanctions against Libya.

New Delhi, September 15, 2003.

India welcomes the UN Security Council resolution 1506 adopted on September 12 2003, lifting sanctions imposed on Libya. India has consistently supported Libya on sanctions issue in the UN and NAM fora, particularly during Indian term in the UN Security Council in 1992. We hope that the lifting of sanctions would contribute to Libya’s economic development and promote bilateral cooperation in different fields.


India welcomes the Libyan decision announced on Saturday, December 20, 2003 to dismantle its programme related to development of the Weapons of Mass Destruction. We hope that this step would bring it in full observance of relevant international agreements and contribute to international peace, stability and security.

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1. On September 12 the United Nations Security Council lifted the 11-year-old sanctions against Libya. It was a 13 to 0 vote in the Council with France and the United States abstaining. The vote came after France and the Libyan Government reached a partial new agreement on the nature of compensation that would now be paid to the relatives of the victims of a 1989 French airliner bombing. As many as 170 persons were killed in the UTA bombing. It may be recalled that the Security Council slapped sanctions on Tripoli in 1992 with a view to forcing it to hand over two of its intelligence agents who were indicted for trial in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am passenger jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 persons. The Council suspended the sanctions in 1999 after the two agents were surrendered and after months of negotiations Libya agreed to pay as compensation $2.7 billion to the relatives of the Lockerbie victims in phases. Each will receive between $5 million and $10 million.
Mauritius


Port Louis, July 1, 2003.

The Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Regional Cooperation of the Republic of Mauritius (hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”),

Desirous to strengthen the friendly relations and cooperation between the Republic of India and the Republic of Mauritius on the basis of the principles and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

Recognising the importance of consultations and exchange of opinions at different levels on matters of bilateral relations and international issues of mutual interest,

Desirous to establish and further facilitate mutually beneficial cooperation,

Agree as follows:

ARTICLE 1

1.1 The Parties undertake to hold meetings, talks and consultations on a regular basis on matters of bilateral diplomatic relations as well as similar issues of mutual interest in respect of regional and multinational fora.

1.2 The meetings may be held between Ministers, their deputies, heads of department, or at any other level agreed by the Parties, and may include experts from both sides.

1.3 The meetings will be held alternately in Port Louis and New Delhi and the agenda, date, venue and level of meetings will be established by mutual agreement.

1.4 Commissions, working groups and groups of expert may also be established, the composition and procedures of which will be mutually agreed.
ARTICLE 2
The Parties undertake to cooperate and hold consultations aimed at coordinating their positions on various issues of mutual interest, to the extent possible, wherever necessary, within the framework of international and regional organizations and forums.

ARTICLE 3
The Parties undertake to encourage cooperation and direct contact between representatives of their diplomatic services. They will facilitate the organization and appropriate execution of such joint activities and programmes, as may be mutually agreed upon, through diplomatic channels.

ARTICLE 4
The Parties undertake to facilitate cooperation and consultations between diplomatic and consular missions of the Republic of India and the Republic of Mauritius in third countries.

ARTICLE 5
This Memorandum shall come into effect on the date of signature, shall remain valid for a period of five (5) years, and shall be renewed automatically for successive five (5) year periods unless either Party notifies the other in writing of an intention to terminate the Memorandum at least six (6) months prior to the date of expiry.

Signed at Port Louis on this 1st day of July 2003, in two originals in Hindi & English languages, each text being equally authentic. In case of any divergence the English text will prevail.

For the Ministry of External Affairs
Of the Republic of India

For the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of the Republic of Mauritius

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Indian External Affairs Minister's remarks at the Press Conference during his visit to Mauritius.

Port Louis, July 2, 2003.

India and Mauritius have unique relationship based on a common civilization heritage. These relations are being nurtured and strengthened by regular exchange of high level visits. Our relations have entered a new strategic phase with cooperation in the IT sector, which is symbolic of our partnership in the new millennium. My visit to Mauritius is essentially to provide further momentum to our relations by rejuvenating the institutional framework and broadening the scope of our interaction.

I have had extremely valuable interaction with the President, Vice President, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. These discussions have further underscored the tremendous goodwill that exists between the two countries at people-to-people level. We are satisfied about the follow-up action which has been initiated on a number of issues that were identified for cooperation during the visit of Sir Anerood Jugnauth to India in January this year. These areas include setting up of a bio-informatics center, technical cooperation, training in Indian institutions, anti-narcotics, oil exploration, ocean energy, anti-terrorism and defence. We have agreed to strengthen the Joint Commission and make it more responsive to the growing dimension of our relations. We have reaffirmed continuation of our long tradition of cooperation in the defence and security areas. I have reiterated our intention to continue to provide assistance in this area. We have signed many agreements that underscore our productive partnership in the small scale industrial sector and our close coordination of policies on multilateral political and economic issues. We want to maintain the tradition of frequent exchange of high level visits. In this context we have extended invitation to the Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Paul Raymond Berenger, Vice President Mr. Abdool Raouf Bundhun and Foreign Minister Anil Kumarsingh Gayan to visit India in the near future. The Joint Statement that we have issued reflects the understanding that we have reached during my visit. I have no doubt that our relations are poised to reach greater heights for the mutual benefit of our people. I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of Mauritius for the warm hospitality extended to me my delegation.

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Port Louis, July 2, 2003.

1. At the invitation of the Hon. Anil Kumarsingh Gayan, Minister of Foreign Affairs & Regional Co-operation of the Republic of Mauritius, H.E Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India paid an official visit to Mauritius from 1-3 July 2003.

2. During the visit, the Hon. Minister of External Affairs of India called on H.E Karl Auguste Offmann, President of the Republic of Mauritius, H.E Abdool Raouf Bundhun, Vice President of the Republic of Mauritius, the Rt. Hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister and H.E Paul Raymond Berenger, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius.

3. H.E Shri Yashwant Sinha, the Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India visited the Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Moka, Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture and the Cyber City being constructed with Indian collaboration. He also interacted with a wide cross section of the Mauritius business community and the people of Indian origin.

4. Both sides expressed satisfaction that action had already been initiated to implement cooperation in areas such as renewable energy, anti-narcotics, counter terrorism, oil exploration, handicrafts, etc, which were identified during the visit of the Rt. Hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, to India in January 2003.

5. The following agreements were signed during the visit of the Minister of External Affairs of India:

   (i) MoU on Foreign Office Consultations Mechanism

   (ii) MoU in the field of Social Defence including the Welfare of the Elderly, Programme of Demand Reduction with regard to Drug Abuse, Welfare of Street Children, Juvenile Justice System and other areas in the general field of Social Defence.

   (iii) Extension of MoU on Training of Small and Medium Enterprises run by Women in Mauritius.
6. Both sides also agreed that the following MoUs should be concluded at the earliest possible:

- MoU in the Field of Non-Conventional Energy Sources.
- MoU on Environment Matters between the Ministry of Environment of Mauritius and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of India.
- MoU including Concept Paper in respect of the World Hindi Secretariat and its staffing.
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Prospection and Exploration of Oil and Gas Resources in the Mauritius EEZ.

7. The Hon. Minister of External Affairs of India held official discussions with the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs & Regional Cooperation of Mauritius. The talks were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere and covered a wide range of issues pertaining to bilateral, regional and global matters of mutual interest.

8. The two Ministers reiterated that Indo-Mauritian relations were characterised by the deep and abiding bonds based on common friendship, culture, and a shared civilisational heritage. They reaffirmed the vision for a closer and stronger relationship between the two countries and stressed that the traditional and historical ties between India and Mauritius should be further strengthened.

9. Both Ministers expressed satisfaction that the strategic partnership between the two countries in information technology was taking shape with the establishment of the Cyber City in Mauritius. They agreed that this project is a pointer to the way ahead in the bilateral economic relations between the two countries. It was agreed in this context that the Mauritian proposal for a Bio-Informatics Institute in Mauritius to strengthen cooperation between the two countries, which are rich in bio diversity, and resources need to be implemented expeditiously. Both sides are happy to note that a Joint Advisory Committee is being established.

10. They reaffirmed their commitment to democracy and secularism and emphasized on the importance of harmonious co-existence in
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multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual societies, and stressed on the concept of unity in diversity.

11. Both sides felt that the bilateral relations have reached a stage at which strengthening of existing institutional mechanism was necessary. In this context, it was agreed that the scope of Joint Commission between the two countries would be expanded to set up Joint Working Groups on trade and investment, terrorism, science and technology (including IT), culture and textiles under the umbrella of the Joint Commission. It was further agreed that the Joint Commission should meet at the earliest possible.

12. Both Ministers recognised the potential of increased flow of investment between the two countries. During the last decade, Indian investment amounted to US$ 90 million approximately representing nearly 20% of total foreign direct investment inflows in the Mauritius EPZ sector. More Indian investments with a value of more than approximately US$ 335 million, in electronics, cables, ICT, spinning and light engineering products are in the pipeline. In the wake of developments in the regional integration process, Mauritius, as member of COMESA and SADC offers opportunities to attract investors from India to tap preferential markets in the member state countries. In this context, Mauritius has agreed to set up a high level group to study the proposal for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement.

13. India welcomed suggestion of Mauritius to convene a conference of political leaders from countries with large community of Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting in New York or CHOGM this year. It was agreed that Mauritius would take initiative in this regard. India offered its assistance to facilitate this conference.

14. Both sides expressed satisfaction about the level of bilateral cooperation in the defence and security areas. India reiterated its commitment to provide assistance to Mauritius in the defence sector, including training. India would provide assistance in conducting hydrographic surveys of the harbours, ports, and outer islands of Mauritius and update existing navigational charts. The Indian navy would also assist in the surveillance of the exclusive economic zone of Mauritius. The procurement of equipment such as Dornier aircraft is under active consideration of the Mauritian authorities.
15. India and Mauritius affirmed that no cause or reason could justify terrorism. Both sides reiterated their firm belief that the fight against terrorism has to be global, comprehensive and sustained so as to totally eliminate terrorism everywhere. In this context, they reaffirmed their commitment to UN Security Resolution 1373. Both sides underlined the need for the global fight against terrorism to address those who instigate, support or assist terrorism, as much as those who perpetrate terrorism. The Mauritian side appreciated India’s efforts to promote peace and to counter cross border terrorism in the Indian sub-continent. It welcomed the recent initiative taken by the Prime Minister of India aimed at fostering friendship and good neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan. To create an appropriate atmosphere for a sustained dialogue, cross border terrorism must end and its sources should be dismantled. Mauritius supports resolution of India-Pakistan issues through bilateral dialogue based on the Simla Agreement of 1972 and the Lahore Declaration of 1999.

16. Both Ministers welcomed the agreements reached on the plan of implementation at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in August 2002, reaffirming the Rio principles, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The Ministers expressed their concern about the adverse effect of climate change and its implications and highlighted the vulnerabilities of both countries to this problem. In this regard, they expressed their desire for an early entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Both sides highlighted the importance of the initiation of negotiations within the framework of the Convention on Bio Diversity towards an international regime for promoting and protecting the just and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the utilisation of genetic resources.

17. The two sides recalled the specificities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and welcomed the holding in Mauritius in August/September 2004 of the International Meeting on the Comprehensive Review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS. India affirmed her support to Mauritius in this endeavour.

18. The two sides reaffirmed their faith in the Non-Aligned Movement. They agreed that the NAM can play an important role in addressing
global issues such as poverty alleviation, financing for development, food security, issues of international peace and security, terrorism and disarmament as well as environmental protection.

19. India and Mauritius share the belief that the emerging world order should be just, equitable, multi-polar and based on the principles of democracy, sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of states and respect for human rights and principles of the United Nations.

20. Both sides agreed to coordinate positions in the international fora. It is imperative to expanding the UN Security Council to make it more representative and efficient. The External Affairs Minister of India conveyed the appreciation of Indian government for the Mauritian support to India’s candidature to the permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council.

21. The External Affairs Minister of India, Shri Yashwant Sinha expressed his deep gratitude to the Government of Mauritius for the warm welcome offered to him and his delegation. He extended invitation to H.E. Anil Kumarsingh Gayan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius to visit India. He also extended invitation to H.E. Paul Raymond Berenger, Deputy Prime Minister of Mauritius, on behalf of the Hon’ble Deputy Prime Minister of India, Shri L.K Advani. The invitations were accepted with pleasure and it was agreed that mutually convenient dates would be finalized through diplomatic channels.

(Yashwant Sinha) (Anil Kumar singh Gayan)
Minister of External Affairs Minister of Foreign Affairs &
Republic of India Regional Cooperation

July 2, 2003
313. Press Release of the Ministry of External Affairs pledging Indian assistance to the construction of International Convention Centre in Mauritius.

New Delhi, October 13, 2003.

In the context of close ties between India and Mauritius, India has extended technical and financial assistance to Mauritius in a large number of areas. The Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Indian Culture, Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre, Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital etc. are symbols of such cooperation. The ongoing Cyber city project for which India has extended a credit line of US$ 100 million reflects the desire of the two countries to take forward the cooperation to the frontier areas of science and technology in the new millennium. In order to further such close cooperation and links, the Hon’ble Minister of External Affairs of India, Shri Yashwant Sinha was requested for Indian assistance for the construction of International Convention Centre in Mauritius for the Small Islands’ Development Conference being hosted by Mauritius in August-September 2004.

Minister of External Affairs had agreed to provide assistance for the construction of the ICC. Accordingly, a cooperation agreement between India and Mauritius providing for assistance to the extent of US$ 12 million (50% in grant and 50% in credit) was finalised. This agreement provides for use of Indian companies and the Indian construction material for the construction of the ICC. The ICC will be a very prestigious and visible symbol of Indo-Mauritian cooperation for many years to come. This agreement is scheduled to be signed between the Hon’ble Minister of External Affairs of India, Shri Yashwant Sinha and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Mauritius, Shri Anil Kumarsingh Gayan on 14th October 2003 in Colombo.
314. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister of Mauritius.

New Delhi, November 21, 2003.

Your Excellency, Mr. Prime Minister, Madame Berenger,

Once again, I welcome you and your delegation to India. It speaks of the strength of our bilateral relations that your first official visit as Prime Minister of Mauritius is to India. India-Mauritius friendship is built on traditional moorings of kinship and shared history. As modern nations, with secular, multi-cultural democracies, we have additional bonds. Our shared perspectives on global issues have led to our close cooperation in international forums, including the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth and the United Nations.

The strength of our partnership is reflected in our close and effective cooperation in fields ranging from defence to science and technology to education. It is also reflected in the many projects we have jointly established in Mauritius, from cultural centres to hospitals.

We have a major ongoing project for a Cyber City and a forthcoming one for an International Convention Centre. It is very appropriate that the World Hindi Secretariat is being established in Mauritius.

India is happy to participate in the impressive economic transformation that Mauritius is experiencing today.

Mr. Prime Minister:

We have had wide-ranging discussions today on all aspects of our bilateral relations and on directions of future cooperation. As the world around us changes, we can expand our economic relationship to match the new opportunities. In that spirit, we welcome your idea of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between our two countries.

We need to significantly enhance trade and investment flows in both directions. Mauritius can be an important gateway for Indian business to Africa and Europe. Business and industry of our two countries can join forces to explore investment and marketing opportunities in third countries.

We must also increase our security cooperation. We are partners in the international coalition against terror. We are working towards
bilateral mechanisms to counter terrorism. We are cooperating against drug trafficking. As I have said before, India will continue to extend all possible assistance for the security requirements of Mauritius.

Mr. Prime Minister,

An attachment to the enduring bonds of friendship with Mauritius runs deep in all levels of Indian society. We know that there is an equally strong fund of mutual goodwill in Mauritius. This gives us confidence in the bright future of our relationship.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I invite you to join me in a toast:

To the health and personal well-being of the Prime Minister and Madame Berenger;

To the progress and prosperity of the fraternal Mauritian people; and,

To eternal friendship between India and Mauritius.

Thank you.
315. Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit of the Mauritius Prime Minister Paul Raymond Berenger.

New Delhi, November 24, 2003.

1. His Excellency Mr. Paul Raymond Berenger, G.C.S.K, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, accompanied by Mrs Berenger, paid a state visit to India from 19-24 November 2003 at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India.

2. During the visit, the Prime Minister of Mauritius called on the President of the Republic of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. He visited Rajghat to pay homage to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi. The Mauritian dignitary called on the Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and held detailed discussions on bilateral, regional and international issues. The Prime Minister of India also hosted a banquet in honour of Mr. Paul R. Berenger and Mrs Berenger.

3. The Prime Minister of Mauritius held meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister, Shri L.K. Advani, Minister of External Affairs, Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Defence, Shri George Fernandes, Minister of Human Resource Development, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi and Leader of Opposition, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi.

4. They reaffirmed their commitment to democracy and secularism and emphasized on the importance of harmonious co-existence in multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual societies, and stressed on the concept of unity in diversity.

5. Both leaders hailed the traditional bonds of friendship and kinship between Mauritius and India founded on historical and shared cultural heritage and expressed satisfaction at the vibrant and excellent relations existing between the two countries. They reaffirmed their intention to continue to further strengthen bilateral relations

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1. During the visit following agreements were signed:

Extradition Treaty

The Treaty signed by the Shri Yashwant Sinha, Hon’ble Minister of External Affairs of India, and Shri Anil Kumar Singh Gayan, Foreign Minister of Mauritius:

The agreement provides for cooperation between the two countries in the suppression of crime by providing for the reciprocal extradition of offenders. The Treaty covers offences such as unlawful seizure of aircraft, hostage taking, criminal offences etc.
conclude, at the earliest, a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA). Both sides agreed to setting up of a Joint Working Group to prepare the modalities of the CECPA. The objectives of this agreement would be, inter-alia, to (i) strengthen and enhance economic, industrial, trade and investment cooperation between the two countries; (ii) progressively liberalise and promote trade in goods and services with a view to the eventual setting up of a free trade area; (iii) facilitate the setting up of joint ventures; and (iv) promote partnerships to ensure greater development of the region.

6. Both sides were satisfied with the level of bilateral cooperation in the field of defence and security. India reiterated its commitment to provide assistance to Mauritius in the surveillance of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Mauritius welcomed Indian assistance and acknowledged that the Indian Navy had already commenced provision of assistance in this regard. Mauritius recognized the assistance being extended by India in the field of defence including repair works being carried out to its OPV ‘Vigilant’ and training of defence personnel. They also recognized the potential that exist for purchase of defence equipment by Mauritius from India. In this context, an agreement was signed during the visit for the purchase of a Dornier aircraft by Mauritius from India.

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**MOU on cooperation in the field of non-conventional energy sources**

The MOU signed by the Shri Yashwant Sinha, Hon’ble Minister of External Affairs of India and Shri Anil Kumarsingh Gayan, Foreign Minister of Mauritius.

The MOU provides for cooperation in the field of non-conventional energy including exchange of information on renewable energy policy, exchange of experts in scientific research, capacity building, training programmes, scientific visits, promotion of new technologies, joint ventures and implementation of pilot projects.

**Agreement for the setting up of the World Hindi Secretariat**

This agreement signed by Shri J.C. Sharma, Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and Mr. Harry Ganoo, Secretary to the Cabinet, Government of Mauritius. This agreement provides for cooperation for promotion of Hindi as an international language and for furtherance of the cause of Hindi towards its recognition at the United Nations as an official language. It provides for the setting up of the World Hindi Secretariat in Mauritius along with the constitution of statutory bodies for the world Hindi Secretariat.

**Commercial agreement between Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. and Government of Mauritius for purchase of Dornier aircraft**

This agreement signed by N.R. Mohanty, Chairman, HAL and Mr. R. Gopal Singh, Commissioner of Police, Mauritius. The agreement provides for the purchase of one HAL Dornier aircraft by the Government of Mauritius.
7. India confirmed its readiness to conduct hydrographic surveys of the harbours, ports and outer islands of Mauritius and update its existing navigational charts and to offer assistance in the field of prospecting and exploration of oil and gas resources in the EEZ and continental shelf of Mauritius. It was noted that cooperation in this regard had already begun between the ONGC and National Institute of Oceanography, Goa with the corresponding Mauritian organizations. Both sides agreed to conclude an MOU at an early date on exploration of oil and gas in the Mauritian EEZ.

8. Both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation against drug trafficking and other criminal matters. In this regard an Extradition Treaty was signed in the presence of the two Prime Ministers. It was also agreed to conclude an agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and an agreement on cooperation on matters relating to Drug Trafficking at an early date.

9. The Prime Minister of Mauritius conveyed his appreciation of India’s generous assistance for the construction of a Multi-purpose conference Centre at Domaine Les Pailles to host the International Meeting on the Comprehensive Review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Islands Developing States scheduled from 29 August to 3 September 2004.

10. The Prime Minister of Mauritius reiterated his appreciation for India’s support and assistance in the Information and Communications Technology and particularly in the setting up of the Cybercity at Ebene in Mauritius. He highlighted the potential for further Indo-Mauritian cooperation in this field, specially with regard to capacity building and to opportunities existing in Africa and in the region.

11. The two sides expressed satisfaction that the Agreement for the setting up of the World Hindi Secretariat and the MOU on cooperation in the field of Non-Conventional Energy Sources were signed during the visit. The two sides also reviewed the progress achieved so far with regard to the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre and the inclusion of Aapravasi Ghat on the list of UNESCO’s World Heritage Sites. In the field of film and image development, India agreed to extend technical assistance in the form of training and equipment and to consider possibilities for joint venture partnerships in the film sector.

12. They also agreed that the next meeting of the Indo-Mauritius Joint Commission would be held in early 2004 at the level of Foreign Ministers of the two countries.
13. Both sides recognized the important role of the United Nations and expressed their determination to continue their efforts in strengthening the UN System as the central organ for ensuring international peace and security. They reiterated their support to the reform of the United Nations Organisation and stressed, in particular, the need for an enlarged Security Council which would be more democratic and more representative of today’s world. The Prime Minister of Mauritius reiterated his total support to India’s candidature to a permanent seat in an expanded Security Council and expressed his satisfaction for India’s support of the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago.

14. On Iraq, both sides had a convergence of view and felt that it was imperative that the people of Iraq should be empowered to determine their own future to rebuild their nation. Both sides also agreed that the UN had a crucial role to play in the process of political and economic reconstruction of that country. The immediate priorities in Iraq are ensuring security and stability, restoration of basic facilities and infrastructure, and a road map for the political process towards a representative government.

15. India and Mauritius called for the establishment of a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East. They reiterated their principled support for the Palestinian cause and for the legitimate rights and aspirations in the framework of the UN Security Council Resolutions No. 242, 338, 1397 and 497 as well as the “land for peace” principle. Both sides stated that the cycle of violence and counter-violence must end.

16. Mauritius welcomed India’s commitment to Africa’s development through NEPAD and sub-regional fora such as SADC and COMESA. Both sides highlighted the importance of the IOR-ARC and acknowledged the vital role of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the Commonwealth in addressing global issues. They agreed to continue their coordination in the context of these multilateral organizations.

17. Mauritius and India affirmed that terrorism cannot be justified in any form and that it is only through international efforts and cooperation that the war against terrorism could be won. In this context they reiterated their commitment to UNSC Resolution 1373. Mauritius shared the concern of India regarding cross-border
terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and reiterated that the Kashmir issue should be resolved through bilateral dialogue.

18. With regard to the global trading system, both sides underscored the need to guarantee equity and fairness for developing countries in post-Cancun. In this regard, India agreed to support the work programme on small economies for their further integration in the Multilateral Trading System, Special and Differential Treatment to developing countries including Small Islands Developing States, and the importance of preferential trade regimes for small vulnerable countries like Mauritius.

19. The Prime Minister of Mauritius expressed his deep gratitude to the Government of the Republic of India for the warm hospitality provided to him and his delegation and the excellent arrangements made during his visit to India. He extended an invitation to H.E. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of the Republic of India to visit Mauritius in early 2004 for the inauguration of the Ebene Cyber city. The invitation was accepted with pleasure. The dates of the visit would be finalized through diplomatic channels.

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Mozambique

316. Speech by President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of President of the Republic of Mozambique Joaquim Alberto Chissano.

New Delhi, May 12, 2003.

Your Excellency Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano,
The President of the Republic of Mozambique,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a matter of great privilege and honour for me to extend a warm welcome to you and to the distinguished members of your delegation. Your visit marks a significant step in strengthening further our age-old ties of friendship and brotherhood. We share the Indian Ocean, which
has provided a historic link for exchanges to take place among us, especially at a people to people level.

When India became independent in 1947, many of the countries of Asia, Africa and other parts of the world were still under the colonial yoke. Given the moral thrust of our struggle for independence, it was natural for India and its people to share the aspirations of the people of those countries, which had still not been liberated. Thus, our support for people in Mozambique, in their struggle for freedom became a cornerstone of India’s foreign policy.

Excellency, you are visiting India after a gap of fifteen years. Within this period, there have been wide-ranging changes in the political and economic landscape of our two countries. India is enjoying the benefits of economic reforms, which we introduced in the early 90’s, and we have Vision to transform India into a developed country by the year 2020. Our progress in the frontier areas of science and technology, including Information Technology, has given us a place among the comity of scientifically advanced nations. The Green Revolution has made us one among the largest food producers of the world. We have all along been guided by the principle that our political freedom can be secure only when we are economically self-reliant. In Mozambique also, you are reaping the benefits of peace and stability as a result of the Peace Agreement signed in Rome in October 1992. The opening of Mozambique’s diplomatic mission in Delhi in December 2001, was no doubt a sagacious decision on the part of your Government and is a reflection of your commitment to strengthening India-Mozambique relations.

We have been closely following the growing stature of your country in the regional affairs of Africa. You have been at the heart of the seminal changes that are taking place in the regional integration of your continent. With the advent of the African Union, African unity is no longer an esoteric concept but a sincere and measured response to the problems of conflicts, market fragmentation and globalisation. In India, we attach great value to the role being played by the Southern African Development Community (SADC). I am confident that this organisation, whose most important organ of Defence, Security and Politics is headed by Your Excellency, will continue to address the political and security issues that may endanger the tranquility of your region. I am happy that the SADC has decided to set up a regular ministerial level dialogue with India. I consider this to be a great honour for my country. Mozambique will also be assuming the onerous responsibility of the Chairmanship of the African
Union this year. I would like to offer my best wishes for the successful holding of the African Union summit in Maputo in July this year. While the African Union is the symbol of African aspirations for political emancipation, the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), reflects the African desire for economic independence. In order to become an active partner in the development of Africa in the context of these initiatives, India has revitalised its own policies towards Africa by evolving new strategies. These include, among others, fresh credit lines for cooperation in the fields of infrastructure development, health, sanitation and education.

Excellency, the spectre of international terrorism has emerged as a global problem, which transcends all national boundaries. Terrorism sponsored across international borders by States in quest for territorial expansion is a threat to international peace and security. India has lost innumerable lives as a result of this problem of cross-border terrorism. We must work together to see that these forces of terrorism are dealt with firmly and eradicated. A Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism would help avoid unilateral or selective action. India is willing to walk the extra mile to develop an international consensus and the requisite legal regimes against terrorism.

I am of the firm opinion that long term and binding economic relations between our two countries can be built up on the basis of ‘win-win’ projects and programmes. Considering the core competence of both our countries, we could set up joint ventures in the areas of sugar production in a cost effective way, hydro power generation and its distribution and marketing, agro and food processing and in the development of small scale industries which are ideally suited to generate employment. Similarly, in the field of health-care, India is developing a vaccine for HIV/AIDS. There is scope for intense collaboration between our two countries in this area also.

India and Mozambique have been working together in various international fora like the Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation. With our background of close cooperation, we are uniquely placed to foster Afro-Asian solidarity on all important global issues. Moreover, I have no doubt that the new areas of cooperation that have been identified during your present visit, will bind us even further in an enduring partnership that will prove to be a model for development cooperation.

With these words, may I request all the distinguished guests to join me in raising a toast:
Joint statement issued during the State Visit of President of the Republic of Mozambique.

New Delhi, May 12, 2003.

1. The President of the Republic of Mozambique, H.E. Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano undertook a State Visit to India from May 10-15, 2003 upon the invitation of the President of India H. E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

2. Within the framework of the visit H. E. Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano held fruitful discussions with H. E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of the Republic of India, and H.E. Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India.

3. During bilateral discussions held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere, both sides exchanged views on various bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

4. Both sides noted with satisfaction that India-Mozambique relations, which have a strong cultural and historical basis, are marked by cordiality and a high degree of understanding and close proximity on current principal issues. Both sides reiterated their desire to strengthen bilateral relations based on the traditionally close ties between the two countries.

5. Mozambique is a country with untapped natural resources and emerging infrastructural requirements. Given India’s varied experience in high technology and industrial areas, India would, in the spirit of South-South cooperation, share expertise in priority areas identified by Mozambique.
6. To these ends, the Indian side agreed to consider extending the scope of ongoing cooperation under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme. Possibility of deputing Indian ITEC experts in key sectors identified by Mozambique would also be considered.

7. India noted the efforts of Mozambique to increasingly integrate with regional organizations such as the African Union, Southern African Development Community as well as with the global economy. In this connection, India extended its support to NEPAD initiatives and agreed to give best possible consideration for extending concessional credit line facilities to African countries, including Mozambique through the EXIM Bank of India.

8. As a gesture of its commitment to further strengthening Indo-Mozambique bilateral relations, the Indian side agreed to waive in entirety, all pending payments due by Mozambique to Government of India.

9. The Indian side agreed to consider the alternative proposal of Mozambique side related to the debt conversion into investment to clear the due payments of “Banco de Moçambique” under Indian EXIM Bank’s credit line.

10. With regard to the issue of blocked funds, both sides noted with appreciation the conclusion of bilateral debt reconciliation exercise in order to give effect to the decision taken by the Government of India.

11. Both sides noted that a high-level Indian delegation, led by Minister of State of External Affairs of India, had visited Mozambique to co-chair the Indo-Mozambique Joint Commission in December 2002.

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1. On May 12 the Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs told a media briefing that during the delegation level talks with the Prime Minister, fresh credit line of US $ 20 million for Mozambique was announced. Also it was agreed that India would grant US $ 200,000 every year for a period of 5 years, which would be used for projects to be identified by both sides as part of Joint Commission. During the call by the EAM on the President of Mozambique, Mr. Sinha stressed India’s intentions to structure a relationship with the African Union of which Mozambique takes over the Chairmanship this year. There is a growing democratisation in Africa and given that trend as well as its immense resources India clearly views Africa as the Continent of the 21st Century. Mr. Sinha also underlined while India and Mozambique could work together on South-South cooperation, what was needed was a firmer institutional framework, a juridical framework, particularly in terms of agreement like bilateral, investment, protection and double taxation avoidance agreements between various countries.
Both sides emphasized the need for creating better awareness of each other's strengths among the private sectors of the two countries. Trade missions would be undertaken and participation in trade/commercial exhibitions in both countries would be encouraged. The Indian side reinforced its commitment for setting up of joint ventures. The Indian side also emphasized the need for signing a trade agreement leading to the establishment of a Joint Trade Committee. Indian side reiterated its intention of holding the next meeting of the Indo-Mozambican Joint Commission in New Delhi towards the end of 2003.

12. Realizing the importance of active cooperation in the fields of agriculture and agro-industries, both sides agreed to continue negotiations aimed at concluding a Plan of Action for setting up of small scale agro industries in rural areas in Mozambique, specially in the implementation strategies and identification of funding sources. The two sides also agreed to cooperate in the development of commercial farming in Mozambique through the establishment of Joint Ventures.

13. The Indian side agreed to provide Technical Assistance on coconut and coir processing.

14. The Mozambican side recalled the visit of its Minister for Health (March 2003) and indicated its desire to facilitate entry of quality Indian pharmaceutical products into Mozambique. Both sides agreed to work on specific proposals for cooperation in the field of Health immediately and to sign an Agreement on Cooperation in the Health Sector at the earliest. After signing the Agreement, both sides also agreed to conclude an Action Plan which among others will cover India's help in providing training to Mozambican health officials in drug quality control and assistance in the field of anti-retroviral drugs and the treatment of Malaria, Tuberculosis and other diseases.

15. The Mozambican side recalled the visit of its Minister of Labour in April 2003. Both sides agreed to sign an agreement on Cooperation in the Labour sector soon. After signing of the Protocol, both sides also agreed to conclude an Action Plan, which among others, will cover India's help in providing training to Mozambique in the following areas: Employment statistics; employment and vocational training;
combat against HIV/AIDS at workplace; social security and migratory labour.

16. Both sides agreed to strengthen their cooperation in the area of Transport and Communications. The Indian side specially evinced interest in the projects on road construction, ports and railways. It was agreed that RITES has the technical capabilities to assist in the management of Mozambican Railway system and rehabilitation of Sena Line.

17. The following were signed during the State visit: -

a) MOU in the field of Agriculture;

b) Bilateral Inter-governmental Science & Technology Agreement

18. Both sides agreed to conclude Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement and Bilateral Investment, Protection and Promotion Agreement at the earliest.

19. The two sides reiterated their support to the need to reform the United Nations, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They stressed, in particular, the need for equitable balance in the expanded Security Council to provide a constructive voice to the aspirations of the developing countries. They believe that piecemeal and discriminatory approaches to such expansion will be inconsistent with the objectives of that world body. Considering that India is the largest democracy in the world and in view of its past contributions to the promotion of peace, Mozambique expressed support for India’s candidature to the permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council. India also expressed support for a more equitable representation of Africa in an expanded Security Council.

20. India and Mozambique affirmed that terrorism cannot be justified in any form, for any cause or for any reason as an excuse. They agreed that the fight against terrorism has to be global, comprehensive and sustained for the objective of total elimination of terrorism worldwide. In this context, they reiterated their commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution 1373. They stressed the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
21. The Mozambique side appreciated the evolving security concerns of India in the light of recent local, regional and global developments. It appreciated the restraint and responsibility shown by India despite its varied defence capabilities. In this connection, the Mozambique side agreed that Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of India and supported the resolution of differences between India and Pakistan through bilateral dialogue on the basis of Simla Agreement of 1972 and Lahore Declaration of 1999. It also recognized that cross-border infiltration and terrorism had to end to encourage resumption of dialogue. It called on concerned countries to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism and to stop serving as a platform for international terrorism.

22. The Mozambican side encouraged and supported the recent steps taken by the Government of India aiming to establish a peaceful atmosphere towards the bilateral resolution of differences between India and Pakistan including Jammu and Kashmir.

23. The Mozambique side expressed sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of India for all the hospitality extended to them and the excellent arrangements made for their visit to India.

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Namibia

318. Speech of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of the Namibian President Sam Nujoma.

New Delhi, February 27, 2003.

Your Excellency Dr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a matter of great pleasure and honour for me to extend a warm welcome to you Mr. President and the other distinguished members of the Namibian delegation. Your present visit reinforces the strong links that have historically bound our two countries.

Excellency, India’s relationship with Namibia has always been one of fraternal solidarity. We in India have always felt a special attachment towards Africa, for the dreams and aspirations of its peoples and respect for the oft forgotten fact that the African continent has been a cradle of human civilization. Both our countries have a shared historical experience. Both of us have now embarked upon a journey towards economic and social emancipation. In the international arena, both India and Namibia have held a common interest in building a world order that is more responsive to the aspirations of developing countries.

India’s relations with the countries of Africa have been constructed on the twin pillars of peace and development. For India, it is a moral imperative to assist the countries of Africa. There is much talk these days about “African renaissance” which is defined in terms of shared democratic values and a commitment to economic reforms. In the post-colonial phase of your history, India has emphasized on Development cooperation as the principle component of our relations. Following the path of self-reliance, India has made significant progress in many areas which are critical to the economic well-being of developing countries. India has shared, whole-heartedly, its experience and achievements in the areas of human resource development and employment generation with the countries of Africa. The India-Namibia Plastic Technology Centre at Ondangwa is a true symbol of our partnership in the spirit of South-South cooperation. It is essential for both our countries to identify one unique development project based on its core competence; either in the health sector such as HIV control or food processing and value addition in diamond products.
Both of our nations should develop a winning partnership from design and development to production and marketing. I have no doubt, Excellency, that the new areas of cooperation that have been identified during your visit, will enable us to collectively tackle new economic and social challenges that confront us in this era of globalisation.

The Namibian Government is also actively engaged in tackling inequities of the past and in empowering the previously disadvantaged citizens. The ongoing efforts in Namibia, for development of infrastructure, are of great importance for the entire region. I am told that you have been, as in the past, doing manual work during the festive season at the sites of the railway extension project in the North of your country, thereby, motivating your countrymen, for voluntary work. This is what Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our nation, taught us many years ago. Nelson Mandela another great son of Africa once said, “What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead”. With this in mind, India stands ready to collaborate closely with the development of your railways and other infrastructure.

Excellency, India greatly values the important regional development role being played by the Southern African Development Community (SADC). India has initiated the proposal for institutionalizing a high level dialogue through the creation of the SADC-India Forum. We will count upon Namibian support to India for strengthening our economic links with SADC and other regional organizations in Africa. India has initiated negotiations to conclude a Preferential Trade Agreement with the Southern African Customs Union which has its headquarters in Namibia. The launching of the African Union and the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) hold tremendous promise for the future of Africa. In the context of these developments, India has recognized the need to revitalize its own links with Africa by evolving a composite ‘Focus: Africa’ policy covering new credit lines for cooperation in infrastructure projects and human resource development.

India and Namibia enjoy close ties that are based on mutual trust and understanding. Both our countries staunchly believe in the imperative for the restructuring of the United Nations to make its functioning more representative, democratic and participatory. We are deeply appreciative of Namibia’s unequivocal support for India’s claims to become a Permanent Member of the expanded UN Security Council. Out bilateral relations have
been further consolidated through our harmonious interaction at various international fora such as the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth and the World Trade Organization.

Excellency, the challenges which our countries face today combine many of the great challenges that confront the whole of mankind. We need social stability that is based on equity and on socio-economic development. We must nurture human resources by continuous upgradation of our skills. We must provide real growth prospects in a democratic framework that is free from exploitation. We must boldly face and tackle the menace of terrorism that is trying to strike at the very roots of our civilization. Your visit, Excellency, has provided us with a great opportunity to renew our relations and to reflect collectively on these challenges and to chalk out a coordinated plan to address them.

I am confident, Excellency, that the warm relations which exists between India and Namibia would continue to grow in the future as well.

May I request all the distinguished guests to join me in raising a toast:-

- to the personal good health and happiness of His Excellency President Sam Nujoma,
- to the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Namibia and
- to the abiding friendship between India and Namibia.

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319. Joint Communique issued on the visit of Namibian President Dr. Sam Nujoma.

New Delhi, February 27, 2003.

On the occasion of the State visit of His Excellency Dr. Sam Nujoma, President of Namibia to India, on 27 February 2003, Namibia and India look ahead with faith and optimism to move together towards realizing the larger goals of their political freedom namely, economic empowerment of their peoples along with social justice.
Recalling that their common struggle began with resistance to racial discrimination, the two countries look back with pride and satisfaction at their productive partnership, in the spirit of South-South cooperation.

They reaffirm their commitment to democracy and secularism and emphasize the importance of harmonious co-existence in multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual societies, and stress the concept of unity in diversity.

Convinced of the need for Afro-Asian solidarity, they resolve to coordinate efforts relating to regional and global security and to support other’s efforts to promote good-neighbourliness and cooperation in their respective regions.

Recognising that the end of the bipolar world has redefined global equations, India and Namibia reaffirm their belief in the vitality and increasing importance of the Non-Aligned Movement as a vehicle for safeguarding the independence of thought and autonomy of action of its members. Recalling the success of the Non-Aligned Movement in the past in relation to decolonisation and the dismantling of apartheid, both the countries believe in strengthening the role of NAM to face the new economic and social challenges of globalisation. They affirm that issues such as inequities of the multi-lateral trading system, global security issues such as terrorism, poverty alleviation, human resources development and capacity building and South-South cooperation should find priority in the rejuvenated NAM along with traditional issues such as international peace and security, peaceful settlement of disputes, disarmament and decolonisation.

Recognizing the importance of promotion and protection of human rights, both at the national and international levels, both countries oppose misuse of human rights as an instrument for interference in the domestic affairs of other countries. Both view all human rights, whether civil, political, economic, social and cultural, as universal, indivisible, interdependent and inter-related.

Development, which empowers people and enables them to achieve dignity, is essential for meaningful and effective enjoyment of human rights by all.

India welcomes the role being played by Namibia in conflict resolution in the Southern African region and its contribution to the success of SADC. Namibia appreciates India’s initiatives to promote friendship and good-
neighbourliness in the South Asian region. While recognizing that the State of Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of India, Namibia calls for resolution of all differences between India and Pakistan through peaceful means and bilateral discussions in accordance with the Simla Agreement of 1972 and Lahore Declaration of 1999.

Concerned at the uneven impact of globalization on developing economies, India and Namibia are convinced that the success and sustainability of the global process depends on its ability to bring equal benefits to developing countries. They agree to consult and collaborate with one another in forums such as the UN and the WTO and to make full use of their partnership within the Non-Aligned Movement to articulate this concern.

The two sides reiterate their support to the need to reform the UN, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They stress, in particular, the need for equitable balance in the expanded Security Council to provide a constructive voice to the aspirations of the developing countries. They believe that piecemeal and discriminatory approaches to such expansion will be inconsistent with the objectives of that world body. Considering that India is the largest democracy in the world and in view of its past contributions to the promotion of peace, Namibia reiterates its support to India’s candidature to the permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council.

India and Namibia affirm that terrorism cannot be justified in any form, for any cause or for any reason used as an excuse. They agree that the fight against terrorism has to be global, comprehensive and sustained for the objective of total elimination of terrorism worldwide. In this context, they reiterate their commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution 1373. They stress the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through the adoption of the comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

They recognize that the India-Namibia relations have been a model for South-South cooperation. Namibia recognizes India as a true friend having shown resolve to stand by the country in its hour of need. The cooperation between the two countries has been extremely valuable in the human resource development sector of Namibia and both the sides stress its continued importance for bilateral relations. In this context, India will extend technical assistance to Namibia in the field of small scale industry.
India and Namibia welcome the positive developments that have taken place on the African continent and the successful transformation of the Organization of African Unity into the African Union. Both countries reiterated their support to the African Union’s programme of economic recovery, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), which is aimed at, among others, achieving peace, overcoming underdevelopment and eradicating poverty in Africa.

Namibia expresses its support for closer interaction including regular ministerial level dialogue between India and regional organizations such as SADC. India reaffirms its support to the objectives of NEPAD and reiterates its desire to assist the African nations for realizing the objectives of NEPAD, through strengthening economic linkages between India and African countries.

1. On February 25 the Spokesperson Navtej Sarna gave a background to the bilateral relations between the two countries and India’s support to anti colonial and anti-apartheid struggle of Namibia. He said: “India’s relations with Namibia, an important Southern African country, are warm and friendly, based on India’s historical support to the anti-colonial and the anti-apartheid struggle waged by Namibia under President Nujoma. India was among the first nations to raise the question of Namibian independence in the United Nations. Since 1946, India took the lead in supporting Namibian struggle in every international forum, especially at the UN Committee on Decolonization and provided all possible moral, material and diplomatic support to the Namibian leadership in exile. The first ever SWAPO Embassy abroad was established in New Delhi in 1986 and was funded by the Government of India. In the post-independent Namibia, India has emerged as a major partner in its economic development, extending valuable assistance under its ITEC programme. Namibia, as a friendly country has extended support to India on issues such as cross-border terrorism, Jammu & Kashmir, Indian candidature to the permanent membership of the expanded UN Security Council etc. Both the countries share similar perceptions on major international issues and are co-travellers in organizations like NAM and the Commonwealth. There have been frequent and regular exchange of visits at the highest political levels between India and Namibia.”
Rwanda

320. Media briefing on the visit of the Foreign Minister of Rwanda.


We have today the Foreign Minister of Rwanda in Delhi and discussions were held this afternoon with the External Affairs Minister both one-to-one as well as delegation level. Mr. Sinha hosted a Lunch in the honour of the Visiting Foreign Minister. An Agreement was signed between the two sides. This is a general agreement on bilateral cooperation between India and Rwanda and this provides for cooperation and political economic, technical, social, judicial security and cultural Agreements. The special focus of cooperation will be on human resource development and coordination of views on multilateral issues. This agreement also provides for the setting up a Joint Commission for the follow up and implementation of the provisions of the agreement. In the discussions that followed the particular focus of cooperation was on the fields of education, health, agriculture and technical assistance in general. Besides of course there was a discussion on increasing cooperation particularly with regional African groups and India and the future prospect of such cooperation both for India, Rwanda and Africa in general. This is what I have to share with you.

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Senegal

321. Joint statement issued at the end of the visit of the President of Senegal Abdoulaya Wade.

New Delhi, October 14, 2003.

1. At the invitation of the President of India, H. E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of Senegal, H. E. Mr. Abdoulaye Wade paid a State Visit to India from October 12-15, 2003.

2. During his visit, H. E. Mr. Wade held fruitful discussions with H. E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of the Republic of India, and
H.E. Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India. The Vice President of India, Mr. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat and the Minister of External Affairs of India, Shri Yashwant Sinha also called on President WADE.

3. During the wide-ranging discussions held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere, both sides exchanged views on various bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

4. Both sides noted with satisfaction that the close relations existing between Senegal and India, which have a strong cultural and historical basis, are marked by cordiality and a deep mutual understanding as well as converging interests on major current international issues. Both sides reiterated their desire to further strengthen the excellent cooperation and close ties between the two peoples.

5. Both sides agreed that friendly contacts and direct exchanges between Ministries, Parliamentary institutions and political parties of the two countries should be further enhanced.

6. The two sides agreed to fully utilize the substantial potential and opportunities for deepening mutually beneficial cooperation, to promote the socio-economic development and prosperity of the two countries. In this connection, both sides recognized that considerable potential exists for India to undertake mutually beneficial cooperation with Senegal in various sectors.

7. Given India’s varied experience in high technology and industrial areas, India could, in a spirit of South-South cooperation, share expertise in priority areas identified by Senegal with a view to consolidating and intensifying the current programme of cooperation in the areas of economic, commercial and human resource development.

1. Briefing the media on the 13th October the Spokesperson Navtej Sarna said “India’s imports (from Senegal) last year were 172 million dollars and that is an increase by 29% from the previous year. Indian exports have increased to 51 million dollars again an increase by more than 100% from the previous year.” Sarna said India had agreed to support a feasibility report on a grant basis for the Dakar rail link project. India also offered to increase technical assistance under the ITEC programme and offered to send a set of Information Technology experts to draw up a forward looking programme in Information Technology for Senegal. Senegal for its part sought support for setting up a University and for setting up a National level Science and Technology learning center.
8. In this context, the Indian side decided to extend a line of credit of US$ 15 million for the development of rural SMEs and for the purchase of agricultural machinery and equipment.

9. To that end, the Indian side agreed to extend the scope of ongoing cooperation under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme. Possibility of deputing Indian ITEC experts in key sectors identified by Senegal would also be considered.

10. Both sides agreed to give priority to consolidation of cooperation in all agreed fields and to organize the second meeting of the Joint Commission in India, soon.

11. During the visit, Agreements on Cultural Exchange Programme, Cooperation in Small and Medium Industries, Media Exchange between PTI and APS etc. were signed. Both sides also agreed to intensify consultations to ensure that a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement and a Bilateral Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments would be signed during the next Joint Commission Meeting.

12. Both sides agreed to strengthen their cooperation in the field of transport and communication. The Indian side specifically expressed interest in road, ports and railway construction projects in Senegal. In this reads, the two parties welcomed the setting up of a bus assembly factory, SENBUS INDUSTRIES, in Senegal, which is the outcome of cooperation between the private sectors of the two countries. They undertook to do everything possible to ensure that this fine example of South-South Cooperation will achieve the expected success.

13. The Indian side also agreed to provide a grant assistance to conduct a feasibility study and a Detailed Project Report for the Dakar-Ziguinchor Railway line.

14. Both sides emphasized the need for creating better awareness of each other's strengths within the private sector of the two countries. It was, therefore, agreed to exchange commercial missions and to participate in trade fairs organized in the two countries.

15. India welcomed the important role played by Senegal in Africa, particularly within Organizations like WAEMU, ECOWAS, the African Union. In that connection, the Indian side reiterated its support to
NEPAD for which India has announced a line of credit worth US$200 million. In its turn, Senegal welcomed the important role played by India on the international political scene as well as its willingness to establish closer relations with West Africa States.

16. The two sides decided to support the establishment of Team-9, a Techno-Economic Cooperation project between India and Africa.

17. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to promote the formation of an equitable multi-polar world order based on the equality of states, principles of rule of law, territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic affairs of States with a view to removing threats to stability and international security.

18. The two parties expressed their deep regrets at the failure of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference, held in Cancun, Mexico from 10 to 14 September 2003. They reiterated their determination to pursue contacts initiated to ensure that the basic concerns of developing countries are taken into account in future multilateral trade talks at WTO level, particularly those relative to agricultural subsidies and market access.

19. Referring to the forthcoming World Summit of the Information Society, scheduled in Geneva, in December 2003 and in Tunis in 2005, the two parties undertook to work together to ensure its success and the integration of the developing countries’ concerns in the documents that will result from this important meeting. For their part, the Indian authorities reaffirmed their support to the initiative launched by H.E. President Abdoulaye WADE on Digital Solidarity and the institution of a Fund in that regard.

20. The two parties expressed their grave concern about the expansion of international terrorism, religious intolerance, international crime, drug and arms trafficking. They considered this wave of violence as a threat to the sovereignty of States, development, stability as well as to international peace and security. They condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of its authors and motivations. In this regard, the two parties stressed the importance of the strict, total and unconditional implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 of 28 September 2001. They stressed the need to strengthen the international legal system to fight against terrorism by finalizing and adopting the draft
Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the soonest.

21. Addressing the situation in the Middle East, the two parties reaffirmed their support to the “Roadmap” for a global, fair, equitable and lasting solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict. They reiterated their support to the existence of the two States, a Palestinian and an Israeli State, living side by side, in secure and internationally recognized borders.

22. The President of Senegal, H.E. Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, extended invitations to the President of the Republic of India, H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and to the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, to visit Senegal at an early date. The invitations were accepted with pleasure. The dates of the visits would be finalized through diplomatic channels.

23. On behalf of the Government and the people of Senegal, H.E. President Wade expressed sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of India for all the hospitality extended to him and his delegation and the excellent arrangements made for their visit to and their stay in India.

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Seychelles

322. Address of Vice-President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat to the National Assembly of Seychelles.


Hon’ble Speaker, Mr. Francis MacGregor, Hon’ble The Leader of the Opposition Mr. Wavel Ramkalawan, distinguished Members of the National Assembly, Your Excellencies Ladies and gentlemen,

Namaskar, Good morning

I bring to you warm greetings, fraternal good wishes and best regards from the people of India, from the Members of the Indian Parliament, and from the Government of India.
It is a great honour for me to be here amidst you and to address this august Assembly, the pillar of democracy of your beautiful country. I cannot express how fascinated I am by the unique beauty of this Paradise Island. Nature has been bountiful to your Country- as beautiful indeed as it has been in bestowing such rich diversity upon your land and its people.

I have pleasantly learnt an Indian connection in the discovery of this Island of Mahe! It was from Pondicherry in India that in the year 1741, the French navigator, Lazare Picault had begun his voyage to Mauritius as destination when his keen eyes spotted this beautiful Island of Mahe. That is why I am sure our two countries will remain firmly connected forever!

I am particularly happy to be visiting Seychelles as you celebrate the Tenth anniversary of the Third Republic. I learn that you have just celebrated the Tenth anniversary of the National Assembly under the Third Constitution with the photographic Exhibition on the history of the Parliamentary traditions in Seychelles. Very soon you will also be observing the centenary of the meeting of the first Legislative Council. I, therefore, consider myself privileged to address this special Session, convened by your Excellency, during this period of your dialogue with history, attesting to the close friendship between our two democracies.

We in India celebrated the Golden Jubilee of our Parliament earlier this year. Hon’ble Mr. Speaker, let me say how honoured we felt with your presence then and of your delegation on that historic occasion.

Hon’ble Members, both our countries share common background, and have a common legacy of colonialism. Both countries have also had to struggle for independence. Also on attainment of independence, both of us decided to continue as members of the Commonwealth. Both Countries then became members of the United Nations. We are both wedded to the common ideals of democracy and secularism. The basic tenets of democracy, expression of popular will, respect for liberty and human rights, adult suffrage, rule of law and governance by the majority party apply equally in our two Countries. Parliamentary procedures, too, have major elements of similarity though their applications do of course vary. However, the Constitution remains the supreme law of the land, in my country as in your. Both our countries recognize that people’s faith in democracy rests upon the confidence that the common man has in the capacity and effectiveness of Parliamentary institutions to provide him security and promote his welfare. The Parliamentary institutions are the best forums to understand and address man’s developmental needs and
to focus on various aspects of governance impacting on the well-being of the people.

Our struggle for independence, an epic struggle for democracy, freedom and liberty, was led by Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our Nation. In a period of the past five decades, after attaining independence, India’s experience has shown to the world how complex problems of a developing country can be addressed within a constitutional and democratic framework.

The challenges before the democracies of the developing world are formidable; the foremost being of the eradication of poverty and eliminating under-development. People’s faith in democracies of developing nations depends upon addressing the problems of the poor. Eradication of poverty and providing safety net for the poor, in the present era of globalization, remains the priority agenda item for action. To accomplish this task without any distraction or hindrance, we need an international environment conducive to peace and growth. Peace must prevail if humanity has to survive. We must strive hard for a world free from fear, violence, conflicts and terrorism. Let us be vigilant against the threat to democracy worldwide arising from the forces opposed to it, whether from terrorists or others.

Today, unfortunately, we are failing to provide common man the requisite security and the freedom from fear largely due to the spectre of terrorism. As a victim of terrorism for more than two and half decades, India knows, more than any other country, the adverse consequences of it. The terrorist attack on our Parliament on 13th December 2001 symbolised grave terrorist threat to democracy all over the world. The people of India remain steadfast in their solemn resolve to strengthen democracy and to continue to safeguard our territorial integrity. I would like to thank the people of Seychelles for their principled and consistent support ot India on the issue of cross border terrorism. The fight against terrorism has to be comprehensive and sustained, we need to isolate the elements who instigate, support or assist terrorism, in any form, as much as those who perpetrate it.

India and Seychelles enjoy close relations. Our relations are characterized by regular political consultation both at the official and at people-to-people level. We have maintained close cooperation in multilateral for a mindful of each other’s vital interests and considering them as our own.

My country’s new ‘Focus Africa’ policy is aimed at enabling us to
better address the aspirations and needs of the people of Africa. Seychelles has ethnic links with three continents - Asia, Africa and Europe. It is uniquely placed to play a role in our efforts to achieve better integration of our policies with Africa.

It is also important to expand the UN Security Council to make it more representative and effective. I would like to convey our sincere appreciation for the support of the Government of Seychelles to India’s candidature for the permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council.

Today, globalisation is the key to building up a new world order. But, globalization is not just breaking barriers of trade; it also enjoins upon us to build new human relationships. In this context, ancient Indian concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which means all the world is one family and that a common humanity unites all civilizations, acquires contemporary relevance. In my view, we can achieve real globalisation and have one peaceful world, only through building a humane and value based environment which contributes tolerance, respect and understanding about the diversity and wealth of different civilizations.

ON this occasion, I would like to reaffirm our commitment to further strengthening mutual cooperation between our two countries. We are now entering a new phase of increased bilateral relationship. Some MoUs are getting finalised. There is so much to gain and benefit through mutual help and understanding. For example, you have invaluable experience in promoting eco-tourism to share with us. Similarly, our strength in professional and skilled manpower resources may be of assistance to you.

Friends, India is committed to creating conditions that would facilitate acceleration of cooperation. The constructive cooperation between our Nations would not only be to our mutual advantage but acting together with understanding and shared values, we shall be partners in contributing to the building of a better world-order. On our part, I would like to assure this august gathering of our very best efforts in this endeavour.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir, once again I express my gratitude to you for having given me this opportunity to share my thoughts with you this morning. It was, indeed, a great privilege and rare honour for me. I wish the very best to every one of you. May God bless your country and all the inhabitants, with ever increasing prosperity, success and glory.

✦✦✦✦✦
1. At the invitation of the Vice-President of the Republic of Seychelles, Mr. James Alix Michel, who visited the Republic of India in March 1999, the Vice President of the Republic of India, H.E. Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, paid an official visit to the Republic of Seychelles from 8th to 12th September 2003.

2. The Vice-President of India was accompanied by the Minister of State for External Affairs of India, Shri Digvijay Singh and other high level officials.

3. During his visit, Vice President Shekhawat met with Vice President Michel. The Minister of Health and the Minister of Environment called on the Vice President of India. The Indian delegation also met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as with the Chief of Staff of the Seychelles Peoples Defence Forces. The Hon’ble Vice President of India addressed a special session of the National Assembly and later interacted with its Members. He visited the Seychelles Defence Academy.

4. During the visit, the following Memoranda were signed:-
   - Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Science and Technology.
   - Memorandum of Understanding on Health Cooperation.
   - Memorandum of Understanding on Defence Cooperation.

5. The two sides agreed to finalise a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) at an early date.

6. Discussions at the delegation level talks focused on areas relating to trade, commerce, investment, technical assistance, oceanography, health, manpower development, culture, defence cooperation, regional and international issues.

7. Following a presentation by the Seychelles side on trade and
investment opportunities in Seychelles both sides agreed that there was a need to strengthen trade and investment possibilities between the two countries. Both sides agreed that the Joint Trade Committee Meeting between the two countries should meet at an early date for this purpose. The focus areas for joint ventures were identified in the fields of pharmaceuticals, information technology, agro-based industries, plastic technology and production of paper and paper-related products.

8. Both sides expressed satisfaction that bilateral cooperation in various fields was governed by the Joint Commission on Economic and Technical Cooperation which has been meeting regularly.

9. Given India’s varied experience in high technology and industrial areas, India is willing in a spirit of South-South Cooperation, to share its expertise in priority areas identified by Seychelles with a view to enhancing the current programme of cooperation in the areas of economic, commercial and human resources development. To this end, the Indian side agreed to consider extending the scope of ongoing cooperation under the India Technical & Economic Cooperation. The possibility of deputing Indian ITEC experts in key sectors identified by Seychelles would be considered favourably.

10. The two sides reiterated that Indo-Seychelles relations were characterized by deep and abiding bonds based on common friendship and a shared cultural heritage. They reaffirmed their commitment towards a closer and stronger relationship between the two countries and stressed that the traditional and historical ties between India and Seychelles should be further strengthened.

11. Both sides expressed satisfaction about the level of bilateral cooperation in the defence and security areas. India reiterated its commitment to provide assistance to Seychelles in the defence sector, including training. India agreed to provide assistance in conducting hydrographic surveys of the harbours, ports, and outer islands of Seychelles and update existing navigational charts as well as in provision of defence technology, ammunition and equipment.

12. The two sides expressed their concern over the increase in international terrorism, religious extremism, trans-border organized crime and illicit trafficking in arms and drugs. They viewed their
upsurge as a serious threat to sovereign states, international peace, development, security and stability. They affirmed that terrorism was a grave violation of human rights and a crime against humanity and that no excuse could justify it in any form. They agreed that the fight against terrorism by the international community has to be global, comprehensive and sustained with the ultimate objective of its total eradication from the world. Actions should be taken against states, entities and individuals who support, finance, harbour or abet terrorists or provide them shelter. In this context, they stressed the importance of strict, full and unconditional implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution on the fight against terrorism and reiterated in particular their commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution 1373. They stressed the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through the early finalization and adoption of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

13. In this connection, the Seychelles side appreciated the evolving security concern of India in the light of recent local, regional and global developments. It appreciated the initiatives taken by India to resume diplomatic relations with Pakistan. In this connection, the Seychelles side supported the resolution of differences between India and Pakistan through bilateral dialogue.

14. Both sides welcomed the agreements reached at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in September 2002, reaffirming the Rio Principles, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Both sides expressed their concern about the adverse effect of climate change and its implications. In this regard, they expressed their desire for an early into force of the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Both sides highlighted the importance of the initiation of negotiations within the framework of the Convention on Bio-diversity towards an international regime for promoting and protecting the just and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the utilization of genetic resources.

15. Seychelles and India agreed to explore the possibility of concluding a Memorandum of Understanding on Environment Issues.

16. With regard to the world trading system, both sides underscored
the need for international trade negotiations to obtain balanced and equitable results. In regard to the developing countries in particular the small vulnerable economies, the size and differences in levels of economic development should be taken into account for special and differential treatment.

17. The two sides acknowledged the vital importance of the role of the United Nations in world peace, stability and development. They remained determined to continue their efforts in strengthening the UN system as the central mechanism for ensuring international peace and security as well as democratizing international relations. They reiterated their support for the need to reform the UN, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They stressed, in particular the need for equitable balance in the expanded Security Council to provide a constructive voice to the aspirations of developing countries.

18. The Hon’ble Vice President of India conveyed his appreciation for the support extended by the Government of Seychelles to India’s candidature to the permanent membership of an expanded Security Council.

19. Seychelles welcomed India’s growing engagement through NEPAD and other regional fora in Africa’s development and India’s concern for the well being, particularly of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to which Seychelles belongs. The two sides agreed that the needs of Small Islands Developing States should be fully addressed to enable them to effectively participate in the globalization process.

20. The two sides reaffirmed their faith in the Non-Aligned Movement. They agreed that the NAM could play an important role in addressing global issues such as poverty alleviation, financing for development, food security, issues of international peace and security, terrorism and disarmament as well as environmental protection.

21. India and Seychelles share the belief that the emerging world order should be just, equitable, multi-polar and based on the principles of democracy, sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of states and respect for human rights and principles of the United Nations.

22. The Hon’ble Vice President of India expressed his deep gratitude to the Government of Seychelles for the hospitality and excellent
arrangements made for him and his delegation. He extended on invitation to His Excellency James Alix Michel, the Vice President of the Republic of Seychelles to pay on official visit to India. The invitation was accepted with pleasure. The dates of the visit would be finalized through diplomatic channels.

Done in Victoria on Wednesday 10th September 2003.

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South Africa

324. Brasilia Declaration issued at the end of consultations between the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, South Africa and India.


Please see Document No. 356

✦✦✦✦✦

325. Press release issued by the Governments of India, Brazil and South Africa on Cooperation to strengthen multilateralism.


Please see Document No. 358

✦✦✦✦✦

New Delhi, October 16, 2003.

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South, hereby referred to as “the Contracting States”;

DESIRING to make more effective their co-operation in the prevention and suppression of crime by concluding a Treaty on Extradition;

AFFIRMING their respect for each other’s legal systems and judicial institutions;

HAVE AGREED as follows:

ARTICLE 1

Obligation to Extradite

Each Contracting State agrees to extradite to the other, in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty, persons who are wanted for trial/prosecution or the imposition or enforcement of a sentence in the Requesting State for an extraditable offence.

ARTICLE 2

Extraditable Offences

1. For the purposes of this Treaty, extradition shall be granted for conduct which constitutes an offence under the laws of both Contracting States, punishable by deprivation of liberty for at least one year or by a more severe penalty.

2. Where the request for extradition relates to a person sentenced to deprivation of liberty by a court of the Requesting State for an extraditable offence, extradition shall be granted if a period of at least six months of the sentence remains to be served.

3. For the purpose of this Article, in determining whether conduct is an offence against the law of the Requested State -

(a) it shall not matter whether the laws of the Contracting States place the conduct constituting the offence within the same
category of offence or describe the offence by the same terminology;

(b) the totality of the conduct alleged against the person whose extradition is sought shall be taken into account and it shall not matter whether, under the laws of the Contracting States, the constituent elements of the offence differ.

4. An offence of a fiscal character, including an offence against a law relating to taxation, customs duties, foreign exchange control or any other revenue matter, is an extraditable offence. Provided that the conduct for which extradition is sought is an offence in the Requested State, extradition may not be refused on the ground that the law of the Requested State does not impose the same kind of tax or duty or does not contain a tax, duty, customs, or exchange regulation of the same kind as the law of the Requesting State.

5. An offence is extraditable whether or not the conduct on which the Requesting State bases its request occurred in the territory over which it has jurisdiction. However, where the law of the Requested State does not provide for jurisdiction over an offence in similar circumstances, the Requested State may, in its discretion, refuse extradition on this basis.

6. Extradition may be granted pursuant to the provisions of this Treaty in respect of an offence provided that -

(a) it was an offence in the Requesting State at the time of the commission of the offence; and

(b) the offence alleged, if it had taken place in the Requested State at the time of the making of the request for extradition, would have constituted an offence against the law of the Requested State.

7. If the request for extradition relates to a sentence of both imprisonment and a pecuniary sanction, the Requested State may grant extradition for the enforcement of both the imprisonment and the pecuniary sanction.

8. If the request for extradition relates to more than one offence, each of which is punishable under the laws of both States, but some of which do not meet the other requirements of paragraphs 1 and 2,
the Requested State may grant extradition for such offences provided that the person is to be extradited for at least one extraditable offence.

**ARTICLE 3**

**Mandatory Refusal of Extradition**

Extradition shall be refused in any of the following circumstances:

1. Where the offence for which extradition is requested is considered by the Requested State to be a political offence. For the purpose of this paragraph, the following conduct does not constitute a political offence:

   (a) conduct that constitutes an offence mentioned in a multilateral convention or agreement to which both Contracting States are parties and are obliged to extradite the person or submit the matter to appropriate authorities for prosecution;
   
   (b) murder;
   
   (c) a murder of or other violent crime against a Head of State or a Head of Government or Deputy Head of State or Deputy Head of Government of the Requesting or Requested State, or a member of such person’s family;
   
   (d) inflicting serious bodily harm;
   
   (e) sexual assault;
   
   (f) kidnapping, abduction, hostage-taking or extortion;
   
   (g) using explosives, incendiaries, devices or substances in circumstances in which human life is likely to be endangered or serious bodily harm or substantial property damage is likely to be caused; and
   
   (h) an attempt or conspiracy to engage in, counseling, aiding or abetting another person to engage in, or being an accessory after the fact in relation to, the conduct referred to in any of paragraphs (a) to (g).

2. Where there are substantial grounds for believing that the request for extradition is made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing
the person by reason of that person’s race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, or sex.

3. Where the prosecution for the offence for which extradition is requested would be barred by lapse of time under the law of the Requesting State.

4. Where the offence for which extradition is requested constitutes an offence under military law, which is not an offence under ordinary criminal law.

5. Where the person sought has been finally acquitted or convicted in the Requested State for the same offence for which extradition is requested and, if convicted, the sentence imposed has been fully enforced or is no longer enforceable.

**ARTICLE 4**

**Discretionary Refusal of Extradition**

Extradition may be refused in any of the following circumstances:

1. Where the offence for which extradition is requested is subject to the jurisdiction of the Requested State and that State will prosecute that offence.

2. Where the person sought is being prosecuted by the Requested State for the offence for which extradition is requested.

3. Where the offence carries the death penalty under the law of the Requesting State, unless that State undertakes that the death penalty will not be sought, or if a sentence of death is imposed, it will not be carried out.

4. Where, in exceptional cases, the Requested State while also taking into account the seriousness of the offence and the interests of the Requesting State considers that because of the personal circumstances, such as age, mental or physical ability to stand trial, of the person sought, the extradition would be incompatible with humanitarian considerations.

5. Where the person sought has been finally acquitted or convicted in a third State for the same offence for which extradition is requested and, if convicted, the sentence imposed has been fully enforced or is no longer enforceable.
ARTICLE 5

Nationality

Extradition shall not be refused on the ground of the nationality of the person sought.

ARTICLE 6

Presentation of Requests

1. A request for extradition shall be submitted -

(a) in the case of the Republic of India, to the Minister of External Affairs;

(b) in the case of the Republic of South Africa, to the Minister for Justice and Constitutional Development.

2. The request for extradition shall be routed through the diplomatic channels.

ARTICLE 7

Documents to be Submitted

The following documents shall be submitted in support of a request for extradition:

(a) in all cases, whether the person is sought for prosecution or the imposition or enforcement of sentence -

(i) information about the description, identity, location and nationality of the person sought;

(ii) a statement describing briefly the conduct constituting the offence for which the extradition is requested, indicating the place and the date of the commission of the offence and which provides a description or a copy of the text of the legal provisions describing the offence and the applicable penalty. This statement shall also indicate -

(aa) that these legal provisions were in force both at the time of the commission of the offence and at the time of the extradition request;
(bb) whether or not the prosecution of the offence, the imposition or the enforcement of any applicable penalty is barred by reason of lapse of time; and

(cc) where the offence occurred outside the territory of the Requesting State, the legal provisions establishing its jurisdiction; and

(b) in the case of a person sought for prosecution for an offence

(i) the original or a certified true copy of the warrant of arrest or of any document having the same force and effect, issued by a competent authority in the Requesting State;

(ii) a copy of the indictment, charge sheet or other charging document; and

(iii) evidence that would be sufficient to justify the committal for trial of the person sought, if the conduct had occurred in the Requested State. The record may include any report, statement or other relevant documentation.

(c) in the case of a person sought for the imposition or enforcement of a sentence -

(i) a certified statement by the competent authority describing the conduct for which the person was convicted and attaching a copy of the document that records the conviction and, where applicable, sentence of the person; and

(ii) if a portion of the sentence has already been served, a statement by the competent authority specifying the duration of the sentence which remains to be served.

**ARTICLE 8**

**Authentication of Supporting Documents**

Where the law of the Requested State requires authentication, documents shall be authenticated by a statement by the Minister making the request or a person designated by her or him under the seal of that Minister identifying the person who has signed the document, including that person’s position or title.
ARTICLE 9

Language

All documents submitted in accordance with this Treaty shall be in the English language.

ARTICLE 10

Additional Information

If the Requested State considers that the information furnished in support of a request for extradition is not sufficient in accordance with this Treaty to enable extradition to be granted, that State may request that additional information be furnished within such time as it specifies.

ARTICLE 11

Waiver

Extradition of a person may be granted on request pursuant to the provisions of this Treaty, notwithstanding that the requirements of Article 7 have not been complied with, provided that the person sought consents to being extradited.

ARTICLE 12

Provisional Arrest

1. In case of urgency, the competent authorities of the Requesting State may apply by any means (including through the International Police Organisation (INTERPOL)), which allows for a written record for the provisional arrest of the person sought.

2. An application for provisional arrest shall include the following:

   (a) information about the description, identity, location and nationality of the person sought;

   (b) a statement that a request for extradition will follow;

   (c) a description of the nature of the offence and applicable penalty, with a brief summary of the facts of the case, including date and place of the offence;

   (d) a statement attesting to the existence of a warrant of arrest or
a conviction to which this Treaty applies and details thereof; and

(e) any other information which would justify provisional arrest in the Requested State.

3. The Requested State shall promptly inform the Requesting State of the measures taken pursuant to the application for provisional arrest.

4. Provisional arrest shall be terminated if the Requested State has not received the request within sixty (60) days of the arrest. The competent authorities of the Requested State, insofar as is permitted by the law of that State, may extend that delay with regard to the submission of the documents referred to in Article 7. However, the person sought may be granted bail at any time, subject to the conditions deemed necessary to ensure that the person does not leave the country.

5. The expiry of the sixty (60) day period does not preclude subsequent arrest and extradition if a request for extradition is subsequently received.

**ARTICLE 13**

**Competing Requests**

1. Where requests are received from two or more States for the extradition of the same person either for the same offence or for different offences, the Requested State shall determine to which of those States the person is to be extradited and shall notify those States of its decision.

2. In determining to which State a person is to be extradited, the Requested State shall have regard to all the relevant circumstances, and, in particular, to -

(a) the relative seriousness of those offences, if the requests relate to different offences;

(b) the time and place of commission of each offence;

(c) the respective dates of the requests;

(d) the nationality of the person sought;
(e) the ordinary place of residence of the person;

(f) whether the requests were made pursuant to an extradition treaty;

(g) the interests of the respective States; and

(h) the nationality of the victim.

ARTICLE 14

Surrender

1. The Requested State shall, as soon as a decision on the request for extradition has been made, communicate that decision to the Requesting State. Reasons shall be given for any complete or partial refusal of an extradition request.

2. Where extradition is granted, the Requested State shall surrender the person in accordance with arrangements agreed to between the competent authorities of the Contracting States.

3. The Requesting State shall receive the person within such reasonable period as the Requested State specifies and, if the person is not removed within that period, the Requested State may refuse to extradite that person for the same offence.

4. If circumstances beyond its control prevent a Contracting State from surrendering or removing the person to be extradited it shall notify the other Contracting State. The Contracting States shall decide upon a new date of surrender and the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article shall apply.

ARTICLE 15

Postponed or Temporary Surrender

1. Where the person sought is being proceeded against or is serving a sentence in the Requested State for an offence other than that for which extradition is requested, the Requested State may surrender the person sought or postpone surrender until the conclusion of the proceedings or the service of the whole or any part of the sentence imposed. The Requested State shall inform the Requesting State of any postponement.
2. To the extent permitted by its law, where a person referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article has been found extraditable, the Requested State may temporarily surrender the person sought for the purposes of prosecution to the Requesting State in accordance with conditions to be determined between the Contracting States. The person so surrendered shall be kept in custody in the Requesting State and shall be returned to the Requested State after the conclusion of the proceedings against that person. A person who is returned to the Requested State following a temporary surrender shall be finally surrendered to the Requesting State to serve any sentence imposed, in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty.

**ARTICLE 16**

**Surrender of Property**

1. The Requested State shall, in so far as its law permits and at the request of the Requesting State, seize and surrender property that may be used in the prosecution of the offence and which, at the time of the arrest, is found in the possession of the person sought or is discovered subsequently.

2. The property mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be surrendered even if extradition having been granted, cannot be carried out owing to the death or escape of the person sought.

3. Where the property referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article is required in the Requested State in connection with civil or criminal proceedings, the Requested State may temporarily retain or surrender it on condition that it be returned.

4. Any rights that the Requested State or third parties may have acquired in the property shall be preserved. Where these rights exist, the property shall be returned without charge to the Requested State as soon as possible after the trial.

**ARTICLE 17**

**Rule of Specialty**

1. A person who has been extradited shall not be prosecuted, sentenced or detained for any offence committed prior to the
surrender other than that for which that person was extradited, nor shall the person's liberty be restricted for any other reason, except in the following cases:

(a) where the Requested State consents;

(b) where the person, having had an opportunity to leave the Requesting State, has not done so within thirty (30) days of final discharge, or has voluntarily returned to that State after having left it; or

(c) where the person extradited consents before a judicial authority in the Requesting State.

2. A request for the consent of the Requested State under paragraph 1 of this Article shall, if required by the Requested State, be accompanied by the relevant documents required by Article 7 and a record of any statement made by the extradited person in respect of the offence concerned.

3. If the charge for which the person was extradited is subsequently changed, that person may be prosecuted or sentenced provided the offence under its revised description is:

(a) based on substantially the same facts contained in the extradition request and its supporting documents;

(b) punishable by the same maximum penalty as, or a lesser penalty than, the offence for which the person was extradited; and

(c) substantially the same in nature to the original offence.

ARTICLE 18

Re-extradition to a Third State

1. Where a person has been surrendered to the Requesting State, that State shall not extradite the person to any third State for an offence committed before that person's surrender unless -

(a) the Requested State consents to that extradition; or

(b) the person has had an opportunity to leave the Requesting State and has not done so within thirty (30) days of final
discharge in respect of the offence for which that person was surrendered by the Requested State or if the person has voluntarily returned to the Requesting State after having left it.

2. The Requested State may request the production of the documents submitted by the third State in relation to any consent pursuant to sub-paragraph (a) of this Article.

**ARTICLE 19**

Transit

1. To the extent permitted by its law, transit of a person sought in extradition proceedings by one Contracting State, through the territory of the other Contracting State shall be granted on a request in writing. The request for transit -

   (a) may be transmitted by any means; and

   (b) shall contain the information referred to in paragraph 2 of Article 12, and the particulars of the transit and ultimate proposed surrender.

2. No authorization for transit shall be necessary when air travel is used and no landing is scheduled in the territory of the transit State. In the case of an unscheduled landing, the transit State may require the request for transit provided for in paragraph 1. To the extent permitted by its law, the transit State shall detain the person in transit until the request is received and the transit is carried out, provided that the request is received within forty-eight (48) hours after the unscheduled landing.

**ARTICLE 20**

Expenses

1. The Requested State shall make all necessary arrangements for and meet the cost of any proceedings arising out of a request for extradition.

2. The Requested State shall bear the expenses incurred in its territory in the arrest of the person whose extradition is sought, and in the maintenance in custody of the person until surrender to the
Requesting State.

3. The Requesting State shall bear the expense incurred in conveying the person extradited from the territory of the Requested State.

**ARTICLE 21**

**International Obligations under Conventions and Treaties**

The present Treaty shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Contracting States arising from international conventions or treaties to which they are parties.

**ARTICLE 22**

**Consultation**

The Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Department for Justice and Constitutional Development of the Republic of South Africa or persons designated by the respective Ministers may consult with each other through the diplomatic channel in connection with the processing of individual cases and in furtherance of efficient implementation of this Treaty.

**ARTICLE 23**

**Entry into Force, Amendment and Termination**

1. This Treaty shall be subject to ratification and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged as soon as possible.

2. This Treaty shall enter into force on the date of the exchange of instruments of ratification.

3. This Treaty may be amended by mutual consent.

4. Either Contracting State may terminate this Treaty. The termination shall take effect six (6) months from the date on which it was notified to the other Contracting State.

5. The Contracting States may also terminate this Treaty by mutual consent on such terms and conditions as may be agreed to between the States.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Treaty.
DONE at New Delhi this 16th day of October of the year Two Thousand and Three, in two originals each, in Hindi and English, both texts being equally authentic. However, in case of divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA


The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South Africa; (hereinafter referred to as contracting States);

Desiring to improve the effectiveness of both countries in the investigation, prosecution and suppression of crime, including crimes related to terrorism, through cooperation and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters;

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Scope of Application

1. The Contracting States shall, in accordance with this Treaty, provide each other with the widest measure of mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

2. Mutual legal assistance is any assistance given by the Requested State in respect of investigations, prosecutions or proceedings to the Requesting State in criminal matters, irrespective of whether the assistance is sought or is to be provided by a court or some other authority.

3. Assistance shall be provided without regard to whether the conduct which is the subject of the investigation, prosecution or proceedings
in the Requesting State would constitute an offence under the laws of the Requested State.

4. Assistance includes -

(a) locating and identifying persons and objects;
(b) serving documents, including documents seeking the attendance of persons;
(c) providing information, documents and records;
(d) providing objects, including lending exhibits;
(e) search and seizure;
(f) taking evidence and obtaining statements;
(g) authorizing the presence of persons from the Requesting State at the execution of requests;
(h) making detained persons available to give evidence or assist Investigations;
(i) facilitating the appearance of witnesses or the assistance of persons in Investigations;
(j) taking measures to locate, restrain or forfeit the proceeds of crime; and
(k) any other form of assistance not prohibited by the law of the Requested State.

5. This Treaty shall also apply to any requests for legal assistance relating to acts or omissions committed before its entry into force.

Article 2

Definitions

For the purpose of this Treaty -

1. Criminal matters means, for the Republic of South Africa both statutory and common law offences and, for the Republic of India, investigations, inquiries, trials or other proceedings relating to an offence created by Parliament or by the legislature of a state/province.
2. Criminal matters shall include investigations, prosecutions or proceedings relating to offences concerning taxation, duties, customs and foreign exchange.

Article 3

Central Authorities

The Central Authorities shall transmit and receive all requests for the purposes of this Treaty. The Central Authority for the Republic of India is the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Central Authority for the Republic of South Africa shall be the Director General, Department for Justice and Constitutional Development or a person designated by the Director General.

Article 4

Execution of Requests

1. Requests for assistance shall be executed promptly in accordance with the law of the Requested State and, in so far as not prohibited by that law, in the manner specified by the Requesting State.

2. The Requested State shall, on request, inform the Requesting State of the date and place of execution of the request for assistance.

3. The Requested State shall not refuse to execute a request on the ground of bank secrecy.

Article 5

Contents of Requests

1. In all cases, requests for assistance shall indicate -

   (a) the competent authority conducting the investigation, prosecution or proceedings to which the request relates;

   (b) the nature of the investigation, prosecution or proceedings, and include a summary of the facts and a copy of the applicable laws;

   (c) the purpose of the request and the nature of the assistance sought;

   (d) the degree of confidentiality required and the reasons there for; and
(e) any time limit within which the request should be executed.

2. In the following cases, requests for assistance shall include -

(a) in the case of requests for the taking of evidence, search and seizure, or the location, restraint or forfeiture of proceeds of crime, a statement indicating the basis for belief that evidence or proceeds may be found in the Requested State;

(b) in the case of requests to take evidence from a person, an indication as to whether sworn or affirmed statements are required and a description of the subject matter of the evidence or statement sought;

(c) in the case of lending of exhibits, the current location of the exhibits in the Requested State and an indication of the person or class of persons who will have custody of the exhibits in the Requesting State, the place to which the exhibit is to be removed, any tests to be conducted and the date by which the exhibit will be returned;

(d) in the case of making a detained person available, an indication of the person or class of persons who will have custody during the transfer, the place to which the detained person is to be transferred and the probable date of that person's return; and

(e) in the case of requests in respect of search & seizure, a statement describing the basis of belief that the money or property is the proceeds of crime and liable for search & seizure.

3. If necessary, and where possible, requests for assistance shall include -

(a) the identity, nationality and location of a person who is the subject of the investigation, prosecution or proceedings;

(b) details of any particular procedure or requirement that the Requesting State wishes to be followed and the reasons therefor.

4. If the Requested State considers that the information is not sufficient to enable the request to be executed, it may request additional information.
5. A request shall be made in writing. In urgent circumstances, a request may be made orally but shall be confirmed in writing promptly thereafter.

Article 6

Refusal or Postponement of Assistance

1. Assistance may be refused if in the opinion of the Requested State, the execution of the request would impair its sovereignty, security, public order, essential public interest or prejudice the safety of any person.

2. Assistance may be refused if the execution of the request would be contrary to the domestic law of the Requested State.

3. Assistance may be refused if the request relates to an offence in respect of which the accused person had been finally acquitted or pardoned.

4. Assistance may be refused if the request seeking restraint, forfeiture or confiscation of proceeds of crime or seizure of property is in respect of conduct/activity which cannot be made the basis for such restraint, forfeiture, confiscation or seizure in the Requested State.

5. Assistance may be postponed by the Requested State if execution of the request would interfere with an ongoing investigation or prosecution in the Requested State.

6. The Requested State shall promptly inform the Requesting State of its decision not to comply in whole or in part with a request for assistance or to postpone execution, and shall give reasons for that decision.

7. Before refusing a request for assistance or before postponing the execution of a request, the Requested State shall consider whether assistance may be provided subject to such conditions as it deems necessary. If the Requesting State accepts assistance subject to those conditions, it shall comply with them.

Article 7

Service of Documents

1. The Requested State shall serve any document transmitted to it for the purpose of service.
2. The Requesting State shall transmit a request for the service of a document pertaining to a response or appearance in the Requesting State within a reasonable time, before the scheduled response or appearance.

3. The Requested State shall return a proof of service in the manner required by the Requesting State.

**Article 8**

**Provision of Information, Documents, Records and Objects**

1. The Requested State shall provide copies of publicly available information, documents and records of government departments, ministries and agencies.

2. The Requested State may provide any information, documents, records and objects in the possession of a government department or agency, but not publicly available, to the same extent and under the same conditions as they would be available to its own law enforcement and judicial authorities.

3. The Requested State may provide certified copies of documents or records, unless the Requesting State expressly requests originals.

4. Original documents, records or objects provided to the Requesting State shall be returned to the Requested State as soon as possible upon request.

5. In so far as permitted by the law of the Requested State, documents, records or objects shall be provided in a form or accompanied by such certification as may be specified by the Requesting State in order to make them admissible according to the law of the Requesting State.

**Article 9**

**Search and Seizure**

1. The Requested State shall execute a request for a search and seizure.

2. Search and seizure shall be conducted by the Requested State in accordance with its domestic laws.

3. The competent authority that has executed a request for a search
and seizure shall provide such information as may be required by the Requesting State concerning, but not limited to, the identity, condition, integrity and continuity of possession of the documents, records or objects seized and the circumstances of the seizure,

**Article 10**

**Taking Evidence in the Requested State**

1. A person requested to testify and produce documents, records or objects in the Requested State may be compelled, if necessary, to appear and testify and produce such documents, records or objects, in accordance with the law of the Requested State.

2. Subject to the law of the Requested State, commissioners, other officials of the Requesting State and persons concerned in the proceedings in the Requesting State shall be permitted to be present when evidence is taken in the Requested State and to participate in the taking of such evidence in the manner as may be specified by the Requested State. The right to participate in the taking of evidence includes the right to pose questions.

3. The persons present at the execution of a request may be permitted to make a verbatim transcript of the proceedings. The use of technical means to make such a verbatim transcript may be permitted.

4. To the extent permitted by its law, the Requested State shall execute a request for the taking of evidence in the manner requested by the Requesting State.

**Article 11**

**Presence of Persons at the Execution of Requests**

To the extent permitted by the law of the Requested State, persons specified in the request shall be permitted to be present at the execution of the request.

**Article 12**

**Making Detained Persons Available to give Evidence or Assist in Investigations**

1. Upon request, a person serving a sentence in the Requested State
shall be temporarily transferred to the Requesting State to assist in investigations or to testify, provided that the person consents.

2. When the person transferred is required to be kept in custody under the law of the Requested State, the Requesting State shall hold that person in custody and shall return the person in custody at the conclusion of the execution of the request.

3. When the sentence imposed expires, or where the Requested State advises the Requesting State that the transferred person is no longer required to be held in custody, that person shall be set at liberty and be treated as a person present in the Requesting State pursuant to a request seeking that person’s attendance.

**Article 13**

Providing Evidence or Assisting in Investigations in the Requesting State

The Requested State shall invite the person to assist in the investigation or to appear as a witness in the proceedings and seek that person’s agreement thereto. That person shall be informed of any expenses and allowances payable.

**Article 14**

Safe Conduct

1. Subject to Article 12(2), a person present in the Requesting State in response to a request shall not be prosecuted, detained or subjected to any other restriction of personal liberty in that State for any acts or omissions which preceded that person’s departure from the Requested State, nor shall that person be obliged to give evidence in any proceeding other than that to which the request relates.

2. Paragraph 1 of this Article shall cease to apply if a person, being free to leave the Requesting State, has not left within thirty (30) days after receiving official notification that the person’s attendance is no longer required or, having left, has voluntarily returned.

3. Any person who fails to appear in the Requesting State may not be subjected to any sanction or compulsory measure in the Requesting or the Requested State.
Article 15

Proceeds and Instruments of Crime

1. The Requested State shall, upon request, endeavour to ascertain whether any proceeds of a crime are located within its jurisdiction and shall notify the Requesting State of the results of its inquiries.

2. When, pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article, suspected proceeds of crime are found, the Requested State shall take such measures as are permitted by its law to restrain and forfeit those proceeds.

3. Proceeds forfeited pursuant to this Treaty shall accrue to the Requested State, unless otherwise agreed.

Article 16

Restitution and Fine Enforcement

The Requested State shall, to the extent permitted by its law, provide assistance concerning restitution to the victims of crime and the collection of fines imposed as a sentence in a criminal prosecution.

Article 17

Confidentiality

1. The Requested State may require, after consultation with the Requesting State, that information or evidence furnished or the source of such information or evidence be kept confidential, disclosed or used only subject to such terms and conditions as it may specify.

2. The Requesting State may require that the request, its contents, supporting documents and any action taken pursuant to the request be kept confidential. If the request cannot be executed without breaching the confidentiality requirement, the Requested State shall so inform the Requesting State prior to executing the request and the latter shall then determine whether the request should nevertheless be executed.

Article 18

Limitation of Use

The Requesting State shall not disclose or use information or evidence furnished for purposes other than those stated in the request, without the
prior consent of the Requested State.

**Article 19**

**Authentication**

Documents, records or objects transmitted pursuant to this Treaty shall not require any form of authentication, except as specified in Article 8, or as required by the Requesting State.

**Article 20**

**Language**

1. Requests shall be submitted in the English language.

2. Supporting documents, if not in the English language, shall be accompanied by an English translation.

**Article 21**

**Expenses**

1. The Requested State shall meet the cost of executing the request for assistance, except that the Requesting State shall bear -

   (a) the expenses associated with conveying any person to or from the territory of the Requested State at the request of the Requesting State, and any expenses payable to that person while in the Requesting State pursuant to a request under Article 12 or 13 of this Treaty;

   (b) the expenses and fees of experts either in the Requested State or the Requesting State; and

   (c) the expenses of translation, interpretation and transcription.

2. If it becomes apparent that the execution of the request requires expenses of an extraordinary nature, the Contracting States shall consult to determine the terms and conditions under which the requested assistance can be provided.

**Article 22**

**Compatibility with other Treaties**

Assistance and procedures set forth in this Treaty shall not prevent either Contracting State from granting assistance to the other State through the
provisions of other applicable international conventions or agreements, or through the provisions of its domestic law. The States may also provide assistance pursuant to any bilateral arrangement, agreement or practice which may be applicable.

**Article 23**

**Consultation**

The Central Authorities of the Contracting States shall consult, at times mutually agreed to by them, to promote the most effective implementation of this Treaty. The Central Authorities may also agree on such practical measures as may be necessary to facilitate the implementation of this Treaty.

**Article 24**

**Entry into Force. Amendment and Termination**

1. This Treaty shall be subject to ratification and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged as soon as possible.

2. This Treaty shall enter into force on the date of the exchange of instruments of ratification.

3. This Treaty may be amended by mutual consent.

4. Either Contracting State may terminate this Treaty. The termination shall take effect six (6) months from the date on which it was notified to the other Contracting State.

5. The Contracting States may also by mutual consent terminate this Treaty on such terms and conditions as may be agreed to between the States.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Treaty.

Done at Hyderabad this the 16th day of October 16th of the year Two Thousand and three in two originals each, in Hindi and English, both texts being equally authentic. However, in case of divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of
The Republic of India

For the Government of
the Republic of South Africa

✦✦✦✦✦

New Delhi, October 26, 2003.

PREAMBLE

The Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Republic of India (hereinafter jointly referred to as the “Parties” and in the singular as a “Party”).

CONSIDERING that bilateral co-operation in the field of Hydrocarbons, i.e. petroleum, natural gas and coal bed methane, shall be of mutual social, economic and environmental benefit to both countries.

CONSIDERING further that such co-operation will promote the development of existing relations between the two countries;

Have agreed on the following:

**ARTICLE 1**

Objectives

The Parties shall endeavour to promote the development of cooperation in the field of Hydrocarbons, i.e. petroleum, natural gas and coal bed methane, between the two countries on the basis of equality and mutual advantage, taking into account the experience of specialists and the possibilities for cooperation available in each country.

**ARTICLE 2**

Scope

(1) The Parties shall endeavour to promote cooperation in the field of Hydrocarbons, inter alia, by means of;

(a) exchange of information pertaining to the parties' overall Hydrocarbon policies and strategies, priorities, institutional arrangements, regulatory frameworks, technology transfer, research and development and establishment of databanks and commercialization of Hydrocarbon technologies.

(b) Developing cooperative projects in South Africa, India and third countries in the fields of;
(i) Petroleum products;
(ii) Hydrocarbon exploration and production
(iii) Refining, storage, trading transportation and distribution of petroleum products.
(iv) Building and maintenance of industrial facilities in the hydrocarbon sector.
(v) Gas processing facilities, gas transmissions and distribution network, CNG projects.
(vi) Gasification technologies.
(c) promotion of joint projects by the interested organizations of the parties on the erection and maintenance of hydrocarbon infrastructure and on the application of hydrocarbon technologies;
(d) exchange visits of policy makers and technical experts responsible for the development and implementation of Hydrocarbon policies;
(e) training and development of specialists in the Hydrocarbon sectors of both countries inter alia through seminars, conferences and specialists courses;
(f) Joint participation in workshops, conferences and exhibitions aimed at attracting investment in the Hydrocarbon sectors of both countries;
(g) Co-operation and assistance for proper development of laws, regulations and policies related to the Hydrocarbon sector, exchange of experiences in the organization and establishment of regulatory and management agencies in the Hydrocarbon sector;
(h) Bilateral trade in Hydrocarbon sectors covering equipment supplies, work execution, service contracts including consultancy services.

(2) For the implementation of projects envisaged with the scope of paragraph 1 of this Article, the Parties shall conclude separate Agreements, Protocols or Contracts governing the terms and conditions of their implementation.
ARTICLE 3

Competent Authorities

(1) The Department of Minerals and Energy of the Republic of South Africa and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas of the Government of India shall be the respective competent authorities for coordinating all programmes of cooperation entered into under this Agreement.

(2) The competent authorities shall be responsible for the identification of programmes, Implementing Agencies, review of progress, evaluation of results and consideration of any other relevant to the promotion of bilateral cooperation.

(3) For the purpose of implementing the provisions contained in this Agreement expert Working Group shall, where appropriate be established to hold meeting periodically in India and South Africa or as the Parties may agree.

ARTICLE 4

Working Group

(1) The Parties shall, where appropriate, establish Working Groups for the purpose of joint development of plans for cooperation as well as implementation and analysis of work to be performed in the areas referred to in Article 2.

(2) The agenda, time and place of meetings of these Working Groups shall be agreed upon by the Parties.

ARTICLE 5

Expenses

Each Party shall bear all expenses of its participants on all programmes of cooperation and in meetings of Implementing Agencies or Working Groups contemplated under this Agreement.

ARTICLE 6

Publication of Reports

(1) The Parties shall keep confidential, the outcome of results of specific programmes of cooperation carried out under this Agreement.
The outcome or results of specific programmes of cooperation carried out under this Agreement may be published only with the consent of the Parties.

If a Party wishes to share the results of the specific programmes of the cooperation initiated under this Agreement with a third party, prior written consent of the other Party shall be obtained.

**ARTICLE 7**

**Settlement of Disputes**

Any dispute between the Parties arising out of the interpretation and implementation of this Agreement shall be settled amicably through consultations or negotiations between the Parties.

**ARTICLE 8**

**Entry into force**

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date on which each Party has notified the other in writing, through the diplomatic channel, of its compliance with the requirements necessary for its coming into force. The date of entry into force shall be the date of the last notification.

**ARTICLE 9**

**Amendment**

The Agreement may be amended by mutual written consent of the parties. Any amendment shall enter into force under the same terms and conditions required for entry into force of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE 10**

**Duration and Termination**

(1) This Agreement shall remain in force for a period of five years whereafter it shall automatically be renewed for successive periods of five years, unless terminated by either Party by giving one year’s notice in advance of its intention to terminate the Agreement, through the diplomatic channel.

(2) At the termination of this Agreement, its provisions and the provisions of any separate protocols, contracts or agreements made
in that respect shall continue to govern any unexpired or existing obligations assumed or commenced thereunder, in accordance with the terms and conditions of such separate protocols, contract or agreements. Any such obligation shall be carried on to completion as if this Agreement is still in force.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned representatives being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments have signed this Agreement.

Done at New Delhi on this October 16th day of 2003 in two originals in Hindi, and English languages, all texts being authentic. In case of divergent interpretation however, the English text shall prevail.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF INDIA
THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

329. Speech of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of President of the Republic of South Africa Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki.

New Delhi, October 16, 2003.

Your Excellency, Dr. Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, Madame Zanele Mbeki, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are very happy to welcome you back amongst us. Your presence here on Indian soil again after six years is a source of happiness and joy for all of us.

We, in India, have always felt a special solidarity with Africa and for the dreams and aspirations of its people. As an ancient civilization ourselves, we respect the fact that the African Continent has been the cradle of humanity. The contemporary history of our two countries also has much in common. Both our countries struggled under the yoke of an unjust and unequal rule. The father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi started his experiments with truth on South African soil and he forged the weapon of non-violence on the railway platform of Pietermaritzburg. On return
from South Africa, he led our country to independence by using the force of truth and non-violence in a struggle which lasted over four decades. We were all very happy when you succeeded in your struggle. These inter-linked histories of our struggles for freedom are the foundation on which the relations between India and South Africa are founded. These relations have become stronger, more broad-based and vibrant over time because of the many commonalities. After a long freedom struggle, our two countries determinedly embarked on the arduous journey towards socio-economic development of our peoples. Political liberty, however precious and cherished, is incomplete without economic upliftment. Every citizen has a right to live with dignity; every citizen has a right to aspire for distinction. Freedom will be meaningful and a reality only if it enables the citizens to achieve these.

India started its programme of economic liberalisation more than a decade ago. After using the initial years to build the foundations of our industry and infrastructure, we are now opening up our economy to the world. The development processes under way in our countries have thrown up enormous opportunities for mutually beneficial exchanges and cooperation. South Africa has rich mineral resources and technologies and these can be of benefit to us. On the other hand, during the last five and a half decades of existence as an independent nation, India has also made significant strides in diverse fields. Today, India has world-class expertise and knowledge in the areas of agriculture, pharmaceuticals, small and medium enterprises, Information Technology, irrigation and transport, to mention just a few. In the common task of nation-building in which both our countries are engaged, India is committed and proud to be a partner with South Africa in whatever sphere we can help. Ours is a partnership which is deeply rooted in our shared commitment to the ideals of democracy, liberty, equality and human dignity.

We both are nations that celebrate diversity and pluralism. Former President Nelson Mandela painted a picture with his dream of a ‘rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world’. This is a dream that is well on its way to being realised. The same Indian Ocean laps the shores of our two countries. It is across its waters that so many Indians went to South Africa and made it their home. This million-strong community of Indian origin includes many who have sacrificed their lives and struggled staunchly against the Apartheid regime. Today, they are a vibrant part of the rainbow society of South Africa and form an important pillar of our relationship.

Excellency, under your leadership, South Africa has taken its rightful
place in the comity of nations. It has emerged as an influential player on
the regional and global stage. Our two countries share a common approach
on so many issues on the international agenda. We have already
established a close cooperation in ensuring a level playing field for the
developing world. In June this year, with the establishment of the trilateral
India, Brazil and South Africa dialogue forum, we have added a significant
trans-continental dimension to our bilateral relationship and enhanced
the architecture of South-South cooperation. When three vibrant
democracies, from three developing continents, with strong economies
like those of India, South Africa and Brazil speak with one voice, that
voice cannot be ignored. Our cooperation at various multilateral fora has
been very positive. Recent events have reinforced the urgent need for
restructuring of the UN. It was meant to represent the world community,
and its primary aim was the preservation of peace. India stands irrevocably
committed to working towards a safer, saner and a more equitable world
order based on cooperation and inter-dependence. We, like South Africa,
stand committed to a UN that preserves the values enshrined in its Charter-
peace, independence, equality, equity, fair play and justice for all nations
irrespective of their size and power. Let us continue to work together
towards this end.

Your visit has provided us with an invaluable opportunity to
reinvigorate our relations and to reflect together on the many challenges
that face us today. Besides poverty, the other challenge which is menacing
the very roots of our civilization, is terrorism. It poses the biggest threat to
peace and stability in the world today. India continues to be a serious
victim of cross-border terrorism for more than two and a half decades
now. We condemn all acts of terrorism wherever they occur, by
whomsoever and in whatever form. We would like to enhance our
cooperation in this area, to squarely confront and defeat this menace to
society. It was you, Your Excellency, who had the vision of setting the goal
of ‘a strategic partnership’ between India and South Africa during your
last visit as Executive Deputy President in 1996. This phrase has guided
India-South Africa relations all along and will continue to do so. Within the
last decade, our trade relations have grown from very low levels to over a
billion dollars. The framework Preferential Trade Agreement that we have
signed today with the South African Customs Union will inject a new
dynamism into these linkages. Based on the core competencies of India
and South Africa, we can network our institutions for projects to jointly
design, develop, produce and market new products and technologies
that would take both our countries on a steady path towards higher and higher levels of progress and prosperity.

I have no doubt that we can look back on the dynamic interaction between our two countries over the last decade with considerable satisfaction. But self-congratulation must not lead to complacency. We must resolve to work together even more closely. An immense responsibility lies ahead of us. Our cooperation must yield concrete results for our two peoples. We have to explore new horizons while keeping our feet firmly planted on the ground. This is a great challenge but I am confident that we shall prove to be equal to it.

May I request all the distinguished guests to join me in raising a toast:-

- to the personal good health and happiness of His Excellency President Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki and Madame Zanele Mbeki
- to the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of South Africa,
- and to the abiding friendship between India and South Africa.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

330. Joint Declaration issued on the occasion of the State visit of the South African President Thabo M. Mbeki.

New Delhi, October 16, 2003.

1. During this visit, which takes place on the tenth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the new South Africa, both countries reaffirm their commitment towards a strategic partnership, based on their shared values: democracy, economic development with social justice, and a just and equitable global order.

2. Both countries recall that their freedom struggles were linked intrinsically through Mahatma Gandhi whose ideals and vision continue to inspire the two countries. They, furthermore, agreed that this had created a unique historical bond between them.
3. Recalling the Red Fort Declaration on a Strategic Partnership between India and South Africa, signed in March 1997, both countries note with satisfaction the consolidation of this partnership over the years. A high degree of understanding, mutual trust and confidence mark India-South Africa cooperation which has extended to every sphere of human endeavour including, in particular, political, economic, defence, scientific, technological and cultural matters. This has made the bilateral relationship strong, broad-based and vibrant. Both countries reiterate their desire to further strengthen and diversify bilateral relations and take their partnership from strength to strength for the benefit of both peoples 1.

4. Taking note of the commendable progress made by both countries towards the goal of growth with equity and justice, addressing poverty and under-development, India and South Africa agree that their bilateral cooperation should contribute to empowerment of the marginalized and disadvantaged citizens, which is a common priority.

5. The two countries note that the economies of India and South Africa have certain comparative advantages and complementarities, which offer a wide range of potential opportunities for cooperation in trade, investment and transfer of technology. For example, India has valuable experience in human resource development, information and communication technology, and the pharmaceutical sector. South Africa has world-class skills and technology in mining, power generation and infrastructure development, and a vast reservoir of mineral resources. Both countries agree on the need for creating better awareness of each other’s strengths within their respective private sectors.

1. Separately briefing newsmen the Official Spokesperson Navtej Sarna emphasized the following:

   1. There is an urgent necessity to strengthen and diversify economic relations to keep pace with excellent political relations between India and South Africa.

   2. We should be able to double present trade turnover of US Dollars One Billion by end of next year.

   3. Early conclusion of Preferential Trade Agreement with Southern African Customs Union would be very useful and this is expected by end of the year.

   4. Unity of Cancun should be maintained.

   5. India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum must keep up its momentum.

   6. India is ready to share HRD with South Africa.
6. Both countries note with satisfaction that negotiations between India and Southern African Customs Union (SACU) towards a Free Trade Agreement have shown substantial progress. It is hoped that the matter will be concluded by the end of 2004. Such an agreement will provide a significant incentive to the business communities of the two countries to explore mutually beneficial commercial opportunities and contribute to the growth of bilateral trade.

7. Both agree that the recently constituted tripartite IBSA dialogue forum, comprising India, Brazil and South Africa, is a significant addition to the architecture of South-South dialogue. These three likeminded countries from three continents represent large vibrant democracies with strong economies and rich human and natural resources. By providing an avenue for utilizing the potential synergies among the members, IBSA will contribute to the revitalization of South-South cooperation.

8. Both countries reaffirm their faith in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). They agree that the NAM can play an important role in addressing global issues such as sustainable development, poverty alleviation, financing for development, food security, issues of international peace and security, terrorism and disarmament, as well as environmental protection.

9. Furthermore, they welcome the agreements reached at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg in September 2002, reaffirming the Rio Principles, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Both sides reiterate their commitment towards advancing the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Both express concern about the adverse effect of climate change and its implications. In this regard, they express their desire for an early entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Both countries stress the importance of the initiation of negotiations within the framework of the Convention on Bio-diversity towards an international regime for promoting and protecting the just and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the utilization of genetic resources.

10. India appreciates the role being played by South Africa in promoting peace, development, democracy and good governance in Africa. Reiterating the historical links that bind India and Africa, the two countries agree to work closely and actively to make India’s
engagement with Africa even more meaningful. South Africa notes with appreciation that the Afro Asian Games will be held in India (Hyderabad) from October 24 to November 1, 2003.

11. South Africa values India’s determination to support the transformation of Africa. The two countries noted that both the establishment of the African Union and the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) as the regeneration programme of the African continent, hold tremendous promise for the development of Africa. India has already taken many steps in order to engage fruitfully with NEPAD, including allocation of US$ 200 million for projects that contribute to realization of NEPAD’s objectives. The two countries welcome the opportunity of enhancing cooperation with each other in identifying and implementing these projects.

12. The two countries recognize that international economic relations continue to be characterized by inequities and inequalities. Large sections of the world are yet to reap the benefits of globalization, which has led to economic crises and instability in several developing countries. The two countries agree that globalization must not perpetuate existing inequalities and call upon the countries of the North and of the South to continue their dialogue towards establishing a more equitable global economic environment. Both counties reiterate their commitment towards ensuring the success of the WTO Doha Development Round.

13. Both countries reiterate the need to reform the United Nations to make it more effective and truly representative of the contemporary international community. They acknowledge the vital importance of the role of the United Nations in promoting world peace, stability and development. They remain determined to continue their efforts in strengthening the UN system as the central mechanism for ensuring international peace and security as well as democratising international relations. They reiterate their support for the need to reform the UN, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They stress, in particular, the need for an equitable balance in an expanded Security Council to provide a decisive voice to developing countries. They believe that piecemeal and discriminatory approaches to such expansion would be inconsistent with the objectives of that world body. India and South Africa share the belief that the emerging world order should be just, equitable, multi-polar
and based on the principles of democracy, sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of states and respect for human rights and principles of the United Nations.

14. Both countries stress their concern over the increase in international terrorism, religious extremism, trans-border organized crime and illicit trafficking in arms and drugs. They view this upsurge as a serious threat to sovereign states, international peace, development, security and stability. In this context, they stress the importance of strict, full and unconditional implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution on the fight against terrorism and reiterate in particular their commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution 1373. They stress the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through the early finalisation and adoption of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. They affirm that terrorism is a grave violation of human rights and a crime against humanity, and that no cause or pretext can justify it. They agree that the fight against terrorism by the international community has to be global, comprehensive and sustained, with the ultimate objective of its total eradication from the world. Action within the ambit of the UN system should be taken against those states, entities and individuals who support, finance, harbour or abet terrorists or provide them shelter, safe havens or asylum to engage in any acts of terrorism. In that regard, it is essential that every State be made to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting, training or participating in terrorist acts in another state or acquiescing in organized activities within its territories directed towards the commission of such acts.

15. Both countries note the existence of global threats and challenges including trafficking in narcotic drugs, human beings and small arms; hunger and malnutrition; diseases like malaria and tuberculosis that grip developing countries; the pandemic of HIV/AIDS; and the degradation of our common environment. In this regard they reiterate the need to fully implement the Millennium Development Goals.

16. To concretize cooperation between India and South Africa, both countries agree that the following bilateral agreements¹, signed

1. The following is the summary of the agreements signed:

A. **Extradition Treaty**

In terms of this Extradition Treaty, both India and South Africa, have agreed to extradite
during the visit, are an important step forward.

- Extradition Treaty;
- Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters;
- Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2004-2006
- Agreement on cooperation in the field of power
- Agreement on cooperation in the field of hydrocarbons

to the other, persons who are wanted for trial/prosecution or the imposition of enforcement of a sentence in the Requesting State for an extraditable offence. The offence could be fiscal or criminal in character. (Document No. 326)

B. Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty

This Treaty provides for each side giving the widest measure of mutual legal assistance in criminal matters. The Treaty aims at improving and strengthening cooperation between both countries in the investigation, prosecution and suppression of crime, including crimes related to terrorism, through cooperation and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters. The successful conclusion and signing of the Treaty is an important achievement in the bilateral cooperation in combating crimes including terrorism. (Document No.327)

C. Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Power

This Agreement endeavours to promote cooperation in the field of power by means of exchange of information, promotion of technology transfer, research and development, joint projects, and human resource development. The areas of cooperation include electricity generation, transmission and distribution, urban and rural electrification, renewable energy promotion and utilization. The agreement envisages the establishment of a Joint Working Group for the purpose of joint development of plans for cooperation in these and other agreed sectors.

D. Cultural Exchange Programme

The Executive Programme for Cultural Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South Africa for the years 2004-2006 covers areas of cooperation in the Arts and Culture, and exchanges in the fields of Design Technology, Theatre, Exhibition of contemporary arts and Film Festivals. The Cultural Exchange Programme is being signed within the framework of the bilateral Cultural Agreement signed on 04.12.1996.

E. Agreement in the field of Hydro-Carbons

The Agreement envisages endeavours to promote cooperation in the field of hydrocarbons, inter alia, by means of exchange of information pertaining to the parties’ overall Hydrocarbon policies and strategies, priorities, institutional arrangements, regulatory frameworks, technology transfer, R&D and establishment of databanks and commercialization of Hydrocarbon technologies, and Developing cooperative projects in South Africa, India and third countries in the fields of Petroleum products, Hydrocarbon exploration and production. Refining and also storage, trading transportation and distribution of petroleum products, building and maintenance of industrial facilities in the hydrocarbon sector, gas processing facilities, gas transmissions and distribution network, CNG projects, and gasification technologies. (Document No. 328)
17. The strategic partnership between India and South Africa is guided by the common vision of a global order marked by peace, security and equity. Both countries emphasize the multidimensional nature of poverty. It extends beyond income to education, health care, capacity building and skill enhancement, political participation at all levels, advancement of indigenous culture and social organization and access to natural resources, clean water and air for all. To tackle these multiple challenges, they agree to consolidate their cooperation bilaterally as well as multilaterally, including at international fora such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth and through the IBSA dialogue forum, to build a better world for the present and future generations.

Prime Minister President
The Republic of India The Republic of South Africa

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Sudan


New Delhi, September 26, 2003.

India welcomes signing in Naivasha yesterday an agreement between Government of Sudan and Sudan People’s Liberation Army on Security arrangements during the interim period. We commend the sagacity and mutual trust demonstrated by the two sides in reaching this landmark development.

We hope it would promote the movement towards a comprehensive peace agreement in accordance with the Machacos-I and Machacos-II Protocols.

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Joint Statement issued on the visit of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam to Sudan.


1. At the invitation of H.E. President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan, H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, President of the Republic of India, accompanied by a high-level delegation, paid a State visit to Sudan during 20-22nd October, 2003. H.E. the President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam was warmly received by the Sudanese leadership and people, who described his visit as historic and a reaffirmation of the centuries-old and time-tested relations between the two countries and their peoples.

2. During the visit, H.E. President Abdul Kalam held discussions with H.E. President Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir. He also received in separate meetings, Their Excellencies Professor Moses Macar, Vice-President of the Republic of the Sudan, Sayed/Abdalla Ahmed Alhardalo, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Dr. Awad Ahmed Al-Jaz, Minister of Energy and Mining. H.E. President Abdul Kalam addressed the National Assembly and visited educational, cultural and economic sites of importance and interacted with the Indian Community in Sudan as well as with the Sudanese Alumni of Indian Universities.

3. During the visit of H.E. Dr. Abdul Kalam, and in the presence of the two Presidents the following Agreements were signed:
   
a) Bilateral Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investment.

b) Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation.

c) A Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation in Communications and Information Technology.

4. Relations between Sudan and India have always been cordial and friendly. The two sides reiterated that the Indo-Sudanese relations were characterized by deep and abiding bonds based on friendship, culture and a shared civilizational heritage. They affirmed their vision for closer and stronger relationship between the two countries and stressed that the traditional and historical ties between India and Sudan should be further strengthened and expanded.
5. The two sides discussed a wide range of important bilateral relations, and exchanged views on various regional and international issues of mutual concern.

6. India and Sudan expressed their satisfaction with the recent impressive evolution of their bilateral relations. Both sides expressed satisfaction that the strategic partnership between the two countries in the oil sector has taken shape with the landmark entry of the Indian ONGC-OVL into the GNPOC. Both sides underscored the need for further Indian involvement in the oil and energy sectors and related industries. In this connection, the two sides also took note of the fact that the Sudanese Ministry of Energy and Mining agreed to offer the project of Portsudan oil refinery expansion and the project of Khartoum – Portsudan petroleum products pipeline to ONGC-OVL in view of their good performance and excellent relationship existing between them and expressed their hope that these contracts be signed expeditiously.

7. Both sides recognized the potential of increased flow of investment between the two countries. They expressed their conviction that there is considerable untapped potential in major sectors including, information technology, agriculture, food security and agro-processing, small-scale industries, human resource development, science and technology and pharmaceuticals. To that end, the two sides reiterated their commitment to further enhance and increase the scope of their economic, investment, trade and cultural exchanges. They noted also, in this regard, that the 2nd Session of the Joint Business Council would be held in New Delhi next November, 2003.

8. Both sides felt the need to strengthen existing institutional mechanisms to cope with their expanding bilateral relations. In this connection, the two sides expressed the hope that the forthcoming meeting of the Joint Commission in New Delhi co-chaired by the two Foreign Ministers will give added dynamism commensurate with the aspirations and interests of their respective peoples. In this context, India extended an EXIM Bank Line of Credit of US $ 50 million to contribute to the economic development of Sudan. India also announced a grant of US$ 50,000 worth of Indian medicines to meet the humanitarian requirements of victims of recent floods in Kasala region of Sudan.
9. Sudanese side briefed its Indian Counterpart on the positive and far-reaching developments in the Peace Process in Sudan including the recently signed Agreement on Security Arrangements, which represented its commitment to lasting peace and stability. The Indian side reiterated its position in support of Sudan’s unity and territorial integrity. The two sides affirmed that both India and Sudan were multi-religious and multi-ethnic societies committed to pluralism, harmonious co-existence and the concept of unity in diversity. The Sudanese side called upon its Indian counterpart to share and participate in the consolidation of peace and in the reconstruction efforts in the various parts of the country. Indian side promised to do everything possible.

10. The two sides exchanged views on India’s vision as a developed country by 2020 and Sudan’s 25-year strategic plan for development. Both commended the on-going efforts to realize those lofty goals and need to share experiences and insights.

11. On the situation in Africa, the two sides expressed satisfaction over the positive developments in the continent represented by the establishment of the African Union, with NEPAD as its economic arm. The Sudanese side expressed its appreciation of India’s commitment to work closely with Africa in the context of NEPAD, pursuant to the traditional ties of co-operation and solidarity that have always characterized Indo-African relations and appreciated, to that end, the recently launched “Focus Africa Programme” by the Government of India aimed at enhancement of those historic ties.

12. On the situation in the Middle East, the two sides called for an early establishment of a Palestinian State in accordance with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions so as to end the Israeli occupation.

13. Sudan welcomed the initiative taken by the Prime Minister of India aimed at fostering friendship and good-neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan, and supports resolution of India-Pakistan issues through dialogue and peaceful means.

14. On the developments in the international scene, both Sudan and India share the conviction that the emerging world order should be just, equitable, multi-polar and built on the principles of democracy, sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal
affairs of states and the peaceful settlement of disputes. They share the imperative of a comprehensive reform of the U.N. system including an expanded Security Council to make it more representative and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the developing countries. In this context Sudan supported India’s candidature to a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Both sides agreed to closely co-ordinate positions in the international fora.

15. The two sides in line with their commitment to the UNSC Resolution 1373 affirmed their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They reaffirmed their conviction that terrorism knows no religion or geographical boundaries and stressed the need to combat this global menace.

16. The two sides reaffirmed their faith in the Non-aligned Movement and stressed the importance of its revitalisation to address global issues such as poverty alleviation, sustainable development, food security, as well as issues of international peace and security. The two sides hailed the position taken by developing countries during the recently concluded WTO Ministerial meeting in Cancun.

17. Sudan and India strongly believe that the State visit of H.E President Abdul Kalam to Sudan will undoubtedly consolidate further and expand the framework of bilateral co-operation in all fields. They both agreed on the importance of increasing the frequency of bilateral visits at all levels including by dignitaries, ministers, officials, experts as well as the people-to-people contacts.

18. H.E. President Abdul Kalam, on behalf of the Indian delegation and his own behalf, expressed deepest thanks and appreciation to the Sudanese Government and people for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended throughout their stay in the Republic of the Sudan.

19. H.E. President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, President of the Republic of India invited H.E. President Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan to visit India.

20. H.E. President al-Bashir accepted, with pleasure, the kind invitation, the date of which will be decided through diplomatic channels.
INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003

Section - IX

AMERICAS

(i) NORTH AMERICA
Canada

333. Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Cooperation between the Indian Foreign Service Institute and the Canadian Foreign Service Institute.

New Delhi, October 13, 2003.

The Indian Foreign Service Institute and the Canadian Foreign Service Institute, hereinafter referred to as the “Institutes”, in the spirit of cooperation that has traditionally existed between the two countries and desiring to promote greater cooperation between the two institutions have decided as follows:

1) The Institutes will cooperate in mutually decided upon areas of activity which may include:
   
   (a) The exchange of information on the structure and content of diplomatic training programmes.
   
   (b) The exchange of information on the use of technology in delivering training to employees, both at headquarters and at missions.
   
   (c) The design of e-learning course contents.
   
   (d) Joint research in mutually agreed areas.
   
   (e) Participation by diplomatic officials in each other’s training programmes.
   
   (f) Identification of experts in areas which support each other’s programmes.

2) The two Institutes will decide the specifics and logistics of every project they jointly pursue including specific provisions for financial terms if necessary.

3) This Memorandum of Understanding will come into effect on signature and will remain in effect for a period of three years, being automatically renewed for further three year periods at a time, unless terminated by either Institute by giving a notice in writing to the other Institute 90 days prior to the date of termination.
334. Joint Statement issued on the visit of Canadian Prime Minister.

New Delhi, October 24, 2003.

Prime Minister Vajpayee and Prime Minister Chrétien today committed their governments to an expanded partnership for the 21st Century.

While building on their historic ties, it was agreed that future efforts need to take into account the significant economic, political, and social changes underway in both countries. The two countries will strengthen government, commercial and civil society linkages as they forge their new partnership.

India and Canada will deepen their engagement in order to achieve the common objective of strengthening international and regional peace and security. The two leaders expressed their national stands on nuclear disarmament. However, they underlined the urgent need to increase international cooperation to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The two countries agreed to enhance their strategic dialogue on all these issues.

The two leaders noted the progress in bilateral relations since re-engagement and welcomed in particular:

- The announcement of increased Canadian representation in India, through the establishment of a Consulate General in Chandigarh, upgrading of the Canadian Consulate in Mumbai to a Consulate General, and the appointment of a trade representative in Chennai;
• Significant investments by Indian firms in Canada in the field of information technology, as well as Canadian corporate investment in the Indian information and communications technology and financial services sectors;

• The extension of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (SICI); and

• Cooperation on counter-terrorism, particularly through the India-Canada Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism – the first such working group established by India.

• The Prime Ministers are committed to widening and deepening relations between the two countries through strengthened links between the two governments, encouragement of greater commercial and economic exchanges and closer contacts between their civil societies:

**Strengthened Government Contacts**

• Formalize an annual dialogue on global issues at the level of Foreign Ministers and Foreign Secretary/Deputy Minister to discuss bilateral, regional, international and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

• Strengthen cooperation in the global campaign against terrorism through the bilateral Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism and through cooperation in multilateral fora.

• Support the holding of the third meeting of the Indo-Canadian Legal Forum, involving the Supreme Courts of the two countries, at Ottawa in 2004.

• Maintain the significant momentum in high-level visits with a view to achieving results on the shared vision for a new partnership.

**Expansion of Commercial and Economic Exchanges**

• Commit their governments to increase the volume of bilateral trade and investment by jointly identifying priority areas and sectors for specific attention.

• Formalize, on an annual basis, recently launched trade policy
consultations between India and Canada at the Deputy Minister/Secretary level, which cover both bilateral and WTO issues.

- Utilize the results, as appropriate, of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada review of bilateral trade, which includes reports on investment, merchandise and services trade, and the first ever comprehensive survey of the Canadian business community on doing business with India.

- Accord priority to an enhanced policy dialogue and strengthened bilateral cooperation in science and technology, research and development, and the environment.

Civil Society Linkages

- Encourage multiple-level contacts between the various segments of the civil society, especially as there is a large and growing population of Canadians of Indian origin and India is the second largest source of immigrants to Canada.

- Promote greater cultural exchanges beginning with the early completion of a joint agreement on film, television and animation co-production.

The Prime Ministers agreed that the vision they outlined today will benefit both of their societies in the coming years. They committed their governments to sustaining the leadership required to realize this shared vision for a 21st century partnership.
United States of America

335. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on India – USA Consultations on Missile Defence.


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The other matter; tomorrow and day after are the Indo-US Consultations on Missile Defence which will be held in New Delhi. The Indian delegation will be led by Dr. Sheelkant Sharma, Joint Secretary, DISA in the Ministry of External Affairs and the delegation from the US will be led by Mr. David Trachtenberg, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense. This is the continuation of earlier consultations held on the subject. The first such consultations were held in May 2001 when Mr. Armitage visited India and the second set of consultations was held in the United States in May 2002 when our delegation went there. As you are aware the United States has a new strategic framework of which missile defence is one component, the other are strategic reduction, nuclear non-proliferation and counter proliferation. So it is as a part of this framework that they are having discussions and consultations with Russia, with their allies and with friendly countries like India.

Question: Does US have this kind of consultations with Pakistan and China?

Answer: I am not aware of that. But I do know they have them with Russia and with their allies.

On January 16 the Spokesman in his media briefing was again asked about the missile defence talks. He answered the following questions:

Question: Anything on the Indo-US discussion on missile defence?

Answer: Well, the consultations of missile defence have taken place on the 15 and 16th January. As you know our delegation was led by Mr. Sheel Kant Sharma and the US delegation was led by Mr. David Trachtenberg, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense. These talks which are a continuation of the ideas which were developed during the May 2002 Defence Policy Group Meeting focussed on missile defence issues. The two sides discussed security contributions that missile
defences could make. The meeting also provided an opportunity to review the latest developments in the US Missile Defence policies and programmes. The two sides also reaffirmed their commitment to continue the open line of communication on missile defence issues between the two countries.

Question: Did the testing of Agni missile come up for discussions?
Answer: I am not aware of any more details of the discussion.

Question: Was North Korea discussed?
Answer: I have shared with you what we have.


It is a great pleasure for me to be here at Carnegie Endowment for Peace among so many distinguished scholars of international relations to speak about India and United States and the areas of security in which we can work together.

I am delighted to renew my association with Washington, where I spent three years on a tour of duty in the early 1990s. There has been a remarkable change in India-US relations since then. At that time, we were told that our problem was that India was not even a blip on the White House radar screen. Why the second largest country in the world in terms of demography and the seventh largest in terms of geographic size, and what is more, a democracy of remarkable resilience sharing so many values that Americans hold so dear should not have registered on the White House radar screen is something that can be explained but not necessarily understood. Anyhow, today there is a real transformation underway in the quality and intensity of our consultation and cooperation. The world’s most powerful and the most populous democracies are now purposefully seeking to work together in several important ways.

In the early 1990s, there was a general expectation that the end of
the Cold War, the triumph of democracy, and the economic promise of globalization, would usher in a new era of peace, freedom and prosperity.

The reality is that there are too many divides, too many fractures, too much disparity, too much imbalance in power, too much inequality in our collective life as an international community for people not to threaten and not to fear. The security challenges in an imperfect world will not disappear, more so as a sense of insecurity is both an objective reality as well as a state of mind. The more you have the more you want to secure it from those who may want to take it away from you. Unfortunately, problems never go away, only their nature changes. Not surprisingly, therefore, today many security challenges, some new and some old ones in new forms, command our collective attention. Though we know what we have left behind, we are uncertain about what lies ahead of us. It is on the intersection of these two developments – transforming India-US relations and new security challenges – that I share my thoughts with you today.

Let me first speak about the texture of our new relationship. More than four years ago, in September 1998, even as India-US relations were in a state of freeze, our Prime Minister described this relationship as one between “natural allies”. Last September, President Bush spoke of developing a strategic relationship with India as a component of the US national security strategy. President Clinton in March 2000 and President Bush in November 2001, together with Prime Minister Vajpayee, affirmed their commitment to set the relationship on a new course.

In the past two years, despite all the demands of our respective immediate challenges, we have sustained an unprecedented level of bilateral engagement. This growing dialogue is enlarging the areas of understanding and expanding the territory of trust and confidence. It is not merely restricted to political leaders and senior levels of the two governments. There is a constant two-way traffic of officials between Washington and Delhi. And, in recent years we have put in place over twenty institutional forums and working groups, for which the two governments run the risk of hearing the familiar accusation of bureaucratic proliferation! It is, however, helping India and the United States develop a new habit of political consultation on all developments of regional and global importance and developing cooperation in diverse fields. In the course of the past two days, I have discussed regional and international political and security developments with Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Global Issues with Under Secretary Dobriansky, high
technology commerce with Under Secretary Juster and Under Secretary Douglas Feith in the Pentagon.

Nowhere has this engagement grown more than in the area of defence and, given the near absence of any defence cooperation in the past, the change has been nothing short of dramatic. The large combined exercises that we conducted last year in India and the United States, the naval escort that we provided to US ships moving through the Straits of Malacca from April to September 2002, the nature of exchanges that we have between top military personnel are in many ways entirely new developments in India’s external defence relations anywhere in the world. Our counter-terrorism working group has served as a model for similar engagement that both of us have with other countries. Last year, India and the United States launched a new initiative in cyber security to address the vulnerabilities of our increasingly wired world.

From the consultations on missile defence to signing an agreement on non-surrender of each others citizens to international tribunals, from supporting a consensus on the IAEA resolution on North Korea to advancing UN initiatives ranging from terrorism to peacekeeping, India and the United States are working to accommodate each other’s interests and address common challenges.

The United States is our largest trading partner, the principal destination of our IT services exports and the major source of foreign investment, and we attach great importance to developing this relationship further. Although the trade and investment figures are nowhere near their potential, we can, perhaps, draw encouragement for the future from the many examples of successful collaborations and from the recent figures, which, in contrast to a general decline in the United States’ external trade, saw growth of 20% in India’s merchandise exports to the United States and 7% increase in US exports to India, as also a more robust growth in service trade.

India and the United States are two nations blessed with many skills and talents. Our partnerships of the Information Age are a metaphor of the possibilities that we have for harnessing the power of knowledge and science for our common good. If information technology saw unprecedented progress in the United States, its innovative use in India in healthcare, managing livestocks, farming and distance education is helping us to discover that the power of information technology to change the lives of people is constrained not by resources but by imagination
and motivation. In the past, despite the vicissitudes of our political relations, our cooperation helped pioneer revolution in agriculture and scientific education, use of space technology for remote education, and spread of clean and renewable energy. Today, India and US scientists are together developing vaccines for fighting communicable diseases and will apply their space research capabilities for weather studies, tele-medicines and sustainable economic development.

Impressive as the progress has been, we have to continue managing the process of translating the political commitment of qualitatively transforming relations into a working reality. An important aspect of this process must be the realization that we will not always have identity of views on all issues and sometimes differences of approach rather than on the goals, given our different geo-strategic and economic contexts. We must, however, share our perspectives in candid and transparent manner, sensitive to each other’s interests, and without letting them spill over into other areas or affecting the overall pattern of relations. As our dialogue expands and deepens – and, in recent months, for example, we have consulted extensively on Afghanistan, Pakistan and other countries in South Asia; the Middle East, Iraq, Iran, China, East Asia, North Korea – this approach assumes greater importance. In the midst of the many challenges that India and the United States have each faced in the past two years, we have tried to pursue our relationship based on this understanding.

For too long, India’s pursuit of its security needs was a point of significant political difference and a reason for US constraints on scientific and technological cooperation with India. Although a deep and intense engagement in recent years has enlarged our understanding on security and non-proliferation issues, it has not completely resolved the outstanding differences. The dialogue that we have had, especially in the past six months, demonstrates – at least from our perspective – that what separates us on these issues is not interests or approach but a historical point in time that put us on the opposite sides of a legal divide.

Our nuclear posture is based on no first use, non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states and a credible minimum deterrent. We continue to maintain a moratorium on further nuclear tests and have reiterated our commitment to participating in the multilateral negotiations for FMCT. Our strategic forces are under the control of civilian political leadership. India has no desire to enter into a nuclear arms race
with anyone. We do not, as our doctrine demonstrates, see nuclear weapons as a coercive instrument or one of blackmail in international relations, either with our neighbours or anyone else.

Over the past several decades, maintaining strict controls on our nuclear and missile capabilities has been a vital part of our security policy. Government of India’s commitment to non-proliferation has been unwavering and its record impeccable. And, as our scientific and technological capabilities in the private sector have grown, we have further strengthened our controls in export of nuclear and missile related materials and technologies as a national security imperative. We reiterated this commitment in January this year.

Our shared values and interests, as also our many common challenges, not the least in the arc of proliferation and terrorism that surrounds India, have led our leaders to seek a closer, strategic relationship between our two countries – a vision that is shared across the political spectrum in both nations. In an uncertain and unpredictable world, where the existing non-proliferation regime is being increasingly challenged by strategic proliferation and the horrifying possibilities of its links with terrorist organizations, India and the United States can turn their common concern on non-proliferation into a partnership against proliferation. That must be one of the aims of our strategic partnership.

As we give shape to the vision of strategic relationship, as we enlarge our understanding, as we embark on many joint endeavors, we must go beyond old persuasions that have constrained cooperation in civilian applications of science and technology. Our two governments are making concentrated efforts to deepen cooperation in this area and we appreciate the effort that the US Administration has put into it. In recent months, we have made good progress, but there is much that we can still accomplish. A broad cooperation in science and technology and a more robust trade in high technology areas should be an important element of our strategy to stimulate our overall economic relations, because in so many ways India and the United States are already pioneering international partnerships in knowledge-intensive industries.

I have spoken so far about our new relationship. Let me speak about other new challenges besides the ones I have touched upon which we should together meet. International terrorism poses a grave challenge both to India and the United States. We have been facing it for many years, but it was considered our problem, a product of the unresolved India-Pakistan confrontation. Those behind it were not seen as a threat to
the USA or the West and early signals that this insouciance might be misplaced were ignored. The dramatic events of September 11 drove home to the US that those forces which did not want India to live did not want the US to live either. These are the products of the madrassas, of a warped world view, of grievances against the course of history, against the forces of modernity, against democracy, pluralism and the right to choose, with an exaggerated sense of their own strength, as if perverse convictions fired by religious zealotry are enough to achieve any goal. While the wounds inflicted by terrorism on India did not stir the world, the world got stirred by September 11. Terrorism has grown to become one of the greatest challenges to democratic societies and international stability. From being a footnote in the security concerns and foreign policy priorities of the world, it has become a key purpose of our collective endeavor today, and instead of being treated principally as a crime and law enforcement issue it has become one of global war.

This war cannot be won completely and durably if short term political calculations come into play and there is equivocation about partners as well as adversaries. In the global war against terrorism there is no room for double standards, of distinction between terrorism that can be tolerated and one that cannot, of terrorism directed against the West and that directed against the others, of the former being untarnished evil and the latter requiring resolution of its root causes. International terrorism, the product of a particular mindset, of a certain religious ideology, of deep rooted feelings of moral and historical superiority, of a certain infrastructure built around madarasas and mosques and a network of financing rendered more complex by the role of charitable institutions. The epicenter of terrorism cannot be the epic centre of the fight against it. Those who have one foot in the terrorist camp cannot have both feet in the combat against it. The institutions that nourish terrorism cannot be reliable instruments to eliminate it. The leader of a country whose right hand commits terrorist acts against India and the left hand cooperates against the Taliban and Al Qaeda, one part of whose discourse is a rallying call in favour of terrorism against India and the other rallies against those who target the West, whose promises have no value because he has no value for them, cannot be a reliable partner in the combat against terrorism. You cannot with the one hand water poisonous weeds and with the other spray weed-killers.

In a speech to the US Congress in September 2000, Prime Minister Vajpayee had spoken about terrorism’s growth, nourished by religious extremism and fundamentalism into an instrument of state policy for some,
into a force that had become a threat to the values of democracy, pluralism, liberty and progress, and into a danger against which distance offered no insulation.

Many challenges still lie ahead in defeating the forces of terror. In the past seventeen months, we have made considerable progress in combating international terrorism by creating new levels of international cooperation, by crafting new multilateral standards for national behaviour and responsibility, by disrupting financial networks, by interdicting terrorists and by dismantling their bases in Afghanistan. But much more needs to be done still.

US has no better partner than India in combating fundamentalist terrorism and the security challenges it poses. We are both targets. The epicenter of terrorism is in our region and we have a common stake in eliminating it. Both of us have rejoiced in the downfall of the Taliban and we support the government of President Karzai in Afghanistan. Both of us favour stability in Central Asia and the elimination of the fundamentalist terrorist threat to the region. We are cooperating bilaterally at the level of our governments and our agencies in dealing with this menace. India has initiated a Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism in the UN, which the US supports. Our common experience and sufferings make us natural partners. As democracies, the challenges we face are particularly acute. Free and open societies like ours have to find answers to inadequacies of existing law enforcement and crime prevention mechanism dealing with terrorism, while preserving their high standards of rule of law, judicial processes and transparency. We still have to develop new paradigms of international cooperation on actionable intelligence, on which our success depends so much. We have to develop new technologies, systems and institutions for protection of our people.

We have to deal with terrorism pro-actively. We have to address the problem of all that which inspires, draws and indoctrinates countless young men to the path of violence. We must develop a consensus on how to deal with sovereign states, whose policies, social ethos and institutions breed the mindset that sustains international terrorism. We have to systematically target terrorist financial and communication networks, and their safe havens. We have to deal with failing or failed States, not only for the suffering that their own people undergo, but to prevent terrorists from exploiting the chaos to inflict suffering on people elsewhere. Our success depends on the moral clarity of our purpose, in the resolve of democracies to stand together, in our unequivocal rejection of terrorism regardless of
the garb it seeks to clothe itself in, in our signal that terror is a discredited instrument that is doomed to fail, and in our recognition that success of terrorism anywhere gives it strength and inspiration globally. Beyond Afghanistan, we will have to address the other epicenter of terrorism in India’s neighbourhood.

Last year, the two events in South Asia – the campaign in Afghanistan and our own efforts to address cross-border terrorism – intersected on the territory of Pakistan. From the clarity that proximity and experience begets, we can see that the pursuit of Al-Qaeda and the goal of stability and security in Afghanistan would never be fully realized unless Pakistan also takes steps to end cross-border terrorism against India. The infrastructure and institutions that exist for terrorism against India provide the refuge and the breeding ground for terrorism against others too. However complex the challenge may be of dealing with this conundrum, the United States, India and the international community must address it squarely.

India and the United States both recognize the frightening possibilities of the link between the old and the new – between weapons of mass destruction, on one hand, and non-state actors as well as states that sponsor, support and abet terrorism, on the other. The nexus between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction is frightening. I drew attention to this in my speech at the Conference on Disarmament just a few days ago, exhorting the CD to find ways of addressing this new menace. India moved successfully last year in the UNGA a resolution on the issue of terrorism and WMD. There are States that are today collaborating in transfers of nuclear and missile technologies, endangering gravely the security of democracies. There is also the danger of their weapons falling into the hands of terrorist outfits. We face new questions about traditional concepts and methods of deterring, dissuading, pre-empting and defeating this new asymmetric and unpredictable threat. I am aware of the intense debate and efforts in this country to reorient your security doctrines and capabilities to address this new challenge, and it is one in which our two countries have also engaged frequently over the past year.

A new phenomenon is the growing incidence of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems, not by private entities, but as a result of political and strategic choice by governments. It creates long-term strategic equity and alliance among the collaborators and enables them to use their respective comparative advantages to overcome barriers to advancing their capabilities. Some of these countries have
links with terrorism, have avowed policies to change the status quo through force or resort to nuclear blackmail. It is evident that international ad hoc proliferation control regimes, designed on different assumptions of proliferation and for a different era, are clearly ineffective in meeting the resulting threats to international peace and stability. Developing countries, which exercise self-discipline and adhere to the rule of law and transparency, find themselves facing both the constraints of the ad hoc control regimes and a deteriorating security environment from unchecked clandestine proliferation. India lies right in the middle of this arc of proliferation and confronts the dilemma that it represents. The political and security implications of strategic proliferation cannot be in the interest of the United States, India and the entire democratic world.

India’s security interest span the region from the Gulf to South-East Asia. We have close historical, political, cultural, religious and economic links with this part of the world. Our three million Indian expatriates work in the Gulf countries, with 1.5 million in Saudi Arabia alone, remitting several billion dollars every year to India. Their skills help to underpin the stability and prosperity of these countries. India’s surplus and qualified human resources are an asset to the region. With South East Asia, India is rapidly developing close economic links as part of its Look East policy, which include Free Trade and Economic Partnership Agreements with Thailand and Singapore respectively, east-west transportation links connecting, to begin with, India, Myanmar and Thailand and India’s summit level dialogue with ASEAN. India is also a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum. India and China have a long common border and the Sino-Indian equation is a critical element in Asian peace and security. India has long term strategic interests in Central Asia and Iran is rapidly becoming a key link in India’s efforts to have access to this region and Afghanistan. India’s security requires peace, stability and prosperity in this larger region.

The US, as a global power, has a powerful presence in this region. It has now a military presence in Central Asia which is likely to be long term not only because of Afghanistan but also because of the oil and gas resources of this region and its geo-political importance otherwise. The US intends to stay in Afghanistan in the foreseeable future and barring, perhaps, Pakistan whose ambitions have been thwarted, all other neighbouring countries, including, India believe that the US presence in Afghanistan is required to ward off instability and revival of conflict there. The US has defence arrangements with Japan and Taiwan and it has a
powerful presence in Asia through various institutions and organizations such as ARF, APEC, besides the existence of military bases in this region. US policies towards China, which it considers both a partner and a competitor, if not a threat, are key to the shaping of the future strategic balance in Asia. India and the US, therefore, have a large canvas in Asia to work on in terms of dealing with various security challenges.

The Iraq issue raises a host of difficult questions to which there are no easy answers. Many issues are involved: development of weapons of mass destruction, compliance with UN resolutions, sanctions, the problem of inspections, validity of pre-emptive action if there is no immediate threat of aggression, the political acceptability of regime changes imposed externally, the role of the UNSC, the debate between unilateralism and multilateralism, double standards in dealing with situations of similar concern, the consequences of military action against a country located in an already volatile region and its consequences, the possible break-up of the state, the concerns of neighbours, the danger of radicalization of Islamic opinion, post-war political management, control of oil supplies, etc. etc. The close allies and friends of the US raise these questions and doubts. India has some special concerns about the situation in Iraq because of the presence of millions of expatriates in the Gulf region, the size of remittances they send home, volatility of oil prices following armed action, the sentiments, in particular, of India’s own 140 million Muslims. In the case of Iraq, there is a conflict between wishes and expectation. No one wishes a conflict but everyone expects it.

Asia has made substantive progress towards freedom and prosperity. However, across the immense political, cultural, religious and economic diversity of Asia, there are many issues that remain unsettled. Democracy’s advance has been arrested or reversed in many countries. Progress towards modernity and pluralism confronts religious extremism and fundamentalism. Economic development is generating strains within and across societies, as it benefits some and bypasses others. There are countries that seek to redraw boundaries and settle claims – historical or imaginary – through the force of power. There is the challenge of balancing the legitimate interest of major powers in Asia – Japan, China, India and ASEAN bloc – and others who have a stake in Asia. With China we are seeking to strengthen our relationship in diverse fields. However, there are many aspects of China’s internal and external policies: the rising profile of China, how its growing strength will impact on the region and beyond, how and to what extent its economic success will make its system more
democratic, transparent and comprehensible, all these are of interest and a challenge not only to India but to the international community as a whole.

Asia has traditionally been seen in terms of its sub-regions, each with its own dynamics and its own problems. Traditionally, we deal with them as unconnected compartments. However, lines that insulate one region from the other are increasingly getting blurred by proliferation deals that link the east to the west, by the chain of terror network across West, South and Southeast Asia, by the concerns about the safety of commerce from the Straits of Hormuz to the Straits of Malacca, by the challenge of connecting major consumers of energy to its sources in West and Central Asia.

India’s size, its location at the cross-roads of all important regions of Asia and its key routes of commerce and communication, its political stability, the resilience of its democratic institutions, the broad consensus that binds a billion people together in an unparalleled diversity, the enterprise and skill of its people in science and knowledge industries, its exercise of power with restraint and responsibility, its desire for cooperative security relations makes it an indispensable factor of stability and security in Asia and beyond.

India and the United States have the potential to work together and in partnership with other countries in addressing the existing and emerging security challenges in the world. We are two societies that mirror in each other our deepest ideals and aspirations – democracy, pluralism, the rule of law. Democracy is not the only factor that defines relations among nations, but it is a strong tool to counter extremism, fundamentalism and terrorism. By power of example, Indian and the United States can demonstrate that these values are not linked to culture, economy or geography, but have a growing universal aspiration.

The foundation of our engagement is built on many common and converging interests: promoting stability in Asia-Pacific region, combating terrorism, preventing and countering proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, managing the consequences of failing States, protecting the sea lanes of communication and commerce, and ensuring access to markets and energy resources of the region.

It is in a spirit of candour amongst friends that I wish to convey a certain sense of disappointment in India born out of the perception that the international community could do more to ensure an end to cross-
border terrorism from Pakistan, not as a favour to India but as a part of the international combat against terrorism. There is little cause for satisfaction on any parameter of cross-border terrorism. A permanent end to cross-border infiltration does not mean tactical reductions or fluctuations in levels of infiltration. During the elections in Jammu & Kashmir, infiltration and terrorist violence were stepped up with tragic consequences for candidates and voters. The people of India appreciate the steps that the United States took under its law against Pakistan-based terrorist organizations of concern to us and the efforts it made to extract a commitment from President Musharraf on immediate and permanent end to infiltration. We recognize, too, that the United States continues to call for progress in that direction. The disappointment stems from the lack of results, especially since the commitment was made to the United States and the international community. General Musharraf has simply gone back on his commitments. He has released the leaders of two especially virulent organizations banned by the US and others. The websites of terrorist organizations are back in business; fund collection for jehad against India has again begun openly. The extremist religious parties, those that were the mainstay of the Taliban and the Al Qaida are now more firmly entrenched in power, thanks to General Musharraf’s policies, countenanced by the West, of decimating the mainstream political parties. The Taliban and the Al Qaida have lost their base in Afghanistan but have found it in Balochistan and the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan, even while the US is present on Pakistani soil. The astute General understand the many equities the US has today in Pakistan and exploits this to pursue his sponsorship of terrorism against India. He plays upon the fears of the West about a fundamentalist take-over in Pakistan, while encouraging, at the same time the religious extremists himself in order to have an insurance cover against western pressure, and in this manner, has gained western acquiescence for firmly entrenching military rule in Pakistan by amendments to the constitution and by manipulating the elections. Pakistan represents everything that is in the forefront of US concerns: religious fundamentalism, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction in possession of a failing state, a military dictatorship masquerading behind a pale democratic façade. A big challenge India and the US face is to make Pakistan a genuinely moderate state.

India is ready to make peace even with such an unreliable leadership. An end to cross-border terrorism from Pakistan will set in motion the process of normalization of relations and resolution of outstanding issues between India and Pakistan through direct bilateral dialogue. For India,
there can be no accommodation, equivocation or ambiguity on the issue of terrorism. It must end. Nobody is more acutely aware than India of the importance of a dialogue. But, we have learnt in Lahore and Agra the futility of going through the motion of dialogue, and the risks inherent in its inevitable failure, if this dialogue takes place without a change in the mindset. And, it is our desire for progress that we remain committed to a composite dialogue process to deal with all issues simultaneously, based on the universal wisdom that the most difficult issues are tackled by first addressing the ones that are easily resolved. Economic relations provide one important route to move forward. If Pakistan, as a WTO member, were to grant MFN status to India and make effective progress on the interminably long negotiating process for a South Asia Preferential Trade Agreement, it would benefit not only the people of India and Pakistan, but, by moving the SAARC economic process forward, entire South Asia. The absence of movement by Pakistan testifies that its call for dialogue is more for form than substance.

Let me conclude by saying that the transformation underway in India-US relations and our commonality of interests we see in meeting new security challenges, are significant features of India’s foreign policy in recent years. The investment that both sides have made in the relationship is predicated as much on mutual benefit as on its global significance. Our broad agenda and the process that we have crafted for our engagement will provide a sound basis for an enduring partnership. The United States, the most powerful democracy, with its belief that it is right to be good, and India, the most populous democracy, with its belief that it is good to be right can together promote what is both good and right, in the one case bringing power to the enterprise and in the other case, the numbers.


Senior United States and Indian government officials participated in the second meeting of the Global Issues Forum at the Department of State in Washington, DC, February 3-4, 2003. The first meeting of the Global Issues Forum was held in New Delhi on October 30, 2002.

The U.S. delegation was led by Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky, and included representatives from the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State, and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. The Government of India delegation was led by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal, with the participation of other senior officials from the Ministry of External Affairs.

The objective of the Global Issues Forum is to strengthen current areas of cooperation between the U.S. and India on issues of global interest and explore new avenues of cooperative endeavor. This session focused on a range of issues including environment; health and infectious diseases, with an emphasis on HIV/AIDS; and human rights and democracy-related issues. In addition, there was discussion of the Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum, with both sides expressing strong interest in substantially expanding science and technology cooperation. In the area of environment, the two sides discussed a range of global issues such as the forthcoming session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Environment Governing Council/GMEF, international agreements on Persistent Organic Pollution (POPS), sea turtles, and fisheries issues. The health segment concentrated on action taken for the prevention, treatment and care for HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. These discussions were a prelude to full interagency discussions expected later this year in New Delhi on those issues.

The segment on multilateral issues was led by Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Lorne Craner and explored ways to advance human rights and democracy in multilateral fora. In addition, the two sides discussed the issue of trafficking in persons (TIP) and policies on population.
The two governments agreed to continue their dialogue on all three sets of issues more extensively in New Delhi later in 2003. These discussions all fall under the umbrella of the Global Issues Forum, adding a new dimension to the steadily broadening and deepening U.S.-India partnership. Cooperation in the Global Issues Forum is another important step toward completing the process of transforming U.S.-India relations to which President Bush and Prime Minister Vajpayee pledged the commitment of both governments in their November 2001 Joint Statement. Both delegations expressed their deep regret on the deaths of Dr. Kalpana Chawla and her fellow crew members in the Columbia space shuttle tragedy this weekend.

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Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal and the U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce Kenneth Juster met in Washington D.C. on 4th February and agreed on the principles that would govern India-US bilateral high technology commerce, including trade in “dual use” goods and technologies. It represents a significant step in expanding the strategic content of the relationship.

The two sides agreed to take steps to promote and facilitate such trade by addressing systemic barriers to such trade; generating market awareness; undertaking promotional activities; conducting industry outreach programs; reviewing policies and processes on export of “dual use” goods and technologies to India; and, pursuing export control cooperation.

The US Government appreciated the importance that the Government of India attaches to the widest possible access to US “dual-use” goods and technologies and to efficiency, continuity, stability, and transparency in the export licence application process. The US Government would review the policies and processes for certain category of goods and the two sides would work out arrangements for authorized transfers of goods and technologies, controlled for nuclear proliferation and missile technology, for civilian applications in India.
The two governments, in cooperation with the private sector, will also conduct special outreach activities to make government officials and private entities in India and the United States aware about the policies, regulations and opportunities for “dual use” trade with India.

The principles also acknowledge importance that the US Government attaches to a supportive regulatory and institutional environment in India for robust bilateral high technology commerce. The two sides also envisage a series of promotional activities to advance high technology commerce in the broadest sense.

The bilateral High Technology Cooperation Group, the first such group that the United States has with any country, will hold consultations and initiate a programme of activities to implement the principles.

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339. Press release issued by the Embassy of India in Washington (D.C) on the conclusion of the visit of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal to the United States.


India’s Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal, concluded his three-day visit to Washington DC today, after meeting with U.S. Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage in the morning and Deputy National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley later in the afternoon. On 3rd and 4th February, he had extensive discussions with Marc Grossman, Under Secretary for Political Affairs in the State Department; Paula Dobriansky, Under Secretary for Global Affairs (also in the State Department); Douglas Feith, Under Secretary of Defence at the Pentagon; and, Kenneth Juster, Under Secretary for Commerce. The Foreign Secretary met senators and congressmen at Capitol Hill; addressed the Carnegie Endowment on “The India-US Partnership: Emerging Security Challenges”; and answered questions at a Press Conference in the Indian Embassy.

India and the United States reached agreement on principles governing high technology commerce including trade in dual-use technology between the two countries, reflecting their new relationship and common strategic interests. The two sides agreed to take steps to
promote and facilitate such trade by addressing systemic barriers; generating market awareness; undertaking promotional activities; conducting industry outreach programs; reviewing policies and processes on export of dual use goods and technologies to India; and, pursuing export control cooperation.

Foreign Secretary’s visit constitutes an important milestone in the wide-ranging and intense dialogue between India and the United States at the highest official level. The interface was marked by cordiality and candor and reflected the desire of the two sides to consolidate and expand the relationship.

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During their November 2001 meeting in Washington D.C., Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Bush affirmed their commitment to qualitatively transform India-U.S. relations. They further agreed that the two sides should discuss ways to stimulate bilateral high technology commerce as a step toward enhancing the new relationship between the United States and India.

In pursuit of this goal, the Governments of the United States and India decided in November 2002 to work expeditiously toward developing a new statement of principles regarding bilateral cooperation in high technology trade, including trade in “dual-use” goods and technologies, in a way that broadly advances the relationship between the two countries in this area and reinforces their mutual interest in stemming the proliferation of sensitive goods and technologies.

The two Governments have set forth the principles to farther promote and facilitate bilateral high technology commerce in its broadest sense:

1. The two Governments note that there is immense untapped potential for India-U.S. high technology commerce and recognize the importance of taking steps to remove systemic tariff and non-tariff
barriers, identify and generate awareness of market opportunities, and build additional confidence in the two countries for such trade, in a way that reflects their new relationship and common strategic interests.

2. The two Governments recognize that the private sectors in India and the United States are important partners in this endeavor.

3. The two Governments should focus on steps to create the appropriate environment for successful high technology commerce. The Government of India appreciates the importance that the Government of the United States attaches to a supportive regulatory and institutional environment in India for robust bilateral high technology commerce, including easing barriers to such commerce. The Government of India intends to do its utmost in this regard.

4. The two Governments should seek to identify market opportunities in high technology commerce and related regulations that affect such commerce.

5. The two Governments, in partnership with the private sector, should consider steps for trade promotion efforts to generate awareness about market potential, relevant regulatory issues, collaboration opportunities, and financing possibilities.

6. The two Governments understand the importance of enhancing trade between India and the United States in “dual-use” items, including controlled “dual use” goods and technologies, while protecting the national security and foreign policy interests of both countries, and intend to take steps to facilitate such trade, which is a component of high technology commerce.

7. The two Governments should encourage outreach and educational activities to ensure that the private sectors in India and the United States have full and accurate information regarding the export control laws, regulations, and policies of the two countries.

8. The two Governments attach the highest importance to preventing the proliferation of sensitive goods and technologies. They further recognize the importance of continuing their export control cooperation program and activities to achieve the shared goal of
strengthening export control systems through laws, regulations, and enforcement, in accordance with modern export control standards.

9. The Government of the United States appreciates the importance that the Government of India attaches to the widest possible access to U.S. “dual-use” goods and technologies and to efficiency, continuity, stability, and transparency in the export license application process. The Government of the United States intends to do its utmost in this regard, consistent with its laws and national security and foreign policy objectives, including compliance with international commitments.

10. The two Governments recognize that U.S. “dual-use” export controls currently apply to only a very small fraction of total U.S.-India high technology commerce, and that a broad range of “dual-use” goods and technologies is currently available to India.

11. The Government of the United States should seek to identify and review licensing processes and policies for exports to India of goods and technologies controlled for reasons of anti-terrorism (AT), crime control (CC), encryption (EI), national security (NS), regional stability (RS), and short supply (SS), in a manner that seeks to facilitate further trade in these “dual-use” goods and technologies.

12. For authorized transfers of “dual-use” goods and technologies controlled for missile technology or nuclear proliferation reasons, including exports to entities in civilian space and civilian nuclear energy fields, the Government of India will consider a mutually satisfactory system of assurances regarding end use, diversion, transfers and retransfers within and outside India, re-export, and, where necessary, physical protection and access to the controlled items by third parties.

13. The two Governments should examine cooperative steps to ensure that all parties adhere to license conditions for “dual-use” goods and technologies and should outline the manner in which suspected violations and infractions are to be addressed. The Government of India will cooperate with the Government of the United States in verifying Indian end users and end uses.

14. The two Governments should seek to keep each other informed about changes in their export control laws, regulations, and policies; exchange information on export licenses that are approved, denied,
or returned without action; and establish a mechanism for prompt discussion of any bilateral “dual-use” export control issues.

15. This Statement of Principles constitutes the basis for further steps to enhance high technology commerce between the two countries.

16. The two Governments plan to convene as soon as possible the India-U.S. High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG), decided upon in November 2002, to further this Statement of Principles and develop a schedule of meeting and activities for this purpose.

Kenneth I. Juster
Under Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce

Kanwal Sibal
Foreign Secretary
Indian Ministry of External Affairs

341. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage.


Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

...Restricting myself to the visit of Mr. Richard Armitage, you all know his schedule of meetings. Mr. Armitage met the PM, DPM and the EAM, Finance Minister and of course the Foreign Secretary with whom he held delegation level talks. Foreign Secretary also hosted a lunch in his honour. He also met the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Armitage is of course visiting the region. He has visited Afghanistan and Pakistan before coming to India. The discussion with all the interlocutors were extensive and covered bilateral, regional and international issues. Specifically I can indicate some areas - discussions covered developments in Iraq, Middle East peace process, general situation in countries around Iraq. Afghanistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and DPRK and China also figured in the discussion. On bilateral issues both sides emphasised that the goal of transforming Indo-US relations as reflected in the understanding between Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Bush in November 2001 remained a foreign policy priority for both countries. Mr. Armitage also handed over a letter of invitation from Vice President Dick Cheney for DPM L.K. Advani to visit the United States. That visit is expected to take place in early June.
The United States also appraised the Indian delegation of some progress on the trinity issues with a clear expectation that there will be further progress as this is an integral part of our mutual desire to transform our bilateral relationship. The first meeting of the hi-tech commerce group is scheduled to be held in Washington in the first week of July. The Indian delegation would be led by the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Kanwal Sibal and the US delegation by Mr. Kenneth Juster, Under Secretary, Department of Commerce.

Mr. Armitage was laudatory of Prime Minister’s initiative towards Pakistan. We briefed him on our thinking behind the initiative and the need for Pakistan to take firm and credible action on permanently ending cross border terrorism and dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism was emphasised to Mr. Armitage in all the meetings. It was also conveyed that the Prime Minister’s peace initiatives towards Pakistan was designed to create easier conditions for Pakistan to respond to us favourably on the issue of cross border terrorism. It was not meant to substitute our requirements that cross border terrorism should end and the infrastructure of terrorism should be dismantled so that a sustained dialogue can take place. The intention, as we have discussed before is that a more conducive atmosphere needs to be created before and all of you are aware that several elements of the initiative are designed to create a more conducive atmosphere. There was complete congruence between the two sides on the need to deal suitably with terrorist organisations like Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad and this matter was evidently also thoughtfully raised by Mr. Armitage in Islamabad. The issue of the need to move forward on economic cooperation and the inadequacy of the response so far received also came up for discussion during the meetings.

**Question:** Could you explain that Prime Minister’s initiative was designed to create easier conditions for Pakistan to respond to us favourably?

**Answer:** I don’t think there is anything new or a need to explain. The Prime Minister himself explained in his statements on the floor of the house that what we need to do is to move towards peace, we need to create a situation in which the atmosphere is such in which a dialogue can start and naturally it is essential for the creation of such an atmosphere that cross border terrorism ends and the infrastructure of terrorism is dismantled. I think it is quite clear.

**Question:** In Islamabad Armitage has said that cross border infiltration
has gone down. Was this discussed in Delhi?

**Answer:** He had already mentioned these points as you are rightly say in Islamabad and it was mentioned here also in the sense that this was the statement which he had heard from his interlocutors in Islamabad which he had mentioned there. But our view on this matter is quite clear and remains the same. We have heard claims, we have heard declarations before and we have received assurances before. But these have not been translated into reality. For us, we will judge Pakistan by what they do and not by what they say.

**Question:** Are you looking at some timeframe to see that cross border terrorism has ended and terrorist infrastructure dismantled?

**Answer:** I think when the reality happens on the ground it will show for itself.

**Question:** How are we going to judge that cross border has ended and terrorist infrastructure dismantled?

**Answer:** I think terrorism is a vicious reality whose presence or absence speaks for itself. Once you know that there is no infiltration, once launching pads have been removed, once training camps are shut down, once the communication systems are shut down, then you know there is credible movement.

**Question:** India obviously have invested so much in India-US relations. Last year also Mr. Armitage came with similar assurances about cross border terrorism and infiltration. What is new this time? I mean is there any new element or a message for the Government of India that he brought?

**Answer:** There are two questions in what you say and I would like to address both. First I would like to say that this entire theory that here is somebody bringing and carrying messages is quite misplaced. So I would not like to characterise Mr. Armitage’s visit as that of a messenger. The second part you asked as what is new – we have received these assurances before that did not translate into reality. But let me say that every season is a new season and this is a season in which our Prime Minister has extended a hand of friendship. He has taken up this initiative of peace and we are hoping for an appropriate positive response particularly on the issue of cross border terrorism and infrastructure.

**Question:** Mr. Armitage has said ….(inaudible)
Answer: I unfortunately missed his statement because I was in the car at that moment. But if I understand you right, this I think was made clear in the conversation that we had that it was for India to judge when a conducive atmosphere had been created for a dialogue to take place.

Question: Richard Armitage said that he had assurances from President Musharraf that there are no training camps in Pakistan or Pakistan occupied Kashmir. Did India presented any evidence of the presence of such training camps in Pakistan?

Answer: Yes, during the meeting we shared our latest assessments on cross border infiltration, existing launching pads along the Line of Control, training camps in PoK and other parts of Pakistan, the existence of communication networks of the terrorists. These assessments were shared with the US side. These assessments shows that the reality is very different from proclamations.

Question: What was Armitage’s response?

Answer: We shared our assessments.

Question: The US cooperation with Pakistan have resulted in capturing lot of high ranking Al-Qaeda cadre in Pakistan. But we have a situation where JeM and LeT leaders roaming freely in Pakistan. Was this duality of Pakistani policy pointed out to the US side?

Answer: This is a self evident duality and its been quite clear. As you know there has been some action on certain fronts, no action as far as we are concerned and the fact as I told you that India and the United States share the assessments about terrorist organisations and their work and the need to clamp down on them.

Question: What was the reaction of Prime Minister when Mr. Armitage told him that Musharraf has said that nothing is happening across the LoC?

Answer: I was not present at the call on the Prime Minister. I cannot tell you what the Prime Minister’s personal reaction was or if this matter was raised specifically with him. But in the delegation level talks when this matter was raised our view was shared that we would judge by actions on the ground.

Question: What was the assessment that Mr. Armitage carried from Pakistan after his talks with the Pakistani leadership?
Answer: He shared his assessments but as I have told you before we are not characterising this as passing messages between government to government or to others.

Question: Did the issue of joint verification come up?

Answer: No it did not come up. Not that I am aware of.

Question: Inaudible

Answer: I think you are going back to what I said. India’s position on this issue is very clear. There is no place for mediation and from what I understand there is no intention of mediating. This was a visit of Mr. Armitage, US Deputy Secretary of State and as I told you a very substantial amount of bilateral discussion took place.

Question: India and US have been having strategic dialogue. Has US given us assurance that we will fight terrorism together?

Answer: If I had caught some of the quotes on the scanner as I walked in I think Mr. Armitage made it very clear at the airport that a terrorist is a terrorist is a terrorist. If I can borrow a turn of phrase, any terrorism is too much terrorism.

Question: You said that Prime Minister’s initiative was designed to create easier conditions for Pakistan to respond to us favourably. On what assessment was it founded on: an assessment (a) that Pakistan has taken some steps to crack down terrorism therefore we need to create better conditions (b) an assessment that Pakistan has done nothing and and therefore we need to do take...

Answer: I would like to refer you to the Prime Minister’s statement, the last statement that he made in Parliament in which he has explained the reasons why he made this gesture of friendship in Srinagar, why he wants to give peace another chance.

Question: Mr. Brajesh Mishra yesterday made a proposal that India, Israel and America jointly ... of international terrorism. Was something discussed on this issue?

Answer: The issue of terrorism was discussed at length.

Question: Did you convey to Pakistan that similar evidence about the presence of training camps in Pakistan and PoK?
Answer: This was not a dialogue with Pakistan.

Question: What are the issues that they discussed on DPRK and China?

Answer: I have shared with you the extent of details that I have. I don’t have specific details on the nature of discussions on those countries. But I do know these countries came up for discussion. DPRK of course in the context of the transfer of nuclear and missile technology.

Question: On the front of restoration of airlink, road and rail link between India and Pakistan. Was there any progress?

Answer: Not that I am aware of.

Question: Has the visit of Richard Armitage help in speeding up the dialogue process between India and Pakistan?

Answer: I think we are going around in circles. We have made specific moves. We have announced for instance that we will have a High Commissioner in place, we have made moves on civil aviation links, we have defined other areas on which we can make a start, we are waiting for a response on these. This is a step-by-step approach. A lot of work has to be done. I think not only India, I think even Pakistan recognises that this is a step-by-step approach.

Question: There were some reports that India is sending troops to Iraq.....

Answer: We have received no formal request. India’s position on peacekeeping operations is well established and clear. We have participated in such operations only under UN auspices.

Question: But if such request are to be made?

Answer: You are asking me to make logical triple jumps at the end of a long day.

Question: Have any dates being worked out for the next SAARC Summit?

Answer: Not that I am aware of. I don’t even know if they have been proposed.

Thank You
342. Media briefing by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha after his meeting with the US Secretary of State Colin Powell in Moscow.


Opening statement:

I had a meeting with the US Secretary Colin Powell this morning. I am also meeting later this afternoon Russian Prime Minister Kasaynov and the Deputy Prime Minister & Finance Minister Kudrin. Tomorrow is the formal meeting of Indo-Russian intergovernmental Joint Commission (IRIGC) preceded by personal meeting between the Minister of Industry and Science & Technology Klebanov. Tomorrow, I am also meeting the Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. We carry on our discussion of IRIGC, which will be concluded on the 16th afternoon.

Before I come to my meeting with Colin Powell, as far as Indo-Russian relationship is concerned, the point I wanted to stress is that there are number of areas where we have to make a faster progress, particularly in the area of trade and investment. There will be great emphasis from our side. There is a certain stagnation in the Indo-Russian trade and therefore we need to think of innovative ideas to get out of this and increase the trade exchange. Similarly, investment was a very important flavor of our cooperation with the Soviet Union. But the two way investment on a wide-spread scale - I have not deliberately used the word large-scale trade, because in Sakhalin, Kudankulam etc. we have large-scale investment, but the wide spread trade i.e. number of companies from Russia investing in India and number of Indian companies investing in Russia and this private sector and public sector interaction has to increase. The main thrust of my approach this time in the IRIGC is to pick up these issues, suggest an approach, which will enable us to meet this requirement and of course the emphasis will be on the implementation of the decisions. I will be making some suggestions later tomorrow. I hope to get response from the Russian side.

With Prime Minister Kasaynov, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov I will take up other issues than economic cooperation which I discuss with Ministers Kudrin and Klebanov, i.e., political and strategic. This is the agenda of my visit as far as my interaction with the Russian interlocutors is concerned.

Now, about the meeting with the Secretary Powell. Couple of weeks
ago, when I was talking to Colin Powell on phone, we talked about our travel plans and it turned out that he and I will be in Moscow about the same time. Therefore, we decided that we take the opportunity to meet with each other and exchange notes. We met today. We spent an hour together. We discussed many areas of our bilateral relations. As you are aware, there are five or six areas where we are focussing. Defence cooperation is one, we are pretty much satisfied the progress that has been made; the economic and trade cooperation again is on track - Indian exports to US have grown by 20 per cent despite the slowdown in the US economy. The IT sector is doing well. There is a great deal of interaction between the two countries through institutional, private and governmental sectors.

Then we have, what we describe as trinity issues i.e. cooperation in space, civilian nuclear and high-technology. These three again are areas where there is an intense engagement, and a number of US officials have visited India in the last few months. Our people have gone to US. But we feel that there are certain procedures which are coming in the way of our trinity interaction. This is an issue which we have been raising with US. It was raised recently when Mr. Armitage was in India, it was raised by our National Security Adviser Shri Brajesh Mishra, I too took this opportunity to raise this issue with Secretary Powell. We had a good exchange. We felt that there was a greater progress. It was decided that Foreign Secretary of India will be visiting Washington. Colin Powell said that they take 5-6 weeks to prepare the meeting at their end and there will be in-depth review again, when Foreign Secretary is in Washington. The other thing that we have agreed upon, is after the in-depth review there will be a regular interaction between Secretary Powell and me, even on phones. Then we will review the progress made. This was a very welcome outcome of the meeting that I have had today.

The issue of India-Pakistan also came up in the discussion. I explained the Indian approach and how we are interested in proceeding step-by-step, making sure that the every step that was taken resulted in success, without a stalemate or a failure. I emphasize that the need of Pakistan putting an end to cross border terrorism and dismantling infrastructure of terrorism. Then I have mentioned that we will take steps which will build confidence, create confidence, and revert the situation on the ground and there will come a time, when between the two foreign offices, at some level talks about talks will begin. Clearly that is really the beginning of the process, which will be carried forward. Secretary Powell told that he has been personally in touch with President Musharraf and
others and they have been relentlessly emphasizing that there should be an end to cross border terrorism.

The fact that there has been a terrorist attack in Rhiad and a terrorist attack in Chechnya day before yesterday. In two days two major incidents of international terrorism took place. As far as international terrorism is concerned the mood is somber. Every one realises its impact.

We also spent a little time in discussing draft of the UNSC Resolution on Iraq that Americans have presented to the UNSC.

What I like to tell you is that the conversation took place in a very cordial atmosphere. There is an understanding about our approach both to the bilateral issues as well as India Pakistan issues.

There is often a talk about the American role in India - Pakistan issues. In this meeting there were no suggestions from the US side far less than any kind of pressure. India-Pakistan issues came up by the way of information.

**Question – answer session**

**PTI –** There have been reports in the Indian media and quoted in the foreign media that Mr. Armitage has sought presence of Indian military contingent in Iraq.

This issue did not come up. I think Mr. Armitage has clarified that he has not raised this issue with us. I have also seen such reports. But you are aware of Indian position as far as this issue is concerned. We contribute our forces for peace keeping under the aegis of the United Nations.

**Indian Express - Sir, is there any time frame for this step-by-step approach?**

There cannot be a time frame, because there are two parties. Therefore the time frame will depend on the response that one gives to the other. We fix a time frame when you have complete understanding or it is unilateral. In this case it is neither. There is no understanding at this point of time. There is no point in fixing the time frame unilaterally.

**IANS - Did you discuss the Indian participation in Iraq the post-war reconstruction?**

This has been discussed off and on. There again our point is that both the humanitarian assistance and reconstruction has to be under the aegis of
UN, therefore we are waiting for the UN Security Council to take a view on the Iraq resolution. Let us see what comes out.

_The Hindu_ - Did Secretary Powell share with you the chances of resolution coming through, today morning he met with the Russian Foreign Minister...

He told me about this meeting. He said that they are in touch with other members of Security Council. Let us see that in what shape this resolution ultimately comes up.

_PTI_ - Sir, did you get an impression from the Secretary Powell that the US was putting some sort of pressure on Pakistan.(not clear)

The only thing that is generally discussed with any interlocutor - US, UK, Russia - is the issue of cross-border terrorism. That is where we need to put pressure on Pakistan and we expect them to put pressure on Pakistan. But the road-map, the details of the road map that is not discussed or shared. We make a general statement that there will be a step-by-step approach, but what the steps would be and what the road map is, is not something that we discuss with the third party. This is something that one has to be clear, that this is our case that there is no third party role and I think third party also relaizes that there is no role for them as far as dialogue itself per say is concerned. Yes. because there is an international coalition against terrorism, where everyone is involved, one is free to discuss cross border terrorism.

_PTI_ - Are you satisfied with the assurances (inaudible) cross border terrorism (inaudible)

I think there is no difference as far as that point of view is considered. There could be a difference with regard to the degree of pressure or the means of that pressure. As far as the need for it is considered I thought that nobody had denied the need for that.

_IANS_ - Previous two summits have failed because of Pakistan’s role - Lahore was sabotaged by Kargil and during Agra summit Pakistan tried to make media issue out of the summit. What makes you think that the possible summit could be successful?

Summit is still far away. We are not talking of summit at all. Summit, if at all, will come right at the end, when everything has been successfully worked out. And the issues between Pakistan India under the new step-by-step approach that we are planning to talk, will have to be sorted at other levels by both the sides. Let us also clearly understand that Lahore
was a success, Agra might not have been. As you said that a successful summit was sabotaged by Kargil and unsuccessful summit in Agra was further complicated by the cross border terrorism, high profile terrorist attacks. In both the situation, an impression one gets, that there are elements in Pakistan which are neither happy with success or with the failure. Therefore this is something which will have to be sustained over a period of time. (Foreign Secretary - Pakistan calls it a tiered approach).

*Indian Express* - Is there any difference between the step-by-step approach and the tiered approach?

Tiered approach means that you have it at various tiers, which means step-by-step. There are number of things which you can probably sort out at some level. Most of the things will have to be sorted out at the level of Foreign Secretaries. If there are a few outstanding issues, then may be we will have to think of some other devices, but clearly before the summit, there must be an overwhelming improvement.

*The Hindu* - You discussed the issue of Pakistan with Secretary Powell and possibly you will discuss with Foreign Minister Ivanov. Do you think that Russia and America at the foreign minister and summit level in St. Petersburg may discuss ways of bringing pressure on Pakistan?

It will not be fare for me to make that judgement.

**Do you think it will help?**

As far as international community itself is concerned, we certainly expect them to use whatever influence they have in Pakistan and ask Pakistan to stop cross border terrorism. As far as Russia is concerned there is unstinted support to India on cross border terrorism against India.

*Indian Express* - Sir, we are getting ready step-by-step for the summit, the onus of summit will be on Pakistan, to match the steps.

It is not a question of matching of steps. There have been some suggestions made by both. There have been some suggestions made by us. Five-six steps are already there. The Indian Prime Minister mentioned four steps, Pakistani Prime Minister added one more step of sports contacts. The Indian Prime Minister talked about two specific steps, out of which one has already been taken by us - the appointment of the high commissioner. Pakistan has to play its part. Civil aviation they are expecting some clarification from Pakistan. Perhaps, the technical level talks will begin.
Similarly they have offered opening of rail-road links between two countries. At some point of time this will be discussed. Easing of the visa regime will be discussed - sports again will be discussed.

*The Hindu* - Sir, have you discussed with Secretary Powell Afghanistan? Are Americans concerned about the rising threat of destabilisation in Afghanistan after the Iraq war?

Afghanistan did not come up during discussions with Secretary Powell. But this was discussed in detail with Mr. Armitage and also was discussed by the National Security Adviser. The situation in Afghanistan has been a cause of a concern for a while, because we see evidence of Taleban activated. Americans are present in Afghanistan and they are fully aware.

*IANS* - If Americans put sincere pressure on Pakistan, then perhaps it might produce better results. Are you convinced that Americans are going to put more pressure and sincerely?

In all conversations they tell us this. We do not have a barometer to judge the pressure, but they tell us. (Foreign Secretary adds - Today Secretary Powell told us the same).

*PTI* - Sir, does this mean that though Secretary Powell acknowledges the need to end cross border terrorism against India to harmonise the relations with Pakistan, there is no complete coincidence of view of on the assessment of situation related to cross border of terrorism, its level.

There is no difference of opinion with regard to this. When innocent people are killed in Nadimarg the gravity is realised, when Kasinagar happens the gravity is realised. I do not see any scope for underestimation. Only thing I see is that for some reason or the other, the words which are conveyed to us are very reassuring, but on the ground their impact is not reassuring.

*PTI* - Sir, are there any concrete projects going to be discussed during the forthcoming IRIGC?

Things are being discussed in the Working groups. And the approach is to concretise.

Thank you.
Press release of the Embassy of India on the visit of Minister of Commerce and Industry Arun Jaitley to Washington, D.C.


Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Commerce & Industry, Government of India met his American counterpart Mr. Donald Evans, Secretary, US Department of Commerce on June 11, 2003. Both sides held a frank and candid exchange of views on a range if bilateral issues. Both observed that there was significant potential for enhancing and deepening bilateral trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

Earlier in the day Shri Jaitley, delivered the keynote address on the occasion of the re-launch of the India-US Commercial Dialogue in Washington DC. The US-India Commercial Dialogue was organized by the US India Business Council in collaboration with the FICCI and CII. In his address, Shri Jaitley noted that many areas of convergence underline relations between the USA and India, the world’s two largest democracies, which are committed to the rule of law, to upholding universal peace and security of open democratic and free societies.

While India is fully committed to free trade, Shri Jaitley mentioned that in a globalized world no country is immune from developments in another part of the world. India as the voice of the developing countries and the US as the largest economy should maintain the process of dialogue and engagement and arrive at constructive options on multilateral issues. Both countries can play a significant role in enhancing global trade.

In his address, Shri Jaitley reiterated the Government’s commitment to the economic reform process and said that the reform process initiated in 1991 had transformed the Indian economy. The economic reforms had contributed to the present strong fundamentals of the Indian economy – a rate of growth of 6% registered over the last decade, low levels of inflation, and comfortable foreign exchange reserves. In 2002, the Indian economy grew at more than 5% despite a poor monsoon and a sluggish global economy. Shri Jaitley also noted that India’s exports grew by 18% during 2002. He attributed this robust growth in the face of various internal and external adversities to the competitiveness of the Indian economy. The reform process had also contributed to significant reductions in the poverty levels in the country, Mr. Jaitley said. He further emphasized the present Government’s commitment to the reforms process with special
focus on the infrastructure such as roads, power, telecom as also the ports including connectivity in terms of roads and telecom in rural areas.

Coming to the present strengths of the Indian economy, Shri Jaitley recounted how India has carved for itself a niche position in the knowledge trade sector and noted with satisfaction that India had considerable manpower resource of skilled and unskilled labour which can meet the needs of all the developed economies of all their manpower requirements.

Shri Jaitley particularly praised the efforts made by the USIBC in promoting interaction between the business, trade and industry of the two countries and exhorted US businessmen to focus their attention on India as it had an attractive FDI regime. He stated that most of the US business interests in India are profit making ventures and some of them have attained household names. He urged the US investors to take advantage of the Special Economic Zones as also the Agri-Export Zones which have great potential for exports. The SEZ, he emphasized, with total or near total exemption from all duties, presented a great opportunity for investment which US business should exploit not only for the manufacturing of merchandise but also for services.

Under the aegis of the Global Issues Forum, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, International Environmental and Scientific Affairs John Turner led a U.S. delegation to Delhi from 7-11 July 2003. He held discussions with an inter-ministerial Indian delegation led by Deepa Wadhwa, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs on one cluster of Forum issues- energy, environment, health and science and technology. He also had separate meetings at Government of India Ministries and agencies responsible for these issues.

The two sides agreed that the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) presents an important opportunity to advance implementation-focused agenda for sustainable development. The two sides reaffirmed their common belief in the role of the CSD as a forum that can enhance information exchange on best practices and opportunities for capacity building for sustainable development. They agreed to share their successful examples of public-private partnerships at multilateral forums, including at the next session of CSD, where access to safe water, sanitation and human settlements will be highlighted.

The two governments decided to support efforts to enhance science and technology cooperation. To this end, they agreed to discuss a new umbrella India-U.S. Science and Technology Agreement. They felt that the India-U.S. Science and Technology Forum, established in 2000, should be an important instrument for catalysing scientific collaboration between the two countries.

The two sides decided to continue long-term cooperation in the conservation and restoration of critical wildlife resources, as mutually agreed.

They agreed to further intensify their cooperation in prevention, control and elimination of infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria, polio and water borne diseases, through appropriate intervention
strategies; strengthening the ongoing India-U.S. biomedical research collaboration; and, supporting capacity building and infrastructure development for laboratory research and epidemiology.

The two governments agreed to expand cooperation in developing and commercialising cleaner and more efficient energy technologies. The two sides pursue cooperative efforts in these areas through their bilateral economic dialogue, Bilateral Energy Consultation, MOU on Cooperation in Environment and the ongoing dialogue on Climate Change. The two sides recognised the importance of developing transformational technologies for clean energy. The United States expressed gratitude for India’s participation in the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum in the United States in June 2003, which aims to foster international cooperation in research and development of technologies to capture, separate and store carbon from energy systems. India will consider participation in the International Partnership for a Hydrogen Economy, a multilateral initiative for the development of zero-emission hydrogen and fuel cells.

The two sides agreed to continue dialogue and cooperation through the Global Issues Forum.

The India-US Defense Policy Group (DPG) met in Washington on August 6-7, 2003. This was the 5th meeting of the DPG and the 3rd meeting since December 2001. The DPG was headed on the Indian side by Defense Secretary, Shri Ajay Prasad, and from the US side by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Mr. Douglas Feith. In addition to the meeting of the DPG, Mr. Ajay Prasad also called on the US Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Richard Lee Armitage and General Richard Myers, Chairman, Joint Chief of Staff of the US. Secretary of Defense, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld also dropped in at the meeting of the DPG where he spoke of the strategic significance of India and the value of closer India-US defense relations.

The DPG is the apex body for a structured dialogue with the United States for cooperation in the field of defense and security issues. It reviews, provides policy guidance and approves activities of the various bilateral groups under the DPG dealing with military to military cooperation, defense acquisitions, production etc. and cooperation in the sphere of research and development. The DPG also provides a forum for high-level policy dialogue on security perspectives. It brings to the table a large number of components of defense establishments of both countries.

It is a matter of satisfaction, and an indication of the rapid growth and promise of India-US defense relations, that this was the third meeting of the DPG in less than two years. It reflects the convergence of security perceptions in many areas and a commitment of both sides to enhancing cooperation in the area of defense.

The 5th meeting of the DPG took place in a very cordial and cooperative atmosphere. The progress of military to military cooperation since the last DPG was reviewed. Satisfaction was expressed on the various bilateral exercises involving US and Indian forces in 2002 and 2003 such as the airborne joint exercises in Agra in May 2002 and in Alaska in September-October 2002, the joint air transport exercise in Agra in October, 2002, naval exercises in September/October, 2002, peace keeping command post exercise in Delhi in April, 2003 and special forces joint counter insurgency exercises in April, 2003. Similar combined exercises of greater complexity and sophistication were agreed on for the next 2-3 years. These exercises have been providing experience and
insights into concepts, doctrines, technologies and operating procedures that have been valuable for the Indian armed forces.

There is also a growing defense supplies and research and development relationship. The first batch of Weapons Locating Radars have already arrived and there is progress on India’s request for Special Forces equipment as well as a Deep Submersible Rescue Vehicle, as indeed in many other areas. The backlog on the issue of export licenses for defense equipment is now largely overcome and the nascent procurement relationship has begun to progress smoothly. New proposals were exchanged to develop a defense technology relationship to include production, research and development and if possible in due course, joint development. A Master Information Exchange Agreement to facilitate information exchange on research and development was initialed by the two principals, Mr. Prasad and Mr. Feith.

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The U.S.-India Defense Policy Group (DPG) met 6-7 August 2003 in Washington, DC. U.S. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith hosted the meeting and Defence Secretary Ajay Prasad led the Indian delegation.

The strategic situation in the world has changed dramatically in recent years. Global terrorism, state sponsors of terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are the key threats to international peace and security. The United States and India are drawn together in an effort to deal with these new circumstances. As a result, President Bush and Prime Minister Vajpayee have re-defined the U.S.-India relationship. Democracy, common principles, and shared interests are the foundation of our new strategic partnership.

Since the last meeting of the DPG in May 2002, the U.S. and Indian defense establishments have continued to expand cooperation. The past year’s accomplishments include:
• combined special forces counterinsurgency exercise in Northeast India;
• combined Air Force exercise in Alaska;
• complex Naval exercises on the East Coast of India;
• delivery of “Firefinder” radars to India;
• senior-level missile defense talks; and
• conclusion of a Master Information Exchange Agreement to facilitate cooperation in research and development of defense technologies.

During this year’s DPG, the delegations emphasized the long-range strategic concepts that guide the new approach to the U.S.-India relationship. They agreed that the work of the two countries together during the past year and planned activities for the next year are translating that strategic vision into action.

The delegations discussed the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons and technologies of mass destruction, including the risk that terrorists will acquire such weapons. They also discussed measures to combat proliferation.

The two sides agreed to establish a high-level dialogue on defense technology security issues.

The two sides reaffirmed the shared view that missile defense enhances cooperative security and stability. They decided to hold a missile defense workshop in India in the next six months as a follow-on to an international workshop attended by U.S. and Indian delegations at the June 2003 Multinational Ballistic Missile Defense Conference held in Kyoto, Japan. The Indian delegation also accepted invitations to the July 2004 Multinational Ballistic Missile Defense Conference in Berlin and the 2005 Roving Sands missile defense exercise.

The two sides welcomed the improved prospects for freedom and security in the Middle East. They underlined their commitment to furthering stability and security for the people of Iraq and the contribution that international cooperation could make to that process. They agreed to continue to seek ways for the United States and India to work together to support the people of Iraq. They also welcomed the establishment of
Iraq's Governing Council and noted the important role of the UN Special Representative in addressing the needs of the Iraqi people.

They discussed the success of Operation Enduring Freedom and reaffirmed the ongoing commitment of both countries to the future of Afghanistan. They agreed that a permanent end to terrorism is critical to ensuring a future of peace and stability in South Asia.

The United States and India have continued to work together to enhance their capabilities to combat terrorism and increase interoperability. The two delegations highlighted the importance of the ongoing series of Joint and Combined exercises in building interoperability between U.S. and Indian armed forces and agreed to continue this interaction. They also agreed to continue to review counterterrorism equipment requirements for India's special operations forces.

The two delegations welcomed the reports on the recent meetings of the Military Cooperation Group (coordinating military exercises and exchanges), Security Cooperation Group (coordinating sales and licensing), and Joint Technical Group (coordinating research and development). These groups will meet again in the coming months.

In addition to the above-areas, the two delegations approved a range of activities for the coming year, including:

- Specialized training programs and joint exercises to be carried out by the armed services of the two countries, including an air combat training exercise.

- India will host in coordination with the United States a multinational planning exercise to develop standard operating procedures.

- Continued development of a defense supply relationship, including through the Government-to-Government Foreign Military Sales program. A U.S. team will travel to India in September to discuss the details of a possible sale of P-3 maritime patrol aircraft.

- U.S. sale to India of training materials and specialized equipment to support India's peacekeeping training capabilities.

- A Defense Planning Exchange to permit U.S. and Indian defense experts to conduct discussions on defense strategy and planning.
Secretary Prasad also met with U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard Myers. These meetings emphasized the importance both sides place on the growing bilateral relationship.

Next year, the DPG will hold its meeting in New Delhi.

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347. Question in the Rajya Sabha: “Visit of U.S Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee to India”.

New Delhi, August 21, 2003.

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:-

(a) whether the Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Richard Meyers visited India in the last week of July, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the purpose of his visit;

(c) whether the General brought any special message from the U.S. President with regard to the stand taken by the Government of India about sending troops to Iraq; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government’s reaction thereto?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs: Shri Digvijay Singh:

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) Chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard B. Myers visited New Delhi on 28-29 July 2003 in the context of regular senior level defence engagement between India and the United States to strengthen mutually beneficial bilateral defence relations.

(c) No, Sir.
(d) Does not arise.

STATEMENT

During their meeting in New York on 12 September 2002, Prime Minister and U.S. President George W. Bush agreed to explore possibilities of expanding cooperation in space, diverse forms of energy, high-technology commerce and science.

India and the United States have initiated five safety related projects for safeguarded nuclear facilities. Exchange of visits by U.S. and Indian nuclear regulatory officials has also commenced. In the area of space, the two sides have renewed the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in earth and atmospheric sciences. The United States has offered to resume cooperation in space applications for sustainable development, weather research missions, tele-medicine, tele-education and disaster management. Joint workshops on civilian space applications and research have also started.

The two sides have established a bilateral High Technology Cooperation Group, which held its first meeting in Washington D.C. on 1-2 July 2003. This is the first such group that the United States has set up with any country. The Group discussed regulatory and promotional issues related to enhancing trade in ‘dual use’ goods and technologies, as well as facilitating cooperation in areas such as information technology, life sciences, nano-technology and defence technology.

The two sides are also pursuing collaborative science and technology projects in the areas of health and communicable diseases, environment and climate change, and renewable and clean energy. Under the aegis of the 1998 agreement between Department of Science and Technology and the U.S. National Science Foundation, there are currently about 65 scientific research projects supported by various labs, institutions and universities in India and U.S.A. The India-U.S. Science and Technology Forum was established in 2000 to catalyse India-U.S. scientific collaboration.
348. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of US Assistant Secretary of State Ms. Christiana Rocca.

New Delhi, September 11, 2003.

Mr. Navtej Sarna: Good evening ladies and gentlemen

The visit of the US Assistant secretary of state Christiana Rocca was in New Delhi on September 10 and 11th for a regional dialogue. She called on Foreign Secretary Shri Kanwal Sibbal, Secretary (ANA) Shri Abyankar, and also met Joint Secretaries of various divisions. Specifically, the Joint Secretary dealing with US and Canada, Shri Jayant Prasad, Joint Secretary dealing with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives, Shrimati Neelam Dev, Joint Secretary (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran) Shri Arun Singh, and Joint Secretary (Nepal, Bhutan) Shri Ranjit Rai.

India- US regional dialogue is one of the elements of the institutionalised, political and strategic dialogue between the two countries to share perspectives and harmonise the approaches on the issues of the mutual concern in India’s extended neighbourhood. The dialogue symptomises the continuing transformation in India- US bilateral relations.

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349. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Asia Society on “India – US Relations in the Emerging Global Environment”.


Ambassador Holbrooke,
Mr Menezes,
Distinguished Guests,

It is a pleasure to be here with Asia Society again. Five years ago, I addressed you on India-US relations. India was then facing a difficult international environment; and that included our relations with USA. Even then, I described India and USA as natural allies. I would like to return to that theme today, to reflect on the transformation in India-US relations,
and on the global environment in which this transformation has taken place.

The end of the Cold War encouraged hopes of a rare era in history, when international relations would no longer be defined by great power rivalries. There may be differences on issues and disagreements on approaches, but conflict and confrontation do not overshadow the relations among great and emerging powers. There are debates on whether the international order will be unipolar or multipolar. There are questions about the balance between national interest and international responsibility; about national sovereignty and international obligations. These debates are inevitable, since we are still in the process of shaping the contours of the post-Cold War era.

Another dominant theme of our times is the interdependence of nations, accentuated by technological changes and economic interlinkages. Globalization has touched every sphere of our activity.

The end of the Cold War had kindled hopes of an enduring era of security and stability. This has not happened. Instead, new political problems and security challenges have been thrust upon us.

Many newly independent countries still suffer from weak political institutions, economic stagnation and a deficit of democracy and modernity. This threatens the security of their people and that of their neighbours.

Globalization has promoted development and prosperity in some countries, but the uneven spread of its benefits has also created new disparities. The communications revolution has also resulted in the globalization of crime and terror, and even of epidemics and diseases.

Through all these uncertainties, we still have a unique opportunity today to shape global politics and international relations within a framework of plurality and equality, based on consensus, compassion, coexistence and cooperation. This cooperative world has to be development-oriented, to accommodate the interests of all.

To achieve this goal requires cooperation among democracies of the world to tackle the challenges, which have survived the Cold War, and those which have arisen more recently.

Continued terrorist attacks around the world remind us that the global war against terrorism, which commenced after the tragedy of 9/11, is far
from over. Our long-term strategy to combat it should have four broad elements:

One, a concert of democracies acting in cohesion. A threat against one should be seen as a threat against all.

Two, Consistency of approach in demanding from all countries, the same high standards in combating terrorism.

Three, continuity of resolve, and clarity of purpose. We should not be drawn into the grey zone of conflicting policy objectives, which condone ambiguous positions on terrorism.

Four, to win the war against terror, we have to win the war of ideas. We have to expand the constituency of democracy by promoting the ideals of freedom, democracy, rule of law and tolerance, which are our defining strengths.

The post cold war age has also seen a significant proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. Today, the threat of their falling into terrorists’ hands looms large. The existing regimes for non-proliferation rigorously audit the performance of responsible states, but do not touch the proliferators. An honest reappraisal is required.

The structure of international political, security and economic institutions, established nearly sixty years ago, needs to be reviewed from the perspective of today’s realities and future needs. Our international trade negotiations should place the development agenda at the centre of attention. We should not let status quo tendencies sabotage the long-term gains of genuine change.

Iraq and Afghanistan are two immediate test cases of our efforts to build a world order based on cooperation and partnership. In both cases, the way we address these challenges will have far-reaching implications for our common future.

In Iraq, we have to develop an international consensus, which accelerates the political, economic and security transformation in that country. In Afghanistan, we need to complete the work commenced by the Bonn process, and help its government to completely wipe out the remnants of Taliban, to establish full control over the entire country and to progress as scheduled towards national elections.

The future of Iraq and Afghanistan is vital for their citizens, but will equally have far-reaching implications for the region and for the world.
Distinguished Guests,

On many of these global challenges, India and USA share similar perspectives. We see our growing partnership with the United States of America as an important element in our efforts for a dynamic and cooperative multipolar world order. India-USA relations have undergone a major transformation in recent years. The strength of this relationship derives from a greater understanding of our basic commonalities. The end of the Cold War has enabled us to enhance our engagement, based also on a convergence of many geopolitical perspectives.

In March 2000, President Clinton and I agreed that India and USA would be partners in peace in the new century, and share a common responsibility for ensuring regional and international security.

In November 2001, President Bush and I affirmed our commitment to transforming our bilateral relationship. We agreed that we should try to give this partnership the inherent strength to survive all future political changes in our democracies.

In India, my government’s commitment to building this relationship enjoys support across the political spectrum. In fact, people often remark that progress is not fast enough! They seek immediate, dramatic results and media-friendly symbols of friendship. I tell them that one lesson I have learnt from four decades on the Opposition benches in Parliament is the virtue of patience! The transformation of our ties takes place after years of doubt and indifference. We have to guide it carefully, with a vision which extends beyond our immediate horizon.

The range and frequency of the India-US dialogue has increased considerably in recent times. It covers global and regional matters, as well as long term and near-term issues. But most significantly, it is the atmosphere of our dialogue that has changed. We now address each other with the confidence and candour of friends. This dialogue, based on respect and equality, is successful precisely because we have recognized that there is no fundamental conflict of interest between us. We work together on areas of agreement, and frankly discuss our differing perceptions, without this affecting our relationship. This reflects the growing maturity of our friendship.

We have, for the first time, entered into substantive defence cooperation. Our Armed Forces have established contact, and there are regular exercises and exchanges of growing complexity. Our common
concerns on terrorism, transnational crime and cyber crime have led us to establish ties in these areas as well.

India and USA are jointly exploring frontier areas of science and technology, including medicine, environment-friendly energy and advanced materials. We are working to re-establish ties in civilian space applications and in civilian nuclear safety. Information technology and the new knowledge economy are increasingly defining the story of our bilateral relationship. Our growing partnership in developing technologies of the future should take our bilateral relations to a qualitatively new level.

It is not only at government and official levels that our two countries are deepening and widening linkages. In educational institutions, scientific laboratories, offices and homes, and even in cyber space, Indians and Americans are discovering new identities of interest.

The Indian American community has played – and will continue to play – an important role in bringing us together. Through talent, hard work and enterprise, Indian Americans have risen to become one of the wealthiest minorities in this country. Their achievements – especially in IT, financial services, management and medicine – have contributed to America’s progress. They have also created greater awareness in this country of the opportunities in the India-US partnership.

Distinguished Guests,

The Indian economy continues to grow. It has doubled in the last ten years, and we hope to redouble it in less than a decade. We are today the fourth largest economy in the world in terms of purchasing power parity. Our external reserves are about US $ 90 billion and are increasing by a billion dollars every two weeks. Our foreign trade is growing at double-digit rates. We are rapidly reducing our external debts. Our inflation rate is low and interest rates are on a declining curve. There is a strong increase in business confidence in recent months. Our reserves of food stock stands at over 30 million tonnes. Starting from scratch a few years ago, Indian software exports have reached US$ 10 billion per annum.

I have no doubt that the fundamentals of a rapidly developing India will strengthen our partnership with the world’s largest economy. Our economic links will strengthen rapidly as India’s economic growth creates new opportunities for investment and joint ventures. On both sides, there is recognition of the strong strategic value of the economic partnership.
Naturally, the vision of a new India-US relationship for the 21st century cannot be realised overnight. We still need to overcome internal resistance, old habits and traditional perspectives on both sides. Mindsets have to be changed in some quarters. We have to address vestiges of our past differences on security and proliferation issues. We must also ensure that the long term perspective of the India-US engagement is not diluted by short term exigencies.

In dealing with these hurdles, our two countries need the wisdom and foresight to recognize the irrefutable logic of the India-US partnership. We have laid the foundations of such a relationship. Our governments will sustain their commitment to it. Political, economic and strategic convergences will generate their own momentum to accelerate the pace of the transformation. An India-US relationship of maturity, substance and strength can have a major impact on the emerging world order in this century.

Thank you
350. Response of the Official Spokesperson to a question on American reaction to Pakistani missile test.

New Delhi, October 15, 2003.

We are surprised at the manner in which the US State Department Spokesman has chosen to respond to a question on the Pakistani missile test. He ought to have confined himself to reacting to the Pakistani missile test rather than clutter up what he had to say by thinly disguised unwarranted references to India¹.

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1. The Spokesman Navtej Sarna was referring to the State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher’s comments who, when asked to comment on the third test by Pakistan of a missile that can fly “if need be, into India” said: “As we’ve said before, we urge Pakistan and other countries in the region to take steps to restrain their nuclear weapons and missile programmes, including no operational deployment of nuclear armed ballistic missiles.” He went on to add: “We have also encouraged them to begin a dialogue on confidence-building measures that could reduce the likelihood that such weapons would ever be used. That kind of dialogue could be part of broader engagement to reduce tensions.” Though the question of missile test was Pakistan-specific, Mr. Boucher talked of “both sides” to include India. “...Each side has the same obligations. So we’ve said that specifically to Pakistan as well... in addition to saying that they ought to handle these matters through restraint and dialogue. We’ve also made clear that no operational deployment of nuclear armed ballistic missiles should be one of the tenets of how they proceed,” Mr. Boucher said.
(ii) CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA
Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh, chaired this morning’s meeting on the subject of India’s relations with Latin American countries.

India’s relations with Latin America are at an unprecedented high. We have been able to make many significant breakthroughs with regard to this part of the world.

The focus of our efforts has been to expand political contacts, build trade and economic linkages, improve connectivity and create institutional linkages with various regional groupings.

We have also focussed attention on harnessing significant achievements among countries of Latin America in the field of Science & Technology, Defence, Civil Aviation, etc. We are further paying special attention to countries where the Indian Diaspora is present in a significant manner.

The highlight of our interaction with Latin America has been relations with Brazil, the largest of Latin American countries. The IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa) initiative deserves special mention in this regard.

We have signed a framework agreement with the Market of Southern Cone Countries (MERCOSUR). We are also working on similar agreements with the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and the Rio Group Troika.

Trade with the region has increased from US$ 473.66 million in 1991-92 to US$ 2.4 billion in 2001-2002.

RITES has obtained a concession in the Colombian Railway System. We have conveyed our interest in railway projects in Brazil, Trinidad & Tobago, Jamaica, etc.

ITEC (Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation) is an important
instrument of our diplomacy in the region. A number of Central American and Caribbean countries have been asking for increase in their ITEC quotas.

• Culture is another important area. A major festival of India is being planned in Brazil in 2004.

• There is good cooperation at the multilateral level. Efforts of the Group of 20 under the leadership of India and Brazil at Cancun was an important symbol in this regard.

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ANDEAN Community

352. Agreement between the Republic of India and the Andean Community for the establishment of a Mechanism of Political Consultation and Cooperation.


The Republic of India, on the one hand, and the Republic of Bolivia, the Republic of Colombia, the Republic of Ecuador, the Republic of Peru, and the Republic of Venezuela, Andean Community member States, on the other hand, hereinafter called “the Parties”;

REAFFIRMING their respect for the provisions of international law and the adherence of the parties to the principles of the United Nations Charter,

CONSIDERING the importance of establishing bonds of friendship and cooperation;

RECOGNIZING the desirability of developing political consultation mid diversifying the relations of cooperation in the political, economic, social and cultural fields;

CONVINCED of the importance of giving a boost to bilateral cooperation in topics of mutual interest related to economic, trade, scientific, technological and cultural exchanges;
AGREED:

**ARTICLE I**

**Purpose**

The Republic of India and the Andean Community have decided to formally establish a Mechanism of Political Consultation and Cooperation in order to promote the strengthening and diversification of the bonds of friendship, understanding and cooperation, as well as further development of trade and investment, and cultural and scientific exchanges between them.

**ARTICLE II**

**Objectives**

The aims of the Mechanism of Political Consultation and Cooperation between the Parties shall be the following, among others:

1. Deepen their levels of mutual understanding;
2. Develop political consultation and cooperation on subjects of mutual interest;
3. Promote growth and diversification of trade and investment flows, as well as evaluate mechanisms to facilitate access to their markets;
4. Foster scientific, technical and technological cooperation; and,
5. Encourage cultural and tourism exchanges.

**ARTICLE III**

**Scope**

The Parties shall make an effort to promote the following activities, among others, in order to accomplish the afore mentioned aims:

1. Implementing periodic political consultation on matters of mutual interest related to the international, regional and sub-regional contexts;
2. Strengthening of reciprocal political support and cooperation in the international arena in areas of mutual interest
3. Exchanging trade, investment and market analysis information, as well as pertinent national and/or sub-regional laws and regulations;
4. Carrying out consultations on implementation of mechanisms to promote and facilitate trade flows, particularly in the field of reciprocal market access, through conferences, seminars, trade and industrial missions, general or sector specific fairs, and exploration missions, among others.

5. Intensifying scientific, technical and technological cooperation through exchanges of information, experiences, students, professors and experts in specialised fields, as well as the conduct of specific studies;

6. Fostering cooperation on agricultural policies and development;

7. Contributing to human resource capacity building and education processes, through the reciprocal granting of scholarships and internships, among others;

8. Carrying out cultural and art festivals and exhibitions, crafts shows, as well as student and expert exchanges, in order to promote cultural and artistic exchanges;

9. Giving a boost to tourism flows; and,

10. Setting up business and entrepreneurial consultation instruments which could advance proposals to the Consultation Mechanism established in Article IV.

**ARTICLE IV**

**Consultation mechanism**

The Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Andean Council of Foreign Ministers make up the Political Consultation and Cooperation Mechanism. It shall meet at least once every two years. The meeting shall be held in India and an Andean Community Member Country alternately, on the dates and with the agendas decided upon by diplomatic agreement, through the “pro tempore” Secretariat of the Andean Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

The Parties shall also consider holding meetings at the Vice-Foreign Minister or governmental expert levels.
ARTICLE V

Cooperation mechanism

Cooperation activities between the Parties shall be carried out by the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Andean International Cooperation Committee. Notwithstanding, the General Secretariat of the Andean Community shall be responsible for promoting and developing cooperation in the Andean region until such Committee is officially constituted. The meetings between said institutions shall be held in alternate venues agreed upon by the Parties.

ARTICLE VI

Costs

The cost on international travel, transportation, and living expenses in the host country for an exchange under this Agreement, will be borne by the sending Party.

ARTICLE VII

Validity and Termination

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature and shall be valid for an indefinite period of time. Notwithstanding, the Parties may widen the scope of this Agreement through the exchange of diplomatic notes.

Either of the Parties may terminate this Agreement by sending the other Party a written notification of its intention six months in advance. That termination shall become effective six months after the date of notification.

Done in Lima on the third day of June 2003 in two originals and equally authentic copies, in English and Spanish.

For the Government of the Republic of India

Yashwant Sinha
External Affairs Minister
of the Republic of India

Allan Wagner Tizon
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Peru
On behalf of the Andean Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers

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MERCOSUR

353. Framework Agreement between the MERCOSUR and the Republic of India for Cooperation in the Field of Trade and Investments.

Asuncion (Paraguay), June 17, 2003.

The Argentine Republic, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Republic of Paraguay, and the Republica Oriental del Uruguay, Parties to the Mercosur and the Republic of India;

Desiring to establish clear, predictable and lasting rules to promote the development of reciprocal trade and investment;

Reaffirming their commitment to further strengthen the rules of international trade in accordance with the rules of the World Trade Organisation;

Recognising that the free trade agreements contribute to the expansion of world trade, to greater international stability and, in particular, to the development of closer relations among their peoples;

Considering that the process of economic integration includes not only gradual and reciprocal trade liberalisation but also the establishment of greater economic co-operation.

Agree:

ARTICLE 1

For the purposes of this Agreement, the Contracting Parties are Mercosur and the Republic of India. The Signatory Parties are the Governments of the Argentine Republic, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Republic of Paraguay, the Republica Oriental del Uruguay and the Republic of India,

ARTICLE 2

The aim of this Framework Agreement is to strengthen relations between the Contracting Parties, to promote the expansion of trade and to provide the conditions and mechanisms to negotiate a Free Trade Area in conformity with the rules and disciplines of the World Trade Organisation.
ARTICLE 3

As a first step toward the objective referred to in Article 2, the Contracting Parties agree to conclude by August 31st 2003, a limited scope Fixed Preference Agreement, aimed at increasing bilateral trade flows through the granting of effective access to their respective markets by means of mutual concessions.

The Contracting Parties further agree to undertake periodic negotiations with a view to expanding the scope of the Fixed Preference Agreement.

ARTICLE 4

The Contracting Parties agree to create a Negotiating Committee. Its members shall be for the Mercosur: the Common Market Group, or its representatives for India: the Secretary of Commerce, or its representatives. In order to achieve the aim set out in Article 2, the Negotiating Committee shall establish a schedule of work for the negotiations.

The Negotiating Committee shall meet as often as the Contracting Parties agree.

ARTICLE 5

The Negotiating Committee shall serve as the forum to:

a) Exchange information on tariff applied by each Party; on bilateral trade and trade with third parties as well as on their respective trade policies;

b) Exchange information on market access; tariff and non-tariff measures; sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical standards, rules of origin, safeguard, anti-dumping and countervailing measures; special customs regimes and dispute settlement, among others matters;

c) Identify and propose measures to achieve the objectives set out in Article 3, including those related to trade facilitation;

d) Establish criteria for the negotiation of a Free Trade Area between Mercosur and India;

e) Negotiate an Agreement for the establishment of a Free Trade Area between Mercosur and India, on the basis of the agreed
criteria;

f) Carry out other tasks as determined by the Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE 6

In order to broaden reciprocal knowledge about trade and investment opportunities on both Parties, the Contracting Parties shall stimulate trade promotion activities such as seminars, trade missions, fairs, symposia and exhibitions.

ARTICLE 7

The Contracting Parties shall promote the development of joint activities aimed at the implementation of co-operation projects in the agricultural and industrial areas among others, by means of information exchange, training programmes and technical missions.

ARTICLE 8

The Contracting Parties shall promote the expansion and diversification of trade in services between them, in a manner to be determined by the Negotiating Committee and in accordance with the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

ARTICLE 9

The Contracting Parties agree to co-operate in promoting closer relationships among their relevant organisations in the areas of plant and animal health, standardisation, food safety, mutual recognition of sanitary and phytosanitary measures, including through equivalence agreements in accordance with relevant international criteria.

ARTICLE 10

1. This Agreement shall enter into force thirty days after the Contracting Parties have notified formally, in writing and through diplomatic channels, the completion of the internal procedures necessary to that effect.

2. This agreement shall remain in force for a period of 3 years and thereafter shall be deemed to have been automatically extended, unless one of the Contracting Parties decides by written notification and through diplomatic channels not to renew it. This decision has to be taken thirty days before the expiration of the three-year period.
The denunciation will enter into force six months after its notification date.

3. For the purposes of Article 10.1, the Government of the Republic of Paraguay shall be the Depositary of this Agreement for the Mercosur.

4. In fulfilment of the Depositary functions assigned in the Article 10.3, the Government of the Republic of Paraguay shall notify the other Members States of Mercosur the date on which this Agreement shall enter into force.

**ARTICLE 11**

This Agreement may be amended by mutual consent between the Contracting Parties by an exchange of notes through diplomatic channels.

**Done** in the city of Asunción, Republic of Paraguay, on the seventeen day of June two thousand and three, in two copies in the Spanish, Portuguese, English and Hindi languages, all texts being equally authentic.

Shri S. B. Mookherjee  
For the Republic of India

Rafael Bielsa  
For the Argentine Republic

Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim  
For the Federative Republic of Brazil

Jose Antonio Moreno Ruffinelli  
For the Republic of Paraguay

Didier Opertti  
For the Republic of Oriental del Uruguay
Caribbean Community

354. Agreement between the Government of India and the Caribbean Community to Establish a Standing Joint Commission on Consultations, Cooperation and Coordination.

New Delhi, November 25, 2003.

ARTICLE I

Establishment of a Government of India-Caribbean Community standing joint commission on consultation, Cooperation and Coordination.

The Government of India and the Caribbean Community (hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”), hereby agree to establish the “Standing Joint Commission on Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination”, (hereinafter referred to as the ‘Joint Commission’).

ARTICLE II

COMPOSITION OF JOINT COMMISSION

The Joint Commission shall consist of the Representatives of both Parties.

1. In connection with the work of the Joint Commission, the Caribbean Community Secretariat and the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India shall perform administrative, technical and coordination functions on behalf of the respective Parties.

2. The Joint Commission may establish subsidiary bodies with such functions as may be entrusted to them by the Commission.

ARTICLE III

OBJECTIVES

1. The objectives of the Joint Commission shall be to promote and develop closer relations between the Parties in political, economic, environmental health, scientific and technical fields.

2. The Parties will seek greater mutual understanding of each other’s
views as well as coordination of their positions in international fora.

3. The Joint Commission shall have particular responsibility for the analysis and follow-up of specific cooperation agreements concluded between the Parties. Meetings of the Joint Commission shall be held biennially on dates to be agreed through diplomatic channels alternately at the Headquarters of the Caribbean Community and in India or in such other place as may be agreed to between the Parties. The decisions of the Joint Commission shall have the status of recommendations to the Parties to this Agreement.

**ARTICLE IV**

**ENTRY INTO FORCE**

Each contracting party will notify the other in writing through diplomatic channels when it has completed the formalities required for the entry into force of this Agreement. This Agreement will enter into force on the later of the two dates of receipt of such notification.

**ARTICLE V**

**DENUNCIATION AND TERMINATION**

Either Party may denounce the Agreement upon written notice of its decision addressed to the other Party. The termination of the Agreement shall become effective on the expiry of six months after the date on which the Notification of denunciation is received by the other Party. In the event of denunciation of the present Agreement, the programmes and projects in progress shall not be affected thereby and shall continue until their completion.

**ARTICLE VI**

**INAUGURAL MEETING**

The Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, shall as soon as practicable after this Agreement enters into force make the necessary arrangements for convening the Inaugural Meeting of the Joint Commission.

In Witness Whereof, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries being duly
authorised thereunto, have signed the present Agreement.

**Done** at New Delhi on the 25th day of November Two Thousand Three in two originals each in the English and Hindi languages both texts being equally authentic. In case of any doubt, the English text shall prevail.

On behalf of  
The Government of India  

On behalf of  
The Caribbean Community

Brazil

355. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with Brazilian paper *Economico-International*.

**Brasilia, June 5, 2003.**

**Question:** What is the purpose of your visit to Brazil? Which subjects will you discuss with the Brazilian authorities and what message do you bring from the Indian Government?

**Reply:** Bilateral relations between India and Brazil have made remarkable progress in the last five years. We have been cooperating extensively in multilateral forums, including the UN and the WTO. On the bilateral front, our trade has crossed US$ 1.2 billion mark last year and our areas of technological cooperation range from pharmaceuticals to informatics, to space and energy. Although we have had many high level visits between Brazil and India during this period, including that of H.E. President Cardoso to India in January 1996 and H.E. President K.R. Narayanan to Brazil in May 1998, mine is the first ever visit by an External Affairs Minister of India to Brazil. I intend to take advantage of my stay here to have extensive discussions with H.E. Mr. Celso Amorim, the Minister of External Relations of the Government of Brazil, on the entire gamut of our bilateral relations. Also along with the South African Foreign Minister, H.E. Mrs. Nkosazana Zuma, we shall be engaging in the first ever trilateral discussions for promoting South-South cooperation. I am bringing a strong message of friendship and goodwill from my Government. Your President and my Prime Minister have already had good discussions on the margins of the Evian Summit on June 2. I am also bringing a letter of invitation from our President for your President to visit India early next year.
Question: Trade between Brazil and India has been growing quickly but is still small compared to the potential of the two countries. What are the obstacles to accelerate trade?

Reply: It is a matter of great satisfaction that trade in the calendar year 2002, as per the Brazilian statistics, has reached the unprecedented level of US$ 1.22 billion. I understand that the pace is being maintained and from January to April 2003 bilateral trade is of the order of US$ 410 million, almost evenly balanced on both sides. It is correct to say that there is much more potential to enhance trade and both India and Brazil are working actively to finalize a Preferential Trade Accord between India and Mercosur which has been under discussion for some months now and we trust will soon be finalised.

There are several bureaucratic issues that need to be sorted out, including the issue of long term visas for businessmen, anti-dumping duties on products of Indian interest such as jute sacks, cycle tyres etc. We are in conversation with the Brazilian Government to remove such obstacles and any other that may arise. We also need to tackle logistical and related issues such as lack of direct shipping and airline connections – neither a Brazilian, nor any Indian airline connects our countries – and harmonization of our laws relating to phytosanitary issues which will enable India to export wheat and other agricultural products of Brazilian interest. A major obstacle to our bilateral trade has been currency volatility, as witnessed during the sudden depreciation of the Brazilian Real last year, which inhibited Brazilian importers of Indian products. We are trying to overcome problems of import credits by advancing Lines of Credit to Brazilian banks through our Exim Bank. We are confident of overcoming all obstacles.

Question: India has over a billion inhabitants. Many advances have been made in feeding this huge population, but are there still problems in this field? Does India support the Brazilian President’s plan to introduce a world fund to fight hunger in developing countries?

Reply: President Lula’s initiative of Zero Hunger is admirable, and is fully supported by India. We have achieved self-sufficiency in food production. Indeed, India is the largest producer of milk in the world and we today have a surplus of foodgrains which we can export. The Government of India has successfully implemented food for work programmes and we would be happy to share our experience with Brazil and other countries to fight hunger.
Question: India’s software industries’ exports amount to US$ 8 billion a year, while the same Brazilian exports do not reach US$ 500 million. What kind of collaboration can exist in this sector?

Reply: India and Brazil have mutual respect for each other’s capabilities in software. Indeed, even before our two Governments signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Collaboration on Information Technology Services in November 2000 and set up an Indo-Brazil Task Force on Information Technology soon thereafter, Indian companies were actively collaborating with their Brazilian counterparts in this area.

Today Indian companies such as TCS, Aptech, ZILS, Prologix and several others are present in Brazil through partnerships and other ventures, while Brazilian companies such as Compsys have been active in India. Brazilian software delegations have been visiting India and both sides have achieved a level of collaboration which is admirable for two countries in the developing world who can leverage their talents in this area to create high technology employment-generating opportunities.

Question: India has a dynamic pharmaceutical industry and plans an accelerated expansion of this sector in the next years. Is any partnership with Brazil being discussed?

Reply: There is already active partnership between India and Brazil in the pharmaceutical sector. Recent statistics indicate that India is one of the major investors in the generic pharmaceutical sector, having invested till now 10.2%, the largest share after Brazilian companies in Brazil. Indian companies such as Ranbaxy, Strides Cellopharm, Torrent, Core/Claris, Aurobindo Pharma are already present through their joint-ventures or subsidiaries in Brazil, while a dozen other companies are supplying, at highly competitive prices, bulk drugs and formulations to Brazil. We hope to see a further intensification of this partnership, which will reduce costs in Brazil of much needed medicines and enable Brazilian industry to profit from Indian expertise. We look forward to the support of the Brazilian Government and regulatory agencies to assist Indian companies towards this end.

Question: Is it possible to attract foreign investment and join the developed world with a regular threat of a nuclear war with Pakistan?

Reply: India has no desire to either threaten Pakistan or to live under threat of a nuclear war. I must also emphasize the fact that India has a ‘no first use’ nuclear doctrine. We have repeatedly sought to extend our hand
in friendship towards Pakistan.

It was the Indian Prime Minister who took the initiative to go to Lahore and sign the Lahore Declaration on February 19, 1999 with the leaders of Pakistan. An important component of measures agreed to between India and Pakistan at that time was confidence building measures in the nuclear field. Subsequently, India invited the Pakistan President for a summit in Agra in July 2001 and now the Indian Prime Minister has once again extended his hands of friendship. We have always sought to normalize relations with Pakistan and to establish a longstanding durable friendship.

Let me add at the same time that no country can ignore threats to its security. India has no alternative but to deal appropriately with the challenges to its security posed by cross-border terrorism sponsored by Pakistan.

As far as investment is concerned, India has been continuously receiving higher and higher inflows. Indian companies are also investing abroad in a big way.

**Question:** How far were India and Pakistan from a full scale war in the last years and how close are they to peace now?

**Reply:** As I have mentioned earlier, India believes in a relationship of peace and cooperation with Pakistan. At the same time, all our options were open to deal with the challenge of cross-border terrorism.

Our Prime Minister has now taken a significant initiative. Progress would naturally depend on Pakistan’s response, particularly the action it takes to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism in that country. It has to be recognised that in today’s world no justification can be accepted for terrorism and the international norm is that it must be eradicated wherever it exists.

Many countries and groups of countries have called upon Pakistan to stop serving as a platform for international terrorism.

**Question:** Brazil has a good record in fighting AIDS, and India is among the countries with a high number of cases. Do you expect any partnership in this field?

**Reply:** Indian companies have been supplying several ingredients of the
anti-AIDS cocktail to the Brazilian Government and industry at extremely competitive rates. This is an issue which I intend to take up when I have a trilateral discussion with my Brazilian and South African counterpart in Brazil, since all three of our countries can join together to counter this menace. In this regard, India fully supports Brazil’s initiative in the WTO to amend the laws on intellectual property and patents in particular, to permit developing countries to reduce costs of medicines for AIDS and other epidemic diseases.

**Question:** Brazil and India are consolidating their positions as regional powers. Wouldn’t it boost their specific weight if they had a more common voice and acted jointly in the world arena?

**Reply:** Brazil and India already have a fairly good record of cooperation in various multilateral forums. We have been extending reciprocal support to each other’s candidates in elections to important international bodies. We have also cooperated extensively on issues affecting developing countries, such as the environment, the new world economic order, democratisation of the UN system - including the expansion of the Security Council, etc. During my forthcoming meeting with Minister Amorim, new areas of cooperation will be identified and Brazil and India will work together with like-minded countries to ensure that our views on global issues receive the attention they deserve.

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356. Brasilia Declaration issued at the end of consultations between the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, South Africa and India.


1. The Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Celso Amorim, of South Africa, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, and of India, Yashwant Sinha, met in Brasilia on June 6, 2003, following ongoing consultations and after the respective Heads of State and/or Government of their countries held conversations during the G-8 meeting, in Evian.

2. This was a pioneer meeting of the three countries with vibrant democracies, from three regions of the developing world, active on
a global scale, with the aim of examining themes on the international agenda and those of mutual interest. In the past few years, the importance and necessity of a process of dialogue amongst developing nations and countries of the South has emerged.

3. The Foreign Ministers of Brazil, South Africa and India gave special consideration to the importance of respecting the rule of International Law, strengthening the United Nations and the Security Council and prioritizing the exercise of diplomacy as a means to maintain international peace and security. They reaffirmed the need to combat threats to international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and with the legal instruments to which Brazil, India and South Africa are parties.

4. They agreed on the need to reform the United Nations, in particular the Security Council. In this regard, they stressed the necessity of expanding the Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent member categories, with the participation of developing countries in both categories. They agreed to combine efforts in order to enhance the effectiveness of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

5. They noted that new threats to security - such as terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, drugs and drug-related crimes, transnational organized crime, illegal weapons traffic, threats to public health, in particular HIV/AIDS, natural disasters, and the maritime transit of toxic chemicals and radioactive waste - must be handled with effective, coordinated and solid international cooperation, in the concerned organizations based on respect for the sovereignty of States and for International Law.

6. The Ministers highlighted the priority placed by the three governments on the promotion of social equity and inclusion, by implementing effective policies to fight hunger and poverty, to support family run farms, and to promote food security, health, social assistance, employment, education, human rights and environmental protection. They recalled that social empowerment makes better use of human potentials, contributing to economic development in a significant manner. The Ministers recommended that the exchange of experiences in combating poverty, hunger and disease in the three countries would be of immense use to all of them. They recognized the importance of international effort to
combat hunger. The three countries recognized and undertook to explore a trilateral food assistance program.

7. The Foreign Ministers stressed the importance, for equity reasons as well as for development goals, to address issues related to the elimination of all kinds of racial discrimination and to promote gender equality and mainstreaming a gender perspective in public policies.

8. The three Foreign Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the approval of the Convention on Tobacco Control, in the 56th Health World Assembly, and committed themselves to make every effort to ratify the Convention on the shortest period of time. They also committed themselves to promote the main objective of the Convention – to protect present and future generations against the devastating consequences of the consumption of tobacco and against exposure to tobacco smoke.

9. The Foreign Ministers identified the trilateral cooperation among themselves as an important tool for achieving the promotion of social and economic development and they emphasized their intention to give greater impetus to cooperation among their countries. While noting that their societies have diverse areas of excellence in science and technology and offer a broad range of potential opportunities for trade, investment, travel and tourism, they stressed that the appropriate combination of their best resources will generate the desired synergy. Amongst the scientific and technological areas in which cooperation can be developed are biotechnology, alternative energy sources, outer space, aeronautics, information technology and agriculture. Avenues for greater cooperation in defense matters should also be explored. The Ministers agreed upon putting forward to their respective governments that the authorities in charge of the portfolio for science and technology, defense, transportation and civil aviation, among others, also hold trilateral meetings, aiming at the creation of concrete cooperation projects.

10. The Ministers noted that the new information and communication technologies are transforming the world at a rapid speed, and in a fundamental way. At the same time, a vast digital divide exists between the developed and developing countries, which is adversely affecting the capacity of developing countries to derive optimum benefits from the globalisation process. They agreed to intensify
their cooperation in ICT, including in international efforts and initiatives towards narrowing the digital divide.

11. With respect to environmental issues and sustainable development, they recognized that the Rio Conference and its Agenda 21, the Millennium Summit and the Monterrey and Johannesburg Summits, and the Program for the Implementation of Agenda 21, contain fundamental guidelines to orient the action of their governments and cooperation initiatives. They reaffirmed that Agenda 21 identifies the major causes of continuing deterioration of the global environment as unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and call for the necessary action as contained in the Johannesburg Program of Implementation. They also highlighted their concern over the results of atmospheric warming due to the emission of greenhouse gases and encouraged countries having emission reduction goals in the Kyoto Protocol to work to bring them into force and fully implement them, as well as urged the countries which have not signed or ratified the Protocol to do so.

12. They also reiterated their efforts for the effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, especially the rights of countries of origin over their own genetic resources, as well as the protection of associated traditional knowledge. The fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the access to, use and management of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge must be assured as a way to stimulate social and economic development, as well as the adding of value and the processing of biodiversity-based resources in mega diverse countries. In this context, they placed special significance on the negotiation of an international instrument on benefit sharing under the auspices of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as agreed at the Johannesburg Summit. They thus expressed their agreement that the activities of the Group of Like-minded Megadiverse Countries, of which Brazil, South Africa and India are founding members, should gain even greater importance. They also emphasised the need to render the relevant parts of the TRIPS Agreement compatible with the Biological Diversity Convention.

13. While welcoming the expansion of economic growth, employment, and social development, and the accompanying rise in standards of living, in several developing countries as a result of freer movements of trade, capital, and technology, the Foreign Ministers
of Brazil, India and South Africa expressed their concern that large parts of the world have not benefited from globalisation. They agreed that globalisation must become a positive force for change for all peoples, and must benefit the largest number of countries. In this context, they affirmed their commitment to pursuing policies, programmes and initiatives in different international forums, to make the diverse processes of globalization inclusive, integrative, humane, and equitable.

14. The Ministers regretted that major trading partners are still moved by protectionist concerns in their countries’ less competitive sectors. They stressed the need to fully carry out the Doha Development Program and emphasized how important it is that the results of the current round of trade negotiations provide especially for the reversal of protectionist policies and trade-distorting practices, by improving the rules of the multilateral trade system. They reiterated their expectation that negotiations will gain new political impetus and that it will be possible to overcome deadlocks on issues of fundamental interest to developing countries, before the Fifth Ministerial Conference in Cancun. Furthermore, Brazil, India and South Africa decided to articulate their initiatives of trade liberalisation.

15. The Foreign Ministers noted with concern the increased economic vulnerability of developing countries to fluctuations in global prices of commodities. They affirmed the importance of a predictable, rule-based, and transparent international trading system, to enable the developing countries to maximise their development, through gains from enhanced exports of goods and services of their competitive advantage.

16. They drew attention to the economic and social impact suffered by many developing countries in recent years, as a result of volatile global financial flows. They agreed to strengthen their cooperation towards making the international financial architecture responsive to development, and towards increasing its effectiveness in preventing and addressing national and regional financial crises.

17. They reiterate their belief that success in globalization with equity requires good governance, both at the national and in particular at the international levels, in recognition of the fact that, as a result of globalization, external factors have become critical in determining
the success or failure of achieving sustainable development.

18. The Ministers recommended to their respective Chiefs of State and/or Government the convening of a summit meeting of the three countries. They also decided to further intensify dialogue at all levels, when needed, to organize meetings of top officials and experts responsible for issues of mutual interest.

19. They decided to hold regular political consultations on international agenda items, as well as to exchange information on areas of mutual co-operation in order to coordinate their positions on issues of common interest. To give expression to issues discussed and all other matters emerging out of consultations, the Ministers further agreed to establish a Trilateral Joint Commission. The Foreign Ministries will be the focal points of the Trilateral Joint Commission and the meetings will be co-chaired by the three Foreign Ministers. The secretariat facilities will be co-ordinated by the Secretary in charge of this area in the Foreign Ministry of the host country.

20. The Ministers decided to call this group “India, Brazil and South Africa Dialogue Forum” (IBSA). At the invitation of the Indian Government, the next meeting is going to take place in New Delhi, within twelve months.

The Ministers of India and South Africa thanked the Brazilian Minister for convening this first trilateral meeting.

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357. Joint Statement issued on the visit of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to Brazil.


1. At the invitation of the Minister of External Relations of Brazil, Ambassador Celso Amorim, the Minister of External Affairs of India, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, is visiting Brazil on June 4-8, 2003. During the visit, the External Affairs Minister held discussions with H.E. Mr. Celso Amorim, the Minister of External Relations and H.E. Mr. Humberto Costa, Minister of Health of the Government of Brazil. He also called on H.E. Mr. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, the President of the Federal of Republic of Brazil and handed over to him an
invitation from H.E. Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, President of the Republic of India, to visit India in early 2004.

2. The Ministers took note that the visit occurs very soon after the meeting of President of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and the Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, at Lausanne, Switzerland, on June 2.

3. The visit of Minister Sinha, which takes place amid profound changes in the realm of international relations, led to a very fruitful exchange of ideas between both Ministers concerning many issues pertaining to the international agenda. The visit also permitted them to explore new opportunities for bilateral cooperation.

4. Brazil and India are developing countries with large territorial expanses. They face similar challenges in terms of economic and social development. They share similar points of view with regard to the international system and aspire to participate more actively in the political, economic, commercial, and financial decisions that shape such system. Based on common views and aspirations, Brazil and India wish to develop and widen the close cooperation and consultations they already maintain in international fora.

5. Brazil and India are among the largest democracies in the world. At the same time as they endeavour to develop and improve internally their democratic institutions, they also aspire for democracy to prevail in the international order. In this context, the Ministers stressed the central role played by the United Nations in the preservation of international peace and security. They also stressed the need to ensure strict observance of the United Nations Charter and of the principles and rules of the International Law.

6. India and Brazil agreed that the functioning of the UN should be made more democratic and that the Security Council should be expanded so that it is truly representative of the membership of the UN. Developing countries, which account for the overwhelming majority of the UN General Assembly membership and play an increasingly prominent role in world affairs, should be fully represented in the Permanent Members category in the restructured Security Council. They also agreed that the reform and expansion of the Security Council should be an integral part of a common package. They expressed the view that countries such as that India and Brazil have a natural claim to a permanent seat in the
restructured Security Council. They also felt that this would have a positive effect towards efforts to usher in a peaceful, just and equitable world order and make the Security Council more representative, effective and legitimate.

7. Brazil and India affirmed the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. They agreed that the United Nations should play an important role and take early decisions concerning stability, security and reconstruction of the country. The humanitarian situation should be addressed expeditiously in order to meet the needs of the Iraqi people, who should be enabled to decide on a government of their choice at the earliest. In this context, they expressed their support for the role played by the U.N. Secretary General and his Special Representative to Iraq and to the multilateral efforts being made under the auspices of the UN to ensure the adoption of urgent measures to reduce the suffering of the Iraqi people.

8. The Ministers expressed their repudiation of all forms of terrorism, which constitutes a new and serious threat to international peace and security. They also expressed their willingness to fight the drug traffic and organised crime and pointed to the need of continuing to review measures to repress and prevent these phenomena, according to the specific features of each country and to International Law.

9. As regards economic development, the two Ministers expressed the need to adopt public policies aimed at fostering the modernisation of their respective economies while meeting the legitimate social demands of their peoples. They stressed the need for developed countries to adopt, in trade negotiations carried out within the World Trade Organisation and in regional negotiations, positions favouring the liberalisation of trade on a fair and non-discriminatory basis, correcting the prevailing asymmetries. Likewise, they agreed that the resolutions approved at the International Conference on Financial Development, held in Monterrey in 2002, should be implemented.

10. The Ministers reaffirmed the commitment of their countries to sustainable development and, in particular, to the goals of Agenda 21, as agreed during the 1992 Rio Conference, as well as to the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable
Development, held in Johannesburg, in 2002. They also expressed their hope that the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will enter into force soon, and that it will count upon the support of as many nations as possible.

11. Brazil and India reiterated their firm commitment to the full implementation of the principles contained in the Convention on Biological Diversity, namely the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, and called for cooperation to enable all countries to protect and sustainably use their bio-diversity for the benefit of all mankind. They also emphasised the need to render the TRIPS Agreement compatible with the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as the priority they give to the negotiation of an international regime to promote and safeguard the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources, within that same Convention, as agreed at the Johannesburg Summit. In this regard, the Group of Like- Minded Megadiverse Countries, of which Brazil and India are founding members, should be also be strengthened.

12. Both Ministers expressed their satisfaction with regard to the approval of the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Use Control, on May 2003. They also committed themselves to accelerate the internal ratification process within their respective countries, as well the Convention’s entry into force internationally as soon as possible.

13. Concerning the bilateral agenda, they expressed satisfaction over the impressive increase in bilateral trade between the two countries in recent years, which totaled US dollar 1.2 billion in 2002. Trade estimates for this year are also encouraging. Exports have not only increased, but also diversified. The two Ministers envisaged the sale in the near future of aircraft manufactured by Embraer to the Indian Government, thus opening up new opportunities of co-operation in the aerospace sector. They also took note with satisfaction of the contribution provided by the Indian drug industry to Brazil’s National Health Program in the form of high-quality medicines at affordable prices, and mentioned the existence of joint ventures in the information technology sector established in Brazil. The presence of businessmen in the delegation of Minister Yashwant Sinha is indicative of the support that the Indian Government has
been providing to these private-sector initiatives. The adoption by India of a program for mixing ethanol to gasoline that is similar to the PROALCOOL program enhances the possibilities for a bilateral co-operation in terms of goods and services.

14. The Ministers agreed that economic and trade relations will be further enhanced by two agreements to be signed between the Mercosur and India in the very near future: the Framework Agreement and the Agreement on Fixed Tariff Preferences, the first to be signed next June and the other in the second half of 2003.

15. The Ministers expressed their commitment to continue the implementation of scientific and technological co-operation arrangements between Brazil and India in sectors already identified and in which both countries can provide relevant contributions. These areas are: information technology, biotechnology, especially in the fields of health and medicine, agriculture and genomics. In the space sector, they referred to the agreement in force between both countries and to the possibility of the use of Indian launch vehicles to launch Brazilian scientific micro-satellites.

16. Considering the common need to foster social development for the Brazilian and Indian peoples, the two Ministers agreed to a regular and systematic exchange of national experiences in the areas of health, education, job generation, eradication of poverty, hunger and malnutrition, social work, and others.

17. The relationship between the two countries having achieved new importance and intensity, and with a view to providing it with structure and dynamism, the Ministers agreed to hold the 1st Meeting of the Brazil-India Joint Commission on Political, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Co-operation in India this year.

18. Minister Yashwant Sinha invited Minister Celso Amorim to pay an official visit to New Delhi in the second half of this year.

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Joint press release issued by the Governments of India, Brazil, and South Africa after a meeting of their Foreign Ministers.


The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of India, Yashwant Sinha, Brazil, Celso Amorim, and South Africa, Nkosazana Diamini-Zuma, met today, September 24, on the occasion of the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and exchanged views on a number of current international issues.

They underlined the need to strengthen multilateralism and in this regard, agreed to cooperate among themselves and with the Secretary General to further UN reform.

The Ministers also agreed that their countries would cooperate in international fora and in discussions on multilateral issues.

Recognising that trade is an important instrument in economic growth and in the creation and distribution of wealth, they stressed the importance of promoting a development agenda in the WTO. They renewed their commitment to work together to foster reforms in trade, in agriculture, which will eliminate all distorting subsidies and ensure access to markets in developed countries, while recognising the need for operationalising special and differential treatment for developing countries. They exchanged views on the ongoing negotiations of the Doha Round, in particular the recently held Cancun meeting, and emphasised the importance of the continued work and coordination of the G-22.

They reiterated the determination of their Governments to contribute actively to the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals set at major United Nations Conferences and the Millennium Summit, in particular that of halving, by 2015, the proportion of the world’s people who suffer from poverty and hunger.

They agreed that efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger must be undertaken within the broader framework of the promotion of human rights, in particular their economic, social, and cultural rights and the right to development. Combating hunger goes beyond the provision of food and encompasses structural measures in many areas, in particular education, sanitation, health, employment, rural development and infrastructure.
They noted that recent data demonstrate that in the absence of renewed and bold efforts to promote and finance the implementation of strategies to combat poverty and hunger the international community will be far short of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

In this context, they underlined their commitment to cooperate in the design and implementation of replicable and scaleable projects for poverty reduction and alleviation of hunger as well as improved access to education, health and sanitation. These would include the identification of demonstration projects and best practices, in the above-mentioned areas, to be disseminated at the regional and international levels as concrete examples to advance the Millennium Development Goals. The preparation, approval and implementation of such projects would follow the existing procedures and standards in UNDP and other UN agencies. The three countries invite the involvement of other interested countries in this initiative. They also want to secure the support of the private sector and the participation of civil society. To stress their commitment, Brazil, India and South Africa will make contributions to this initiative in order to facilitate the start-up of projects.

This initiative should be seen as complementary to other ongoing efforts being considered by the international community.

They agreed that the next meeting of the IBSA Trilateral Commission would take place in India, during the second half of March 2004. The Ministers of Planning, Science and Technology, Defence and Agriculture of the three countries would meet before March 2004 to implement the objectives of the Brasilia Declaration and feed into the next meeting of the Trilateral Commission.
359. Joint press statement issued at the end of the visit of the Brazilian Minister of External Relations Celso Amorim.

New Delhi, October 21, 2003.

1. At the invitation of the Minister of External Affairs, H.E. Mr. Yashwant Sinha, who had visited Brazil last June, the Minister of External Relations of Brazil, Ambassador Celso Amorim, paid an official return visit to New Delhi from 20th to 21st of October 2003.

2. The Minister of External Relations of Brazil was accompanied by a delegation of officials from different ministries in charge of important areas of bilateral cooperation. The Brazilian delegation also included twelve representatives of major industrial and services sectors such as construction and infrastructure, mining, metallurgy, aviation, transport and logistics and investment promotion.

3. The two Foreign Ministers co-chaired the first meeting of the Indo-Brazilian Joint Commission that covered both multilateral and bilateral subjects for an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the two countries. Working Groups were set up in the following areas of cooperation: science and technology, space, social matters, health, energy, transport, agriculture, tourism, trade, culture and education. The Groups had their preliminary discussions on different areas of mutual interest and agreed to continue bilateral cooperation.

4. The two sides noted the considerable increase in bilateral commercial exchanges that have tripled between 1998 and 2002 to reach US$ 1.2 billion. Statistics regarding 2003 showed that this positive trend was continuing. They also observed that the proposed conclusion of the Mercosur-India Agreement on Fixed Preferential Tariffs would provide further stimulus to trade relations between India and the Mercosur countries, i.e. Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay.

5. The Ministers decided to give a stimulus to bilateral co-operation in science and technology, which in the past few years has been expanded to include important sectors such as information technology, biotechnology and space research. In this context, they also agreed on an early meeting of the India-Brazil Science Council.

6. The Foreign Ministers agreed on the need for the two countries to co-operate in new fields such as combating illiteracy and hunger and promoting poverty alleviation. Both parties were conscious of
the value of learning from each other’s experiences in the social sectors to improve ongoing programmes and establish new ones.

7. The two sides decided that they would hold the first meeting of the India-Brazil Common Agenda for Environment prior to the visit of the President of Brazil to India in early 2004.

8. In the multilateral field, the two Ministers reiterated their views on the need to strengthen multilateralism, particularly in regard to the United Nations and the WTO. The Foreign Ministers expressed strong support for the proposal of the Secretary General of the UN regarding the reform of the international organisation, including ECOSOC and the Security Council. They stressed the need for an equitable balance by means of the enlargement of the Security Council that would promote democratisation of the UN system and better reflect the global changes that have taken place since the inception of the United Nations.

9. The Ministers also reviewed the progress achieved by the IBSA Dialogue Forum for Trilateral Cooperation between India, Brazil and South Africa, launched last June in Brasilia. They noted that the Heads of States/Governments of all the three countries had, during their recent meeting in New York on September 24, agreed to give the utmost priority to the implementation of the action programme of this Forum, which, inter-alia, would emphasize joint measures to combat poverty and hunger among their populations.

10. During the visit, the Minister of External Relations of Brazil also had an official meeting with the Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley. During this meeting, they discussed the ongoing negotiations of the Doha Round of the WTO and the role played by the Group of 20 during the Cancún Ministerial Meeting last September. In this regard, they agreed to continue their joint efforts to co-ordinate their policy positions in the G-20 in order to promote the interests of developing countries in the World Trade Organisation.

11. The two sides expressed satisfaction with the Interactive Business Meeting Brazil-India, organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), which highlighted the strengths of Brazil and India allowing for strong partnership between the business communities of the two countries.
12. The Round Table meeting organised by the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) on the multilateral trade system and WTO also provided a forum for a valuable exchange of points of views between the officials and private sector participants of the two countries.

13. Hon’ble Mr. Celso Amorim concluded his visit to New Delhi by a formal call on Hon’ble Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister of India, and on that occasion, handed over to him a letter from the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, H.E. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. The letter conveyed the Brazilian President’s gracious acceptance of the invitation to be the Guest of Honour at India’s Republic’s Day function in January 2004.

14. The Minister of External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil, H.E. Mr. Celso Amorim, extended an invitation, on behalf of the President of the Republic of Brazil to the Prime Minister of India, Shri A.B. Vajpayee, to pay a visit to Brazil. H.E. Mr. Celso Amorim also extended invitations to the External Affairs Minister of India, Shri Yashwant Sinha, and the Commerce & Industry Minister of India, Shri Arun Jaitley, to pay a visit to Brazil. The invitations were accepted and it was agreed that mutually convenient dates would be finalized through diplomatic channels.

15. The Brazilian side expressed sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of India for the hospitality extended to them and the excellent arrangements made for their visit to India.
Chile


New Delhi, April 24, 2003.

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Chile, hereinafter referred to as “Contracting Parties”, DESIRING to promote their friendly relations, CONSIDERING the interest of both countries to strengthen their friendly relations: and DESIRING to facilitate the entry of the citizens of the Republic of Chile and the Republic of India, who are holders of diplomatic and official passports; have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1

1. Nationals of one Contracting Party, who are holders of valid diplomatic or official passports, shall be exempt from visa requirements for entry into, exit from and transit through the territory of the other Contracting Party.

2. The passport holders referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be permitted to stay in the territory of the other Contracting Party for a maximum period of 90 (ninety) days. Upon request in writing of the diplomatic mission or consular posts of the Contracting Party whose nationals the passport holders are, the other Contracting Party may extend the duration of stay for those passport holders for up to 90 (ninety) days.

ARTICLE 2

1. A citizen of either Contracting Party, who is assigned as a member of the diplomatic or consular staff in the territory of the other Contracting Party and in possession of a valid diplomatic or official passport shall not be required to obtain a visa to enter the territory of the other
Contracting Party and shall be granted a residence visa for period of his/her official stay.

2. A citizen of one Contracting Party being the representative of his/her country in an international organization located in the territory of other Contracting Party holding the said passport shall also enjoy the rights mentioned in paragraph-1 of this Article.

**ARTICLE 3**

Through diplomatic channels, the competent authorities of Contracting Parties shall, as soon as possible, inform each other of any change of their laws and regulations concerning the entry, exit and stay applied to foreigners.

**ARTICLE 4**

1. This Agreement shall not exempt the holders of diplomatic or official passports from obligations of respecting laws and regulations in force relating to entry, stay and exit in the territory of the host country.

2. Either Contracting Party shall reserve the right to deny entry or to shorten the duration of stay of any national of the other Contracting Party.

**ARTICLE 5**

If a national of one Contracting Party loses his/her passport in the territory of the other Contracting Party, he/she shall inform the diplomatic mission or consular post of his/her country and the relevant authorities of the host country about the loss of his/her passport. The diplomatic mission or the consular post concerned shall, in accordance with laws and regulations of its country, issue a new passport or a travel document to him/her and inform the competent authorities of the host country about the issue of the new passport or travel document and the cancellation of the lost passport.

**ARTICLE 6**

1. For reasons of national security, public order or health, either Contracting Party may temporarily suspend, in whole or in part, the implementation of this Agreement.

2. The Contracting Party, which decides to temporarily suspend, in whole or in part, the implementation of the Agreement shall duly inform the other Contracting Party of such decision through diplomatic channels.
ARTICLE 7

1. The Contracting Parties shall convey to each other, through diplomatic channels, specimens of their current diplomatic and official passports or specimens of any new diplomatic or official passports at least 30 (thirty) days before this Agreement comes into force or before the introduction of the new passports.

2. The Contracting Parties shall inform each other about any modification introduced to the current diplomatic or official passports at least 30 (thirty) days in advance of the introduction of such modification, and convey specimens of the modified documents.

ARTICLE 8

1. This Agreement shall enter into force after the exchange of diplomatic notes by the Contracting Parties, acknowledging that the domestic requirements for its entry into force have been complied with.

2. This Agreement shall remain valid for an indefinite period unless either Contracting Party informs the other Contracting Party in writing of its intention to terminate the Agreement through diplomatic channels 3 (three) months in advance.

3. This Agreement may be amended or supplemented by mutual consent of the Contracting Parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned being duly authorized by their respective Governments, have signed the present Agreement.

Done at New Delhi on 24 April, 2003, in two originals; in Hindi, Spanish and English languages. All texts are equally authentic. In case of divergences in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

Yashwant Sinha
Minister for External Affairs

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE

Maria Soledad Alvear Valenzuela
Minister for External Relations
Joint statement issued during the visit of Foreign Minister of Chile Mrs. Maria Soledad Alvear.

New Delhi, April 25, 2003.

1. On the invitation of the External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile, H.E. Mrs. Maria Soledad Alvear, paid an official visit to India from 24th to 27th April, 2003.

2. During her visit, H.E. Mrs. Maria Soledad Alvear met with and held discussions with the External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, the Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley and the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Smt. Sonia Gandhi. She also called on the President of the Republic of India, H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and the Prime Minister of India, Shri A.B. Vajpayee.

3. The talks were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere and covered a wide-range of issues pertaining to bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. The two sides noted with satisfaction that India-Chile relations are marked by a high degree of mutual understanding and similarity of views on almost all current issues of international importance. Both sides reiterated their desire and commitment to further strengthen their bilateral relations based on mutual friendship and understanding.

4. The Indian side noted with satisfaction how Chile has consolidated democratic institutions and practices, brought about social reconciliation and sustained a high growth economy.

5. India noted the efforts of Chile to increasingly integrate with organizations such as APEC, Mercosur, Rio Group, NAM, G-77 and also the global economy.

6. India and Chile share common interest in the WTO in ensuring liberalization of international trade in goods and services while strengthening development.

7. The two sides noted with satisfaction that since 1998 bilateral trade has grown by 150% to reach US$ 262 million in the year 2002. In this connection, the two sides appreciated the efforts of the private sector as well as the chambers of commerce and industry of the two countries in increasing trade, promoting investment ties and sustainable economic growth between the two countries.
8. In their discussions on further strengthening Chile-India relations in the political, trade, economic, scientific and technological spheres, the two sides noted the considerable untapped potential for mutually beneficial cooperation between Chile and India in these fields.

9. The two sides recognized that India and Chile being two countries with important mineral resources and vast bio-diversities, should promote cooperation between the private sectors and R&D institutions of the two countries for mutual benefit.

10. The official visit of H.E. Mrs. Alvear reflects the interest of Chile and India for strengthening the bilateral ties, to launch a process of consultations and to work towards the signing of a Preferential Tariff Agreement (PTA) leading eventually to a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Chile and India. It is of high interest to both governments that this process of negotiations concludes successfully at the earliest for mutual benefit.

11. The two sides have exchanged proposals for strengthening bilateral economic ties. The Government of the Republic of Chile has received with great interest the proposals presented by the Government of the Republic of India on Avoidance of Double Taxation. For the proposal on Avoidance of Double Taxation, the technical teams from both countries will initiate discussions to conclude the agreement as early as possible.

12. Both sides recognized the importance of bilateral cooperation for achieving growth and development and expressed their firm commitment to promote friendship and cooperation in different fields such as science, technology, technical assistance, sports and youth development.

13. Both parties recognized the potential of trade and cooperation between the two countries in the IT sector and the need to tap capabilities and opportunities in this sector in a more focused and comprehensive manner. They expressed their mutual interest in growth of investment, joint ventures, joint initiatives, technological development and markets in the IT sector.

14. The two sides reaffirmed their faith in the vitality of the Non-aligned Movement. They agreed that the NAM can play an important role in addressing global issues such as poverty alleviation, financing for development, food security, issues of international peace and
security, terrorism and disarmament as well as environmental protection.

15. The two sides shared the belief that the emerging world order should be just, equitable and multi-polar and based on the principles of democracy, sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of states and respect for human rights and UN principles.

16. The Indian side expressed appreciation for the role played by Chile in the past as a member of the UN Security Council and expressed its firm belief that Chile would continue to play a responsible and leading role in the UN Security Council during its term as a member of the UN Security Council.

17. The two sides reiterated their support to democratize and reform the United Nations, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They stressed, in particular, the need for equitable balance in the expanded Security Council to provide a constructive voice to the aspirations of the developing countries. Chile extended its support for India's claim for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

18. Chile and India reaffirmed that terrorism cannot be justified in any form for any cause or for any reason. They agreed that the fight against terrorism has to be global, comprehensive and sustained for the objective of total elimination of terrorism worldwide. In this context, the two sides reiterated their commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution No. 1373. They stressed the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism.

19. The Indian side appreciated Chile's expression of solidarity with India when both the Chilean Government and the Chilean Parliament condemned the attack on the Indian Parliament.

20. The Chilean side acknowledged India's efforts in promoting friendship and good neighbourly relations in the South Asian region and also appreciated the evolving security concerns of India in the light of recent developments in the region. Chile supported the resolution of all India-Pak differences through bilateral dialogue. It recognized that cross-border infiltration and terrorism had to end for any dialogue to be resumed. It also called on all concerned
countries in the region to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism and to stop serving as a platform for international terrorism.

21. The Chilean side acknowledged India’s desire for closer interaction and establishment of regular high-level dialogue with regional organizations in Latin America, such as the Rio Group, Mercosur, OAS etc. and agreed to extend full support to India in its endeavours in this direction.

22. The Indian side appreciated the constructive role played by Chile, as pro-tempore Secretary of the Rio Group for 2001, in initiating Rio Group-India dialogue and the fact that the Chilean Foreign Minister, H.E. Mrs. Maria Soledad Alvear, co-chaired the first India-Rio Group meeting with the External Affairs Minister of India.

23. Both sides noted with satisfaction the high-level contacts that had been facilitated between the Parliaments of both the countries. The Indian side noted with satisfaction the expressed interest of the Chilean Parliamentarians in forming an India Friendship Association. Both sides agreed to maintain and a sustained dialogue between the Parliaments of the two democracies.

24. The following agreements were signed during this official visit:

(i) Agreement on visa exemption for holders of official and diplomatic passports.

(ii) Agreement on animal health (Zoo Sanitary Agreement).


The two sides agreed also to work on an early conclusion of a Joint Commission Agreement, an Agreement on Cooperation in Science & Technology between India and Chile as well as a Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in the field of Information Technology.

25. The Indian side expressed the hope that the President of Chile, H.E. Mr. Ricardo Lagos, will be able to pay a visit to India in the near future for which an invitation is already pending.

26. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile, H.E. Mrs. Maria Soledad Alvear, extended an invitation on behalf of President Ricardo Lagos to the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the Prime Minister of India, Shri A.B. Vajpayee, and the External Affairs Minister of
India, Shri Yashwant Sinha, to pay a visit to Chile. The invitations were accepted and it was agreed that mutually convenient dates will be finalized through diplomatic channels.

27. The Chilean side expressed sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of India for the hospitality extended to them and the excellent arrangements made for their visit to India.

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Guyana


The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana (hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”);

RECOGNISING the friendly ties existing between the two countries;

DESIROUS of strengthening further and to consolidate their traditional friendly relations;

DESIROUS to further facilitate travel between the two countries;

HAVE agreed as follows:

**ARTICLE 1**

1. The nationals of the country of one of the Parties holding valid diplomatic and service/official passports may enter, exit, transit and temporarily stay in the territory of the other Party without visas for a period of 90 days from the date of entry. In exceptional cases, on the written request from the diplomatic mission or consulate of the Party to which a national belongs, the other Party may issue the required visa.
2. The nationals of the country of one of the Parties during their stay in the territory of the other Party, shall follow the existing laws of that Party, including the rules of registration, stay and movement stipulated for foreign citizens and persons without citizenship.

ARTICLE 2

1. Members of diplomatic missions or consulates of either Party located in the territory of the other Party shall be granted a residence visa valid for the duration of his/her assignment at the written request of the diplomatic mission or consulate concerned, provided that they are citizens of the Party and are holding diplomatic or service/official passports.

2. A citizen of one Party being the representative of his/her country in an international organization located in the territory of the other Party and holding a diplomatic or service/official passport shall also enjoy the rights mentioned in paragraph 1 of this article.

3. The facilities enumerated in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall apply also to a spouse of a member of the diplomatic mission or consulate and their children, provided they are holding diplomatic or service/official passports or they are entered in their father’s or mother’s passport.

ARTICLE 3

1. Each of the Parties has the right to refuse the permission of entry to the national of the other party or cancel the period of his/her stay in its territory without giving any reasons.

2. The holder of diplomatic and service/official passports of either Party who are international civil servants or who are employed by an international organization, body, agency or any such entity, would be required to obtain a visa prior to their travel to the territory of the other Party for official visits.

ARTICLE 4

1. Each of the Parties has the right in exceptional cases in the interest of national security, public order and health to fully or partially suspend the present agreement.

2. The Party shall inform through diplomatic channels the other Party at the earliest possible opportunity within twenty-four hours about
the enforcement of these measures and their termination accordingly.

**ARTICLE 5**

The Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the parties after the signing of the present agreement shall within thirty days through diplomatic channels exchange samples of already introduced diplomatic and service/official passports and also shall exchange the samples of new passports and inform each other about the order of their application not later than thirty days before the introduction of any new passport.

**ARTICLE 6**

1. The nationals of the Parties holding diplomatic and service/official passports, in case of loss or damage of their passports in the territory of the other Party must inform the concerned authorities of the country of stay which may issue those persons a document certifying registration of lost passport.

2. The diplomatic or consular mission of the country of which the person is a citizen shall issue them with a duplicate passport or any other identity document

**ARTICLE 7**

In case of any doubt or interpretational problem that may emerge in the process of implementation of the present Agreement, the Parties shall resolve it by consultations through diplomatic channels.

**ARTICLE 8**

With mutual consent, the Parties' may amend or alter the present Agreement annexing an additional protocol which shall be considered as an integral part of the present Agreement.

**ARTICLE 9**

The present agreement shall come into force on the date of the last written notification regarding completion by the Parties of the internal procedures if any necessary for its enforcement. This Agreement shall remain in force until the expiration of three months from the day when one Party transmits to the other Party through diplomatic channels written notification of its intent to terminate the Agreement.
Done at Georgetown this February 4 day of two thousand and three in duplicate each in Hindi and English languages. All texts are equally authentic.

In case of any interpretational differences in the present Agreement, the English text shall prevail.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned being duly authorized by their respective Governments, have signed the present Agreement.

For the Government of For the Government of
The Republic of India the Cooperative Republic of Guyana

363. Speech of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at a banquet in honour of the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana Bharrat Jagdeo.


Your Excellency, Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government and people of India, I have great pleasure in extending a warm welcome to you, Mr. President and to the members of your delegation on the occasion of your State visit to India.

Though geographically a vast distance separates India from Guyana, yet our two countries have a long tradition of friendship and cooperation for our mutual benefit. Relations between India and Guyana are strengthened by factors of shared historical and cultural moorings. One hundred and sixty-five years ago, a sizable number of Indian nationals migrated to your country and it is a matter of pride for us to know, Mr. President, that your forefathers also went from India. We are also proud of the invaluable contributions made by the people of Indian origin to the progress of Guyana. They have flourished in a distant and foreign land because all communities migrating to Guyana forged bonds of brotherhood. This multi-ethnic ethos of modern Guyanese society, in many ways, corresponds to the diverse ethnic and social fabric of modern Indian society.
Besides traditional cultural linkages, our two nations also share other commonalities. We have common perceptions on most issues of international concern. Both India and Guyana are committed to economic development and prosperity through democratic means. We fully appreciate Guyana’s endeavours to establish its own identity in the comity of nations.

Excellency, during the last five and a half decades, India has made progress in diverse fields. In the light of the requirements of the emerging global economy, we attach a high priority to the pursuit of excellence in knowledge-based high technology sectors. Having evolved through the green revolution in agriculture, white revolution in dairy farming and the industrial transition to high-technology areas, we would now like to apply the expertise of our vast human resources sector for addressing the developmental problems of our billion-strong population. To achieve this, we arduously strive for achieving important South-South objectives pertaining to the establishment of a more equitable and balanced trading system, a new international economic order and a more representative UN system. In this connection, we deeply value your country’s cooperation in regional and multilateral organisations on issues of mutual concern. Peace on the planet will come only if inequality in economic prosperity is reduced and the value system of life is integrated in societal life. This can be India’s global mission. India and Guyana can definitely become partners in such a mission.

Guyana is endowed with rich and diverse natural resources. India on the other hand has a technological base with a large reservoir of technical manpower, with a proven capacity and track record of contributing tangibly to many developing countries’ industries. Again, Guyana is strategically located in the Caribbean region and is a dynamic and active member of CARICOM, ACP, FTAA and other such regional co-operation initiatives. Keeping in view the core competence of Guyana, India would like to co-operate with Guyana for development in the areas of agriculture, small scale industries, bio-technology, oil exploration and sugar industries from design to building of plants and production of sugar and its marketing. Indian craftsmen are famed both for diamond cutting as well as for making exquisite gold jewellery. India could help Guyana in adding value to their mineral wealth in these areas also.

In this context, we have noted with interest the new areas of priority, augmenting of Indian ITEC assistance and other such sectors identified by your Government during this visit. We will be happy to co-operate with
you in all these areas. For this, the scope of the ongoing co-operation under the Joint Commission should be suitably widened.

India’s relationship with Guyana in all such matters would be in accordance with its time-honoured tradition of reaching out to the developing world fraternity in a spirit of South-South Cooperation. Under this policy, our Government has established new bridges with our brethren in the African, Asian and Latin American regions. It will be India’s endeavour to continue this tradition and also to widen such ongoing bilateral cooperation.

To achieve these objectives, the Government of India is trying to forge closer linkages through initiatives such as the line of credit arrangements. It is our hope and expectation that the Government of Guyana and the private sector will respond positively to these initiatives. The re-opening of the High Commission of Guyana in India will certainly give a big fillip to the strengthening of our relationship.

Excellency, I would like to conclude by extending my best wishes for your delegation’s fruitful visit to our country and to convey to you and through you to the people of Guyana, the sentiments of fraternal affection and friendship that we have for the Guyanese people. I am confident that guided by your dynamic leadership, our two countries will be able to further increase our co-operation on various issues of mutual interest.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I now request all the distinguished guests to join me in raising a toast:-

- to the personal good health and well-being of His Excellency President Bharrat Jagdeo;
- to the continued prosperity of the people of Guyana; and
- to the everlasting friendship between India and Guyana.

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364. Joint Statement issued during the visit of the President of Guyana Bharrat Jagdeo.

New Delhi, August 26, 2003.

1. At the invitation of the President of India, H. E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of Guyana, H. E. Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo, paid a State Visit to India from August 24-29, 2003.

2. Within the framework of the visit, H. E. Mr. Jagdeo held fruitful discussions with H. E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of the Republic of India, and H.E. Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India. The Vice President of India, Mr. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Minister of External Affairs of India, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Arun Jaitley, Minister for Human Resource Development, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, called on President Jagdeo.

3. During the wide-ranging discussions held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere, both sides exchanged views on various bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

4. Both sides noted with satisfaction that the close relations between Guyana and India, which have a strong cultural and historical basis, are marked by cordiality and a high degree of understanding as well as shared interest in current principal issues. Both sides reiterated their desire to strengthen even further the bilateral relations and close ties between the two countries and peoples. In this context, the Guyanese side reiterated its commitment to the early re-establishment of its diplomatic mission in New Delhi. The Indian side welcomed this and noted that the early re-establishment

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1. Prior to the Presidential visit the inaugural meeting of the Foreign Office Consultation between India and Guyana was held on August 21 between the Director General of Guyanese Foreign Ministry Ms. Elizabeth Karper and from the Indian side Secretary Mr. Shashank. (An MoU on holding Foreign Office Consultations was signed November 2000) The Foreign Office Consultation was also in preparation for the visit of the Guyanese President. At the Consultation both sides reviewed bilateral relations. India was exploring new avenues for stepping up our economic and commercial linkages with CARICOM, and in this context it was mentioned that India was willing to extend liberal line of credit to Guyana, Extensive cooperation was in fact going on in the field of training, HRD, ITEC and other programmes with Guyana. There was also an India-Guyana Joint Commission, which provided a useful platform in reviewing and promoting cooperation in agriculture, health and science and technology.
of the Guyanese diplomatic mission will help to intensify and deepen further the relations between the two countries.

5. President Jagdeo expressed his sincere appreciation for India's continued support to the economic and social development of Guyana.

6. Both sides agreed that friendly contacts and personnel exchanges between Ministries, Members of Parliament and political parties of the two countries should be further enhanced.

7. The two sides agreed to fully utilize the substantial potential and opportunities for deepening mutually beneficial cooperation, to promote the socio-economic development and prosperity of the two countries. In this connection, both sides recognized that considerable potential exists for India to undertake mutually beneficial cooperation with Guyana in various sectors.

8. Guyana is a country with rich untapped natural resources and emerging infrastructural requirements. Given India's varied experience in high technology and industrial areas, India could, in a spirit of South-South cooperation, share expertise in priority areas identified by Guyana with a view to enhancing the current programme of cooperation in the areas of economic, commercial and human resource development.

9. To this end, the Indian side agreed to consider suitably extending the scope of ongoing cooperation under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation. India also agreed to enhance the quota of ITEC scholarships offered to Guyana from 25 to 35 slots. The possibility of deputing Indian ITEC experts in key sectors identified by Guyana would be considered favourably.

10. The Government of India agreed to extend to Guyana a concessional line of credit of US$ 25.2 million through the Exim Bank of India for the modernization of three sugar plants surveyed by a team from Sugar Technology Mission of India. The Indian side agreed to consider extending a similar concessional line of credit through Exim Bank of India for the modernization of the remaining sugar plants in Guyana.

11. As a measure of its commitment to further strengthening India-Guyana bilateral relations, the Indian side agreed to waive off the
balance of Rs. 28.78 million owed by Guyana to India against the first Credit Line of Rs. 100 million extended by India in 1989. A formal waiver document to this effect was signed during the visit. The President of Guyana thanked the Government of India for its support for Guyana’s efforts in securing debt relief.

12. India expressed its concern over the heightened criminal activities which had recently occurred in Guyana. It was noted that there had since been a decrease in such activities. India agreed to render all possible assistance requested by Guyana to enhance the capabilities of the Guyanese law enforcement officers.

13. The two sides noted that the Third session of the Joint Commission between the two countries was held in November, 2000 in New Delhi. Both sides agreed to give high priority to intensifying cooperation in all areas identified and to consider the possibility of convening the Fourth meeting of the Joint Commission in Guyana on mutually convenient dates before the end of the year.

14. The following agreements were signed during the State Visit :-
   a) Cultural Exchange Programme
   b) Education Exchange Programme
   c) Agreement for waiving off the outstanding balance from the first credit line extended to Guyana in 1989

15. Both sides emphasized the need for creating better awareness of each other’s strengths within the private sector of the two countries. It was, therefore, agreed that trade missions would be undertaken and participation in trade/commercial exhibitions in both countries would be encouraged. In this context, they welcomed the signing of an MOU, during the visit, between the apex Indian industry association, FICCI (Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry) and its Guyanese counterpart, establishing a Joint Business Council, and that the first meeting of the JBC would be held before the end of the year.

16. India noted the participation by Guyana in regional organizations such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Amazonian Cooperation Treaty (ACT) and the Organisation of American States (OAS) in support of the
objectives of the integration of the Caribbean region and the wider hemisphere. They further noted the efforts of Guyana to participate in the globalisation process. Guyana welcomed India’s interest in forging closer ties with the Caribbean Community.

17. In exchanging views on the world situation, the two sides noted that India and Guyana face special and similar challenges in their efforts to protect the environment while simultaneously forging ahead with rapid social and economic development of their countries. In this context, the two sides agreed to work together in a practical manner to cooperate on preserving the environment and ensuring sustainable development and to coordinate positions on climate change, bio-diversity and other issues in relevant multilateral fora. They reiterated their full support for the Millennium Development Goals and the need for additional international financing to achieve them.

18. The two sides recognized that small developing states continued to face challenges in the current global environment due to high levels of poverty, physical vulnerability, debt servicing, limited access to international capital and threats to preferential regimes. In addition, economic and social progress of some of them continued to be hindered by rising levels of crime and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The two sides agreed that the needs of small developing states should be fully addressed to enable them to effectively participate in the globalisation process.

19. With regard to the world trading system, both sides underscored the need for international trade negotiations to obtain balanced and equitable results. In regard to the developing countries and in particular the small vulnerable economies, the size and difference in levels of economic development should be taken into account for special and differential treatment.

20. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to promote the formation of an equitable multi-polar world order based on the equality of states, rule of law, territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic affairs of States with a view to removing threats to stability and international security. In this context, they recalled the concept to promote a New Global Human Order based on equity and social justice advanced by the late Dr. Cheddi Jagan, former President of Guyana.
21. The two sides acknowledged the vital importance of the role of the United Nations in world peace, stability and development. They remained determined to continue their efforts in strengthening the UN system as the central mechanism for ensuring international peace and security as well as democratizing international relations. They reiterated their support for the need to reform the UN, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They stressed, in particular, the need for equitable balance in the expanded Security Council to provide a constructive voice to the aspirations of the developing countries. They believed that piecemeal and discriminatory approaches to such expansion will be inconsistent with the objectives of that world body. Considering that India is the largest democracy in the world and in view of its past contributions to the promotion of peace and its role in advancing the interests and concerns of developing countries in international fora, Guyana affirmed its full support to India for permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council.

22. The two sides expressed their concern over the increase in international terrorism, religious extremism, trans-border organized crime and illicit trafficking in arms and drugs. They viewed this upsurge as a serious threat to sovereign states, international peace, development, security and stability. They affirmed that terrorism was a grave violation of human rights and a crime against humanity and that no excuse could justify it in any form. They agreed that the fight against terrorism by the international community has to be global, comprehensive and sustained, with the ultimate objective of its total eradication from the world. Action should be taken against those states, entities and individuals who support, finance, harbour or abet terrorists or provide them shelter, safe havens or asylum to engage in cross-border terrorism. In that regard it was essential that every State be made to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting, training or participating in terrorist acts in another state or acquiescing in organized activities within its territories directed towards the commission of such acts. In this context, they stressed the importance of strict, full and unconditional implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution on the fight against terrorism and reiterated in particular their commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution 1373. They stressed the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through the early finalisation and adoption of the draft Comprehensive Convention

23. In this connection, the Guyanese side appreciated the evolving security concerns of India in the light of recent local, regional and global developments. It appreciated the initiatives taken by India to resume diplomatic relations with Pakistan. In this connection, the Guyanese side supported the resolution of differences between India and Pakistan through bilateral dialogue.


25. The two sides reaffirmed their allegiance to the principle of peaceful and negotiated resolution of disputes as opposed to the use of force or the threat thereof, pursuant to the applicable rules of international law.

26. The President of Guyana, H.E. Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo, extended invitations to the President of the Republic of India, H.E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and to the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, to visit Guyana at an early date. The invitations were accepted with pleasure. The dates of the visits would be finalized through diplomatic channels.

27. On behalf of the Government and the people of Guyana, H.E. President Jagdeo expressed sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of India for all the hospitality extended to him and his delegation and the excellent arrangements made for their visit to and stay in India.

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Peru


The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Peru (hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Parties);

Recognising the friendly ties existing between the two countries;

Desirous of strengthening further and to consolidate their traditional friendly relations;

Desirous further of facilitating travel between the two countries;

Have agreed as follows:

**ARTICLE - 1**

Citizens of either Contracting Party who are holders of a valid diplomatic, service or official passport are not required to obtain a visa to enter, exit, transit through or stay in the territory of the other Contracting Party for a period not exceeding ninety (90) days.

**ARTICLE - 2**

Citizens of either Contracting Party who are assigned as members of Diplomatic Mission, Consular Post or an International Organization in the territory of the other Contracting Party and in possession of valid diplomatic, service or official passports, as well as their family members holding the said passports, shall not be required to obtain a visa to enter the territory of the other Contracting Party and shall be granted residence visas valid for the duration of their assignment at the written request of the Diplomatic Mission or Consulate concerned.

**ARTICLE – 3**

The holders of diplomatic, service or official passports of either Contracting Party who are international civil servants or who are employed by an
international organization, body, agency or any other such entity, would be required to obtain visa prior to their travel to the territory of the other Contracting Party for official visits.

**ARTICLE - 4**

This Agreement does not affect the right of the competent authorities of the Contracting Parties to refuse permission to enter its territory or terminate stay on its territory to any citizen of the other Contracting Party considered “persona non grata” without mentioning reasons for this purpose.

**ARTICLE – 5**

Holders of a valid diplomatic, service or official passport of either Contracting Party, during their stay in the territory of the other Contracting Party, are obliged to abide by its laws and regulations currently in force.

**ARTICLE - 6**

If a citizen of one Contracting Party loses his/her passport in the territory of the other Contracting Party, he/she shall inform the authorities concerned of the host country for appropriate. The diplomatic Mission or Consulate concerned will issue a fresh passport or travel document to its citizen and inform the concerned authorities of the host Government.

**ARTICLE - 7**

Each Contracting Party has the right, for security, public order or health reasons, to suspend temporarily, partially or totally, the force of the present Agreement. The beginning and the termination of such a suspension shall be notified immediately to the other Contracting Party through diplomatic channels.

**ARTICLE - 8**

1. The Contracting Parties shall convey to each other, through diplomatic channels, specimens of their respective diplomatic, service and official passports currently used at least thirty (30) days prior to the entry into force of this Agreement.

2. In case of introduction of new diplomatic, service and official passports or modification of the same, the Contracting Parties shall convey to each other, through the same way, their specimens, at least thirty (30) days prior to their application.
ARTICLE - 9

Any dispute arising out of the effective implementation of the Agreement between the Contracting Parties shall be settled through mutual consultations.

ARTICLE -10

This Agreement shall enter into force thirty (30) days from the day of receipt of the last notification in which the Contracting Parties have informed each other, through diplomatic channels of the fulfillment of internal requirements for the entry into force of the Agreement.

This Agreement has been concluded for an indefinite period. Each Contracting Party may at any time terminate the Agreement, by writing, through diplomatic channels. Its validity shall be terminated after thirty (30) days of the handing over of the written notification to the other Contracting Party.

This Agreement may be modified or amended by mutual consent of the two Contracting Parties.

Done at Lima on 3rd June, 2003 in two originals each in Hindi, Spanish and English languages, all the texts being equally authentic, in case of doubt, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government
Of the Republic of India

For the Government
Of the Republic of Peru
366. Briefing Points by Official Spokesperson on External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha’s visit to Lima, Peru.

New Delhi, June 5, 2003.

1. At the invitation of Peruvian Foreign Minister, Ambassador Allan Wagner, EAM visited Lima from June 3 – 4, 2003. This is the first ever visit by an EAM to Peru and coincides with the 40th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between both countries. As a special gesture, EAM was presented with a guard of honour upon his entry into the Torre Tagle Palace, which is the headquarters of the Peruvian Foreign Office.

2. During his visit, EAM was received by President Toledo, with whom he had a 45-minute meeting. As a special gesture, President Toledo escorted EAM and saw him off till the gates of the Presidential Palace.

3. EAM met and had discussions with Foreign Minister Wagner, First Vice President and Minister of External Trade and Tourism, H.E. Mr. Raul Diez Canseco, the Minister of Education, H.E. Mr. Gerardo Ayzanoa del Carpio. He also called on President Alejandro Toledo. Lima hosts the secretariat of the Andean Community of countries and EAM met with the Secretary General of the Andean Community, Dr. Guillermo Fernandez de Soto. Peru is the current Chair of the Rio group of 19 Latin American countries and EAM had a meeting with Foreign Minister Wagner in his capacity as the President of the Rio Group, attended by the Ambassadors of the remaining Troika countries viz. Brazil and Costa Rica.

4. An important delegation from CII accompanied EAM. The business delegates also had a series of meetings with the local chambers of commerce.

5. Bilateral discussions with Peru focussed on wide variety of issues of mutual interest. Apart from discussions on further cooperation in fields like agriculture, space, information technology, Antarctica and culture, both sides highlighted their convergence of positions on issues of global interest. Both countries, while noting the substantial increase in bilateral trade, also underscored the need for further efforts by the business community in this regard. In addition, they agreed to examine the possibility of signing agreements on promotion and protection of investments and double taxation avoidance to spur trade and investment.
6. In his meetings, EAM highlighted India’s economic and technological strengths and conveyed India’s offer of sharing these with developing countries, particularly Peru. EAM also underscored the durability of achievements under democracy in the long run.

7. Both countries agreed on the need to democratise and reform the United Nations, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. In a landmark decision, Peru extended its support to India’s claim for a permanent seat in an expanded Security Council.

8. On the occasion of the visit, India and the Andean Community signed a framework agreement¹ to establish a mechanism of regular dialogue and consultations on various issues of mutual interest. This will permit the strengthening and diversification of the ties of friendship, understanding and cooperation, as also the development of commercial relations, investment, cultural, scientific and tourism exchanges between India and the members of the Andean Community. Both sides hoped to initiate discussion to sign in a future a PTA or an FTA.

9. In his meeting with the Secretary General of the Andean Community, the magnitude of the scope and potential for cooperation was discussed. EAM proposed the setting up of a joint expert group to study and make recommendations for a comprehensive economic engagement between the two sides.

10. In discussions with the Rio Group, both sides reiterated the need to work closely on issues of mutual interest, particularly on taking common WTO positions. Both sides expressed their hope for an early signing of an agreement to establish a formal dialogue mechanism between India and the Rio Group.

11. A 31-point joint statement was issued during the visit.

12. Both sides signed an agreement on Abolition of visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official / service passports².

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¹ Document No. 352
² Document No. 365
367. Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to Peru.


1. On the invitation of the Foreign Minister of Peru, H.E. Ambassador Allan Wagner, the External Affairs Minister of India, Shri Yashwant Sinha paid an official visit to Peru from 3rd to 4th June, 2003. This visit coincides with the 40th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between both countries.

2. During his visit, the External Affairs Minister of India had a special meeting with the President of the Republic of Peru, H.E. Dr. Alejandro Toledo. Shri Sinha conveyed the greetings of the President of the Republic of India, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam and of the Prime Minister of India, Shri A. B. Vajpayee.

3. The External Affairs Minister of India, Shri Sinha, held an official meeting with the Foreign Minister of Peru and met and held discussions with the First Vice President and Minister of External Trade and Tourism, H.E. Mr. Raul Diez Canseco, the Minister of Education, H.E. Mr. Gerardo Ayzanoa del Carpio and the Secretary General of the Andean Community, H.E. Dr. Guillermo Fernandez de Soto. In addition, he also had a meeting with Foreign Minister Wagner in his capacity as the President of the Rio Group, and with Ambassador Andre Amado, Representative of Brazil, and Ambassador Julio Suñol, Representative of Costa Rica, being the countries that make up the Rio Group Troika.

4. The External Affairs Minister visited Peru accompanied by an important delegation of Indian businessmen interested in exploring the possibilities of investment and trade.

5. The talks were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere and covered a wide-range of issues pertaining to bilateral, regional and global matters of mutual interest. The two sides noted with satisfaction that India-Peru relations are marked by a high degree of mutual understanding and similarity of views on almost all current issues of international importance. Both sides reiterated their desire and commitment to further strengthen their bilateral relations based on mutual friendship and understanding.

6. The Indian side noted with satisfaction the efforts of the people
and Government of Peru, under the leadership of President Toledo, to consolidate democracy, maintain the supremacy of rule of law and respect for human rights, and to work for social reconciliation. The Indian side also noted the appreciable performance of the Peruvian economy in the recent past.

7. The two sides noted with satisfaction the increase in bilateral trade that was around US$ 80 million in the year 2002. At the same time, both sides stressed the need for the private sector as well as the chambers of commerce and industry in both countries to work closely towards promoting trade, investment and economic development. They also expressed their desire to continue exploring new opportunities for augmenting bilateral trade.

8. The Ministers expressed their interest in the early conclusion of the negotiations for signing an Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investments. They also highlighted the importance of initiating negotiations towards the adoption of a Preferential Tariff Agreement and an Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation, all as part of a supportive and stable legal framework for the promotion of investment between both countries.

9. Both countries agreed to work together in taking common positions on issues of interest to developing countries in the WTO, with the aim of ensuring liberalization of international trade in goods and services while strengthening development.

10. India and Peru recognised the need to reactivate and renew the agreements already signed in the fields of agriculture, space, information technology, Antarctica and culture with the objective of consolidating political, trade, economic, scientific and technological linkages. Both sides agreed on the necessity of continuing to explore potential areas of cooperation for mutual benefit.

11. Both sides recognized the potential of trade and cooperation between the two countries in the Communication & IT sector and the need to tap capabilities and opportunities in this sector in a more focused and comprehensive manner. The Indian side agreed to examine the possibility of cooperation and participation in the Huascaran project of the Peruvian Government.

12. Being members and Consultative Parties of the Antarctic Treaty, both sides agreed to encourage their respective national Antarctic
Institutes to strengthen their mutual cooperation through the exchange of experts, participation in studies and scientific programmes and the examination of possibilities of developing joint projects in the Antarctic continent.

13. Both sides agreed to promote the early conclusion of the Joint Work Plan between the Peruvian Agricultural Research Institute (INIA) and the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), the signing of a new cooperation agreement between the Peruvian National Council for Science and Technology (CONCYTEC) and the Indian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). In addition, they agreed to work for the renewal of the cooperation agreement for peaceful uses of nuclear energy between the Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy (IPEN) and the Indian Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), as well as exploring the possibility of cooperation in the fabrication of composite material for low-cost housing.

14. The Peruvian side thanked India for providing technical training to several persons from Peru under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Program (ITEC).

15. Both Ministers welcomed the agreements reached on the Plan of Implementation at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, reaffirming the Rio principles, in particular, of common but differentiated responsibilities. They also welcomed the commitments adopted at the Millennium Summit and noted the resolve of the world community at the Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey in March, 2002 to eradicate global poverty.

16. The Ministers expressed their concern about the adverse effects of climate change and its implications and highlighted the vulnerabilities of both countries to this problem, one of the effects of which is the phenomenon of “El Niño”. In this regard, they expressed their desire for an early entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol of the Framework Convention of the United Nations on Climate Change.

17. India and Peru being Mega Bio-diverse countries, both sides welcomed the “Cusco Declaration on Access to Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Property Rights of the Group of Like-minded Megadiverse Countries”, adopted at Urubamba on November 29, 2002. In this regard, both sides highlighted the
importance of the initiation of negotiations within the framework of the Convention on Bio-Diversity towards an international regime for promoting and protecting the just and equitable distribution of benefits derived from the utilisation of genetic resources. At the same time, both sides agreed to work together towards protecting traditional knowledge and the rights and interests of the people who possess such traditional knowledge.

18. Both Ministers expressed their satisfaction at the signing of the Agreement for the “Establishment of a Mechanism of Political Consultation and Cooperation between India and the Andean Community”, which would permit the strengthening and diversification of the ties of friendship, understanding and cooperation, as also the development of commercial relations, investment, cultural, scientific and tourism exchanges between India and the members of the Andean Community. In this regard, they committed themselves to promote necessary actions to achieve these objectives. The Indian side expressed deep appreciation at Peru’s role in facilitating the above agreement.

19. The External Affairs Minister of India, Shri Sinha, also met with the Secretary General of the Andean Community, H.E. Dr. Guillermo Fernandez de Soto. Among other issues, they held discussions on the implementation of “Mechanism of Political Consultation and Cooperation between India and the Andean Community”, as also on the possibilities of negotiating in future a Preferential Tariff Agreement or a Free Trade Agreement between India and the Andean Community.

20. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction at the meeting of the External Affairs Minister of India and the Foreign Ministers/Representatives of the Rio Group Troika. In this regard, they reiterated their commitment to the further strengthening of the linkages between India and the Rio Group. The Indian side expressed special appreciation at the efforts of Peru as Pro-Tempore Secretary of the Rio Group to forge closer ties between India and the Rio Group.

21. During his meeting with the Foreign Ministers/Representatives of the Rio Group Troika, the External Affairs Minister of India noted the importance of the XVII Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Rio Group held on May 23 – 24, 2003. In this
regard, the Troika Foreign Ministers/Representatives briefed the External Affairs Minister of India regarding the “Cusco Consensus”, approved at that Summit, highlighting the need for innovative financial mechanisms for attending to the social needs as a way of supporting democratic governance and for overcoming poverty, as well as the role of political parties in the strengthening of institutionalised democracy.

22. The two sides reaffirmed their faith in the Non-aligned Movement. They agreed that the NAM can play an important role in addressing global issues such as poverty alleviation, financing for development, food security, issues of international peace and security, terrorism and disarmament as well as environmental protection.

23. India and Peru share the belief that the emerging world order should be just, equitable, multi-polar and based on the principles of democracy, sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of states and respect for human rights and principles of the United Nations.

24. They reiterated their commitment to work for the achievement of the objectives agreed to at the Second Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies, held in Seoul from November 10 – 12, 2002.

25. Both countries reiterated their support for the democratisation and reform of the United Nations, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They especially stressed the need for an equitable balance in the expanded Security Council to provide a constructive voice to the aspirations of the developing countries. They agreed that piecemeal and discriminatory approaches to such expansion will be inconsistent with the objectives of the world body. Keeping in mind that India is the largest democracy in the world and in view of its past contributions to the promotion of peace, Peru extended its support for India’s claim for permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council. At the same time, India extended its support to the Peruvian candidature for the non-permanent membership of the Security Council for the period 2006-07.

26. India and Peru affirmed that terrorism cannot be justified in any form for any cause or for any reason. They agreed that the fight against terrorism has to be global, comprehensive and sustained
with the objective of achieving total elimination of terrorism worldwide with full respect of international law and human rights. To this end they stressed the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through the adoption of a Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism. In this context, the two sides reiterated their commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution No.1373.

27. Both countries reiterated their rejection of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, and reaffirmed their commitment to mutual cooperation in the fight against these problems.

28. Both sides noted with satisfaction the high-level contacts that had been facilitated between the Parliaments of both the countries. The Indian side noted with satisfaction the reactivation of the India – Peru Parliamentary Friendship League in the Peruvian Congress and welcomed the visit of Peruvian Congressmen to India in January 2003. Both sides agreed to encourage a sustained dialogue between the Parliaments of the two democracies.

29. The Foreign Ministers signed an agreement on the “Abolition of visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official / service passports”.

30. The External Affairs Minister of India extended an invitation on behalf of the President of India, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam to the President of Peru, H.E. Dr. Alejandro Toledo to visit India. The Minister also extended an invitation to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, H.E. Ambassador Allan Wagner to visit India. The invitations were accepted with pleasure and it was agreed that mutually convenient dates would be finalized through diplomatic channels.

31. At the end of the visit, the Indian side expressed sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of Peru for the hospitality extended to them and the excellent arrangements made for their visit to Peru.

For the Government of
The Republic of India
Yashwant Sinha
Minister of External Affairs

For the Government of the
Republic of Peru
Allan Wagner
Minister of Foreign Affairs

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Suriname

368. Speech of President A. P.J. Abdul Kalama at a banquet in honour of the President of the Republic of Suriname Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan.

New Delhi, March 17, 2003.

Your Excellency, Mr. Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan, President of the Republic of Suriname, and Madam Venetiaan, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government and people of India, it gives me great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency and Madam Venetiaan, a very warm welcome on the occasion of your State Visit to India.

Though geographically distant, our two countries have traditionally had very close cultural linkages. One hundred and thirty years ago, a sizeable Indian-origin population migrated to your country in search of a better livelihood and economic opportunities. To all these people, who have prospered in your country, the people of India would like to offer felicitations. That they have flourished in a distant and foreign land is because all communities migrating to Suriname have had opportunities to integrate into one single family and one single country. This multi-ethnic ethos of modern Surinamese society, in many ways, corresponds to the diverse ethnic and social fabric of the modern Indian society.

Besides traditional cultural linkages, our two nations also share other commonalities. Both are committed to achievement of economic development and prosperity for our masses through democratic means. As in the case of Suriname, India too awakened to freedom and independence after years of colonial rule. Having been through the experience, we fully appreciate Suriname's endeavours to establish its own identity in the comity of nations.

Excellency, during the last five and a half decades of existence as an independent nation, India has made forays into diverse fields. In the light of the requirements of the emerging global economy, we attach a high priority to the pursuit of excellence in knowledge-based high technology sectors. Having evolved through the green revolution in agriculture, white revolution in dairy farming and the industrial transition
to high-technology areas, we would now like to apply the expertise of our vast human resources sector for addressing the developmental problems of our billion-strong population. To achieve this, we arduously strive for achieving important South-South objectives pertaining to the establishment of a more equitable and balanced trading system, a new international economic order and a more representative UN system. In this connection, we deeply value your country’s cooperation with India in regional and multilateral organisations on issues of mutual concern. We also appreciate Suriname’s support for our candidates in the UN and other international fora.

Suriname is a potentially rich country with an abundance of natural resources. India on the other hand has a technological base with a large reservoir of technical manpower, with a proven capacity and track record of contributing tangibly to many developed countries’ industries and economies. Again, Suriname is strategically located in the Caribbean region and is a dynamic and active member of CARICOM, ACP, FTAA and other such regional cooperation initiatives. Given this background, our countries could fruitfully collaborate not only in the export of products but also in providing services to other countries of that region - both developed and developing. India can be your partner for value addition, by evolving industrial products and bio-diversity products, for example herbs to molecules to drugs.

In this context, we have noted with great interest the new areas of priority - such as strengthening of institutionalised training for Surinamese in key sectors, augmenting of Indian ITEC assistance and other such sectors identified by your Government during this visit. We will be happy to cooperate with Suriname in all these areas. To do this, the scope of the ongoing cooperation under the Joint Commission should be suitably widened. We also recommend more active networking at the level of the private sector in both countries.

India’s relationship with Suriname in all such matters would be in accordance with its established track record and the time-honoured tradition of reaching out to the developing world fraternity in a spirit of South-South Cooperation. Under this policy, our Government has established new bridges with our brethren in the African, Asian and Latin American regions. It will be India’s endeavour to continue this tradition and also to widen such ongoing bilateral cooperation.
To achieve these objectives, the Government of India is trying its best to forge closer linkages through policy incentives such as the Line of Credit arrangements proposed to be extended to Suriname. It is our hope and expectation that the Surinamese Government and the private sector will respond positively to these initiatives.

The population of Indian-origin in Suriname is known for its esteem and regard for various Indian cultural and religious traditions. Widening this dialogue by initiating high-level cooperation at the government level and also by increased interaction between the business communities in both countries can now be given sharper focus in the years to come. Owing to the diverse opportunities for networking offered through modern communications, this should not be too difficult to achieve.

Excellency, I would like to conclude by extending my best wishes for your delegation’s fruitful visit to our country. I am confident that guided by your able statesmanship, our two countries will be able to evolve a tangible agenda of cooperation, on various issues of mutual interest.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I now request all the distinguished guests to join me in raising a toast:-

- to the personal good health and happiness of His Excellency Mr. Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan, President of the Republic of Suriname and Madame Venetiaan;

- to the well-being and prosperity of the people of Suriname; and

- to the everlasting friendship between India and Suriname.

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369. Joint Statement issued on the visit of President of Surinam R. R. Venetiaan.

New Delhi, March 17, 2003.

1. The President of Suriname, H. E. Mr. R. R. Venetiaan undertook a State Visit to India from March 16-20, 2003 upon the invitation of the President of India H. E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

2. Within the framework of the visit H. E. Mr. Venetiaan held fruitful discussions with H. E. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of the Republic of India, and H.E. Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India.

3. During bilateral discussions held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere, both sides exchanged views on various bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

4. Both sides noted with satisfaction that India-Suriname relations, which have a strong cultural and historical basis, are marked by cordiality and a high degree of understanding and close proximity on current principal issues. Both sides reiterated their desire to strengthen bilateral relations based on the traditionally close ties between the two countries.

5. India noted the efforts of Suriname to increasingly integrate with regional organizations such as, CARICOM, ACP, OAS and also the global economy. In this connection, both sides recognized that considerable potential exists for India to undertake mutually beneficial cooperation with Suriname in various sectors.

6. Suriname is a country with rich untapped natural resources and emerging infrastructural requirements. Given India’s varied experience in high technology and industrial areas, India could, in a spirit of South-South cooperation, share expertise in priority areas identified by Suriname.

7. To these ends, the Indian side agreed to consider suitably extending the scope of ongoing cooperation under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation. India also agreed to double the quota of ITEC scholarships offered to Suriname from 15 to 30 slots. Possibility of deputing Indian ITEC experts in key sectors identified by Suriname would also be considered.
8. With a view to giving fillip to ongoing cooperation in the economic and commercial area, the Indian side agreed to extend a concessional line of credit of US $ 10 million to Suriname through the Exim Bank of India for undertaking developmental projects and activities in Suriname jointly identified by the two sides and requiring Indian products and services.

9. The two sides noted that besides projects already identified for the US $ 10 million Credit Line being extended by India to Suriname, some Surinamese companies had requisitioned for the technical services of Indian companies e.g. EBS of Suriname had signed an MoU with M/s. P.E.C. and L & T of India for setting up an electrical transmission line from Paranam to Paramaribo. In connection with all such developmental projects requiring application of Indian products and expertise in Suriname, Indian side agreed to give best possible consideration for extending similar concessional credit line facilities through Exim Bank of India.

10. As a gesture of its commitment to further strengthening India-Suriname bilateral relations, the Indian side agreed to waive in entirety, all pending payments due by Suriname to India against the first Credit Line of Rs. 50 million extended by India in 1992.

11. Both sides noted that a high-level Surinamese delegation, led by Health Minister of Suriname and including representatives of the private sector had participated in an India – Latin American Health Summit held in India in September 2002. During the visit, possibilities of sharing Indian expertise in the areas of hospital management services, deployment of Indian medical doctors and specialists in Surinamese hospitals, the public health sector, for control of malaria and other infectious tropical diseases and sourcing of Indian medicines at economical costs, were identified. In order to give impetus to such cooperation, the Indian side agreed to donate Indian medicines worth US $ 100,000/- to Suriname for treatment of different diseases.

12. Although the bilateral Joint Commission meeting could not take place in 2001 in India due to constraints in both countries, both sides agreed to give high priority to intensifying cooperation in all the agreed sectors of cooperation and to consider the possibility of convening a meeting of the Joint Commission in New Delhi this year on mutually convenient dates.
13. The following agreements were signed during this State Visit:

a) MoU on Agriculture;

b) Cultural Exchange Programme

c) Agreement on extending a new US$10 million Line of Credit by India to Suriname

Possibility of signing Agreements/MoU in the field of civil aviation; in the area of technical cooperation and in Information Technology would be given high priority by both sides.

14. Both sides emphasized the need for creating better awareness of each other’s strengths within the private sector of the two countries. Trade missions would be undertaken and participation in trade/commercial exhibitions in both countries would be encouraged. In keeping with these objectives, they welcomed the decision of the apex Indian industry association, FICCI (Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry) to sign an MoU with its Surinamese counterpart KKF (Surinamese Chamber of Commerce & Industry) during the visit. They also welcomed the proposal to establish a Joint Business Council between the two countries.

15. The two sides reiterated their support to the need to reform the UN, particularly the expansion of the UN Security Council. They stressed, in particular, the need for equitable balance in the expanded Security Council to provide a constructive voice to the aspirations of the developing countries. They believed that piecemeal and discriminatory approaches to such expansion will be inconsistent with the objectives of that world body. Considering that India is the largest democracy in the world and in view of its past contributions to the promotion of peace, Suriname expressed support for India’s claim for permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council.

16. India and Suriname affirmed that terrorism cannot be justified in any form, for any cause or for any reason as an excuse. They agreed that the fight against terrorism has to be global, comprehensive and sustained for the objective of total elimination of terrorism worldwide. In this context, they reiterated their commitment to the UN Security Council Resolution 1373. They stressed the need to strengthen the international legal regime to fight terrorism through
the adoption of the comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

17. The Surinamese side appreciated the evolving security concerns of India in the light of recent local, regional and global developments. It appreciated the restraint and responsibility shown by India despite its varied defence capabilities. In this connection, Surinamese side supported the resolution of differences between India and Pakistan through bilateral dialogue. It also recognized that cross-border infiltration and terrorism had to end to encourage resumption of dialogue. It called on concerned countries to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism and to stop serving as a platform for international terrorism.

18. Both sides noted with satisfaction that in the recent past, high-level contacts had been facilitated between the Parliaments of both countries. The Hon’ble Speaker of the Suriname led a parliamentary delegation to India in August 2002 and also graced the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Indian Parliament in January 2003. Likewise, the Hon’ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha (Lower House of the Indian Parliament) had accepted the invitation of the Hon’ble Speaker of the Suriname National Assembly to visit Suriname as per mutual convenience. Both sides welcomed such contacts and agreed to maintain a sustained dialogue between the parliaments of the two democracies.

19. The Indian side expressed pleasure that Suriname will be the next venue for the Seventh World Hindi Conference in Paramaribo from June 5-9, 2003.

20. The Indian side welcomed the invitation by the Government of Suriname for India to participate as a guest country in the mega CARICOM cultural event (CARIFESTA) being hosted by Surinamese in August 2003 and agreed to send an Indian cultural contingent to perform in the event.

21. The Surinamese side expressed sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of India for all the hospitality extended to them and the excellent arrangements made for their visit to India.
Trinidad and Tobago


Port of Spain, February 5, 2003.

PREAMBLE

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (hereinafter referred to as the “Contracting Parties”):

DESIROUS of strengthening and developing lasting political, economic, commercial, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit;

CONSIDERING the historical and traditional ties between the Contracting Parties and convinced that the development of cooperation between India and Trinidad and Tobago is of mutual benefit and constitutes an example of fruitful cooperation between developing countries;

COMMITTED to implementing the decision adopted by the two Governments on September 1, 2000 to establish a Joint Commission with the objective of widening, diversifying and strengthening bilateral relations between the Contracting Parties;

COGNIZANT of the need to adopt a global approach to enhancing cooperation within a framework which will integrate and coordinate other agreements and memoranda of understanding signed between the Contracting Parties;

NOW AGREE as follows:

ARTICLE 1

The India-Trinidad and Tobago Inter-Governmental Commission, hereinafter referred to as the “Joint Commission”, is established for the purpose of fostering political, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation between the Contracting Parties and promoting
development in the energy, agricultural, low-cost housing and small-scale industrial sectors.

**ARTICLE 2**

The Joint Commission will undertake to:

(a) Consider appropriate measures to strengthen the relations between the Contracting Parties in areas of mutual interest including political, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation;

(b) Discuss issues of major relevance to the Contracting Parties, to determine the main objectives of common interest and recommend ways and means of implementing them;

(c) Indicate priority areas in which cooperation should take place;

(d) Examine the workings of the various bilateral agreements in force between the two countries as well as the implementation of the decisions of the bodies instituted by these agreements;

(e) Explore the possibilities and means of encouraging relations between the commercial and industrial enterprises of the Contracting Parties with the objective of promoting bilateral trade;

(f) Consider the means of promoting transfer of technology within the framework of the agreements and in accordance with existing legislation in both countries so as to support mutual access to each other’s markets and facilitate reciprocal investments that may be advantageous to the two economies;

(g) Promote the study and consideration of subject areas which are mutually acceptable and, where necessary, establish Committees and Working Groups to consider specific issues.

**ARTICLE 3**

The Joint Commission shall be co-chaired by the Minister of External Affairs/Foreign Affairs of each, Contracting Party.

Each Contracting Party shall appoint representatives, including an Executive Secretary, to the Joint Commission.

The Joint Commission shall meet every two years alternately in New Delhi.
and Port of Spain on mutually agreed dates.

Meetings of the Joint Commission shall be chaired by the Co-Chairman from the host country.

The Joint Commission shall conduct its meetings as per the approved working schedule agreed to between the Co-Chairmen.

Meetings of the Joint Commission may be attended by the requisite number of advisers and experts of each Party.

**ARTICLE 4**

The schedule of regular meetings and the preliminary agenda shall be settled by the Co-Chairmen through consultations before the commencement of the meeting.

The meeting shall consider predetermined agenda items as well as the items which, subject to the Co-Chairmen’s consent, may be included in the agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

**ARTICLE 5**

Decisions at the Joint Commission’s meetings shall be adopted by consensus.

Decisions of the Joint Commission shall come into force on the date of signing, if not provided otherwise.

Decisions that have to be approved by the authorized bodies of one or both of the Contracting Parties shall come into force only after notification(s) regarding such authorization(s) have been exchanged between the Contracting Parties.

**ARTICLE 6**

Results and decisions of the Joint Commission meetings shall be reflected in the Agreed Minutes which shall be signed by the Co-Chairmen.

Agreed Minutes of the Joint Commission meetings shall be done in English and Hindi languages, both texts being equally authentic.

**ARTICLE 7**

In order to fulfil its tasks the Joint Commission may set up as many permanent and provisional Sub-Commissions or Sectoral Working Groups
as may be deemed necessary to deal with specific areas of cooperation. The Sub-Commissions/Sectoral Working Groups shall meet separately but shall submit reports of their work to the Joint Commission at each session and shall carry out their work pursuant to the plans and decisions approved by the Joint Commission.

The Joint Commission and its Sub-Commissions may adopt such rules and procedures as may be necessary for their functioning in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE 8**

The Executive Secretaries of the Joint Commission in each country shall be responsible for organizing their respective activities, coordinating the work of the Joint Commission's executive bodies, preparing documents for Joint Commission meetings and tending to matters of an administrative nature with respect to the activities of the Joint Commission. The Executive Secretaries shall consult regularly with each other for this purpose.

**ARTICLE 9**

Expenses arising out of Joint Commission meetings and the work of its permanent and provisional bodies shall be borne by the Party hosting the meeting.

All travel and living expenses, including hotel accommodation for visiting delegations shall, however, be borne by the sending country.

**ARTICLE 10**

1. Each Contracting Party will notify the other in writing through diplomatic channels when it has completed the formalities required by its domestic law for the entry into force of this Agreement. This Agreement will enter into force on the later of the two dates of receipt of such notification.

2. This Agreement shall remain in force for a period of five (5) years. Thereafter, it shall be automatically renewed for successive periods of five (5) years each unless determined in accordance with this Article.

3. Either Party may denounce this Agreement at any time. The denunciation shall take effect six months from the date on which it
was notified in writing through diplomatic channels to the other Contracting Party.

4. In the event of termination of this Agreement, the programmes and projects in progress shall not be affected thereby and shall continue until completion, unless the Parties otherwise agree.

**ARTICLE 11**

Any dispute that may arise from the interpretation or application of this Agreement shall be settled by negotiation between the Contracting Parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement.

DONE in the city of PORT OF SPAIN on this 5th day of February 2003, in two originals in the English and Hindi languages, both texts being equally authentic.

For the Government of the Republic of India  
Minister of State for External Affairs

For the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

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INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003

Section - X

EUROPE
371. Speech by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha on “India-EU Relations: Perspectives in the 21st Century” at the Panteion University, Athens.


Excellencies,

I am very happy to be here today in Greece, the cradle of Western civilization and philosophy, to discuss how I see the future of India-EU relations. The ties between Greece and India are civilizational and span the millennia. The arrival of Alexander the Great to India in 327 BC was the first recorded contact between India and Greece. It is less well known that along with his vast army, Alexander brought with him a few philosophers including, Kallisthenes, who was the nephew of Aristotle. Even today, the name Sikander symbolizes Alexander in India. The catalyst however, which precipitated Greek civilization was the contact with the East even before Alexander’s invasion. Multiplicity of exchanges between Greek cities and their neighbours in the near East and Asia makes it hard to distinguish native and foreign contribution to Greek culture. The achievements that made Indian and the Greek civilization great are too varied and rich to be generalized and are impossible to summarize. Like Indian civilization, Greek civilization has over the years played an important role be it in art, culture, philosophy, poetry, mathematics, engineering etc. The cultural interplay has worked both ways and what it left behind was the seedbed that played a dynamic part in shaping today’s world.

The Indo-Hellenic cultural interaction continued long after Alexander’s death not only in art where inter-twining of our cultures was reflected graphically in the Gandhara School of Art, but also in the minting of coins and the introduction of Zodiac symbols to Indian astrology. Trade between East and West was another important link in this relationship.

Today, as modern dynamic societies our relations are based on the rich cultural heritage and links between our civilizations. At a time over the last two decades when democracy has spread, it would be only appropriate to mention that the genesis of this great tradition can be traced back to the great city-state of Athens. In fact, the magnitude of the Greek contribution lives on in the language that we still use today, for politics and political are terms derived from the Greek word for a city, ‘Polis’. The word ‘democracy’ itself is also derived from the Greek word ‘demokratia’ from ‘demos’ (the people) plus ‘kratia’ (power or rule).
I am particularly pleased to be here at the Panteion University to speak on this important subject in a year when the university is celebrating its 75th anniversary. I understand that it is the 5th oldest university in Greece dating back from 1927. The university has produced many distinguished alumni including the present Prime Minister of Greece whom I look forward to meeting tomorrow.

The last ten years have been momentous for Europe and for India. They have seen the transformation of the EU from a community to a union. The year 2002 saw the successful launching of the Euro and the decision at the Copenhagen Summit on the accession of ten new member states by 2004. After EU’s expansion from 15 to 25 States, its population will rise by 75 million bringing the total to around 453 million. The increase in population will further expand the single market. The EU’s GDP will grow by 5%. In terms of population, EU will be bigger than NAFTA comprising the US, Canada and Mexico, which have a population of around 400 million. What is significant is not only the size of the population, but the fact that this includes one of the most technologically advanced region of the world. Already in the forefront of science and technology, EU will take a further leap with the Galileo project, once it is implemented. We have also noted EU’s resolve to boost its R&D expenditure to maintain and strengthen its lead in science and technology. We understand that EU will provide for 17.5 billion Euros for research and development during the 4-year period 2002-2006.

This expansion of the European Union will no doubt have a profound effect on EU’s global role. It will also mean that the EU will have to address, as it is doing now, its own internal decision making structures to respond to the new challenges. The work of the Convention on the Future of Europe is of particular interest. The expansion has coincided with the development of military capacity within the EU to deal with security issues, including the establishment of a Rapid Reaction Force, greater surveillance capacity and greater readiness to take over some military operations in Europe in the future. These developments are also significant.

The past decade has also been momentous for India as we have transited from a mixed economy to a market economy. India is now a strong and powerful nation which has emerged on the world stage. We have today built significant national strength in every sense of the term. We have averaged 6% growth over the last decade and are targeting 8% over the next five years. Inflation has been at a record low. Our foreign exchange reserves are over US $ 70 billion. From a food shortage country,
we have become an exporter and donor of food grains. Our software industry is the envy of the world. Our space, nuclear science, bio-tech and other high-tech capabilities are a matter of pride. Most of all, it is widely acknowledged that our human resources are among the best in the world. Today India is integrated with the rest of the world and there is a natural synergy between Europe and India. It is clear that it is on this foundation that we must build our future relationship.

Europe, I need hardly emphasise, is a key trading partner of India and a very important investor of capital in India. This is however a two way relationship. It is important that we try to improve the bilateral trade which at Euro 25 billion is far below its potential. We need to set some ambitious targets. Participants at the third India-EU Business Summit on 8th October 2002 at Copenhagen repeatedly stressed the need for significantly boosting our economic relationship by raising the current level of trade of Euro 25 billion to Euro 35 billion by 2005 and double it in 2008.

It is evident that in a transformed relationship between India and the EU, traditional links have to be sustained and nurtured and new links established. In this context, I should cite the importance of cooperation in knowledge industries, whether Information Technology, Bio-Technology, Pharma or Chemicals. In these industries, India has a natural advantage and mutual cooperation could form the basis for our relationship in the 21st century.

Politically, the relationship has already been transformed with an institutionalized Summit level interaction between India and the EU beginning from the 1st India-EU Summit on 28th June, 2000, in Lisbon. The Lisbon Declaration spoke of ‘a new strategic partnership founded on shared values and aspirations characterized by enhanced and multi-faceted cooperation’. These shared values, as our Prime Minister pointed out recently, include democracy, pluralism and liberalism – all values of open, inclusive societies. We must not forget that the EU member states include some of the world’s oldest democracies, while India is the world’s largest democracy. As emerging powers in a multi-polar world, India and EU are also factors for international peace and stability.

The challenges faced by both India and the EU, a challenge that open, tolerant, multi-cultural societies like India and the EU have to face, is the one posed by international terrorism. India has been a victim of terrorism for over two decades. It has led to the killings of more than
60,000 people in our country during that period. The total number of terrorist related incidents from 1st January, 1990 to 31st December 2002 is 55,825. Post 11th September, 2001, the international community and the EU have also realized that terrorism transcends national boundaries and no country is safe from its violent and destructive hands. One could almost say, that globalization as it came to be defined, before September 11 was challenged by the globalization of terror after September 11. Terrorism has now become an ideology and a new tool in the conduct of international affairs. A multi-dimensional approach is required to face the common threat. We have to systematically choke off the four crucial lifelines of terrorist groups: refuge, finance, arms and any remaining ambivalence on the part of the international community. India and the EU have already taken some steps towards promoting cooperation including through the establishment of an India-EU Joint Working Group on terrorism. Cooperation with Europol would be the next and natural consequence.

One of the most vital principles in the fight against terrorism, which is accepted by India and the EU alike, is that there is no justification for terrorism whatever the causes behind it. Indeed this position is accepted by the UN as well, which has repeatedly affirmed that there can be no religious, ethnic, ideological or any other justification of terrorism. The argument of ‘root causes’ of terrorism is self-serving. This is often given by States and groups, which sponsor and support religious extremism for their narrow territorial or ideological aims. If accepted, this would only provide legitimacy to acts of terrorism. Violence is not the remedy for socio-economic deprivation, which must be addressed through development. Political differences should be settled through accommodation within a democratic framework, rather than cited as ground for destroying pluralistic, civil societies and violating human rights of innocent civilians. Terrorism cannot be part of freedom or national liberation struggle. India achieved its Independence through a non-violent struggle.

Let me now turn to investment and technology and the trade and business relationship. The problems between India and EU in the form of non-tariff barriers against Indian products needs to be addressed urgently. 3.5% of India’s exports to the EU are subjected to a variety of trade defence measures, including repeated Anti-Dumping investigations on textile and clothing items on which no domestic injury could be caused due to their being under quotas being maintained by EU. EC should explore
constructive remedies instead of taking anti-dumping measures as provided for the developing countries under the WTO’s Anti-Dumping Agreement. It would greatly facilitate trade especially in agricultural products if EU and India could mutually recognize each other’s ‘Export Inspection Agencies’. Mutual recognition of qualifications of each other professionals is another important area to facilitate movement of professionals in each others territories to provide services. This after all, is part of globalization.

We need a change in mindset and approach. We look forward to a relationship with the EU based on partnership. Indian companies are now ready to make investments and to share technology in some areas. This is not a one way street. The last India-EU Business Summit brought this out clearly. India and the EU should fully exploit the provisions of the Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation and should carry it forward to strategic areas also.

Research & Development is an important area for future attention. India is today one of the platforms for R&D in the world. More than 30 multi-national companies have R&D bases in India. Thanks to our Institutes of Science, Engineering & Technology, India possesses a huge reservoir of highly skilled manpower. This could be used to our mutual advantage.

Our economic reforms programme continues to move forward. India has made steady economic progress despite an international economic slowdown. For over a decade, India maintained a growth rate of 6.5% per annum. This has come down to around 5-5.6% in last two years. This is well above the international average. This is a considerable achievement in an uncertain post-September 11 environment marked by nervous markets, rising energy prices and slow pace of growth of major economies. We are trying to accelerate it further. With second generation reforms, including privatization, this pace is bound to quicken.

The pace of India’s economic reforms may not be as fast as some would wish, but it is steady. As a democracy, India has to build consensus on these issues. Many major reforms have already been implemented. India has abolished quantitative restrictions on imports. This includes the agricultural sector, which has great sensitivity in India as in Europe. India’s sizeable and growing middle class provides a large market to the EU. Foreign direct investment in India has increased this year despite fears in some quarters of an economic slow down. India has opened up Insurance and Banking sectors for Foreign Direct Investment. India’s Patent Law has been strengthened.
Only recently while discussing South Asian Cooperation, I had commented on the remarkable process by which the European Union came to acquire a political and strategic dimension becoming virtually a United States of Europe. The EU is indeed an example of regional cooperation that we in Asia could emulate.

Finally, it is the diversity of India that gives potential strength to the India-EU relationship. India is in many ways an unique country. Where else would you find a population of one billion plus with multiple ethnicities, all known religions, an array of cultural traditions, with an unparalleled gene pool and bio-diversity? Where would you find a floristically rich country, one of the 12 mega-centres of bio-diversity in the world, with over 45,000 species of plants (excluding aquatic life forms), a significant number of which are employed for medicinal purposes? Where would you find a rich heritage of traditional systems of medicine such as Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy and Tibetan (Amchi) systems? It is in this very individuality that lies the strength and dynamism of our future relationship. EU has to realize its gains in investing in this new, vibrant, creative and resurgent India.

The 21st century will surely be fundamentally different from the 20th. The dominant themes of the last century were imperialism, colonialism, apartheid, the Cold War and the East-West divide. Many of these issues are now behind us. The world is now globalised, inter-dependent with increasingly universalized norms. Democracy, pluralism and rule of law are the new watchwords for the international order. India and the EU need to develop and strengthen a framework in which both would confront and eventually overcome the global challenges to our common future such as international terrorism, drug trafficking, environmental degradation, population growth, poverty and food & energy shortages. India and the EU, liberal, pluralistic and multi-cultural democracies with open markets provide a strong underpinning for a future, multi-polar international order.
Inaugural Address by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha at the fourth India-EU Business Summit.

New Delhi, November 28, 2003.

Let me join Commissioner Chris Patten and all of you in first wishing Prime Minister Berlusconi a rapid recovery from the illness, which overtook his trip to India suddenly last evening. We were all extremely disappointed that he would not be able to come but we made sure that the Business Summit took place as planned and even the India-EU Summit went on. I am glad that Mr Prodi, Mr Solana, Mr Chris Patten - would all be available to us tomorrow for the India-EU summit and as Anand has pointed out that the Prime Minister of India will be able to address your plenary session tomorrow as planned, and I hope Mr Prodi will join him.

I have listened with great interest to the speeches which have been made here by Ms. Boniver and Commissioner Patten. I myself would like to begin by saying that we don’t look at the European Union merely as a group of nations that have come together, starting with the European Community in the 1960s to its present form. Of course, we are aware of the fact that 10 more nations will be joining the European Union on the 1st of May next year. With this, the total population of the European Union will be close to half a billion. It will be one of the largest common markets in the world and offer enormous opportunities for economic linkages with the rest of the world, including India. But, more importantly, we look upon the European Union as an idea, as a concept, as a philosophy of how nations should deal with each other. How nations, especially neighbours, could live in peace and prosperity with each other. I believe that what the European nations have done is an example to the rest of the world; an example which is certainly worth emulating in this part of the world.

The European Union is not only expanding territorially, in the sense that more countries are joining in next year and are slated to join in the near future, it is also evolving functionally and conceptually. It is acquiring a personality of its own. It has now a security and political dimension. Therefore, India’s engagement with the European Union is with this new Europe; it is with this new concept; it is with this new idea.

I would like to say that the European engagement with India is also with a new India. We, of course, have had a civilisational and historical relationship with each other. But just as Europe, has changed, so has India. We have worked hard over the last six decades to renew ourselves,
to reinvigorate ourselves and it is with this new concept of India that the world, and the European Union in particular, should deal with. The challenge is to give our old civilisational and historical ties a new, modern, dynamic content. As Mr. Chris Patten and Madam Boniver have pointed out, we share many human values; we share an outlook of the world which is common. We have no problems on the political and security front. We have a great deal of understanding there. We need to work harder on the economic and trade front in order to be able to achieve and surpass the targets that we set for ourselves in the Business Summit in Copenhagen last year. From bilateral trade worth 25 billion Euros, we set ourselves the target of 35 billion Euros by 2005 and we will take it to 50 billion Euros in 2008. If trade has expanded only by a paltry two per cent and reached 26 billion Euros in 2003, then you can understand the challenges that all of us are faced with. But it is not an insuperable challenge; it is a challenge that can be easily met if we just have the right mix of policies and attitudes to be able to achieve these goals.

When I said that there is a new India that Europe will be dealing with, it is not merely the recent feel-good factor I was referring to. I personally feel that Indian industry has come of age. When we started on the path of liberalisation in 1991, Indian industries faced a double whammy. The first was that we started reducing our tariffs. Our tariffs may not yet be what the world would like it to be and what we would like it to be. I personally believe that it is still high, but I would like to assure Mr. Patten that we are on a glide path and that glide path will ensure that we have a soft landing that we do not have a crash landing as and when the tariffs are reduced to levels the world expects. After Marrakech in 1993, we had to remove quantitative restrictions, and every year on all those tariff lines we kept on removing quantitative restrictions and Indian industry had to adjust to that. It has taken us some time. But today the confidence that I see in India Inc. is not merely of the immediate gains they might be making this year, it is out of this feeling that they have been able to adjust, that they have been able to reshape themselves and now they are ready to face the world. Therefore, there is a new India. There is a new India Inc.

Similarly Indian agriculture has adjusted. Indian agriculture has not merely increased production; it has increased Productivity; it has increased surpluses; it has increased exports. Who would have believed that our agriculture or food-grain exports would reach a level of US$ 7 billion as of last year? We have exported our surpluses and that is why in Cancun, India attracted such a great deal of interest in the world-trading regime relating to agriculture.
There is a new India in the field of science and technology. It is not merely, I keep on repeating; it is not merely in information technology, India’s strength extends to all areas of science and technology. India is today one of the largest platforms of research and development in the world. More than 30 multinational companies have R&D bases in India. India has a reservoir of 4 million trained professionals in various fields. We have 250 universities, 1,500 research institutions and over 10,000 higher education centres producing over 2 million undergraduates, 200,000 engineers, and 300,000 non-engineering graduates every year, including 5,000 doctors of philosophy. Therefore, India, which is paying ever increasing attention to the development of human resources, will not only be able to meet requirements at home, we will be and we are one of the largest suppliers of skilled manpower to the rest of the world.

There is a story, which I have often said before. There are the Iguvasu falls on the border of Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina. I was there when I was in Brazil. It is a very out of the way place. Suddenly, in the hotel somebody hailed me and I found it was a couple from Ghaziabad, a place near Delhi. What was the elderly couple doing there? They were visiting their son, who is the chief of Nokia in Rio de Janeiro. Indian professionals are all over the world, you meet them in the most unlikely places. This is the spread of human resource that India has. It is in this context that I would like to refer to the debate, which seems to be arising in various parts of the world with regard to business process outsourcing. If this is our strength, the world not only has to recognise that this is India’s strength the world has to learn to deal with it and to take advantage of it. Business process outsourcing is taking place because it is in the interest of those countries abroad to locate that particular part of their functioning in India. We are cheaper we are better and that is why they do it. Nobody is doing it out of a sense of charity. If it is not done, then those economies are going to suffer. You will not be competitive either in Europe or in the US or in Japan or anywhere else if business processes are not outsourced to India which has a strength in this area. But, there is some kind of a new threat that seems to be arising. I only hope that nations will have the maturity to deal this new threat and deal with it in a reasonable manner in their own interest.

Now take the external sector. Chris Patten referred to the crisis in East Asia some years ago. We had been careful and that is why we escaped the rigours of that crisis. But the fact that India has managed its external front very well is only slowly being recognised by the rest of the world. We not only have a foreign exchange reserve which is rising towards
the 100-million-dollar mark, we also have a current account surplus. We are paying our debts, bilateral debts and multilateral debts, before time because interest rates have collapsed and we want to take advantage of that and we have the wherewithal to be able to do so. We are now lending to the IMF so that IMF can lend to other needy countries. We have decided that except with a few, India need not take overseas development assistance from many countries in the world because that money which India will not take can be available for other developing countries, especially the least developed countries. We have joined the developed countries in debt forgiveness and today we are lending financial resources to a large number of countries. We are making available our technical assistance to a large number of them.

In science and technology, it is also very important to remember the area of space co-operation. In particular, I am mentioning this because we are reaching an agreement on the of Galileo project of the EU. But there are many more areas where we are co-operating with countries of the European Union in the programme relating to space technology. This is the new India. We still have a long way to go. I entirely agree that our tariffs need to be reduced further. I entirely agree that we need to look at our procedures, continuously look at them so that the life of the foreign investor becomes easier. But I would like to plead with all of you businessmen who have come from Europe that it is a different India that you are dealing with, so please shed the old image of India. I remember that when I was serving in Germany in the middle of the 1970s, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister of the country and she visited Germany. She had a meeting with the German businessmen. I heard almost the same language that I heard in Chris Patten’s speech here this afternoon. Things have changed and things have to change further. But if you are smart, energetic, adventurous businessmen, you will take advantage of the opportunities arising today. If you are not smart and you look at all the conditions which must fall in place and keep on waiting, you are likely to miss the bus.

India is a happening place today. Please recognise this dynamism which reforms the Indian economy, the Indian nation today. I know, as my friend Chris Patten said, that there are many people who are over flying India, most certainly they are because they don’t know. If they make an investment in India, they make more money here than they do in that country east of us. There are any numbers of studies, which have proved this point. We are not merely a rule of law; we are not mere a democracy. There is not a single instance where justice has not been made available
to anyone who has sought justice. There is not a single occasion where India could be accused of or charged with having reneged on any of its commitments. That is our history. Therefore, what we are looking for is partnership between a new Europe and a new India. A dynamic partnership, a mutually beneficial partnership - a partnership which will not only help the people in our respective country but a partnership which will help the rest of the world also where we share so many commitments, so many ideas and so many points. It is in that direction that we have to take the India-EU relationship. Business in both India and EU have to play their role and I am quite sure you will not be found wanting.

I would like to wish you all the very best in your deliberation today.

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373. Address by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Special Plenary Session of the the 4th India-EU Business Summit.

New Delhi, November 29, 2003.

Your Excellency President Prodi of the European Commission, External Affairs Minister Sinha, Presidents of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry and Confederation of Indian Industry, Distinguished Business Delegates from Europe and India,

I am happy that there is now an established tradition of annual India-EU Business Summits. The Summit provides a unique opportunity for interaction between Government and Industry on both sides. It is a forum for free and frank exchanges of views on the issues, problems and opportunities in the India-EU economic relationship. I understand there have been some valuable bilateral initiatives by Indian and EU business to address impediments to India - EU economic cooperation in priority sectors. I do not need to emphasise the importance that India attaches to trade and economic cooperation with the European Union. It is our largest trading partner, accounting for nearly a quarter of India’s total foreign trade. It is also our largest investment partner, an important source of technology in critical sectors and a major destination for our service providers.
There is of course a strong asymmetry, since India’s share in EU’s global trade is under 2 per cent. This is a mismatch, which could be corrected by a wider consciousness of the possibilities and a better understanding of the larger picture of the India - EU partnership. The realization has still to take hold that with its rapidly growing economy, skilled human resources, expanding market, and widening industrial and technological base, India can be a strong economic partner of the European Union.

The post Cold War global scenario has created a conducive atmosphere for a stronger India - EU partnership. We do not have any fundamental political disagreements, which could impede the dynamic growth of our economic cooperation. On the other hand, there is much that unites us, and a firm basis to construct a strong edifice of a long term, mutual reinforcing economic relationship.

India and Europe are alike in many ways. Most important, both are well-functioning, committed and firmly-rooted democracies. Europe is a mosaic of sovereign States, which despite past differences and conflicts sees its long-term future as a more unified entity. India is also a continent-sized country, which illustrates a unique unity in diversity, with its states playing an increasing economic role in our interaction with the rest of the world.

Today’s Europe is creating new waves in world affairs. The increasing weight and voice of the EU, its steady expansion and consolidation, its strengthening common currency, its new initiatives to integrate its scientific and technological capabilities - all these trends compel attention and analysis. In the post-Cold War era, India too has emerged stronger and more self-confident, with the conviction that we can have an expanding role in world affairs in the coming decades.

The question we need to ask ourselves is whether India and Europe can create a more dynamic partnership, mutually reinforcing our aspirations. New perspectives need to wipe away the cobwebs of old approaches. Though India is still very much a developing country, we have put behind us the phase when developmental assistance was at the core of our transactions with the developed world. We are ready for a transition to more mature partnerships.

The India-EU interaction in trade requires some introspection and analysis, if we are to double the somewhat modest present level of 25
billion Euros in the next 5 years. Business and Industry on both sides have made some recommendations. We need to look carefully at the unfortunate reality that non-tariff barriers are gradually rising, even as tariffs are falling in response to globalisation. A range of issues from anti-dumping measures to manufacturing standards need to be looked at with a sense of proportion.

In India, we have been careful to ensure that our liberalization measures are non-directional. We do not increase tariffs or raise barriers to target any region or group of countries. In this context one needs to view in perspective the recent debates, in Europe and elsewhere, on the impact of business process outsourcing. The emotive arguments about the migration of jobs to countries like India have missed two basic points.

The first is that this outsourcing is increasing the competitiveness and global reach of European and American companies. The resultant boost to the balance sheets and increased dividend payouts are very much in these countries. The increased profits are also ploughed back into these economies. The second point relates to the barriers to free movement of persons.

The demographic profile of Europe and America necessarily means that these countries will need the induction of a younger work force from outside in the coming decades. If there is a more liberal regime of free movement of businessmen and professionals between India and Europe, this demand can be met within your countries. In the absence of such a liberal regime, outsourcing is inevitable. If people cannot go to where the business is, business will eventually come to where the people are.

Technology is an area, which should figure much more in the India-Europe discourse. Indian expertise in areas of information software technology is now reasonably well known. We hope to replicate our software revolution in biotechnology and other areas. This will be driven by our reservoir of millions of scientists, engineers, technicians and managers produced by our institutes of Technology and Management. In fact our IIT’s and IIM’s have today become branded products, with international recognition and global demand.

Yet, it is a remarkable statistic that though nearly 200 of the Fortune - 500 companies extensively use India as a Research and Development base, very few of these are from Europe. One of the technology areas with outstanding prospects for close India - Europe collaboration is the
Galileo Satellite Navigation Project that Europe is embarking on. In this multi-billion Euro project, exploring new frontiers of technology, India’s expertise in cost-effective space technologies can bring both technical value and price-competitiveness. We therefore seek to participate, not as a mere customer, but as an equal partner.

We welcome investments from the European Union to India. We believe that our infrastructure sector should be a particular area of interest to EU business. Our National Highway Development project, to upgrade or build over 15,000 kilometers of roads linking our major metropolitan centres and rural regions is already well underway. We are soon launching a major new initiative - "Sagarmala" - which aims to build and upgrade a necklace of modern ports, supporting international and coastal shipping all along our peninsular coastline. This 25 billion dollar project should present attractive opportunities for European business.

Our dialogues on investment flows should now take into account the fact that Indian industry is also looking at investment destinations outside India. In consideration of the larger picture in India - Europe relations, I would like to make a point about the direction in which the WTO is heading. I think we should draw the right conclusions from the outcome of the Cancun Ministerial meeting.

We have to recognize that unless the developmental concerns of the poorer countries of the world are taken into account, popular support for economic liberalization will collapse in the developing countries. This could have disastrous consequences for our future discussions on the international trading regime.

The WTO is like a chariot pulled by many horses. Unless each horse pulls at the same pace and in the same direction as the others, the chariot will eventually collapse. It is important not to upset the carefully balanced agenda of interests that resulted from hard fought negotiations and compromises at Doha. We can move forward successfully only at a pace with which all parties are comfortable. This has been the cardinal principle that has guided the EU in its integration.

It is a principle that we in India follow in the coalition that I lead and in the measured pace of our economic reforms. This logic that we have brought into our internal processes also needs to be applied to our external environment. To take one fundamental example, agriculture provides the core livelihood of millions of people from a huge number of developing
countries. The decisions we take in the WTO on agriculture will need to respond to this basic fact, even while they protect the interests of farmer elsewhere.

India and Europe have to bring the consciousness of this larger picture into their mutual interaction and in their engagement with the rest of the world. With the intimate inter-linkage of politics and economics in today’s globalised world, business and industry share the responsibility with us politicians for propagating a cooperative culture, which reconciles the profit motive with the developmental imperative. In the long run, this is the formula for the most durable economic partnership.

Thank you

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New Delhi, November 29, 2003.

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN (SHRI NAVTEJ SARNA): Good afternoon Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. We will begin the joint press interaction by opening remarks by the dignitaries. May I just request the Prime Minister of India to kindly make his opening remarks.

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): I am happy to welcome President Prodi and the Delegation to the European Commission and the European Council. It is unfortunate that we could not have the pleasure of receiving Prime Minister Berlusconi. We wish him a speedy recovery.

We have just concluded wide-ranging discussions on our bilateral relations. We have also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest in a free and frank atmosphere. We share similar views on the important international issues of the day including the need to coordinate more closely in global war against terrorism. We agreed to further intensify India-EU bilateral relations. We have announced an agenda for action to achieve this. It is already with you along with our joint press statement.

Our efforts to remove barriers to trade and economic development are also being intensified. Our agreement on the bilateral trade and investment
development programme, and the customs cooperation agreement will create greater understanding of the rules, procedures and practices which govern trade and investment in our respective regions.

We have discussed areas for cooperation in science and technology. We see great synergies in our respective capabilities. We look forward to raising our aggressive cooperation with the European Union in high technology. One of the projects mentioned is the satellite navigation project Galileo, which is of particular interest to us. We agreed to discuss further India’s participation in this project.

Our summit meeting takes place at an important stage in Europe’s history. In six months, the European Union will take a historic step by nearly doubling its membership. It will mark a new step in the political and economic integration of Europe.

India has excellent relations with all the respective members of the European Union. We look forward to a vibrant partnership with the enlarged European Union.

Thank you.

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN: May I now request His Excellency Mr. Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission to kindly make his opening remarks.

PRESIDENT, EUROPEAN COMMISSION (MR. ROMANO PRODI): Very short remarks. We had full summit between European Union and India and I have had the opportunity to participate through all of that. Our relations year by year are increasing. Now really we have started to build a strategic partnership, that is to say, not only in economy, not only in trade cooperation but in cultural, political fields. The European Union is already the biggest economy in the world. India is such a fantastic, growing country and we need to develop a fresh strategic partnership for political reasons.

Today we discussed our common strategy against terrorism, common views on Iraq and you have to understand that this is the first meeting that we have after the Iraqi conflict. We both share views on the role of the United Nations and the necessity that Iraqi people take care of itself and have an increased role in the future of their country. We have same views also on the main political issues of the Asian continent.
Today, we had three concrete issues that we tackled. Two are important for our trade, the customs cooperation and then maritime transport agreement. These, I repeat, are important because till now the increase in trade has been not certainly helped by the fact that we have problems in our maritime transportation and the customs agreements. We have to reorganise all these sectors. This was one of the main aims of this meeting.

The other conclusion was about Galileo. Galileo may be seen as a big technological jump. It is a big technological jump, but it is much more than that. Galileo is a major political agreement. Remember that when we shall have the Galileo system working, we – European Union, India and China – shall take control of all the logistics that is of interest to us, and probably some other countries will apply to that. So, we share the responsibility of one of the most delicate aspects of our future economic and political life. This is certainly a very high level of mutual trust that we have demonstrated today.

Doha was a big political event. We have now to take the consequences of it and to develop international trade with new perspective. But we have not to stop our action towards multilateral trade. India and European Union do believe, they do trust that multilateral trade is our future and we go on together in this direction.

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN: May I now request Ms. Margherita Boniver representing Presidency of the European Council to kindly make her opening remarks.

REPRESENTATIVE OF PRESIDENCY (MS. MARGHERITA BONIVER): I just want to make two very brief statements. The first is that I want to publicly acknowledge once again how grateful the EU Presidency is to the Indian Government for having allowed this summit to continue to our mutual satisfaction despite the momentary illness and impairment of Prime Minister Berlusconi. We were very grateful that this was taken with great flexibility and also with a great sense of responsibility.

This is our fourth common EU-India Summit. The next time when the new one will take place, Europe will have in the meantime grown to over 450 million people. Therefore, this is the second part of my brief statement. May I express my thanks and my satisfaction for the way things have proceeded this morning. We fully agree with the joint press statement which we have seen and read. May I say just very simply that two democratic giants – India and the European Union – have come together.
This, of course, would give better hope for future generations both in this country and in the European continent.

Thank you very much.

**QUESTION:** How long do you think it will take for Europe to play an equally important part in India’s foreign policy as it already does in India’s economic relations?

**PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA:** That question should be directed to Europe.

**QUESTION:** The second part of the question was, in order to boost India’s weight in world affairs India’s weight in world economy must increase. What will your Government do to accelerate the structural reforms in the domestic economy that are necessary for this to happen?

**PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA:** Already we are in the second phase of economic reforms. We are concentrating on infrastructure. We are doing well in the field of agriculture. Indian economy is on the move. But there is no attempt on our part to ‘steal’ any jobs from other countries for our young men. A complaint is being made and there are some news reports that jobs are coming to India and this is going to adversely affect some countries. I replied to this proposition in my address this morning. Development of India economically will help the entire world. We would like to proceed more speedily.

**QUESTION (INDIAN MEDIA):** President Prodi, last year during the Copenhagen summit differences emerged between India and the European Union on the specific issue of cross-border terrorism related to Jammu and Kashmir. I believe you have continued your discussion on India and Pakistan issues. Have you been able to reconcile the views of both India and European Union?

My second question is, what is European Union’s stand on India’s desire for a permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council?

**PRESIDENT EU:** For the first question, Commissioner Patten came back from Sri Lanka only day before yesterday. He urged to solve their problem as must be ...(inaudible)... unity but giving the necessary degree of autonomy that you need in this case. For Pakistan, of course, we have been deeply worried on the recurring tension that you have had between India and Pakistan. We are happy looking that there are many likes and many degrees of new agreement possible because this is clearly a bilateral problem that must be solved between India and Pakistan. So, it is clear
that our position is that we are simply pressing India and Pakistan to appreciate a full agreement because India is now a giant not only in economy but in world politics. So, their role that must be played in the Asian continent must be a role of aggregation of peace, of creating regional cooperation. So, the tensions with Pakistan are one of the big obstacles to this role that India has to take in the world. So, we have, of course, taken with high appreciation the ceasefire agreement, and we shall appreciate all the agreements that will signal cooperation between India and Pakistan.

For a permanent seat for India in the United Nations, this, as you know, is so complex a problem that it cannot be solved by one case. We certainly understand that a deep change is there in how the United Nations is organized and how the Security Council is organized. We understand that the structure of UNSC represents the structure of the world of a few decades ago. So, we have to update it. You must make an effort to do this general updating. We cannot do it on a case-by-case basis. I repeat, in principle when I say that the Security Council must reflect the new situation of the world, I mean that we have to take into account all the new roles that countries like India have taken in the world. But we must do it in a very complex framework and not in an insulated case.

**QUESTION (EUROPEAN MEDIA):** I have two questions for the Prime Minister.

The first is regarding the Galileo. In the joint statement it is written that there will be eminent participation of India in the project. So, could you elaborate please about how much is India investing in Galileo? More, equal, or less than China, for example?

The second question is regarding Mr. Berlusconi. Do you think that this summit is a little bit lost of importance with the absence of Mr. Berlusconi? Did you personally speak to Mr. Berlusconi? Did he call you in the last two or three days?

**PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA:** I would like to reply to your second question first. Just now you have heard that the summit has successfully been organized. The Council is represented, the European Commission is represented and also the European Council. The fullfledged Commission is here. We miss the Italian Prime Minister but we have been assured that he will visit India as early as possible. Am I correct? (asked Ms. Margherita)

Please repeat the first question.
QUESTION: About Galileo, I just want to know how much is India investing in Galileo. For example, is it less, more or equal to China’s investment?

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA: We have decided to participate in that project and the details are to be worked out.

MS. MARGHERITA: Regarding the question you have just put regarding Prime Minister Berlusconi’s absence, at the beginning of our summit meeting, before that, I woke up Prime Minister Berlusconi’s Assistant and I was authorized to say that not only Mr. Berlusconi apologised personally to Prime Minister Vajpayee for his absence but that the wish of the Prime Minister of Italy was that he could soon set up, as quickly as possible, a convenient date both for the Indian Government and the Italian Government, after the end of the EU Presidency of course, so that Mr. Berlusconi could come and have a bilateral visit to India.

375. Joint press statement on the 4th India-EU Summit.

New Delhi, November 29, 2003.

The 4th Summit between India and the EU was held in New Delhi, India on 29th November, 2003. India was represented by Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He was assisted by External Affairs Minister Mr. Yashwant Sinha. The EU was represented by the Presidency of the European Council, Italian Minister of State for External Affairs, Mrs. Margherita Boniver, President of the European Commission, Mr. Romano Prodi, Secretary General/High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Mr. Javier Solana and the Commissioner (External Relations), Mr. Chris Patten.

The leaders sent the following message:

1. We reviewed developments since the last India-EU Summit in Copenhagen in October, 2002. We expressed satisfaction with the positive outcome of this Summit which has further reinforced the India-EU relationship. We are particularly satisfied with the successful conclusion of an Indo-EU Customs Cooperation Agreement, India’s imminent participation in the development phase of Galileo Project and the launching of negotiations for an Indo-EU
Maritime Agreement. We remain determined to develop this relationship further on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

2. India and the EU, as global actors in the multipolar world, remain committed to strengthening the role of the UN in the development field, as well as in the maintenance of international peace and security. We undertook to work towards strengthening multilateral institutions based on the principles of international law.

3. India and the EU are bound together by values of democracy and pluralism. We are willing to work together to promote pluralistic democracy in the world by laying special emphasis on democratic principles and practice. We encourage greater exchanges between the Indian Parliament and the European Parliament. We will also promote cooperation between political parties, trade unions, universities and civil societies. This would give expression to our shared commitment to democratic values.

4. We affirmed that democracy provides a crucial safeguard for protection and promotion of Human Rights. All Human Rights including the right to personal, economic, social and cultural development are universal, indivisible, interdependent and inter-related. We believe in the equal importance of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and are committed to their full realization. International co-operation needs to be harnessed for the protection and promotion of human rights through dialogue and mutual understanding in a comprehensive global framework. We affirmed our willingness to discuss Human Rights in a comprehensive manner.

5. We agreed that terrorism is a global phenomenon that transcends border and region and can target any country. We expressed the belief that there can be no justification whatsoever for terrorism, and we support the fight against international terrorism, wherever it occurs and regardless of its motives. We affirmed our commitment to the universal ratification and implementation of all the UN Anti-terrorism Conventions. We called upon all States to fully implement their commitment under UNSC Resolution No. 1373 so as to ensure that their territories are not used for sponsoring terrorist activities against other States. We supported the early conclusion and adoption of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. As democracies founded on the rule of law, India and
the EU remain committed to ensuring compatibility of counterterrorism measures with universally accepted Human Rights standards and norms. We also called for progress towards the establishment of cooperation between Europol and Indian agencies.

6. We expressed our common concerns about the link between cross border crimes particularly international drug-trafficking and terrorism and agreed to step up our common efforts to fight organized crimes, arms trafficking and money laundering, to combat drug abuse, international trafficking of illegal drugs and precursor chemicals.

7. We look forward to the early entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and reaffirmed the continued validity of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Recalling the New Delhi Declaration adopted at COP VIII, we agreed to work together for a successful outcome of COP IX, which will take place in Milan in next December.

8. In Afghanistan we strongly support the efforts of President Karzai’s Government to promote national reconciliation and build a peaceful, united and independent Afghanistan. We expressed concern at the continuing threats to security and stability in Afghanistan and expressed support for all measures, including those contained in UNSC Resolution No. 1510, aimed at improving maintenance of peace and security and consolidation of authority in and outside Kabul. We remain committed to the re-construction and development of Afghanistan in partnership with the government and people of that country, while stressing that non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan is a crucial factor in the return of peace and stability.

9. We reviewed the Middle East situation and expressed our deep concern for the resurgence of violence in Israel and the Palestinian territories. We called for the sincere implementation, in letter and spirit, of the Quartet Road Map provisions by both the parties concerned. In line with the Road Map provisions and the relevant UNSC Resolutions, we called for a just, comprehensive and lasting resolution of the conflict, envisioning a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders. Such a solution must also encompass Israel-Syria and Israel-Lebanon tracks.

10. We reviewed the developments in Iraq and stressed the importance of the central role to be played by the UN in the restoration of peace
and normalcy and the re-construction and re-habilitation of that country. We emphasized the urgency of the adoption of a clearly laid out political process within a realistic time-frame, in order to allow the Iraqi people to determine their own political future and retain an effective control of their economic resources. We welcomed the UNSC Resolution No. 1511 and its request to the Iraqi Governing Council to report to the UN Security Council by 15th December 2003 on a timetable and a programme for the drafting of a new constitution for Iraq and for holding of democratic elections under that constitution. We are committed to contributing towards humanitarian assistance for the people of Iraq and reconstruction and development of that country.

11. We support the process of seeking a negotiated settlement acceptable to all sections of Sri Lankan society, consistent with democracy, pluralism and respect for individual rights, within the framework of a united Sri Lanka and called for an early resumption of negotiations.

12. We shared a common analysis of the situation in Nepal, where we both support a settlement of the crisis, based on multiparty democracy and constitutional monarchy.

13. The EU warmly welcomed Prime Minister Vajpayee’s extending the hand of friendship to Pakistan in April 2003 and the latest peace initiatives through a series of wide-ranging steps taken and proposals made for enhancing interaction between the people of the two countries which would be essential for creating an atmosphere of trust and cooperation. The EU welcomed the cease-fire recently agreed upon between both parties as a further step towards the normalization of India/Pakistan relations. The EU expressed the hope that the process could be continued and differences between the two countries resolved peacefully through dialogue. We reiterated the unacceptability of use of terrorism in pursuit of political goals. India stated emphatically that there could be no negotiations until cross border terrorism ends.

14. India welcomed the Enlargement of the EU, and the ongoing discussions on its future evolution. We both affirmed that deepening and widening of EU would further strengthen relations between us. We have also agreed to remain in touch on the evolution of our respective Foreign, Security and Defence policies. Both sides also
noted the draft EU Security Strategy paper and in this context the
two sides agreed for further consultations as key partners for a
strategic security relationship.

15. We remain committed to intensifying economic dialogue at all levels
with a view to improving substantially market access and investment.

16. We expressed our resolve to facilitate and enhance trade by working
together in a constructive manner in seeking speedy and amicable
solutions to a number of specific trade issues including those relating
to Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Technical Regulations and
Standards, and Conformity Assessment Procedures.

17. We called for continuation of the dialogue at experts’ level to promote
better understanding of Trade Defence Instruments.

18. We welcomed the conclusions of the India-EU Business Summit
and expressed our commitment to implement the Action Plans
emanating from the ‘Joint Initiative for Enhancing Trade &
Investment’. We commended the study on the emerging
opportunities from EU’s Enlargement, and encouraged Industry to
take full advantage of those opportunities. Both sides urged Industry
to reflect on how to further develop their partnership.

19. We agreed to launch a “Trade and Investment Development
Programme” with a view to enhance bilateral trade and investment
through the strengthening and the simplification of the administrative
and regulatory regimes and capacity building at the government
and private sector level.

1. EU-India Trade and Investment Development Programme (TIDP)
The Trade and Investment Development Programme (TIDP), with an outlay of EUR 15 million towards
technical assistance, will focus on smoothening the process of trade and investment, with
the aim of bringing these closer to the potential that exists. The details regarding the
modalities for administering the programme have been agreed in the form of a Financing
Agreement for the Trade & Investment Development Programme, which is being signed as
a deliverable at the Summit, on 29th November 2003.

Access to accurate information, training, contacts between Indian and European counter-
parts, and sharing of best practice are central in the TIDP. The main objective of the
Programme is to improve the day-to-day working practice of the target groups, like agen-
cies dealing with trade flows and economic actors on both sides. TIDP will focus on tackling
impediments to smooth trade and investment through co-operation in such fields as certi-
fication, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards, investment facilitation, intellectual property
rights and raising awareness. Current planning aims at launching the Trade and Invest-
ment Development Programmed in late 2003 or early 2004.
20. We reiterated our commitment to work towards further strengthening of the multilateral trading regime under the WTO. We affirmed that multilateral rules fairly agreed upon benefit every one. We reaffirmed that trade can play a positive role in development and that development should remain central to the ongoing negotiations in the WTO. We welcomed the support of our business communities to our dialogue on these issues. We remain committed to driving forward all aspects of Doha Work Programme in a balanced manner including improved market access and the development of WTO rules, as well as the issues of Special and Differential Treatment and Resolution of Implementation Related Concerns of particular interest to developing countries. We are committed to the successful conclusion of the current Doha round of negotiations as also confirmed by the Ministers of the WTO Members at Cancun, and we invite all WTO Members to participate actively and constructively to the resumption of work in Geneva.

21. We remain committed to creating an appropriate economic environment for trade in services and especially in the growth of bilateral trade and investment including through the facilitation of the movement of skilled persons and professionals and enhancement of available infrastructure.

22. We expressed common commitment to promote shared values in education and culture by offering opportunities to the scholars to pursue academic activities. We agreed to launch an EU Scholarship Programme for the Masters and Doctoral level.

23. We reaffirmed our commitment to the fight against poverty and noted the progress made in preparatory activities for two new important development initiatives, namely, Disaster Preparedness Programme, and a Partnership for Progress in Social Development.

24. The vision of a vibrant Information Society and its fullest possible development is jointly shared by us. We decided to work together to further enhance bilateral cooperation in streamlining the regime for electronic communication services and designing an adequate regulatory framework for electronic commerce including digital signatures. We also agreed to jointly support the 2004 Euro-India Cooperation Forum on the Information Society that will be held in New Delhi on 24-26 March, 2004. We strongly recommended Indian and European industry, business and research bodies to grasp this unique opportunity.
25. We encouraged the scientific community to take advantage of the immense potential created by the Science & Technology Agreement and other available instruments.

26. We noted the successful implementation of the Indo-EU Civil Aviation Cooperation Project and the Indo-EU Maritime Project. We acknowledged the importance of efficient transport links to trade and economic growth. We noted the launching of negotiations for an Indo-EU Maritime Agreement covering issues of interest to both sides.

27. Recognising the vital importance of satellite navigation and positioning for our economies and societies, we agreed to cooperate in developing the GALILEO programme. We expressed our willingness to open negotiations to conclude an agreement between India and EU to formalize India’s equitable participation in the Galileo programme, starting with participation in the GALILEO Joint Undertaking.

28. We expressed satisfaction at the successful conclusion of an Indo-EU Customs Cooperation Agreement1.

Agenda for Action:

We agree on the following agenda for action;

1. Ensure in depth discussions on all aspects of bilateral relations between India and EU within the framework of our institutional architecture.

1. India-EU Customs Co-operation Agreement The EU and India are increasingly important trade partners to each other and are therefore both significant users of custom procedures. Efficient custom co-operation is instrumental to both the removal of obstacles and facilitation of trade flows and the fight against fraud and criminal activity.

With a view to ensuring that custom procedures do not hamper trade exchanges, India and the EU have successfully concluded the EU-India Bilateral Agreement on Customs Co-operation, a new instrument confirming the parties’ joint commitment to further deepening co-operation and developing more efficient and transparent custom procedures. The agreement will strongly benefit the parties in that it aims at achieving two main objectives: - Trade facilitation by increasing mutual understanding, harmonization and simplification of custom procedures - Fight against fraud related to the Indian and European legislation, by providing a legal basis for mutual administrative assistance (exchange of information and carrying out of enquiries on request).

Means to achieve this outcome will range from legislative co-operation, aiming at simplification and harmonization of custom procedures, to technical and mutual administrative assistance. Computerization of custom procedures, training and exchanges of officials will be part of the implementation tools.
2. Discuss Democracy and Human Rights in a comprehensive manner.

3. Intensify cooperation to promote peace, stability and reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq.


5. Promote exchanges between the Indian Parliament and the European Parliament as well as Civil Society interaction.

6. Review the implementation of the Action Plans emerging from the sectoral studies conducted in the first two rounds of the “Joint Initiative for Enhancing Trade & Investment” and the study on implications of EU Enlargement.

7. Take steps to facilitate organisation of the first India-EC Steering Committee on S&T cooperation and secure its approval for (i) arrangements for the implementation of the agreed modes of cooperation and (ii) India-EU projects and other cooperative activities.

8. Continue high-level dialogue on multilateral trade issues.

9. Continue dialogue at the experts’ level to promote better understanding of the Trade Defence Instruments.

10. Enhance cooperation in the area of data protection and cyber security in the information society sector

11. Find ways and means as to how best we can support and facilitate the movement of professionals and the enhancement of infrastructure.

12. Launch a Euro 14 million “Trade and Investment Development Programme” to enhance bilateral trade and investment.

13. Ensure an early launch of approximately Euro 30 million Scholarship Programme for the Masters and Doctoral level to promote academic networking.

15. Ensure an early launch of the negotiations for an Indo-EU Maritime Agreement covering issues of interest to both sides.

16. Extend ongoing bilateral project in the Civil Aviation sector.

17. Collaborate in the development and operation of the Galileo Project.

18. Work for early entering into force of an Indo-EU Customs Cooperation Agreement.

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Bosnia

376. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the visit of Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina Dr. Mladen Ivanic.

New Delhi, May 9, 2003.

Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) H.E. Dr. Mladen Ivanic visited India at the invitation of the Minister of External Affairs Shri Yashwant Sinha from 6-8 May 2003. This was the first visit of a Foreign Minister from Bosnia and Herzegovina and also the first ever Ministerial visit between the two countries. The visit was preceded by the signing of a Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations between India and Bosnia and Herzegovina and the first ever such consultations between them in Sarajevo in December 2002.

During his visit, the Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina called on the Hon’ble President and the Prime Minister of India and had meetings with the Minister of Commerce & Industry and the Minister of Tourism and Culture besides holding detailed discussions with the Minister of External Affairs, who also hosted a dinner in the honour of the visiting dignitary. The Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina met representatives of Indian industry and trading fraternity in meetings at ASSOCHAM and CII.
In his discussions with senior Indian functionaries, Dr. Ivanic stressed the desire of Bosnia and Herzegovina to develop multi-faceted relationship with India. His Indian interlocutors agreed that mutual goodwill and the values and aspirations India and Bosnia and Herzegovina share as multiethnic democracies provide a strong foundation to build a warm and friendly bilateral relationship.

Special attention was devoted to promoting bilateral trade and investment. Both sides agreed to augment the existing legal framework by concluding necessary agreements such as BIPA and DTAA. Bosnia and Herzegovina evinced interest in sharing Indian experience in high technology, including IT and telecommunications, and offered to host Indian business delegations for exploring such possibilities. It also invited Indian investment in spheres such as textiles. It was decided that the first meeting of the Joint Committee would be held in Bosnia and Herzegovina towards end-September/ early October 2003. An Indian business delegation will also visit Bosnia and Herzegovina around the same time to hold the first meeting of the Joint Business Council, to be constituted by that time. India suggested cooperation in sharing information on trade and investment by building data transfer networks.

Both countries agreed to cooperate in the fight against organised crime and international terrorism. In this context, they also agreed for early conclusion of relevant agreements, including an Extradition Treaty.

In view of the high level of interest in cultural cooperation and its significance for relations at the people’s level, it was agreed that the two countries would strive to finalise an Agreement on cultural cooperation, to be followed by Cultural and Educational Exchange Programmes.

Both sides noted a large degree of coincidence in their views on topical regional and international issues. Bosnia and Herzegovina came out in favour of resolution of the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, as also other outstanding issues, between India and Pakistan through discussions in a bilateral framework.

Both sides decided to maintain high-level contacts and additionally, hold annual consultations between the Foreign Ministries. They also agreed to consult and cooperate at multilateral fora such as the UN.

The Minister of External Affairs accepted the invitation to visit Bosnia and Herzegovina.
Bulgaria


The Republic of India and the Republic of Bulgaria hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Parties, desiring to develop the legal co-operation in the field of extradition have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Duty to Extradite

1. Each Contracting Party when duly requested and subject to the provisions and conditions specified in this Treaty, undertakes to surrender to the other Party, persons within its territory, other than its own nationals, who are accused or convicted of any extraditable offence.

2. The Requested Party shall invoke all legally permissible measures in order to suspend naturalisation proceedings in respect of the person sought for extradition by the Requesting Party until a decision has been taken concerning the request for his or her extradition and, where the extradition request is granted, until his or her surrender.

3. Irrespective of the place or places of commission of the extraditable offence the Requested Party shall grant extradition:

   a. When the person whose extradition is requested is a national of the Requesting Party;

   b. When the person sought is not a national of either Contracting Party, provided that the acts and omissions of the person sought amount to an offence affecting the interests of the Requesting Party or any of its nationals under the law of the Requested Party and the latter does not claim jurisdiction to prosecute for the same.

Article 2

Extraditable Offences

1. Extradition shall be granted in respect of offences, which under the
law of both Contracting Parties are punishable by a minimum term of imprisonment or other forms of deprivation of liberty for a minimum period of at least one year. In case extradition is requested for the purpose of serving one or more of punishments, extradition shall be granted if the aggregate term of the sentences, which remain to be served for one or more extraditable offences, is not less than six months.

2. If the request for extradition includes several separate offences, some of which do not fulfil the condition of para 1 with regard to the amount of punishment which may be awarded, extradition shall be granted for the offence, which meets the above specified conditions. This rule shall apply only to offences that meet the other conditions of this Treaty.

3. Subject to the conditions set-out in para 1 extradition shall also be granted in respect of an attempt or conspiracy to commit, or aiding, abetting, inciting or participating as an accomplice in the commission of an extraditable offence.

Article 3

Refusal to Extradite

1. Extradition shall not be granted in cases when:
   a. criminal proceedings have been instituted or a judgement has been passed by the judicial authorities of the Requested Party upon the person sought in respect of the offence, or offences for which extradition is requested;
   b. by the date of receipt of the request for extradition, the criminal prosecution or the execution of the punishment has been barred by lapse of time that constitutes a limitation under the law of either of the Contracting parties.

2. Extradition shall not be granted if the offence, in respect of which it is requested, is regarded by the Requested Party as a political offence, an offence of political character, or as an offence connected with such an offence.

3. For the purpose of this Treaty the following offences shall not deemed to be offences within the meaning of para 2:
   a. any offence in respect of which both Contracting Parties have
the obligation pursuant to a multilateral international agreement to extradite the person sought, or to submit his or her case to their competent authorities for a decision as to prosecution;

b. murder, manslaughter or culpable homicide, maliciously wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm;

c. kidnapping, abduction, or any comparable form of unlawful detention, including the taking of hostages;

d. placing or using an explosive, detonating device, destructive device, firearm or ammunition, capable of endangering life, or of causing grievous bodily harm, or of causing substantial property damage;

e. any other offence related to terrorism which at the time of the request is, under the law of the Requested State, not to be regarded as a political offence;

f. an attempt or conspiracy to commit, or aiding, abetting, inciting or participating in the commission of, any of the foregoing offences.

4. Extradition shall not be granted if the Requested Party has substantial reasons to believe that the request for extradition has been made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing the person on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political opinions, sex or status, or that person’s position may be prejudiced for any of those reasons; or if that person has not received or would not receive the minimum guarantees in criminal proceedings, as contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

**Article 4**

Optional Ground to Refuse Extradition

Extradition may be refused if the offence for which extradition is requested has been committed outside the territory of either Contracting Party and the law of the Requested Party does not apply to such offence when committed outside its own territory.

**Article 5**

Capital Punishment

If the offence for which extradition is requested is punishable by death
under the law of the Requesting Party, and if in respect of such offence the death penalty is not provided for by the law of the Requested Party or is not normally carried out, extradition may be refused unless the Requesting Party gives such assurance as the Requested Party considers sufficient that the death penalty will not be imposed, or if imposed will not be carried out.

**Article 6**

**Institution of Criminal Proceedings in the Requested Party**

1. If extradition is refused on any of the grounds under Article 1 (1), Article 3(1a) and Article 3(4), the Requested Party shall submit the case to its competent authorities for institution of criminal proceedings. For this purpose the Requesting Party shall submit the procedural documents and all available information necessary for the proceedings.

2. The Requested Party shall immediately inform the other Contracting Party on the outcome of the instituted criminal proceedings.

**Article 7**

**Rule of Speciality**

1. A person who has been extradited shall not be subjected to any measures of coercion or restriction in his or her personal freedom for any offence committed prior to submission of the extradition request other than that for which he was extradited.

2. A person extradited under this Treaty shall not be detained or tried or be subjected to any other restriction of his personal liberty in the Requesting Party for any offence committed before his extradition, other than:
   
   a. an offence in respect of which he was extradited, or another offence in respect of which he could be convicted based on the proven facts used to support the request for his extradition, or
   
   b. another extraditable offence in respect of which the Requested Party has consented to his or her being so detained or tried, or subjected to any other restriction of his or her personal liberty.

3. The extradited person shall not, without the consent of the Requested Party, be surrendered to a third State in respect of
offences committed before his or her surrender to the Requesting Party.

4. In the case under para 3 the Requesting Party shall transmit a request, the documents mentioned in Article 8 (1) (b) and (c), and if necessary - the documents mentioned in Article 8 (1) (a) or in the case of extradition to a third state, the request of the latter for extradition and the documents submitted by the third State. The request shall be accompanied by declarations given by the extradited person before a Judicial Authority of the Requesting Party with a view to extending the scope of the extradition or giving consent to his or her extradition to a third Party.

5. The provisions of the preceding paragraphs shall not apply in case when having had the opportunity to leave the territory of the Party to which the extradited person has been surrendered, he or she has not done so within 45 days of his or her final discharge or has voluntarily returned to that territory after having left it.

**Article 8**

**Request and Accompanying Documents**

1. The request shall be accompanied by:

   a. the original or an authenticated copy of the warrant of arrest, or if the request has been made in view of serving a sentence, an original or an authenticated copy of the final conviction and sentence, together with a document specifying the part of the punishment which has already been served and the part which remains to be served;

   b. a description of the offences for which extradition is requested indicating the time and place of their commission and the applicable legal provisions;

   c. the text of the relevant legal provisions, including limitations;

   d. as accurate a description as possible of the person sought, together with any other information, which will help establish his or her identity and nationality.

2. If the information is found to be insufficient, the Requested Party shall require the Requesting Party to give the necessary
supplementary information about the circumstances mentioned under para 1 and may fix a time limit for the receipt thereof. This time limit may be extended upon a request giving the reasons thereof.

3. Additional requests for legal assistance in connection with the extradition already granted shall be examined in the context of the information already furnished on the case.

**Article 9**

**Provisional Arrest**

1. If one of the Parties applies for provisional arrest of a person, whose extradition it intends to request, the other Party may, in accordance with its law, arrest that person or impose any other measure of compulsion prior to the receipt of the request for extradition.

2. The request for provisional arrest shall contain a statement of the existence of a warrant of arrest or a final conviction against him, a declaration of intention to request the extradition of that person; a description of the offence for which extradition is requested indicating the time and place of its commission; legal provisions, applicable to the offence and the prescribed punishment, and if necessary, information about what part of the sentence remains to be served, as well as the information necessary for the identification of the person.

3. The Requested Party shall inform without delay the other Party of the progress of its request and of the date of arrest or imposition of another measure of coercion.

4. The arrest of the person or the other measures of coercion shall be terminated if the Requested Party has not received a request and the documents mentioned in Article 8 upon the expiration of 90 days from the date of the arrest or the date of the execution of the other measures of coercion. This provision shall not prevent re-arrest or imposition of other measures of coercion if the request for extradition is received after the expiration of the above time limit.

**Article 10**

**Surrender**

1. If extradition is granted, the person sought shall be sent by the authorities of the Requested Party to such a convenient point of
departure from the territory of that Party as the Requesting Party shall indicate.

2. The Requesting Party shall take over the person sought from the territory of the Requested State within one month or such longer period as may be permitted under the law of the Requesting Party. If the person is not taken over within that period, the Requested State may refuse to extradite him or her for the same offence.

**Article 11**

Temporary Extradition or Postponement of Surrender

1. The decision whether or not to extradite shall be taken and immediately communicated to the Requesting Party, regardless of whether criminal proceedings against the person sought have been instituted in the territory of the Requested Party, or whether he or she is serving a sentence on the territory of the Requested Party in respect of an offence other than that for which extradition is requested.

2. The Requested Party may, after having granted extradition, postpone the surrender until the criminal proceedings or the sentence referred to in para 1 are completed. The Requested Party may instead of postponing surrender, temporarily extradite the person sought to the Requesting Party in accordance with conditions to be determined by mutual agreement between the Parties. The extradited person shall be detained during his or her stay in the territory of the Requesting Party and shall be transferred back to the Requested Party within the agreed period, which shall not exceed three months.

**Article 12**

Handing over of Property

1. When a request for extradition is granted, the Requested Party shall, upon request and in so far as its law allows, hand over to the Requesting Party the articles (including sums of money) which may serve as evidence, including real evidence of the offence.

2. If the articles in question are liable to seizure in the territory of the Requested Party, the latter may, in connection with pending judicial proceedings, temporarily retain them. When the articles are liable
to confiscation the Requested Party may retain them or hand them over on condition that they are returned.

3. These provisions shall not affect the rights of the Requested Party or the rights of any person other than the person sought. When such rights exist, the articles shall be returned upon request from the Requested Party without imposing any charges, within the shortest time after the termination of criminal proceedings.

**Article 13**

**Competing Requests**

If extradition is requested concurrently by more than one State, either for the same offence or for different offences, the Requested Party shall make its decision having regard to all circumstances and especially the relative seriousness and place of commission of the offences, the respective dates of the requests, the nationality of the person sought and the possibility of subsequent extradition to another State.

**Article 14**

**Information on the Result of Criminal Proceedings**

The Contracting Party, whose extradition request has been granted for the purpose of carrying out criminal proceedings, shall communicate to the other Party the rendered verdict.

**Article 15**

**Transit**

1. Each Contracting Party, on submission of a request from the other Contracting Party, shall allow transit through its territory of a person extradited from a third State to that other Party.

2. The provisions of Article 8 shall apply to transit requests. Transit may be refused on the same grounds on which extradition may be refused under this Treaty.

3. If air-transport without landing is used, the permission of the Party over whose territory the flight is made, shall not be necessary. The other Party shall, however, notify in due time the transit passing and shall provide the information necessary to identify the person, and relating to the offence committed, its legal provisions applicable to
the offence committed and to the term of the sentence, if possible, and shall certify that either warrant of arrest or final imprisonment sentence exist. In case of a landing, such notification shall have the effect of a request for provisional arrest as provided for in Article 9.

**Article 16**

**Communications**

1. The requests for extradition shall be formalised in accordance with the national legislation of the Requesting Party.

2. For the purposes of this Treaty communications shall be carried out through a diplomatic channel. The request for provisional arrest may also be transmitted through the International Organisation of Criminal Police (INTERPOL).

3. Requests for extradition, documentation and all legal and other accompanying documents shall be sent in the language of the Requesting Party and shall be accompanied by a certified translation into English or in the language of the Requested Party.

**Articles 17**

**Mutual Legal Assistance in Extradition**

Each Contracting Party shall, to the extent permitted by its law, afford the other the widest measure of mutual assistance in criminal matters in connection with the offence in respect of which extradition has been requested.

**Article 18**

**Obligations under International Conventions or Treaties**

The present Treaty shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Contracting Parties arising from international conventions or treaties to which they are parties.

**Article 19**

**Expenses**

Extradition expenses shall be borne by the Party on whose territory they have been incurred and airfares and transit expenses incurred in relation to the extradition of the person shall be borne by the Requesting Party.
Article 20

Final Provisions

1. This Treaty shall be subject to ratification.

2. This Treaty shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the month of the exchange of instruments of ratification, which shall take place as soon as possible after signing of the Treaty.

3. This Treaty is concluded for an unlimited period. Either of the Contracting Parties may denounce this Treaty at any time. Denunciation shall take effect on the date of expiration of a six month period following the date of the receipt of the notification by the other Party.

Done in duplicate at Sofia on 23rd day of October, 2003 in Hindi, Bulgarian and English languages, the three texts being equally authentic. In case of any difference in the interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA
Name: Mr. Arun Shourie
Designation: Minister of Disinvestments and Communications and Information Technology

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
Name: Mr. Anton Stankov
Designation: Minister of Justice
378. Joint Statement issued during the visit of President Dr. A. P.J. Abdul Kalam to Bulgaria.


1. At the invitation of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria H.E. Mr. Georgi Parvanov, the President of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam paid a State visit to the Republic of Bulgaria on 22-24 October 2003.

2. During the visit, H.E. Mr. Abdul Kalam met with the President of the Republic of Bulgaria H.E. Mr. Georgi Parvanov. He also had meetings with H.E. Prof. Ognyan Gerdjikov, Chairman of the National Assembly and H.E. Mr. Simeon Saxe-Coburg Gotha, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria.

3. The Presidents of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of India held extensive talks in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding that traditionally characterize the Indo-Bulgarian relationship. They covered the entire gamut of bilateral relations, exploring new ways of enhancing the partnership between the two countries in the 21st century based on shared democratic values.

4. The Sides expressed their satisfaction at the growth of the Indo-Bulgarian relationship in a number of areas and welcomed the intensity of high-level bilateral visits undertaken by both sides. In this connection, the Sides agreed to keep up the momentum of exchanging high-level political visits in future.

5. The Sides attached significance to the holding of meetings at the highest level and development of cooperation between the various Ministries and Regions / States, as well as private entities of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of India.

6. The Sides noted the importance of the Inter-Parliamentary cooperation and called for the intensification of interaction of bilateral parliamentary exchanges.

7. The Sides, after taking into account the untapped potential for bilateral cooperation, considered the ways for deepening mutually beneficial cooperation in areas of common interest. They reiterated the need to expand bilateral trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation.
8. The Sides discussed the possibility of bilateral investments and took note of the need to enhance such cooperation. The Sides also noted that the business and scientific circles of both countries should establish direct contacts for the implementation of industrial, scientific and technical projects.

9. In this context, the Sides reiterated the importance of the Indo-Bulgarian Joint Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technical cooperation, the Indo-Bulgarian Joint Business Council, the Indo-Bulgarian Joint Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation, the Indo-Bulgarian Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation, as well as other mechanisms of state support for the development of bilateral ties.

10. The Sides underlined the mutual aspiration for strengthening the contacts in the fields of culture, education and training including promotion of Bulgarian studies and Indology in India and Bulgaria respectively. The Bulgarian Side expressed its appreciation of the assistance in the field of training rendered by the Government of India under ITEC Programme.

11. The Sides expressed satisfaction that the Treaty on Extradition between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of the Republic of India has been signed during the current visit. The Agreement of cooperation on Youth Affairs and Sports signed during the visit will ensure widening the scope of bilateral interaction. The MoU between the Bulgarian Association of Information Technology and the Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council of India, which was also signed during this visit, will further tap the inherent strengths of both our growing economies and enhance bilateral economic co-operation.

12. The Sides held detailed exchanged of views on regional and international issues of mutual interest which revealed a close proximity of viewpoints. The Sides noted the high level of interaction and co-operation between Bulgaria and India at the U.N. and other multilateral fora and expressed their intention to further co-operate in this field. Special mention was made of the successful tenure of the Republic of Bulgaria in the United Nations Security Council during 2002-2003.

13. The Sides reaffirmed the need to uphold the principles of International Law, and the provisions of the UN Charter in regard
to international relations. The Sides noted the importance of politico-diplomatic methods of settlement of international conflicts. They also stressed the need to strengthen the role of the UN in the fight against international terrorism, cross-border criminal activity, illegal traffic of narcotics and in resolving other pressing problems of the modern world.

14. The Sides condemned the growth of terrorism and religious extremism, which threatens international peace and security. They reiterated that terrorism cannot be justified on any grounds, whether political, ethnic, religious, or any other. They agreed that every State has the duty to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in terrorist acts in another State or acquiescing in organized activities within its territory directed towards the commission of such acts, and further agreed that all States must refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts. In this regard, both Sides stressed the importance of the effective implementation of Security Council Resolution 1373. They supported early adoption and implementation of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. The Sides agreed to explore the possibility of forming a Joint Working Group to further cooperate in combating terrorism.

15. The Republic of India considers the Republic of Bulgaria as a friendly state pursuing a balanced and independent foreign policy. The Indian Side confirms and honours the path of development chosen by the people of Bulgaria and supports the efforts of the Republic of Bulgaria to integrate into the European Union.

16. The Republic of Bulgaria considers India, a friendly state and home to one sixth of humanity, an important player in the community of nations. Underlining the importance of expanding the United Nations Security Council in order to make it more representative and to increase its effectiveness, in the context of the overall reform of the United Nations, the Republic of Bulgaria reiterated its support for India’s candidature for Permanent Membership of the expanded United Nations Security Council.

17. The Indian Side highly appreciated the constructive policy of the Republic of Bulgaria as a factor of stability in Southeast Europe and its efforts to promote multi-faceted regional co-operation, including successful implementation of various infrastructural projects, to ensure security and prosperity in the region.
18. In the context of the situation in South Asia, the Bulgarian Side expressed its high appreciation of Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's initiative for normalising and improving India's relations with Pakistan and reiterated its support for settlement of all bilateral issues in accordance with the Simla Agreement of 1972 and the Lahore Declaration of 1999.

19. The President of the Republic of India, Mr. Abdul Kalam visited Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” and interacted with students and faculty members. He also met eminent Bulgarian scientists and friends of India, and visited the Rila Monastery.

20. The President of the Republic of India, Mr. Abdul Kalam extended an invitation to the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Mr. Georgi Parvanov to pay a State visit to the Republic of India. The invitation was accepted with pleasure. The dates for the visit will be finalised through diplomatic channels.

21. The President of the Republic of India expressed sincere gratitude to the President of the Republic of Bulgaria for the hospitality and the excellent organisation of the visit to Bulgaria by the Indian delegation.
France


The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the French Republic hereinafter designated as the Contracting States,

Desiring to provide for effective cooperation between the two States in the suppression of crime and, specifically, to facilitate extradition have agreed as follows:

**ARTICLE 1**

**OBLIGATION TO EXTRADITE**

1. The Contracting States undertake to surrender to each other, subject to the provisions and conditions laid down in this Agreement, all persons against whom the competent authorities of the Requesting State are proceeding for an offence or who are wanted by the said authorities for the carrying out of a sentence of imprisonment.

**ARTICLE 2**

**EXTRADITABLE OFFENCES**

1. Extradition shall be granted in respect of offences punishable, under the laws of the two Contracting States, by imprisonment of at least two years.

2. Where on conviction a prison sentence has been awarded on account of an extraditable offence in the territory of the requesting State, the duration of the penalty remaining to be served must amount at least to nine months.

3. Even regarding offences related to fiscal matters, customs duties or currency exchange, extradition shall be granted in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement.

4. If the request for extradition includes several separate offences
each of which is punishable under the laws of the two Contracting States by a sentence of imprisonment, but some of which do not fulfil the condition with regard to the duration of the sentence which may be awarded, the Requested State shall also have the right to grant extradition for the latter offences.

ARTICLE 3

POLITICAL OFFENCES

1. Extradition shall not be granted if the offence in respect of which it is requested is regarded by the Requested State as a political offence, or as an offence connected with such an offence.

   The Requested State may decide not to regard as a political offence or as an offence connected with political offence or as an offence inspired by political motives a serious offence involving an act of violence against the life, physical integrity or liberty of a person(s) or a serious offence involving an act against property if the act created a collective danger for a person(s).

   The same shall apply to an attempt to commit any of the foregoing offences or participation as an accomplice of a person who commits or attempts to commit such an offence.

   When evaluating the character of the offence, the Requested Party shall consider any particularly serious aspect of the offence, including:

   a. whether it created a danger to the life, physical integrity or liberty of a person(s); or
   b. whether it affected persons not connected to the motives behind it; or
   c. whether cruel or vicious means were used in the commission of the offence.

2. This article shall not affect any obligations which the Contracting States may have undertaken or may undertake under any other international convention of a multilateral character.

3. Extradition shall also not be granted if the Requested State has substantial grounds for believing that a request for extradition has been made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on account of his or her race, religion, nationality or political opinion,
or that the position of the person sought may be prejudiced for any of these reasons.

**ARTICLE 4**

**MILITARY OFFENCES**

Extradition for offences under military law which are not offences under ordinary criminal law is excluded from the application of this Agreement.

**ARTICLE 5**

**EXTRADITION OF NATIONALS**

1. Neither of the Contracting States shall extradite its own nationals. Nationality shall be determined as at the time of the commission of the offence for which extradition is requested.

2. If, pursuant to paragraph 1, the Requested State does not surrender the person claimed for the sole reason of nationality, it shall, in accordance with its laws and at the request of the Requesting State, submit the case to its competent authorities in order that proceedings may be taken if they are considered appropriate. If the Requested State requires additional documents, such documents shall be provided free of charge. The Requesting State shall be informed of the result of its request through the channels provided for in Article 9.

**ARTICLE 6**

**OTHER COMPULSORY REFUSALS OF EXTRADITION**

Extradition shall not be granted if:

1. final judgement has been passed by the competent authorities of the Requested State upon the person claimed in respect of the offence or offences for which extradition is requested;

2. the person claimed has become immune, by reason of lapse of time, from prosecution or punishment, according to the law of either State;

3. pardon has been granted either in the territory of the Requesting State or in the territory of the Requested State, provided, in the latter case, that the Requested State was competent to prosecute according to its domestic law.
ARTICLE 7

OPTIONAL REFUSALS

Extradition may be refused:

1. When the offence for which extradition is requested is regarded by
   the law of the Requested State as having been committed in whole
   or in part in its territory or in a place treated as its territory;

2. when the offence for which extradition is requested has been
   committed outside the territory of the Requesting State and the law
   of the Requested State does not allow prosecution for the same
   category of offence when committed outside its territory.

3. if the person claimed is being prosecuted by the Requested State
   in respect of the offence or offences for which extradition is
   requested, or if the judicial authorities of the Requested State have
   discontinued, in accordance with the law of that State, the criminal
   proceedings for the offence for which extradition is requested;

4. when the person claimed has been tried and finally acquitted or
   convicted in a third State in respect of the offence or offences for
   which extradition is requested;

5. if the surrender is likely, to have dire consequences for the person
   claimed, namely on the grounds of his age or health.

ARTICLE 8

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

If the offence for which extradition is requested is punishable by
death under the law of the Requesting State, and if in respect of such
offence the death penalty is not provided for by the law of the Requested
State or is not normally carried out, extradition may be refused unless the
Requesting State gives such assurance as the Requested State considers
sufficient that the death penalty will not be awarded or, if awarded, shall
not be carried out.

ARTICLE 9

TRANSMISSION OF REQUESTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. The request for extradition shall be in writing and shall be transmitted
   through the diplomatic channel.
2. The request shall be supported by:

(a) the original or a true certified copy of the conviction and sentence, or of the warrant of arrest or other order having the same effect and issued in accordance with the procedure laid down in the law of the Requesting State;

(b) a statement of the offences for which extradition is requested, the time and place of their commission, their legal description, and a reference to the relevant legal provisions, including those pertaining to lapse of time, as well as a copy of those provisions;

(c) particulars of the remaining duration of the sentence to be carried out when the person is claimed for the purpose of serving a sentence of imprisonment;

(d) as accurate a description as possible of the person claimed, together with any other information which will help to establish his identity and, if possible, his location.

**ARTICLE 10**

**ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE**

If the information communicated by the Requesting State is found to be insufficient to enable the Requested State to make a decision in pursuance of the present Agreement, the latter State shall request the necessary supplementary information and may fix a time limit for the receipt thereof. This time limit may be extended by the Requested State upon a duly reasoned request being made by the Requesting State.

**ARTICLE 11**

**PROVISIONAL ARREST**

1. In case of urgency, the competent authorities of the Requesting State may apply for the provisional arrest of the person sought; the competent authorities of the Requested State shall take a decision on it in accordance with their law.

2. The request for provisional arrest shall include a brief statement of the facts of the case; it shall also state that one of the documents mentioned in Article 9, paragraph 2 (a), exists and that it is intended to send a request for extradition. It shall also state for what offence extradition will be requested and when and where such offence
was committed and shall so far as possible give a description of the person sought.

3. A request for provisional arrest shall be sent to the competent authorities of the Requested State either through the diplomatic channel or direct by post or telegraph or through the International Criminal Policy Organization (Interpol) or by any other means affording evidence in writing or accepted by the Requested State. The requesting authority shall be informed without delay of the result of its request.

4. Provisional arrest may be terminated if, within a period of 60 days after arrest, the Requested State has not received the request for extradition and the documents mentioned in Article 9. The possibility of provisional release at any time is not excluded, but the Requested State shall take any measures which it considers necessary to prevent the escape of the person sought.

5. Release shall not prejudice re-arrest and extradition if a request for extradition is received subsequently.

**ARTICLE 12**

**REQUEST FOR EXTRADITION BY SEVERAL STATES**

1. If extradition is requested concurrently by more than one State, either for the same offence or for different offences, the Requested State shall make its decision having regard to all the circumstances and especially the relative seriousness and place of commission of the offences, the respective dates of the request, the nationality of the person claimed and the possibility of subsequent extradition to another State.

2. If the Requested State reaches a decision at the same time on extradition to one of the requesting States, and on re-extradition to another Requesting State, it shall communicate that decision on re-extradition to each of the Requesting States.

**ARTICLE 13**

**DECISION**

1. The Requested State shall promptly communicate to the Requesting State through diplomatic channels its decision on the request for extradition.
2. The Requested State shall convey to the Requesting State the reason for any complete or partial refusal of the request for extradition.

**ARTICLE 14**

**POSTPONED OR CONDITIONAL SURRENDER**

1. The Requested State may, after making its decision on the request for extradition, postpone the surrender of the person claimed in order that he may be proceeded against by that State or, if he has already been convicted, in order that he may serve his sentence in the territory of that State for an offence other than that for which extradition is requested.

2. The Requested State may, instead of postponing surrender, temporarily surrender the person claimed to the Requesting State in accordance with conditions to be determined by mutual agreement between both States.

**ARTICLE 15**

**SURRENDER OF THE PERSON SOUGHT**

1. If extradition is agreed to, the Requesting State shall be informed of the place and date of surrender and of the length of time for which the person claimed was detained with a view to surrender.

2. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article, if the person claimed has not been taken over on the appointed date, he may be released after the expiry of 15 days and shall in any case be released after the expiry of 30 days. The Requested State may refuse to extradite him for the same offence.

3. If circumstances beyond its control prevent one of the Contracting States from surrendering or taking over the person to be extradited, it shall notify the other State. The two States shall agree upon a new date for surrender and the provisions of paragraph 2 of this Article shall apply.

**ARTICLE 16**

**RULE OF SPECIALITY**

1. A person who has been extradited shall not be proceeded against, sentenced or detained with a view to the carrying out of a sentence
or detention order for any offence committed prior to his surrender other than that for which he was extradited, nor shall he be for any other reason restricted in his personal freedom, except in the following cases:

(a) when the State which surrendered him consents. A request for consent shall be submitted, accompanied by the documents mentioned in article 9 and a legal record of any statement made by the extradited person in respect of the offence concerned. Consent shall be given when the offence for which it is requested is itself subject to extradition in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement;

(b) When that person, having had an opportunity to leave the territory of the State to which he has been surrendered, has not done so within 45 days of his final discharge, or has returned to that territory after leaving it.

2. The Requesting State may, however, take any measures necessary to remove the person from its territory, or any measures necessary under its law, including proceedings by default, to prevent any legal effects of lapse of time.

3. When the legal description of the offence for which a person has been extradited is altered this person shall only be proceeded against or sentenced if the offence under its new description;

(a) can give rise to extradition pursuant to this Agreement;

(b) relates to the same facts on which extradition was granted.

4. When the modification of the legal description of the offence for which a person has been extradited may result in a lessening of the sentence to be awarded, the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article shall apply.

ARTICLE 17

RE-EXTRADITION TO A THIRD STATE

Except as provided for in Article 16, paragraph 1 (b), the Requesting State shall not, without the consent of the Requested State, surrender to a third State a person surrendered to it and sought by the said third State in respect of offences committed before his surrender. The Requested
State may request the production of the documents mentioned in Article 9 as well as a legal record in which the person claimed states that he accepts or refuses re-extradition.

**ARTICLE 18**

**INFORMATION ON THE RESULT OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS**

The Requesting State shall inform the Requested State, upon demand by the latter, of the outcome of the criminal proceedings being conducted in respect of the extradited person and send a copy of the final and binding decision.

**ARTICLE 19**

**SURRENDER OF PROPERTY**

1. Upon the request of the Requesting State and to the extent permitted under the laws of the Requested State, all articles which may serve as evidence or which have been acquired as a result of an offence and which at the time of apprehension are found in the possession of the person sought shall be surrendered if extradition of the person sought is granted. Surrender of such articles shall be possible even without any special request and, if possible, at the same time as the person sought is surrendered.

2. The property specified in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be handed over even if extradition, having been agreed to, cannot be carried out owing to the death or escape of the person claimed.

3. Insofar as the rights of the Requested State or of third parties to the articles are to be respected, the Requested State may refuse surrender or condition surrender upon a satisfactory assurance from the Requesting State that the articles will be returned to the Requested State as soon as possible.

**ARTICLE 20**

**TRANSIT**

1. Transit through the territory of either of the Contracting States shall be granted upon request transmitted through the diplomatic channel, provided that the offence concerned is an extraditable offence under this Agreement.
2. The State requested to grant transit may refuse to comply when the person concerned is its national.

3. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 4 of this article, it shall be necessary to produce the documents mentioned in article 9, paragraph 2.

4. If air transport is used, the following provisions shall apply:

   (a) When no landing is scheduled, the Requesting State shall notify the State over whose territory the flight is to be made and shall certify that one of the documents mentioned in Article 9, paragraph 2 (a) exists. In the case of an unscheduled landing, such notification shall have the effect of a request for provisional arrest as provided for in Article 11 and the Requesting State shall submit a formal request for transit;

   (b) when a landing is scheduled, the Requesting State shall submit a formal request for transit.

ARTICLE 21

PROCEDURE

Except where this Agreement otherwise provides, the procedure with regard to extradition and provisional arrest shall be governed solely by the law of the Requested State.

ARTICLE 22

LANGUAGES TO BE USED

The documents transmitted in application of this Agreement shall be in the language of the Requesting State and be accompanied by a translation in the language of the Requested State.

ARTICLE 23

EXPENSES

1. Expenses incurred in the territory of the Requested State until the surrender of the person claimed are borne by that State.

2. Expenses incurred on the transit of a person claimed through the territory of the State requested to allow the transit, are borne by the Requesting State.
ARTICLE 24

RATIFICATION; ENTRY INTO FORCE; DENUNCIATION

1. Each of the States shall notify the other of the fulfillment of the procedures required by its constitution for the entry into force of the present Agreement.

2. The present Agreement shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the date of receipt of the last notification.

3. Either State may terminate the present Agreement at any time by giving to the other written notice of termination through diplomatic channels; in that case, termination shall take effect six months from the date of receipt of that notice.

Done at Paris on 24 January 2003 in triplicate in Hindi, French and English languages, all three texts being equally authentic.

For the Government of For the Government of
The Republic of India the French Republic


SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Friends, I am very happy to welcome the Prime Minister of France and his delegation to India. He has paid us the compliment of making this his first official visit outside Europe. We appreciate this symbol of our special relationship.

Our discussions today have been wide-ranging and productive. We reviewed the international situation covering developments in and beyond our neighbourhood. I am happy that we have an identity or similarity of views on all the issues we covered. France has been an important friend of India in international fora and we appreciate its consistent support on matters of our concern.

We have a vibrant political relationship and close cooperation in
defence, space, information technology and communications. France is an important center of high technology. Our partnership in research and sharing of technologies can be of great benefit to our peoples. One such sector is water where French know-how can help us utilize and manage water resources better. Our new working groups on roads and urban development will help us to draw on French expertise to strengthen our infrastructure.

We discussed today the need to further expand our economic and commercial cooperation. While trade has been growing, it does not do justice to the potential. Business and industry in our two countries should take up this challenge. The Government can and will facilitate this process.

I would also like to thank the Prime Minister of France for bringing with him a taste of France in the form of the French Season in India. I am sure the series of activities constituting this event will promote our mutual understanding and our interactions in the economic and cultural fields.

Thank you.

H.E. JEAN-PIERRE RAFFARIN: I would like to start by thanking the Prime Minister of India for the quality of the welcome which my delegation and myself have received in Bangalore and in Delhi.

If the present Republic and the Government decided that my first official trip outside of Europe would be to India, it is to reaffirm our intention to strengthen and further cooperation between our two countries, and also to reaffirm the fact that we share a common vision of the world.

This vision of the world is what France intends to develop during its Presidency of the G-8. It is articulated around four strong values – solidarity, responsibility, security and democracy.

For solidarity, we would like us to be present in all of our concerns and G-8 will make a number of advances in the continuation of the Congress of Children, Johannesburg, to make sure that development is at the very heart of concerns of the world.

The issue of responsibility is also a very strong message. We would like that statement, not only the statement but also we can make the actors in the financial field, economic field, social field, ethical field that all these actors should show a great responsibility.

Security is also a part of the common vision, which we share with India. It is to strengthen our fight against terrorism and proliferation of
terrorism, against all forms of terrorism.

The topic of democracy is also extremely important. Democracy is in fact a dialogue with civil society. India has recently shown its deep attachment to the values of democracy by organizing elections in a region of the world with very painful territorial difficulties. It is because we share this common vision that more people of the world wish to strengthen and reaffirm our cooperation today. Our exchanges are not at the level of our friendship.

We welcome the initiatives which have been developed during this trip. First of all the launch of the French Season in India but also the French presence in Bangalore and also a whole of series of initiatives which have been taken by the members of the delegation, not only by entrepreneurs but also by cultural actors who have all committed themselves to participate to a greater extent to our exchanges. Together we wish to develop Indian investment in France and French investment in India.

We also want to give further momentum to receiving Indian students in France. In three years we have moved from 150 young people in France to 1000. We do feel that this level is not sufficient and we wish to strengthen our cooperation in the field of education and research.

Thanks to the very large Ministerial delegation I have here with me, several concrete initiatives were developed. I think I can name one of the contracts which was signed in Bangalore, companies such as Snecma or ADS, These are large groups but also smaller groups have also engaged in new partnerships, which in aeronautics and space industry is an example of good cooperation.

I also work on the fact that major files in the field of defence are also progressing, but also in the field of industrial development in the civilian field. We have also heard the message concerning the civilian use of nuclear energy. We have also been pleased to be informed that the case of the order of Airbus, in the words of the Prime Minister, “is on the right track”. This, as other major cases for instance I am thinking of the contract of … for the building of a hydroelectric power plant in the State of … We developed many initiatives and the Ministers who are present here shall see them through.

I shall end with a message which is both sad, but also which is very future-oriented. I would like to express to the Prime Minister of India our
heart-felt condolences for the death of Kalpana Chawla in the conditions that we all know. Claudie Haignere, who is the Minister of Research, who also is himself an astronaut, heard the last message from Kalpana Chawla. It was from the Shuttle, a message to the young people of India. The message is as follows, “The path which leads from dreams to success does exist. May you have sufficient vision to find it, brave enough to start upon it and persevering enough to follow it to its end. I wish you a great trip.”

I wish for a great trip to the friendship between India and France.

Thank you, very much.

QUESTION (INDIAN MEDIA): My question is addressed to the French Prime Minister. Mr. Prime Minister, you spoke earlier today about Iraq and in that you said that Iraq could not content itself with passive, resigned cooperation any more. Has the stand of the French Government changed after the speech of Secretary Powell in the UN? What are the implications of an attack on Iraq on a multi-polar world order?

H.E. JEAN-PIERRE RAFFARIN: The position of France has not changed after the communication of Secretary Powell before the Security Council of the United Nations. It is a contribution, and we like all countries who have information to communicate to contribute to the Inspectors so as to enable the Inspectors to present their report before the United Nations on the 14th of February. It is only then that Security Council shall be in a position to assess the situation. We have said, ‘We do not wish for war’. We have said, ‘We do not want war.’ We have said that Iraq can still change the situation if it is to move from a passive cooperation to an active cooperation and enables the Inspectors to fulfill their mission for the Security Council to assess the situation.

QUESTION (FRENCH MEDIA): This is question for both the Prime Ministers.

President Bush has said, “The game is over in Iraq.” I would like to know whether you consider this a declaration of war. What are the consequences of this?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: I do not think that the game is over. Evidence which has been produced by America is to be carefully examined. Inspectors should be encouraged to continue with their work and to make every effort to find out whether any weapons are shielded,
or any weapons are not noticed. I sincerely hope that Iraq will fully comply with Resolution 1441 of the UN Security Council. The UN Security Council needs to use all the wisdom of its members to resolve this matter.

H.E. JEAN-PIERRE RAFFARIN: It is not a game, and it is not over. Our position is the same as the one which has been expressed by the Prime Minister of India. There are other alternatives to war. We would like that the process that was engaged with the Resolution 1441 should continue to its end.

QUESTION (INDIAN MEDIA): I have a question for His Excellency the Prime Minister of France.

Political relations between India and France have always been very close. The Prime Minister said, “France has always been a consistent friend of India.” Why is it then that economic ties have not really taken off the way they should have? How do you think economic ties will be boosted by this visit?

H.E. JEAN-PIERRE RAFFARIN: I have come here precisely for this purpose, to give further life to our friendship and to develop our cooperation. I believe that our cooperation must be extended from the political arena to that of economic exchanges, social matters and also cultural matters. This is why I have come accompanied by a very large delegation not only of industrial leaders but also cultural actors, and people who have a responsibility in the media, so as to highlight the fact that France and India are to continue and further their cooperation.

I believe that there are further ways of extending our exchanges, not only exchanges between our industrial leaders and cultural actors but I think also exchanges between young people and young researchers. This will be one of the priorities of action of my Government.

QUESTION (FRENCH MEDIA): This is a question to both the Prime Ministers. This concerns the mention you have made of Airbus on which we would like some details. You said that the negotiations are going in the right direction. We would like to know whether these are concerned with both the airlines or one, how many aircraft, and when this can be finalized?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: As I said in the morning to a question asked by a journalist, the question of procuring Airbus aircraft is under consideration. We are having talks on that. Now a decision is going to be made final in a short time.
H.E. JEAN-PIERRE RAFFARIN: I must welcome the fact that the Prime Minister has said ‘a short time’, which would translate as ‘soon’. So, to be specific, it concerns 43 Airbus aircraft. This was following the decision announced in last March by Indian Airlines. This shows indeed the trust which exists between the two companies – Airbus and Indian Airlines. We welcome the fact that a decision will be taken soon. Friendship always takes time!

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381. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister of France.


Mr. Prime Minister,
Distinguished Guests from France,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Once again, I welcome you and your delegation on your first State Visit to India. Your visit to India is a reaffirmation of our excellent bilateral ties. It is another milestone in the tradition of regular high-level exchanges, which we have sustained since the visit of President Chirac five years ago. There is now a new maturity and depth in the relationship.

Our close friendship draws on our rich cultural and historic heritage, of which both our nations are justifiably proud. It is strengthened by our commonalities in the modern age. These include a commitment to democracy and to a cooperative multi-polar world order. We are steadfast partners in the international coalition against terrorism. These shared perspectives enrich our cooperation, both bilaterally and multilaterally.

Mr. Prime Minister,

The last decade has witnessed rapid change. Your country has been at the forefront of efforts to transform Europe from common market to common currency, and from community to union. To us in India, the growing weight of a united Europe enhances the importance of our friendship with France.

There is a natural synergy between India’s rapidly expanding economy and the industrial and technological strengths of France. We
still have to guide our economic and commercial relationship towards full exploitation of this synergy. Governments can only facilitate this process. It is for our captains of industry to actually carry it forward. I am particularly happy that you have brought with you to India a high-level business delegation.

Mr. Prime Minister;

Our defence cooperation is vibrant and strengthening. We have an ongoing partnership in space, and we hope we can expand our cooperation in civilian applications of nuclear energy. Our excellent relationship is also advanced by our cooperation in science and technology, delivering the benefits of technology to the people.

We must also focus on other areas of interest, including energy, biotechnology, IT and telecommunications. The ‘French Season’ is an impressive showcase of the best of French culture, science, technology and industrial capabilities. It will greatly enhance mutual understanding. It is an understanding we are pledged to carry forward towards harmonization of views and actions, to the mutual benefit of our two great nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I request you to join me in a toast:

To the health and happiness of the Prime Minister of France
To continuing friendship between India and France

Thank you.
382. Suo Motu Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the Lok Sabha on his visit to France, and some other countries.


Please see Document No. 388

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Germany

383. Media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on Prime Minister’s visits to Germany, Russia and France.


Please see Document No. 405

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384. Media Briefing of German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.


Chancellor Schroeder: Ladies and Gentlemen, a cordial welcome to you! I am very glad to be able to welcome Prime Minister Vajpayee, here in Germany. My last visit to India is still very fresh in my mind. His visit here and the fact that the political relations between Germany and India are very good, give us the possibility to strengthen our relations, in particular, in the economic and scientific field.

In September, we will have the Asia-Pacific Weeks in Germany. We are glad that India, which is for us one of the most important partners in Asia, is participating the Asia-Pacific Weeks. In this context we will also bring in a new dynamism into the Indo-German Joint Economic Commission.

As you know, there is a very good cooperation between India and Germany in the sector of information and communication technology.
However, what you might not know, because it is not yet so much in public focus, but should know, is, that there is a very close cooperation in the field of exploiting renewable energies, in particular, wind and solar energy.

In international politics, there is a great measure of close consensus. This is true about the role of the United Nations just as the international anti-terrorism campaign. This is true also about the Middle East process, where we agree that it is absolutely necessary that the so-called “road map” becomes a reality. We welcome very much the progress that has been made. We hope that they dynamism that has been made. We hope that the dynamism that has come into this process, will continue and lead to a good result.

In this context I have appreciated and I say this with respect and also with admiration – the initiatives of the Indian Prime Minister for a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir question. I believe that this a way on which all involved should proceed.

**Mr. Vajpayee:** Mr. Chancellor, I would like to express my hearty thanks also on behalf of my delegation – to you and your government for the hospitality you have shown to us during this visit.

We enjoy the excellent bilateral relations. One-and-a-half years ago the Chancellor had paid a very successful visit to India. During this visit it became clear to us that there is a strategic potential for cooperation between Germany and India. I hope that my visit to Germany will help to transform these efforts, this potential into a concretely close and wide-ranging relationship.

As the chancellor has mentioned already, we have had very useful talks about our bilateral relations, about our respective regions and also about the international situation. We have shared our views and we believe that we have common grounds in all these fields.

Our institutions for bilateral cooperation function well. But we must direct our attention more specifically to economic ties. For us, Germany is one of our biggest trading partners, and it has made also large investments in India. Many German firms are well known in India. A recent welcome development is that Indian companies invest increasingly in Germany.
Economic know-how including information technology, biotechnology and entertainment industry play an important role in the economic strategic and political decisions of our two countries. In all of these fields we have synergies, which have not yet been fully exploited.

We also discussed collaboration in the field of renewable and alternative energies. Here India can benefit to a large degree from German know-how. We spoke also about a partnership in the fields of rural energy supply through renewable energy.

We discussed cooperation in the field of research and development and spoke also about a partnership programme in the field of research institutes. In our technical universities we can also benefit from German know-how in vocational training. We discussed also many topics concerning WTO. We agreed that our joint commission should meet soon to discuss these topics further.

India and Germany share a joint perspective about terrorism. We appreciate Germany’s position and understanding for our problems regarding cross-border terrorism. Our two countries also have a common vision of a cooperative, multi-polar world order.

An integrated and extended Europe will play a very important role in this world order. Naturally, Germany plays a key role in this. India has always held its relations with the EU in very high regard. We will follow these developments with interests.

Finally, I would like to inform that I have invited Federal Chancellor Schroeder to India in 2004 for continuing the tradition of annual summit meetings, and thus the bilateral dialogue between our two countries will get its dynamism.

Many thanks.

Question: ...

PM Vajpayee: This was a clever and somewhat round about question. The question was: What do we expect from Germany? – I think, Germany is part of the international community and has always been among those countries that have denounced terrorism and spoken out against it.

If you ask what we expect from Germany, then I would say that if General Musharraf comes to Germany, the Federal Chancellor might inform him that Pakistan should end cross-border terrorism and that India is ready
for the dialogue about all topics, including Jammu and Kashmir.

**Mr. Schroeder:** There is an old India proverb – or there could at least be one which means: Never talk about a guest before you have talked to him. But I can tell anyone – also in public – that I always respect and admire the steps, which the Prime Minister has repeatedly taken for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Of course, I want to express my hope publicly towards anyone that these very positive steps be responded to appropriately. There is no question about it. Ending terrorism is a duty of civilized governments, of any government.

**Question:** first part in English, there was no translation

Mr. Federal Chancellor, has the Indian Government, Mr. Vajpayee, been able to give us assessment of Afghanistan and something about the new relations India could establish with Afghanistan?

**PM Vajpayee:** India is a democracy. There are elections at regular intervals. Recently elections were held also in Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan has, however, tried to work against it by acts of violence, threats and by killing candidates. Despite the people came out for these elections in large numbers and voted. This was a clear vote for what the people want. I think after these elections we do not need another election.

**Mr. Schroeder:** So far as the question addressed to me is concerned, it has not yet been decided whether we will expand our engagement in Afghanistan. A prerequisite of such a consideration would firstly be that the United Nations expresses such a desire and secondly that we have resources to comply with such a possible request. Currently we are examining whether this is possible.

Our first priority here is to protect and aid the civilian personnel. This is the sole concern and it is not a question of extending what we want to do and must do in and around Kabul. If the United Nations wishes it and our resources permit and if we can ensure the necessary security conditions for our own people, then we will consider this seriously. But no decision has been made yet.

First we will handover the role of a “lead nation” in Kabul to the Canadians, and NATO will support ISAF. Whether we have the possibility to fulfil wishes that have not yet been articulated clearly, in the middle of the process of examination is far from being decided. As I said before, we are always ready, as it is known to take international obligations seriously. This especially applies to the campaign against terrorism.
We have had an intensive exchange on Afghanistan. There is no question about it. One has to see with great respect what India has done so far not only in the humanitarian but also in the economic field. In order to stabilise the Karzai Government - just as Germany. We closely cooperate for example in building up of the Afghan police force.

Many thanks, Ladies and Gentlemen

385. Remarks by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the meeting with the German Parliamentarians.


Thank you for your warm welcome. It is a privilege for me to be here in this seat of Germany’s democracy, which symbolizes the spirit of freedom of the German people. Having been a parliamentarian for nearly five decades, I feel at home here. I only hope you will be kinder to me in your response than my fellow parliamentarians in India, when I address them in our Parliament!

I convey to all of you greetings from the Indian Parliament and good wishes from the people of India. Many of you here are members of the India-Germany Parliamentary Group. This reflects your strong interest in India. I am happy to inform you that the Speaker of our Parliament recently constituted an India-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group. We were also honoured that the Bundestag was represented at the celebrations of the Golden Jubilee of our Parliament in January this year.

India and Germany are pluralist, secular democracies. The evolution of parliamentary democracy in India is a fascinating story. It was less than six decades ago that we achieved independence. Many doubted at that time that a democracy based on universal adult franchise could succeed or survive in a poor country with high illiteracy, where most people had never voted before. We have proved them wrong. We have preserved the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious fabric of our society within a constitutional, democratic and federal framework. Our system institutionalizes fundamental freedoms, human rights and rule of law. We have regularly changed governments through a peaceful, non-violent
expressions of popular will. As I look around at the functioning of real and sham democracies around the world, I sometimes feel that the enormity of India’s achievements in this direction is not fully appreciated.

In the course of my discussions here in Germany, it also struck me that the challenges which our two countries face are not dissimilar, even though your perspectives as a developed country and ours as a developing country differ in many respects. Our economic reforms and liberalization policies have had to face conflicting interests and demands within our political parties, our unions, our civil society and also our parliament and government. We have followed the patient process of trying to reconcile the various competing interests, and to move forward in a manner most conducive to equitable economic development and social justice. It may not be a very rapid process but it does make for greater stability. I think you have also experienced this process in decision making in Europe. I should inform you that my coalition government has as nearly many parties as the number of countries the European Union would have, after its expansion.

History has shown time and again that democratic societies are those which seek peace, protect freedoms, permit dissent and value consensus. These are precisely the attributes which make such societies the main targets of international terrorism. September 11 and its aftermath taught us two principal lessons. One is that the global reach of terrorism requires a global and comprehensive effort to counter it. The second is that we cannot, and should not, negotiate with terrorism or differentiate between its various constituent elements. As partners in the international coalition against terrorism, India and Germany should recognize that our success against terrorism will depend on how well we have learnt this lesson.

India has suffered, both from terrorism and from the consequences of the double standards applied by countries to deal with terrorism in different places. But, even while we continue to deal with our specific problem of cross border terrorism, I have extended a hand of friendship to Pakistan in the hope that it may initiate a process leading to peace, friendship and cooperation between our two countries. I hope my political initiative will inspire action to end cross border terrorism and to dismantle the infrastructure of support to it. We encourage our friends and partners also to bring to bear their influence to make this happen.

Recent global developments have yet again emphasized the importance of evolving a cooperative multi-polar world order, which would
promote the ethic of pluralism and consensus, protecting the legitimate interests and aspirations of its constituent elements. We are happy that the United Nations Security Council has reached unanimous agreement on the manner of moving forward in Iraq, with an important role for UN and its organizations. I believe that the recent events have again underlined that the United Nations and its organizations need to be made more reflective of modern political realities. Both India and Germany have definite views on this and legitimate interests.

I have had very fruitful discussions with President Rau, Chancellor Schroeder and others on strengthening the economic pillar of the India-German relationship. Germany is India’s fourth largest trading partner and sixth largest investor. In a reversal of historical trends, Indian companies are now looking at Germany for investment. But we cannot say that our bilateral trade of 5 billion US dollars is anywhere near its true potential. As I mentioned to Chancellor Schroeder, Germany receives only about 1.5% of India’s total IT exports to USA and Europe. German companies have not exploited India’s potential bio-technology market of 2.2 billion Euros or of the synergies available in advanced areas of bio-technology research and development. India has recently launched 2 German satellites and our remote sensing satellites have participated in some German experimental projects. But our joint use of space technologies for communications and developmental applications can go much further. Germany set up one of our first institutions of technological excellence in Madras in 1959. Another Indo-German institute of advanced technology will shortly be established in Vishakapatnam to strengthen dissemination of advanced technologies in areas ranging from precision manufacturing and infrastructure to environmental engineering. We welcome more cooperation in research and technology, including commercialization of technologies like solar refrigeration.

When Chancellor Schroeder came to India, we recognized the strategic potential of the India-German relationship. Objective conditions exist for transforming this potential into the reality of a strategic partnership. This would require a greater mutual awareness of economic opportunities, reform of old mindsets and eliminating the remnants of Cold War ideologies which have promoted a view of India through a restrictive South Asian prism. It is time our friends like Germany acted on their understanding of India’s global presence.
386. Press Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the media interaction with the Minister-President (Chief Minister) of the State of Bavaria.

Munich (Germany), May 29, 2003.

"Thank you for your kind words, and for your warm welcome. My delegation and I are grateful for the hospitality we have received here. Bavaria is as famous for its hospitality as it is for its industrial capability, its leadership in cutting-edge technologies, the quality of its water and the diversity of its beer.

It is remarkable that in the midst of a slow-down in the global and European economy all around you, Bavaria has maintained a steady economic growth path. This is a tribute to technological excellence and sound economic management.

This is my last stop on this visit to Germany. The focus of the visit has been to strengthen bilateral political consultations, to impart fresh momentum in areas of ongoing economic cooperation, and to explore new areas for collaboration. I am happy to share with you my assessment that there is a genuine willingness in this country to widen our interaction and deepen our partnership.

This willingness is very evident in Bavaria. It is host to number of Indian entrepreneurs and professionals. Several Indian firms have commenced operations in Munich. Our discussions have been very productive. They covered ways to increase trade between Bavaria and India, which is currently around 500 million Euros. Only 11 percent of our exports to Germany reach this state. Our exports to Bavaria are dominated by traditional items such as textiles and manufactures. With the internet capital of Germany so closely linked to India’s I.T. capital of Bangalore, we could have expected a greater share of the products of the “New economy” in our bilateral trade. Our business communities need to focus their attention on this.

We are happy that your investment promotion agency has selected Bangalore for its second overseas office. We hope that it will reverse the trend of a reduction in German investment flows into India in recent years.

We need to promote greater interaction between our two countries to enhance our trade in IT and biotechnology products."
I have also conveyed to the Minister-President that India would be keenly interested in developed institutional linkages with Bavaria, which could upgrade the industrial and technological training skills in our own polytechnics and universities.

Bavaria is a pioneer in e-governance. Our cities of Hyderabad, Bangalore and New Delhi are also developing useful e-governance systems. There may be mutual advantages in sharing experiences. I have proposed a partnership between Bavaria and one of our cities in the entire range of the Knowledge trade.

Information and communications technologies shrink distances, but they cannot make geography irrelevant. As the European Union expands to include new members, Bavaria will certainly play a crucial role as the geographical and industrial centre of this expanded grouping. India has a rapidly expanding cooperation with the European Union and this development would be of interest to us.

I have invited Minister-President Stoiber to visit India to see for himself the opportunities for enhancement of the India-Germany partnership. We look forward to receiving him in the near future.

✦✦✦✦✦
I am happy to meet this distinguished gathering. You represent the modern inheritors of the great Germanic tradition of scholarship, especially in the field of Indology, and philanthropy. This is the last of my engagements during my memorable four-day visit to your country. We are indeed touched by your affection and goodwill for India.

We in India admire your country for many reasons. Among them is the deep and specialized knowledge of India that German scholars have amassed generation after generation. I would even say that the field of Indology would be much the poorer without the pioneering efforts of German scholars. It is they who introduced Sanskrit, the Vedas, the Ayurved, and our epics to the western world. For this, modern India owes you and your forbears a debt of gratitude.

Over the past few centuries, the best of Indian and German minds have resonated with one another to produce an enduring harmony. Max Mueller and Herman Hesse are well known in India; and so also are modern scholars such as Professor Rothermund, who is with us today.

I think Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore summarised this aptly when he said, “Germany has done more than any other country in the world for opening up and broadening the channel of intellectual and spiritual communication of the West with India.”

So deeply did Tagore admire your country and your greatest poet, Goethe, that he not only learnt German, but also gained enough mastery over it to read Goethe’s Faust in the original. In the words of Taraknath Sen, an Indian scholar on German literature, “Both Goethe and Tagore worshipped at the shrine of the Universal Man, whom they evoke and celebrate in their writings.”

The interaction between Tagore and the late Count Hermann Keyserling, whom the poet admired as the “philosopher of culture”, is one of the cherished chapters in the cultural relations between our two countries. Inspired by Gurudev’s Shantiniketan, Keyserling established the ‘School of Wisdom’ in Darmstadt. Meeting in the period between the two World Wars, the two believed that mankind is united by a spiritual
unity, of which different cultures and civilizations are distinctive notes in a musical symphony.

Speaking of music, I am reminded of the famous conversation between Tagore and Einstein, a dialogue that focused on the commonality between music, nature and God. I am told that the website on this conversation receives one of the highest hits on the Internet by intellectuals around the world.

Our interaction has not been limited to history, literature, philosophy and culture. For us, German technology has nearly the same attractive quality as German art and poetry. Historically, interaction between our men of science has also been of the highest order. For instance, the Bose-Einstein Statistics have continued applicability in the present day. You have helped us establish the Thumba Rocket Launching Centre and the Indian Institute of Technology in Chennai. And now, we have worked together to launch your satellites on our indigenous PSLV rockets. We desire to have stronger partnership with Germany in research and development in frontier areas.

_Distinguished Scholars,_

Each one of you, in your own way, has been an Ambassador of India in this great nation of yours. Our scholars on Germany are performing the same role. You have an important role to play in representing both the ancient civilization that you know so well, and the modern India that is rapidly emerging on the world scene. It is a role you are best suited to play, as a bridge between our two countries.

The basic message that I have brought with me on my visit to Germany is that India is looking to broaden and deepen its engagement with our valued friend in Europe. I do not refer to only trade and investment, but to every field of human endeavour. It is especially necessary to continually strengthen the edifice of interaction in art, culture, literature, philosophy and diverse areas of scholarship.

Pursuit of material prosperity is no doubt essential. But in the challenging times that we live in, it is far more important that countries around the world promote peace and friendship through mutual understanding and goodwill. Ultimately, material prosperity is but a means to attain the end of cultural fulfillment of Man, enabling him to develop all his gifts and experience the intrinsic Unity in Diversity in Mankind.
And all of you are engaged in this lofty endeavour.

Friends,

I am told that Indological studies have been facing some new challenges in recent times. I would like to hear your considered views on how to overcome these challenges. There is a proposal that we set up a rotating Chair for Indology in certain prestigious universities in India and Germany.

I have also received a suggestion that we institute an annual Tagore-Einstein Memorial Lecture, to be held alternately in India and Germany. This suggestion envisages inviting the best minds, from around the world, in art, culture, philosophy, science and promotion of peace under this initiative. If you have any further suggestions, I would welcome them.

I would like to listen to you now, and to learn from you what India and Germany can do together.

Dhanyavaad. (Thank You)

Danke. (Thank You)
Suo Motu statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Lok Sabha on his visits to Germany, St. Petersburg, Evian and China.


In the last two months, I have had the opportunity to interact with a number of world leaders during my visits to Germany, Russia, France and China.

I visited Germany from May 27 to 30. I was then in St. Petersburg at the invitation of President Putin for the Tercentenary celebrations of that city. Thereafter, I participated in the G-8 enlarged dialogue in Evian at the invitation of President Chirac. I paid a separate bilateral visit to China from June 22 to 27.

The visits to Germany and China were bilateral in nature, while those to Russia and France were for prominent events to which only selected countries were invited. All these visits underscored our on-going dialogue with key countries of Europe and Asia and an increasing acknowledgement of the growing salience of India in international affairs. They helped to consolidate our bilateral ties with these countries and to project our position on important issues at select international gatherings. Such visits also enable us to understand better the perspectives of others on issues of vital concern to the international community.

My visit to Germany was in response to Chancellor Schroeder’s invitation, extended during his visit to India in October 2001. I had useful discussions with the German leadership on expanding and intensifying bilateral relations. We also had a detailed exchange of views on regional and international issues. Germany sees the need for uncompromising global action against the scourge of terrorism wherever it occurs and against whomever it is directed.

India and Germany are both keen to impart further momentum to trade and investment linkages. I highlighted the investment opportunities in India and the wide-ranging complementarities between India and Germany, which encourage greater scientific and technological cooperation. I also had occasion to interact with a wide cross-section of German parliamentarians, business representatives and Indologists. In Munich, I had useful discussions with the Minister-President of Bavaria, Dr. Edmund Stoiber.
We value our continuing high-level contacts with Germany as one of our most important interlocutors in the European Union, a member of G-8 and currently on the Security Council. In line with our agreement to have annual summit meetings. We look forward to welcoming Chancellor Schroeder in India next year.

The 300th anniversary celebrations of St. Petersburg were grand and impressive. The invitation to India for this special event was a mark of the close strategic relationship between India and the Russian Federation. Equally, the extraordinary level of the international participation at these celebrations illustrated the importance of Russia and the international stature of President Putin.

My visit to St. Petersburg provided me the opportunity of bilateral meetings with President Putin. President Chirac of France, President Hu Jintao of China and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. I also interacted briefly with President Bush of USA.

In my meeting with President Putin, we discussed issues of bilateral, regional and international interest. We agreed to continue the wide-ranging and extensive interaction between the two countries. President Putin reiterated Russia’s commitment to further deepen defence relations with India. I hope to pay a bilateral visit to Russia in the near future, as part of our normal sequence of annual summits.

I thanked President Chirac for his initiative in inviting select developing countries for a broader dialogue with the G-8. There was common understanding of the importance of a multipolar world, for which a restructured UN was essential.

In my discussions with Prime Minister Blair, we expressed satisfaction at the quality of our bilateral relations. PM Blair demonstrated sensitivity and understanding for our core security concerns.

In my meeting with President Hu Jintao of China, he said the new leadership of China placed great emphasis on developing friendship with India. We agreed that China and India, which comprise one third of humanity, should work together effectively to make the 21st century the Asian century.

India was one of 14 developing countries that was invited to the G-8 Enlarged Dialogue in Evian. The Dialogue enabled a free and unstructured interaction, which could highlight the varied economic,
developmental, environmental, security and other concerns of developing countries.

In my remarks, I underlined the immediate urgency for meaningful follow up on the Millennium Development Round to create a global trading regime, which would promote development. I emphasized the need to deliver on existing commitments and to explore new ideas for generation of additional financial resources for development, particularly in the least developed countries. I suggested that though the Kyoto Protocol has not been ratified, the encouragement of clean energy development should be pursued, through incentives and transfer of technologies as envisaged in the Protocol. Developing countries should be fairly compensated for the use of their biodiversity resources and their traditional knowledge. I drew attention to the stark truth that unless there is immediate and tangible progress in these areas, the political support in developing countries for economic liberalization and responsible environmental measures will rapidly disintegrate.

On the margins of the G-8 Summit I had the opportunity to meet the Presidents of Brazil and Mexico. Both agreed on the need for a strategic alliance on WTO issues. Promoting effective cooperation in groupings like the G-15, and strengthening the UN so as to effectively articulate developing countries’ concerns.

The G-8 Enlarged Dialogue could develop into a useful forum of communication at the highest level between the developed and the developing world. A number of the participants at Evian felt that this initiative should be continued by future G-8 Presidencies.

I visited China from June 22 to June 27 this year at the invitation of Premier Wen Jiabao. My visit took place almost ten years after the last visit by an Indian Prime Minister to China. It gave me an invaluable opportunity to personally interact with the new Chinese leadership. I was received with great warmth and courtesy and was given the distinct impression that our desire for mutual goodwill and for diversification of our bilateral relationship was fully reciprocated. A recurrent theme in all my meetings was the commitment of both sides to strengthen the ongoing process of building mutual trust and understanding.

We concluded ten agreements, a list of which is placed on the Table of the House. For the first time in India-China relations, a Joint Declaration was signed by the two Prime Ministers. The text of the Joint Declaration is also placed on the Table of the House. The Declaration outlines the
principles and shared perspectives, which will guide the future development of our bilateral relations. It also confirms the commitment of our two countries to work more closely together internationally to strengthen the trend towards multi-polarity, on WTO issues and on other areas of concern to developing countries.

The Declaration reflects the importance both countries attach to the settlement of the India-China boundary question. Principles for an eventual settlement of this question have been under discussion for some time now. Premier Wen Jiabao and I agreed that these discussions should be given a new momentum by exploring the framework of a boundary settlement from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship. We appointed Special Representatives for this purpose. The National Security Advisor will be our Special Representative. China has appointed its senior-most Vice Foreign Minister as his counterpart. Premier Wen and I also agreed that the joint work on the clarification of the Line of Actual Control should continue smoothly and that peace and tranquillity in the border areas should continue to be maintained.

There was a special stress on our bilateral economic relationships. A large delegation of senior businessmen from CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM was in China in conjunction with my visit. I addressed two well-attended meetings of Indian and Chinese businessmen in Beijing and Shanghai. Our Minister of Commerce and Industry met his ministerial counterparts in Beijing. He also had extensive interactive sessions with relevant agencies and with Chinese businessmen. Our Minister of Communications, IT and Disinvestment had similar useful sessions in Shanghai.

There was a clear awareness on both sides of the potential of our economic relationship. This was reflected in the decision to set up a joint study group to identify potential complementarities in bilateral economic cooperation. The JSG will recommend to both Governments concrete measures to increase trade, promote investments and encourage greater cooperation between our business communities. We also decided to set up a financial dialogue and cooperation mechanism to strengthen our coordination in this sector.

Another development of significance is the Memorandum on border trade through Nathu La pass on the India-China boundary. This adds a third point of crossing for border trade between India and China. With this Memorandum, we have also started the process by which Sikkim will cease to be an issue in India-China relations.
On Tibet, I would like to assure this House that there is no change in our decades old policy. We have never doubted that the Tibet Autonomous Region is a part of the territory of the People’s Republic of China. There can, therefore, be no argument against reiterating it. We have said nothing new about the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama or of Tibetan refugees in India.

Our cultural relationship also received a new impetus during my visit. We have agreed to establish cultural centres in Delhi and Beijing. I inaugurated a Centre for Indian Studies in Beijing University and announced some contributions from India to facilitate the functioning of this centre. Next year we have agreed to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Panchsheel, which is one of the cornerstones of the India-China relationship. I valued the opportunity of visiting the White Horse Temple in Luoyang which marks the arrival of the first Buddhist monks from India to China and underlines the cultures and historical dimension of our interactions. The Chinese side has also agreed to consider my suggestion for opening of additional routes for the Kailash Mansarover Yatra.

The twin objectives of my visit – to establish close relations with the new leadership of China, and to impart fresh momentum to our increasingly diversified bilateral cooperation – were fulfilled. We have agreed to a wide-ranging, mutually beneficial engagement with China, even while simultaneously addressing our difference through amicable discussions.

I have reason to be satisfied with the results of all these visits. Our dialogue with Gemany has been reinforced. President Putin went out of his way to have a bilateral meeting with me, well after midnight on the very first day, despite his preoccupations as host of a large multilateral event. This signalled the importance he attaches to our bilateral relationship. President Chirac conducted the Enlarged Dialogue in a manner that highlighted the key importance of our views as a developing country. With China, progress has been made in enhancing mutual trust and understanding.

All the leaders I met naturally showed interest in the situation in South Asia. I was happy to note that all of them expressed support and appreciation for the hand of friendship we have extended to Pakistan and hoped Pakistan would reciprocate. All of them spoke strongly against the menace of terrorism. I believe my interlocutors have a proper appreciation of our policy of promoting peace, regionally and internationally.
Hungary

389. Joint Media Interaction by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Hungarian Prime Minister Peter Medgyessy.


OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN (SHRI NAVTEJ Sarna): Good evening. We will begin the media interaction by opening statements by the two Prime Ministers. May I invite first the honourable Prime Minister of India to kindly make the opening remarks.

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): I am happy to welcome the Prime Minister of Hungary and his delegation. His visit reaffirms our commitment to our traditionally warm and friendly bilateral relationship.

Our discussions today have been useful and productive. We covered all aspects of our bilateral relations paying special attention to intensifying and diversifying our economic cooperation.

The agreements we have signed today strengthen institutional framework for bilateral trade and investment. In addition to these, our Exim Banks have also agreed to extend a ten million dollar line of credit each to finance bilateral trade.

Information technology is a focus area in the development strategies of both countries. Indian firms have already established a presence in Hungary. The agreement on cooperation in information technology will promote our partnership in this important field.

Our defence partnership can be strengthened to support our defence modernization programme. The agreement we have signed is a testimony to this fact.

India and Hungary have a long tradition of cultural interaction and scholarly exchanges. We also have longstanding cooperation in science and technology. These traditions will benefit from the cultural and educational exchange programmes which have been signed before you today.

Hungary’s membership in the EU will add a new element to our bilateral cooperation within the framework of the European Union.
OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN: May I now request the honourable Prime Minister of Hungary to make his opening remarks.

PRIME MINISTER OF HUNGARY (MR. PETER MEDGYESSY): Dear Mr. Prime Minister Vajpayee, Ladies and Gentlemen:

First of all I would like to extend my thanks for the invitation due to which we could make this visit. I have had the opportunity to meet the most prominent players of Indian politics during this visit.

I think Mr. Prime Minister was very right when he said that we can witness a new beginning. It is 29 years since a Hungarian Prime Minister visited India. I believe that we should not wait another 29 years till the next Prime Ministerial meeting. Please also allow me to inform you on this occasion that I have invited Prime Minister Vajpayee to visit Hungary. I truly hope that he can make this visit next year.

The responsibility of Governments is to serve their people. I think this meeting also serves this purpose very well firstly because it facilitates personal contacts between two leaders, and also because it provides a framework for cooperation through the treaties and agreements we sign. I also think that it serves the purpose of facilitating economic relations.

I am accompanied by 30 representatives of the Hungarian business community. I am convinced that this will be an opportunity for new contacts and new possibilities. There are many more opportunities and a much bigger potential in the relations of the two countries than what we have witnessed so far.

In terms of cultural exchange, our relations have been traditionally good. They date back to centuries. Hungary maintains a cultural institution, the only one in this region for 25 years now, and one that is very successfully promoting the cultural relations of the two countries.

There are also great opportunities in our partnership in education. Indian students are very welcome in Hungary. By the way, there are several hundreds of Indians already studying in Hungarian University of Medical Science and other universities as well. In Hungary there are a great number of young people who are interested in India and we would like to encourage them too.

Mr. Prime Minister has referred to the fact that Hungary will become a member of the European Union. I can just reassure him that by that the number of countries who are friends of India will be bigger.
We have a very similar way of thinking on a number of foreign policy issues. We are also interested in the reform of the United Nations and in fighting terrorism.

Partnership of the two countries is enhanced by the very fact that we have similar traditions historically. Both countries had to suffer hard for their independence and freedom. The people of both countries are proud of their freedom and they cherish their national traditions. That has also contributed to achieving very fruitful and successful negotiations. and, of course, it is not over yet.

I will have a number of meetings too and then I will have the opportunity to visit Bangalore and Mumbai.

Thank you.

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN: The honourable Prime Ministers will have time to take two questions from each side. I request the members of the press to kindly introduce themselves and also indicate to whom the question is addressed. The first question is from the Indian side.

QUESTION (INDIAN MEDIA): My question is addressed to the Hungarian Prime Minister.

What is India’s place in Hungary’s worldview and what does the bilateral relationship between the two countries mean to you?

PRIME MINISTER OF HUNGARY: India for Hungary is a long-term and reliable partner. With a country of such size, such dimensions, rich tradition and prosperous economy, you can only think on long-term basis. India is an important factor in world politics. It is a global factor. This is why we would like to see regular contacts with India at the highest level. We think that in economic relations there are a great number of opportunities. We would like to see rapid development and results in this field.

We see that this region is very dynamically developing and India is a pioneer of that development. We also believe that that can add to the dynamism of Hungarian economy. Also, Indian investors are warmly welcome in Hungary and so are Indian goods.

QUESTION (HUNGARIAN MEDIA): My name is Nicholas Kellete and I represent Hungarian Radio. I have a question for the Indian Prime Minister which concerns international politics.
Mr. Prime Minister, how do you see the future of the United Nations, especially the future of the Security Council? Is there any need to reform the functioning of the Security Council of the United Nations?

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA: You have put a very good question. Some of the recent events have put the United Nations in a very difficult situation. Even the Security Council was not functioning as it should have been. It is necessary that the prestige of the United Nations be restored. It is the only international organization which can look after the interests of the entire humankind. Things are improving but they have to improve more.

QUESTION (INDIAN MEDIA): This is a question addressed to Hungarian Prime Minister.

What are the areas in which you think India and Hungary can have joint ventures? Could you identify the areas?

PRIME MINISTER OF HUNGARY: I consider three or four areas that are very important. One is agriculture. Hungary can provide a very developed technology. We would also be very happy to contribute to strengthening and building biological foundations, providing breeding material, production of seeds, and also enlargement of animal breeding bases. We also see the opportunity of cooperating in irrigation technology with our Indian partners. There we have already achieved very good results. And I think that can be an interesting area for India as well.

The other field would be energy sector, building of power plants in particular. That is a field where we already have traditions. We mention the Neyveli Power Plant here. We are happy to cooperate in the renovation and possible enlargement of Neyveli Power Plant and also in the building of additional power plants. We know that energy is one of the central matters that Indian Government is also concerned about. This was mentioned by the President of the Republic also when I met him this noon.

The third important area is our cooperation in defence industry, with particular regard to defence, IT and communication. We know that Indian companies are interested in investments in Hungary. We are, of course, also open to these. Of course, the best bid will win. These are just examples.

I believe the business community should and will find the best promotion. We would also very much appreciate if the presence of Hungarian businesses could be safeguarded in case of major tenders. If they make the right bid, they should also win.
QUESTION (HUNGARIAN MEDIA): *Honourable Prime Minister, my name is Farkash and I am a reporter of Hungary’s biggest newspaper Népszabadság. But my question will be in English, please excuse me.

The question is about the position of the Indian Government on the investments of Indian enterprises in Hungary. Which kind of enterprises, which fields of Indian economic activity would you prefer to come to Hungary and invest there?

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA: Some investment has taken place. We would like more investment. For our Indian companies this is a new trend and we welcome it. Most of the Indian companies find Hungary attractive. The question of investments was discussed by both the Prime Ministers.

OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN: That brings us to the end of the press interaction.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen.

✦✦✦✦✦

390. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister of Hungary.


Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Medgyessy,

I warmly welcome you and your delegation to India. Your visit is a milestone in our bilateral relations. It is nearly three decades after the last visit by a Hungarian Prime Minister. This is an occasion to reaffirm our commitment to our long-standing friendship.

India and Hungary have a long history of civilizational contacts. Over the centuries, the efforts of eminent scholars, artists and thinkers have woven a rich tapestry of our scholarly and cultural interaction. Some of the great Indologists of the 18th and 19th century were Hungarians. The tradition of Indology has been kept alive in your universities.

Our poet-philosopher Rabindra Nath Tagore inspired a wide expansion of our cultural ties to include literature and art. One of our greatest modern artists, Amrita Sher Gill, personified a blending of oriental artistic sensibilities and the western traditions, which she imbibed from Hungary.
Mr Prime Minister,

Our political and economic relations are built on this foundation of scholarship, understanding and goodwill. Hungary is a key partner for India in Central Europe. We both share a deep commitment to democracy and the rule of law. We are members in the international coalition against terror. We have a long tradition of defence cooperation.

Today, we discussed ways to expand and diversify our economic partnership to match the existing potential. We have put in place the necessary institutional framework to develop these ties. However, our businessmen must also seize the opportunity and make a contribution to this effort.

Mr. Prime Minister,

Both our countries have witnessed rapid and deep-rooted transformations in the last decade. Hungary is now a member of NATO, and will shortly become part of an enlarged European Union. We welcome this development. It is a tribute to your success in reclaiming your place in Europe's councils. We are also happy that we will have another friend in the European Union!

I am confident that our discussions today, our new Agreements, and the interaction of our businessmen will strengthen our partnership, I hope that the rest of your stay in India is pleasant and rewarding, and that your visits to other cities will give you a better understanding of the developments and opportunities that are emerging in India.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I request you to join me in a toast:

To the health and happiness of the Prime Minister of Hungary and Mrs. Medgyessy;

To eternal friendship between India and Hungary.

Thank you.
391. Joint Statement issued during the visit of Hungarian Prime Minister Peter Medgyessy.

New Delhi, November 4, 2003.

1. At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, H. E. Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Hungarian Prime Minister, H. E. Mr. Peter Medgyessy paid a State Visit to India from 2-8 November 2003. This was the first Prime Ministerial visit from Hungary to India in three decades.

2. Prime Minister was accompanied by Mrs. Medgyessy and Minister of Economy and Transport and Deputy Ministers of Foreign affairs, Information and Communication, Prime Ministers Office, Interior, Defence, Culture, Education etc. A large Business and media delegation accompanied the Hungarian Prime Minister.

3. Following a ceremonial reception at the Rashtrapathi Bhavan, the Prime Minister of Hungary laid a wreath at Mahatma Gandhi’s Samadhi. Apart from New Delhi, Prime Minister Medgyessy and his delegation are scheduled to visit major commercial, economic, technological and cultural centers in Agra, Bangalore and Mumbai.

4. During the visit, Mr. Medgyessy called on President of the Republic of India Dr. Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He also had meetings with Hon’ble Speaker, Lok Sabha, Shri Manohar Joshi and Deputy Prime Minister Shri L.K. Advani, and the Leader of the Opposition, Lok Sabha Mrs. Sonia Gandhi.

5. The two sides held extensive talks in an atmosphere of friendship and understanding during which they covered the entire gamut of bilateral relations and also held a detailed exchange of views on regional and international issues of mutual interest, including international terrorism, Iraq and Afghanistan.

6. Both sides expressed satisfaction over the progressive growth of Indo-Hungarian relationship, which is marked by strong cultural affinity and understanding. They agreed to keep up the momentum of exchanging high-level political visits in future.

7. In the presence of the two Prime Ministers, both sides signed (i) the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, (ii) Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement, (iii) Agreement on Defence
Cooperation, (iv) MoU on Cooperation in Information Technology and Services, (v) Cultural Exchange Programme and (vi) Educational Exchange Programme. These agreements provide necessary framework for enhancing trade and commercial relations and enable both sides to further promote cultural and educational links between the two countries.

8. The two sides noted the importance of Inter-Parliamentary cooperation and expressed satisfaction over the level of cooperation. They called for the intensification of interaction of bilateral parliamentary exchanges.

9. The two sides, after taking into account the untapped potential for bilateral cooperation, considered the ways for deepening mutually beneficial cooperation in areas of common interest, especially in trade and investment. The two sides discussed the possibility of bilateral investments and took note of the need to enhance the potential for such cooperation. It was also noted that the business and scientific circles of both the countries should intensify direct contacts for the implementation of industrial, scientific and technical projects with the participation of Indian and Hungarian businessmen.

10. In this context, the two sides reiterated the importance of the Indo-Hungarian Joint Commission and the Indo-Hungarian Joint Business Council and other institutional mechanisms for the development of bilateral ties. They identified automobile, IT, engineering goods, oil, pharmaceuticals and power as promising areas of focus.

11. On the evolving situation in Iraq, India and Hungary stressed that the international community must work together to ensure the territorial integrity of Iraq and the ushering of a polity determined by the Iraqi people themselves with full control over the country's natural resources. Expected next steps should be: strengthening security, the rule of law and public order, restoration of the basic infrastructure, acceleration of the constitutional process, organization of municipal and national elections. Strengthening security should be achieved through larger international involvement based on the mandate of the Security Council resolution 1511.

12. The two sides reaffirmed the need to uphold the principles of International Law, and the provisions of the UN Charter in regard to international relations. Both the sides underlined the importance
of expanding the United Nations Security Council in order to make it more representative and effective.

Taking into consideration the reputation India has achieved within the international community and the growing political and economic role India plays in the international fora the Republic of Hungary regards India as a natural contender for United Nations Security Council permanent membership.

13. Both sides condemned all forms of terrorism, which threatens international peace and security. They reiterated that terrorism cannot be justified on any grounds, whether political, ethnic, religious, or any other. All states must refrain from providing any form of support active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts. In this regard, both sides stressed the importance of the effective implementation of Security Council Resolution 1373 and 1456.

14. In the context of Indo-Pakistan relations, Hungary reiterated that the outstanding issues between the parties should be amicably resolved bilaterally in the spirit of the Shimla Agreement and Lahore Declaration.

15. Prime Minister Medgyessy expressed sincere gratitude to the Prime Minister and the Government of the Republic of India for the hospitality and the excellent organisation of the visit to India.
Poland

392. Joint Press Interaction held by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Polish Prime Minister Leszek Miller.

New Delhi, February 17, 2003.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: I am happy to welcome the Prime Minister of Poland and his Delegation. We are happy that he has chosen to visit India on his first visit to Asia.

Our discussions today have been useful and productive. We covered bilateral relations paying special attention to further expansion of our trade and economic cooperation further. We also discussed regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Poland has also been our reliable partner for defence cooperation. In our programme of defence modernization this cooperation is important. The agreement we have signed is testimony of this fact. The agreements\(^1\) we have just concluded will further the cooperation between our two countries on combating terrorism and organized crime.

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\(^1\) During the visit of the Polish Prime Minister the following three agreements were signed on 17 February 2003, after the talks between two Prime Ministers:


The Agreement aims at enhancing the cooperation of the two countries in combating organized crime and international terrorism. It provides for exchange of documentation, information and experience on the activities of persons indulging in organized crime and terrorism, especially those engaging in offences against life and health; illegal production, distribution, and trade in narcotic and psychotropic substances trafficking in persons and illicit trade in arms, thefts of radioactive and nuclear substances as well as their illegal trade; counterfeiting and forgeries of money; money laundering, as well as the offences relating to funding of international terrorism. The Agreement also provides for extending operational co-operation between respective authorities of the two countries. The Agreement will enter into force thirty days after exchanging notes confirming the approval and can remain valid for unlimited time. (See Document No. 393)

(ii) Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland (Document No. 394) The Treaty will facilitate extradition of any person who is wanted for prosecution, or is convicted of an extraditable offence committed within the territory of the Requesting State, and is found within the territory of the Requested State. An extradition offence for the purposes will be an act which under the laws of each Contracting State is punishable by a term of imprisonment for a period of at least one year. Political offences of certain categories, including murder or harm to the person of the Head of State or the Head of Government, other murders and grievous bodily harms, hostage taking, etc. will attract
Poland will take a historic step towards integrating into Europe when it joins the European Union next year. We look forward to a qualitatively new dimension in our friendship with Poland within the framework of the European Union.

Thank you.

H.E. LESZEK MILLER: Prime Minister; Ladies and Gentlemen:

I wish to express my great satisfaction at the possibility to pay a visit to India. I wish to thank the Prime Minister for the invitation, which enables the intensification of our mutual relations.

Next year, we will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries. It will be a good opportunity to evaluate the road we have covered together. But, first of all, it will be an occasion to reflect upon our common future.

The last Polish Prime Minister visited India eighteen years ago. It is definitely too much. And I am convinced that the visits of Heads of Government, the provisions of the Treaty. The Treaty also provides for provisional arrest in urgent cases. It also provides for seizure of the property of the person, whose extradition is sought, by the Requested State. The treaty will enter into force on the date of exchange of Instruments of Ratification and can be terminated at six month’s notice by one of the Contracting Parties.

(iii) Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland on Cooperation in the Field of Defence.

The Agreement provides a broad framework of cooperation in the defence sphere between India and Poland. It specifically identifies the following areas for cooperation: exchange of experience in the field of military planning and functioning of armed forces; military education and training of military personnel; maintaining peace and fighting terrorism; organization of armed forces, their logistic support, personnel management and administration; exchange of information; military science and research; supply and modernization of armament and military equipment; military medicine and legal issues in the field of defence. The Agreement is concluded for a five-year period and is renewable thereafter.

2. During his visit, Prime Minister Miller had detailed discussions with Prime Minister Vajpayee on the entire range of bilateral relations, and on important regional and international issues of mutual interest. Mr. Miller also called on the President and Vice President of India. Mr. Miller attended a meeting of leading Indian and Polish business representatives organised jointly by the CII and FICCI. The Prime Minister and his delegation also visited Agra and Bangalore. In Bangalore, he met the Governor of Karnataka who hosted a lunch in his honour. This was the first visit by a Polish Prime Minister to India after Poland’s transition to a multi-party democracy in the early 1990s. Significantly it came at a time when Poland was on the threshold of joining the European Union and when the diplomatic relations between India and Poland were to enter their Golden Jubilee year.
Presidents and Ministers will be more frequent and they will be useful for the shaping of our partnership.

On the first of May next year Poland will become a member of European Union. It is a great opportunity for my country. But it is also a chance to focus our attention on the other non-European parts of the world.

We would like to cooperate more intensely with the Asian continents. One cannot cooperate with Asia and forget India because India takes a special position contributing to the stabilization of the situation in this region.

We talked with the Prime Minister and members of the Indian Government about economic cooperation. There are vast reserves here. Our economic turnover is not really very high. It has not exceeded 250 million US Dollars. Poland has a negative trading balance.

All of this makes us think about the necessity to revitalize our economic and trading cooperation, especially in many areas where Indian technologies are very advanced. For example, biotechnology or IT.

The group of Polish businessmen that is accompanying me today held very intensive talks with their Indian partners. I do hope that they will bring fruit in the future in the form of mutually beneficial agreements.

Mr. Prime Minister, on behalf of the Polish Delegation I wish to thank you very much for the great hospitality extended to us. I wish to thank you for the conditions in which we are meeting here, for the atmosphere of kindness and friendship. I wish to assure you of the respect of Poles to India and also I wish to assure you help for the creation of good and great future.

QUESTION (POLISH MEDIA): I have a question to both Prime Ministers. This is a question about what the Governments of these two countries are going to do in order to make sure that the cooperation between India, and Poland returns to the former level from over a dozen years ago. Are you going to introduce some incentives for businessmen for example, and encourage investment?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAEE: Today the meeting with businessmen went on very well. A number of suggestions were put forward. There is wide scope for cooperation in the field of trade and commerce. We have decided to appoint a Joint Commission, which will be examining various possibilities and initiatives. These are the encouragements that we have offered.
H.E. LESZEK MILLER: The accession of Poland to the European Union will influence on increasing the attractiveness of our country for foreign investors. Cooperation with Poland will simply mean cooperation with the whole of European Union. We are also trying to change the legislation in Poland to make it more friendly for investors.

Last year the Polish Parliament adopted a special Act on supporting investment. We will continue to do everything possible to make better conditions for investors. Soon we are going to appoint a Special Ombudsman under Ministry of Economic, Labour and Social Policy. This person will be sort of a guide for investors. And he will be proposing also different solutions including legislative solutions so that the Polish law could create better and better conditions for investing.

In the course of today’s meetings with the Indian businessmen, it was a pleasure for me to know of the great interest of these people in our country. Also there was a great interest to create joint ventures. It is very promising for our economic cooperation.

QUESTION (INDIAN MEDIA): My question is addressed to the Prime Minister of Poland.

India has already signed one Extradition Treaty with the European Union. You are also going to become a member of that Union. So, what is the significance of having a separate extradition treaty with India?

H.E. LESZEK MILLER: We are still not a member of the EU, and problems on extradition do exist. The negotiations on this earlier took quite sometime. So we came to the conclusion that the visit of Polish Delegation to India would be a good moment to sign such an agreement.

New Delhi, February 17, 2003

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Poland, hereinafter called “the Contracting Parties”,

Recognizing the need to develop and strengthen friendship bonds and joint co-operation;

Deeply concerned with the expansion of organised crime and international terrorism;

Looking forward to strengthen and develop the co-operation in combating these crimes;

Convinced about the high importance of the cooperation aimed at an effective combating of organised crimes and international terrorism and looking forward to strengthen and develop co-operation;

Directed by the Principle of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit;

Have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**

The Contracting Parties, in accordance with their domestic laws, shall co-operate in combating all types of serious crimes and prosecuting criminals, especially those engaged in organised crime in the following fields:

1) offences against life and health;
2) offences against property of significant value;
3) illegal production, distribution, and trade in narcotic and psychotropic substances or their precursors as well as their smuggling;
4) terrorism;
5) illegal migration and smuggling of persons;
6) trafficking in persons;
7) illicit trade in armaments, ammunitions, and explosives;
8) thefts of radioactive and nuclear substances as well as their illegal trade;
9) thefts of works of art, mechanical vehicles, and other properties, as well as their smuggling;
10) counterfeiting and forgeries of money, cheques, securities, and other financial instruments and introducing them into circulation;
11) economic offences particularly relating to taxation, banking system, money laundering, as well as relating to funding of international terrorism.

Article 2

For the purpose of the realisation of the co-operation in the above mentioned fields, and in compliance with their own legal regulations, the Contracting Parties shall:

1) exchange personal data about criminals engaged in organised crimes, especially including data about instigators, abettors and conspirators, about connections between criminals, structures of criminal groups and organisations, typical behaviours of individual criminals and groups, circumstances of the crimes, especially the time, place, method of committing the crime, subject and special features of the crime, as well as violated penal law regulations and undertaken activities if it is necessary to fight against organised crimes or counteracting a threat to the public security which may be serious in the given case;

2) extend operational co-operation between respective authorities of the two countries in the field of prevention and combating of organised crime, international terrorism and drug trafficking;

3) exchange experiences and information, especially about international criminal methods, as well as new forms of criminal activities;

4) exchange documentation, publications and results of scientific research in the field of prevention and combating crime.

5) organize exchange of experts aimed at professional training,
especially in the field of investigative techniques and methods to combat crimes.

**Article 3**

The Contracting Parties shall fight against crimes connected with narcotics, and especially the illegal growth, production, exportation, importation, and transit, as well as trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors and chemicals used in the manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (hereinafter referred to as “narcotics”) within the framework of the United Nations Convention against illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988. In particular the Contracting Parties shall take following steps in accordance with their domestic law;

1) transfer personal data of persons participating in the illicit production and trafficking of narcotics, information about hide-outs and transportation means, methods of work, places of origin and destination of the narcotics, as well as information about specific details of the given cases;

2) render mutual assistance in operational matters including employing special investigative techniques such as controlled delivery with a view to identifying person involved in such offences;

3) transfer information about methods of smuggling narcotics;

4) exchange results of research in the field of prevention and combating crime relating to illicit production, trafficking and abuse of narcotics;

5) transfer samples of new narcotics and other dangerous substances both of plant origin and synthetic on mutual request;

6) exchange experiences, material and equipment used in the illicit production and trafficking in narcotics;

7) undertake any other joint activities aimed at combating the illegal production and trafficking in narcotics.

**Article 4**

Where it is considered necessary to combat terrorist crimes or to combat serious threats to the public security of either Contracting Party, the Contracting Parties hereby undertake, in accordance with their respective
laws and regulations, to exchange information and intelligence about terrorist and organised criminal groups which plan to commit or have committed terrorist acts, including their methods of operation.

**Article 5**

For the purpose of fighting against illegal migration and smuggling of persons, the Contracting Parties shall exchange information, including patterns of seals placed in passports and other traveling documents, as well as types of visas necessary to prevent and combat these crimes.

**Article 6**

1. The co-operation defined in this Agreement shall be implemented by direct contacts between the Central Authorities of the Contracting Parties and by persons appointed by them:

2. The Central Authorities shall be the following:
   
   (I) On-the part of the Republic of India:
   
   a) Ministry of Home Affairs,
   
   b) Narcotic Control Bureau under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance - for the purpose of Article 3.

   (II) On the part of the Republic of Poland:
   
   a) the Minister competent for internal affairs,
   
   b) the Minister competent for public finances,
   
   c) the Minister competent for financial institutions,
   
   d) the Chief of the Internal Security Agency,
   
   e) the Chief Commander of the Police,
   
   f) the Chief Commander of the Border Guard;

**Article 7**

To further enhance co-operation pursuant to the present Agreement, the Central Authorities of the Contracting Parties may conclude additional technical protocols within the scope of the present Agreement.
Article 8

1. The Contracting Parties in conformity with their domestic legislation, shall ensure secrecy of the information transferred to each other if the information was marked by the transferring Party with a confidentiality clause.

2. All transferred information and supporting material may be made available to a third country only with the written consent of the transferring Party,

3. In case of an unintended leak or threat of leak of classified information presented by one Contracting Party, the other Contracting Party shall immediately inform the transferring Party about it as also about the measures undertaken to prevent the same.

4. Both Contracting Parties, in conformity with their domestic legislation shall protect transferred personal data in particular against unauthorised access or use for purposes other than for which it was transferred.

Article 9

Contracting Parties may hold consultations in order to ensure efficiency of the co-operation specified in Article 1 - 5 of the present Agreement.

Article 10

The present Agreement shall not affect the obligations of either Contracting Party under any other bilateral or multilateral agreement.

Article 11

The present Agreement does not constitute obstacles to introduce or develop other forms and methods of co-operation in the field of combating organised crime that can be accepted by both Contracting Parties.

Article 12

1. If one of the Contracting Parties claims that an execution of the request or a realisation of a joint undertaking could violate its sovereignty, threaten its security or other important interests, or violate rules of its legal order, it can partially or totally reject the co-operation sought or make it dependent on meeting certain conditions.
2. The Contracting Parties shall enter into consultations and arrange
meetings of experts in furtherance of the present Agreement at a
mutually convenient time and place and for this purpose names of experts will be finalised by both Contracting Parties as mutually agreed.

Article 13

Costs of the execution of request for co-operation under the present Agreement shall be covered by the Contracting Party in whose territory they have arisen, unless the respective authorities of the Contracting Parties agree otherwise in specific cases.

Article 14

The English language shall be the language of communication between the Contracting Parties for the purpose of co-operation under the present Agreement.

Article 15

The present Agreement shall be approved in accordance with the laws of the Contracting Parties and it shall enter into force thirty days after exchanging note confirming the approval.

Article 16

The present Agreement has been concluded for an unlimited period of time. It can be terminated by means of a proper notification by either Contracting Party. In such a case, it will cease to be in force six months after such a notice.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto, have signed this Agreement.

Done at Delhi this day 17 of February two Thousand and Three in two originals, each in the Hindi, Polish and English languages. All the texts shall have the same authenticity. In case of differences in their interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of the Republic of India
For the Government of the Republic of Poland

✦✦✦✦✦
394. **Extradition Treaty between The Republic Of India and The Republic Of Poland.**

**New Delhi, February 17, 2003.**

The Republic of India and the Republic of Poland hereinafter referred to as Contracting States

Desiring to make more effective the cooperation between the two States in the suppression of crime, including terrorism, by concluding a treaty for the extradition of offenders,

Have agreed as follows:

**ARTICLE 1**

**Obligation to Extradite**

1. Each Contracting State undertakes to extradite to the other Contracting State, in the circumstances and subject to the conditions specified in this Treaty, any person who is wanted for prosecution for, or is convicted of an extraditable offence, as specified in Article 2, committed within the territory of the Requesting State, and is found within the territory of the Requested State.

2. Extradition shall also be granted in respect of an extraditable offence, as specified in Article 2, committed outside the territory of the Requesting State but in respect of which the Requesting State has jurisdiction, if the laws of the Requested State provide for the punishment for such an offence committed outside its territory in similar circumstances.

3. Extradition may also be granted in respect of an extraditable offence, as specified in Article 2, committed wholly or partly in the territory of the Requested State, over which the Requesting State has jurisdiction.

4. Extradition shall be granted in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty, irrespective of when the offence in relation to which extradition is sought was committed, provided that:

   a) it was an. offence under the laws of both the Contracting States at the time of the acts or omissions constituting the offence; and
b) it was an offence under the laws of both the Contracting States at the time the request for extradition was made.

**ARTICLE 2**

**Extradition Offences**

1. An extradition offence for the purposes of this Treaty is constituted by act which under the laws of each Contracting State is punishable by a term of imprisonment for a period of at least one year.

2. An offence shall also be an extradition offence if it consists of an attempt to commit, abetment or participation in the commission of an offence specified in paragraph 1. Conspiracy to commit an offence specified in paragraph 1, as provided by the laws of the Republic of India and participation in an association or an organized group to commit offences specified in paragraph 1, as provided by the laws of the Republic of Poland, shall also be extradition offences.

3. An offence shall be an extradition offence notwithstanding that it relates to taxation or revenue or is one of a purely fiscal character. Where extradition is sought for an offence against laws relating to taxation, customs duties, foreign exchange or other revenue matter, extradition may not be refused only on the ground that the laws of the Requested State do not impose the same kind of tax or duty or do not contain a tax, duty, customs, or exchange regulation of the same kind as the laws of the Requesting State.

**ARTICLE 3**

**Application**

Treaty shall apply to offences committed before as well as after the date it enters into force.

**ARTICLE 4**

**Grounds for Refusal of Extradition**

1. A person shall not be extradited if:

   a) he is a citizen of the Requested State;

   b) the person claimed has, according to the laws of either the Requesting or the Requested State, become immune, by
reason of lapse of time, from prosecution or the execution of punishment;

c) extradition is inadmissible under the laws of the Requested State; or

d) the offence in respect of which he is wanted for prosecution or is convicted is a military offence which is not an offence under ordinary criminal law.

2. A person shall also not be extradited if in respect of the offence for which his extradition is requested, he has been previously proceeded against in the Requested State and convicted or acquitted with final effect.

3. Where it appears to the Requested State that extradition would be totally incompatible with humanitarian considerations, in particular the state of health or old age of the person sought, the Contracting States shall consult to mutually determine whether the extradition request should continue.

**ARTICLE 5**

**Political Offences**

1. Extradition shall not be granted if the offence for which extradition is requested is an offence of a political character.

2. For the purposes of this Treaty, the following offences shall not be considered to be of apolitical character:

   a) murder or any other offence against the person of the Head of State, the Head of Government of either of the Contracting States or members of their families;

   b) an offence for which both Contracting States have the obligation pursuant to a multilateral international agreement to extradite the person sought or to submit the case to their competent authorities for decision as to prosecution;

   c) murder, manslaughter, malicious wounding, or inflicting grievous bodily harm or other grievous injury to health;

   d) an offence involving kidnapping, abduction or any form of unlawful detention, including the taking of a hostage;
e) placing or using an explosive, incendiary or destructive device capable of endangering life, of causing substantial bodily harm or of causing substantial property damage; and

(f) an attempt to commit, or participation in the commission of any of the foregoing offences as well as conspiracy to commit these offences, as provided by the laws of the Republic of India and participation in an association or an organized group to commit these offences, as provided by the laws of the Republic of Poland.

ARTICLE 6

Consequences of Refusal of Extradition

1. If an extradition request is refused under paragraph 1 subparagraph (a) of Article 4, the Requested State shall transmit the case to its competent authorities in order to initiate criminal proceedings in accordance with the laws of the Requested State. For this the Requesting State shall transfer to the Requested State the relevant documents and evidence.

2. The provision of paragraph 1 shall apply in other cases also where a request for extradition is refused, if the initiation of criminal proceeding is not excluded under the laws of the Requested State.

3. In case the extradition is refused on the ground of existence of jurisdiction (Article 1 paragraph 3) and according to the decision of the investigating authority the trial is not found feasible in the Requested State, the request for extradition may be resubmitted.

ARTICLE 7

Postponement of Extradition and Temporary Extradition

1. If the person to be extradited is being prosecuted or serving sentence for another crime in the territory of the Requested State, the extradition may be postponed till the end of the criminal proceedings of the case, or completion of sentence, which shall be advised to the Requesting State.

2. If the postponement of extradition can result in immunity by the reason of lapse of time or impede the investigation, the person can be extradited temporarily under a special request of the Requesting State.
3. The temporarily extradited person must be returned to the Requested State immediately after the end of the proceedings of the case.

ARTICLE 8

Extradition Procedures

1. The request for extradition shall be made through diplomatic channels.

2. The request shall be accompanied by:
   a) the name and surname of the person whose extradition is requested, information on his citizenship, place of residence or whereabouts and other pertaining data, as well as, if possible, the description of the person’s appearance, his photographs and fingerprints;
   b) a statement of the facts of the offence for which extradition is requested; and
   c) the text of the laws:
      (i) defining the offence and
      (ii) prescribing punishment for that offence.

3. The request for extradition for the prosecution, besides the information specified above, must be accompanied by the original or a certified copy of the warrant of arrest issued by a competent court of the Requesting State and such information or statements as would justify the committal for trial of the person had the offence been committed in the Requested State.

4. If the request relates to a person already convicted and sentenced, it shall also be accompanied by a certified copy of the judgement and a statement that the judgement is final and enforceable and showing how much of sentence still remains to be undergone.

5. If the Requested State considers that the material or information supplied for the purposes of this Treaty is not sufficient in order to enable a decision to be taken as to the request, it shall request the necessary supplementary material or information and may fix a reasonable time limit for the receipt thereof.
ARTICLE 9

Provisional arrest

1. In urgent cases the person sought may, in accordance with the laws of the Requested State, be provisionally arrested on the application of the competent authorities of the Requesting State. The application shall contain an indication of intention to request the extradition of that person and a statement of existence of a warrant of arrest or a conviction against him, such information as may be necessary to identify him and such other information as would be necessary for the issue of a warrant of arrest in the Requested State. The application shall also state for what offence extradition will be requested.

2. A person arrested upon such an application shall be set at liberty upon the expiration of 60 days from the date of his arrest if a request for his extradition shall not have been received. This provision shall not prevent institution of further proceedings for the extradition of the person sought if a request is subsequently received.

ARTICLE 10

Rule of Specialty

1. A person extradited under this Treaty may not be detained, prosecuted, sentenced or punished in the Requesting State for offences except for:

   a) an offence for which extradition has been granted or a differently denominated offence based on the same facts on which extradition was granted, provided such an offence is extraditable or is a lesser form of such offence;

   b) an offence committed after the extradition of the person; or

   c) an offence for which the competent authority of the Requested State has consented to the person’s detention, prosecution, sentencing, or punishment.

For the purpose of this subparagraph:

   (i) the Requested State may require the submission of the documents specified in Article 8; and
(ii) unless the Requested State objects in writing, the person extradited may be detained by the Requesting State for 90 days, or for such longer period of time as the Requested State may authorise, while the request is being processed.

2. A person extradited under this Treaty may not be extradited to a third State for an offence committed prior to the surrender unless the surrendering State consents.

3. Paragraph 1 and 2 of this Article shall not prevent the detention, prosecution, sentencing or punishment of an extradited person, or the extradition of that person to a third State if:

   a) that person leaves the territory of the Requesting State after extradition and voluntarily returns to it; or

   b) that person does not leave the territory of the Requesting State within 30 days of the day on which that person is free to leave.

**ARTICLE 11**

**Admissibility of Documents**

The documents which accompany an extradition request shall be received and admitted as evidence in extradition proceedings if:

   a) in the case of a request from the Republic of India, they are certified by the proper diplomatic or consular representative of the Republic of Poland in the Republic of India;

   b) in the case of a request from the Republic of Poland, they are certified by the principal diplomatic or consular officer of the Republic of India resident in the Republic of Poland; or

   c) they are certified or authenticated in any other manner accepted by the laws of the Requested State.

**ARTICLE 12**

**Competing Requests**

If extradition of the same person whether for the same offence or for different offences is requested by a Contracting State and a third State, the Requested State shall determine the State to which the person shall be extradited. In making its decision, the Requested State shall take into
consideration factors including: existence or non-existence of extradition treaty with the states requesting extradition, place of the commission of offences, gravity of offences, nationality of the offender and chronological order of the requests received.

**ARTICLE 13**

**Death Sentence**

If under the laws of the Requesting State the person sought is liable to the death penalty for the offence for which his extradition is requested, but the law of the Requested State does not provide for death penalty in a similar case, extradition may be refused, unless the Requesting State gives such assurances as the Requested State considers sufficient that the death sentence will not be carried out.

**ARTICLE 14**

**Transfer**

1. The modalities of transfer of the person to be extradited, including the time and the place, shall be agreed upon by the competent authorities of both the Contracting States.

2. The Requesting State shall take delivery of the person sought from the territory of the Requested State within 30 days of the date on which the Requesting State was notified of the extradition decision. If he is not removed within that period, the Requested State may refuse to extradite him for the same offence.

3. If circumstances beyond its control prevent a Contracting State from timely surrendering or taking delivery of the person to be extradited, it shall notify the other Contracting State before the expiration of the time limit. In such a case the competent authorities of the Contracting States may agree upon a new date for the surrender and for taking delivery.

**ARTICLE 15**

**Seizure and Surrender of Property**

1. To the extent permitted under its laws, the Requested State may seize and surrender to the Requesting State all articles, documents and evidence connected with the offence in respect of which
extradition is granted. The items mentioned in this Article may be surrendered, to the extent permitted under the laws of the Requested State, even when extradition cannot be effected due to the death, disappearance, or escape of the person sought.

2. The Requested State may condition the surrender of the property upon satisfactory assurances from the Requesting State that the property will be returned to the Requested State as soon as practicable. The Requested State may also defer the surrender of such property if it is needed as evidence in the Requested State.

3. The rights of third parties in such property shall be duly respected.

**ARTICLE 16**

**Mutual Legal Assistance in Extradition**

Each Contracting State shall, to the extent permitted by its laws, afford the other Contracting State the widest measure of mutual assistance in criminal matters in connection with the offence for which extradition has been requested.

**ARTICLE 17**

**Extradition Expenses**

The Requesting State shall bear the expenses related to the translation of documents and the transportation of the person surrendered. The Requested State shall pay all other expenses incurred in that State by reason of the extradition proceedings.

**ARTICLE 18**

**Languages**

While complying with the present Treaty, the Contracting States shall use their national language attaching the translation in the national language of the other Contracting State or in the English language.

**ARTICLE 19**

**Obligations under International Treaties**

The present Treaty shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Contracting States arising from other international Treaties to which the Contracting States are parties.
ARTICLE 20

Ratification and Termination

1. This Treaty shall be subject to ratification and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged New Delhi or Warsaw. It shall enter into force on the date of exchange of instruments of ratification.

2. Either of the Contracting States may terminate this Treaty at any time by giving notice to the other through the diplomatic channel; in such a case, the Treaty shall cease to have effect six months after the receipt of the notice.

In witness whereof the undersigned being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Treaty.

Done at New Delhi this day of 1st February 2003 in duplicate in Hindi, Polish and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any interpretational difference the English text shall prevail.

For the Republic of India For the Republic of Poland

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395. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister of Poland.

New Delhi, February 17, 2003.

Mr Prime Minister and Mrs Miller,

Once again I welcome you and your delegation on your first official visit to India. Your visit is another milestone in India-Poland bilateral ties. It takes place as we enter the 50th year of diplomatic relations. It is an occasion to re-affirm our commitment to the longstanding friendship between our two countries.

India and Poland have a long history of civilizational contact and cultural interaction. The rich scholarship in Indology in your universities testifies to this.

The Polish citizens, who came as young children to camps in and around Jamnagar during World War II, continue to maintain close links with India. We were touched by their contribution to the relief assistance for the victims of the earthquake in Gujarat two years ago.

I should also inform you, Mr. Prime Minister, that one of the most exquisite works of art adorning the walls of our Rashtrapati Bhavan for the past many decades is an oil painting of Mahatma Gandhi’s assassination by the Polish painter, Feliks Topolski.

I am told that there are markets in Delhi, where virtually every shopkeeper speaks Polish fluently!

Mr Prime Minister,

Our political and economic relations have built on these diverse manifestations of friendship and goodwill. We see Poland as a key partner in Central Europe. We share a deep commitment to democracy. We are together in the international coalition against terrorism. Our trade relations are vibrant. We have a long-standing tradition of defence cooperation.

We have discussed today how we can further expand and diversify our cooperation to match our combined industrial and technological potential. Besides our governmental mechanisms, the business delegation accompanying you can make an important contribution to this effort.

The last decade has been one of rapid change for both our countries.
Poland is now a member of NATO, and is at the doorsteps of the European Union. This is a tribute to the success of your political transition and economic transformation over the last decade. We are happy to have an additional forum for fruitful interaction with Poland.

I am confident that the agreements signed during this visit, our exchanges of perspectives, and the interactions between our business representatives will further strengthen the India-Poland partnership.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,* I request you to join me in a toast:

To the health and happiness of the Prime Minister of Poland and Mrs. Miller;

To eternal friendship between India and Poland.

☆☆☆☆☆

**Romania**

**396. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the engagements of Romanian Foreign Minister in New Delhi.**

**New Delhi, January 15, 2003.**

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen.

.....I would like to brief you on the ongoing visit of the Foreign Minister of Romania. He has been having his meetings today. I would just give a run down on those meetings. He has met External Affairs Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha, and EAM hosted luncheon in honor of the visiting Foreign Minister. He has also met Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Arun Shourie, and he will call on Vice President and Prime Minister in the evening. In meeting with Shri Shourie the two sides decided to work on three concept papers on Energy, IT and Joint Ventures including in third country and these papers are to be finalized in next three months. During the meeting with the External Affairs Minister the two sides discussed an action plan which included further actions on these papers and also in the field of pharmaceuticals. In addition the two Ministers decided to include cultural matters in the action plan. In addition to these bilateral matters the two Ministers also discussed regional and international issues in
particular the Iraq situation and the EU and the direction that it was moving in. Afghanistan was also discussed with the possibility of joint cooperation and joint projects in Afghanistan. These discussions essentially would also prepare a way for an eventual visit to India by the Prime Minister of Romania. Another issue that came up for discussion was forming Triple Business Alliance which involve getting delegations of leading industrialists from both sides to meet each other and to discuss matters of mutual concern. This is expected to give a further impetus to our bilateral trade which for the last 10 months stands at about US$ 100 million.

**Question:** What are three concept papers and what do we expect out of it?

**Answer:** As I said three concept papers are on Energy, IT and Joint Ventures. We have just decided to elaborate the concept papers, so it would be pre-mature for me to give any more detail because these papers have to be worked out.

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1. On January 15 briefing the media on the visit, Official Spokesperson had reminded that the last visit to India by a Romanian Foreign Minister (Mr. Adrian Nastase), was in October-November 1991 who was presently the Prime Minister of Romania.

   On the Indo-Romanian relations he (the Spokesperson Navtej Sarna) said these “are close and friendly and cover many areas. Bilateral trade during the first ten months of 2002 registered an increase of over 30% and is expected to reach US$100 m during 2002. The visit of H.E. Mr. Geoana would provide continuity to high-level contacts between India and Romania. It would also offer the opportunity to review and strengthen bilateral relations as also to discuss issues of international and regional interest.”
Russia


The 5th round of the Indo-Russian Foreign Ministry Consultations on Central Asia and Caspian was held in New Delhi on 6th January 2003.

The bilateral review of Russian and Indian relations with this important group of Central Asian countries that lie between them, in their near neighbourhood, takes place annually.

Economic Relations with the Central Asian states, development of the energy resources, current trends in the refining sector and plans for pipelines and new routes for transportation of oil and gas were discussed. The talks also focused on developments in Central Asian states in the last one year, during which the region has been the focus of considerable international attention. India and Russia also discussed the possibilities of cooperation in economic activities in Central Asia.

The fifth round of consultations was led on the Russian side by Mr. Konstantin Viktorovich Shuvalov, Director General, III CIS Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Shuvalov called on the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Kanwal Sibal. H.E. Mr. Alexander M. Kakadin, the Ambassador of Russian Federation to India was also present.

The Indian delegation was led by Mr. Rajiv Dogra, Joint Secretary (Central Asia). Mr. Anil Wadhwa, Joint Secretary (Central and Eastern Europe), also attended the talks.

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398. Interview of Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha to the Russian paper Nezavisimaya.


[Today Foreign Minister of India Mr. Yashwant Sinha is coming to Russia. This visit is taking place during another increase of confrontation between India and Pakistan and increased diplomatic activity of Russia in South-Asian region. Before the visit, Mr. Yashwant Sinha gave interview to the Nezavisimaya.]

Q: What are the goals of your visit?

A: My meetings with representatives of the Russian leadership and my host Igor Ivanov are expected to cover the entire spectrum of bilateral issues and, and a number of international problems. My visit is preparatory for our Prime Minister’s visit to Russia in May of this year. My visit also coincides with Indian Trade Exhibition in Moscow, in which a large number of Indian companies are participating. Gas project in Russia Sakhalin-I and nuclear power plant in India Kudankulam are examples highlighting capacities of our countries in the sphere of our bilateral investment in industry.

Q: What are India’s priorities regarding Russia?

A: First off all, it’s our regular dialogue in spirit of strategic partnership in regard to problems of regional development as well as in the sphere of international relations as a whole. We need to address the challenges of international terrorism. In this light it’s possible to consider creation of counterterrorist working group by the meeting of Vladimir Putin and Atal Bihari Vajpayee in May. Putin during his visit to India last year supported our position that dialogue between Pakistan and India may resume only after Islamabad ceases its support of terrorism and dismantles terrorist infrastructure on its territory. We’re particularly concerned about extremists’ threats to use WMD. We clearly realize the necessity to prevent WMD proliferation.

Q: It’s obvious that the talks will include Iraq. What’s the position of India on this problem?

A: We support fulfillment of corresponding UN resolutions and elimination of WMD. We believe that any decisions regarding Iraq should be sanctioned by the UN. If Iraq fulfills these decisions, the sanctions should be lifted.
Q: How important is threat of trans-border terrorism for you today?

A: It's the issue of primary importance for us. We see that Pakistan strive to weaken and divide India. For the last two decades Pakistan in any way supported trans-border terrorism on Indian territory. Besides that, Pakistan actively participated in creation of Taliban movement and Al Qaeda. This country has become the epicenter of international terrorisms. Today forces that are related to Taliban and Al Qaeda appeared in North West province in Baluchistan region in Pakistan. Because of constant threat by Pakistan, the situation in Afghanistan continues to be unstable.

Q: 21 century is projected as Asian century because of good performance of Asian economies like China, India and ASEAN countries. India seems to be interested in further integration with Asian countries. Is it so?

A: India's multilateral cooperation with ASEAN countries is an inseparable part of our “Look East” policy. Comprehensive dialogue with these countries began in 1996 and in November 2002, the first India-ASEAN summit took place. We have many joint projects and studies in human resource development, trade and investment, science and technology. India and ASEAN agreed to create in the future regional trade and investment zone.
Q. In December 2002 President Putin paid a state visit to India. How do you assess its outcomes? Which topics in India-Russia bilateral relations are most important now?

President Putin’s successful visit to India, a milestone in our relations, further elevated our strategic partnership to an even higher and qualitatively new level. His meetings with the entire Indian leadership were marked by special warmth, characteristic of our relations based on goodwill, trust and mutually beneficial cooperation. The visit reconfirmed that our relations are characterized by remarkable stability and continuity. We have a sound and substantive relationship, which is dynamic and forward-looking. This is exemplified by the fact that our relations are practically problem free; we have consultations on a wide spectrum of issues and our cooperation is multifaceted. My current visit to Russia is with the objective of maintaining the momentum in our relations and discuss with the Russian leadership the implementation of key decisions taken during the Summit. Our Prime Minister’s visit to St. Petersburg for the 300th anniversary celebrations of that city and further high-level contacts are being planned. We look forward to achievements in our relations commensurate with high expectations on both sides.

The documents signed – Delhi Declaration on Consolidating Strategic Partnership, Joint Economic Declaration, Joint Statement and MOU on Combating Terrorism - reaffirmed the common interest and approaches of both countries on a range of bilateral, regional and international issues. This is but natural given our affinity in both countries being territorially large and pluralistic and having commonality of interest in meeting current global challenges, in particular, terrorism. On the economic side, agreements were signed on Intellectual Property, Banking and Telecommunications. It is our objective to complement our excellent
political and strategic relations by deepening its economic content. Specific steps are being taken to meet this goal, which focus on increasing the contacts between the private sectors of our respective countries.

Q. Could you assess the current level of our defence cooperation? Is the agreement on sale of Admiral Gorshkov going to be signed in the month of March?

Our defence cooperation with Russia is long standing, mutually beneficial and a factor of stability in Asia and beyond. We have a long term cooperation programme extended up to 2010. Recent examples included the supply of SU-30, MKI aircraft and T-90 tanks. Negotiations are in progress on the conclusion of contract on the supply of the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier. We are satisfied with the progress being made, which is being monitored regularly, including during the recent visit of our Defence Minister to Russia in January. I must also mention the Aerospace exhibition in Bangalore, in which Russian products were prominently displayed. Efforts are being made to qualitatively improve our defence cooperation from seller-buyer level to joint research, design and development. The state-of-the-Art Brahmos missile is an example of our joint research.

Q. What are the prospects for economic cooperation in general?

Both sides realize that the existing level of bilateral trade and investment is not adequate and certainly below potential. The biggest challenge confronting our bilateral economic and commercial engagement is to establish a climate of greater predictability, confidence and awareness. While we would strive towards further consolidation of traditional sectors of our engagement, there is a continuous search for new areas of cooperation. Certain core sectors for future cooperation have already been identified. These include machinery and equipment, IT and telecom, energy, automobile and components, gems and jewellery, food processing, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology and tourism. India’s investment in the Sakhalin project and Russian investment in the Kudankulam nuclear power plant underline the increased interest and renewed commitment towards boosting trade and investment relations. Both investments are to the tune of $1.7 billion each. Our continuing cooperation in the field of science and technology and our joint efforts towards commercializing technologies is a matter of great encouragement and promise.

Q. Pakistan is accused of cross border terrorism. What are the prospects of improvement in India-Pakistan relations?
There is widespread recognition that the epicenter of international terrorism is located in the common neighbourhood of both India and Russia, in particular Pakistan. It is no secret that a large infrastructure of terrorism has been built up over the last two decades in Pakistan and its controlled territory. Despite repeated calls by international community to effectively fulfill its commitment and obligations to put an end to infiltration of terrorists into India as well as to dismantle terrorist infrastructure operating on Pakistani soil and on Pakistan controlled territory, there is compelling evidence that little has been achieved. There is a complete convergence of views between India and Russia that there can be no double standards on terrorism. Pakistan must implement its commitments. The resumption of dialogue is possible when Pakistan gives up its deliberate policy of relying on terrorism as proxy war and as an instrument of foreign policy.

Q. What is your position on India-Iran gas pipeline?

There have been repeated reports of armed tribal blowing up existing pipelines in Pakistan. In such a situation, India cannot countenance any cooperation, which involves Pakistan, especially because gas will have to transit via the territory of Pakistan.

Q. US operation against Iraq is looming. Will Delhi support this action? How significant could be an estimated impact of this war upon Indian interests?

We support Iraq’s compliance with the UN Resolutions and elimination of weapons of mass destruction there. We believe that whatever decisions are taken, it is important to have the sanction of the United Nations behind them. We also maintain that if Iraq complies with UN Resolutions, then sanctions should be lifted in tandem on humanitarian considerations.

Q. What kind of common goals and plans India and Russia could have in Afghanistan reconstruction?

The complex and enormous security and political challenges emanating from Afghanistan have affected not just India and Russia but far beyond. Both our countries have an interest in the successful implementation of the Bonn Agreement and extend full support to the Karzai Administration aimed at promoting national reconciliation, economic reconstruction, rebuilding of Afghan institutions, including indigenous security structures according to Afghan needs and priorities and to bring back Afghanistan on to its feet so that it is able to defeat internal and external threats. India and Russia both individually and bilaterally have worked towards these
objectives, including through a Joint Working Group on Afghanistan, established two years ago. India and Russia are one in assessing the current situation wherein Afghanistan is more peaceful but not yet stable. There are reports about regrouping of Taliban and Al Qaeda forces backed by Pakistan attempting to fulfill political vacuum in the Pushtoon areas. If not checked, we may see a repeated performance of Pakistan yet again trying to pursue its ambitious policies in Afghanistan, reminiscent of the early 90s.

Q. What is India’s position vis-à-vis Shanghai Cooperation Organisation?

India believes that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is pursuing an important agenda, especially with regard to combating the menace of terrorism. India is interested in joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and has made its intentions clear to the Russian Federation as well as the other Member States. Our membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is not dependant on any other state joining or not joining this Organization. We believe that India will be able to contribute constructively to the agenda of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. We understand, however, that currently the rules of membership do not allow the accession of new states into the grouping. We are, however, following the activities of the Organization with interest.

New Delhi, March 25, 2003.

The Government of India has noted the large turnout in the referendum vote held in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation on 23 March, 2003 on a draft Constitution for the Republic as well as on electoral laws on holding Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The Russian Federation has made concerted efforts since 1999 to tackle problems of terrorism, fundamentalism and extremism in Chechnya which are aided and abetted by outside forces with links to international terrorism.

The referendum, the official results of which are expected shortly, is an important stage in the process of restoring constitutional order, normalcy as well as the rehabilitation and economic reconstruction through a democratic framework in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation.

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The sixth meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group on Afghanistan was held in Moscow on 28 March 2003. The Indian delegation was led by Foreign Secretary Mr. Kanwal Sibal. H.E. Mr. Vyacheslav Trubnikov, First Deputy Foreign Minister, led the Russian delegation.

The two sides discussed the situation in Afghanistan, including the progress in implementation of the provisions of Bonn Agreement of December 2001, and coordination of various international efforts aimed at rehabilitation and reconstruction. They also discussed the threats to regional peace and stability from terrorist activity in the region, and efforts aimed at strengthening international mechanisms to fight against international terrorism. They also exchanged views on the role of United Nations in shaping the contours of Afghan economy and polity.
They elaborated on their respective efforts at contributing to reconstruction and the development of indigenous institutions and security structures.

They expressed their full support to all international efforts aimed at reconstruction, and emergence of Afghanistan as a peaceful, strong prosperous, united and independent nation.

They agreed to continue coordinating their efforts on Afghanistan in different international forums.

Both sides positively assessed the developments in Afghanistan and noted the progress made since the establishment of Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan in June last year. They expressed support for the broad based government led by H.E. Hamid Karzai, the President of Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan. They appreciated President Karzai’s committed efforts targeted at promoting national reconciliation and building of a strong, united and independent Afghanistan. They confirmed their continued resolve to provide comprehensive support for the efforts by the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan to rebuild the nation, create new army and law-enforcement structures, and rehabilitate national economy.

They underlined that non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan was a crucial factor in the return of peace and stability in Afghanistan. In this regard they called upon the neighbouring states of Afghanistan to adhere to their commitments as outlined under the Kabul Declaration on Good Neighbourly Relations signed on 22nd December 2002.

They also recognized the concern over the increased production of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan and its illegal trafficking. They emphasized the need for the development of a comprehensive strategy, with appropriate key UN role to counteract this problem.

They noted and reiterated support to continued central and coordinating role of the UN in the post Bonn agreement processes in Afghanistan, including in constitutional and democratic institution building, convening of the constitutional Loya Jirga in the fall of 2003, and general elections in 2004.

Serious concern was expressed over the escalation of subversive and terrorist activity by the Taliban and Al-Qaeda remnants and others, and their efforts to regroup with support from outside.
The two sides agreed that Afghan ownership must be accorded fundamental importance in Afghanistan’s reconstruction and institution building efforts. They observed that for reconstruction programmes in Afghanistan to be effective, and acceptable to Afghan people, they should be based on Afghan felt and priority needs. Similarly, broad based indigenous security structures would be critical to longer-term unity and stability. This process should be carried out in a calibrated manner without weakening current resources and strengths.

They agreed that international action against terrorism cannot be selective, but has to be uniform, comprehensive, continuous and multifaceted. They also emphasized that action should be directed against those states, entities and individuals who support, fund or abet terrorists or provide them shelter or asylum to engage in cross-border terrorism. They agreed that there should be no double standards in fight against terrorism. They reiterated that there could be no justification for terrorism, political, religious or ideological. In this context they concurred that the provisions of the various United Nations Security Council Resolutions including UNSCR 1373, should be fully implemented by all member states.

They agreed on the need to strengthen international mechanism to fight against international terrorism, and in this context agreed to work towards early conclusion and adoption by the UN General Assembly of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and the draft International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. They emphasized that India-Russia cooperation in combating international terrorism is an important constituent of our strategic bilateral ties.

The two sides agreed that the next meeting of the Joint Working Group will be held in New Delhi on mutually agreed dates.


The Government of India condemns the terrorist attack in Znamenskoye in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation on 12 May, which resulted in a large number of casualties. We convey our condolences to the members of the bereaved families.

We express our solidarity with the Russian Government in its efforts directed towards tackling the problems of terrorism, fundamentalism and extremism in Chechnya, which have international links. We commend the resolve of the Russian government in not allowing these forces to disrupt the process of restoring constitutional order and normalcy on the basis of the Constitutional Referendum vote held in Chechnya on 23rd March.

This attack is yet another reminder to the international community that it must step up collective efforts to eradicate terrorism wherever it exists.

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403. Interview of External Affairs Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha with Russian paper Rossiskaya Gazeta.


Rossiskaya Gazeta

Mr. Minister, this is your second visit to Moscow this year. You are now visiting for the Joint Commission meeting. What’s the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Joint Commission?

The 9th Session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission assumes significance as it takes against the backdrop of a number of initiatives that have created a positive setting for expansion of economic and commercial ties. Both India and Russia represent large and growing market economies with tremendous potential for growth. Both have made
impressive progress with structural reforms in recent years. At a time of major global economic slowdown, India and Russia have continued to grow. Average GDP growth during the last four years places both countries among the top ten performers in the world. This created new opportunities for bilateral cooperation. An example of progress in making use of this is our investment of $1.7 billion in Sakhalin-I Project. There are several new investment proposals under consideration. Our Joint Business was recently revived and met this year. Areas of cooperation of Indian business in Russia include machinery and equipment, IT, automobile! components, gems and jewellery, food processing, tourism, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and energy.

We are working on strengthening infrastructural linkage between our two countries. Contacts between our banking sectors are increasing, and this has led to building of greater trust and understanding. The first Indian commercial bank is expected to open in Moscow later this year. Along with other participating countries India and Russia are working on North-South Transport Corridor – a viable and commercially attractive trade route. We are also working actively on creating a favorable environment for bilateral investment, streamlining customs administration and putting in place an efficient visa regime for business exchanges.

The forthcoming session of the IRIGC would review the entire gamut of economic and commercial engagement; explore new areas of cooperation as well as means for expanding our trade and investment ties.

**During President Putin’s visit to India last December, the sides signed Joint Declaration for Strengthening and Increasing economic, science and technical cooperation between the Russian Federation and India, which has 20 points. How successfully that Declaration is being implemented?**

That Declaration is truly a landmark document. It highlights our shared desire to impart a new trust to our bilateral economic and commercial engagement. It provides a roadmap and a series of actionable points to accomplish this task. The implementation of the directives contained in the Joint Declaration would need concerted efforts and cooperation from a number of agencies on both sides, including our business sectors. The Declaration has mandated the IRIGC to set up a task force to oversee its implementation. We would like to activate the task force in order to provide a positive progress report to the next Summit meeting. The economic component has to play a very important role in our relationship.
Does India recognize Russia as a country with market economy and how widely does India apply anti-dumping procedures against Russian exports?

India doesn’t list Russia as a non-market economy. The Joint Declaration acknowledges the fact that Russia, like India, is a growing market economy. This is not a merely a political decision, but is also meant to provide a level playing field for the Russian products in Indian market. Anti-dumping investigations, in keeping with relevant WTO resolution, have a legal dimension and we have briefed our Russian colleagues on these aspects. There are ongoing consultations on these matters. I may also add that anti-dumping investigations on products imported from Russia are far insignificant as compared to products from some other trading partners of India, with only one case under investigation in 2002.

What is India’s attitude toward its membership in Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)?

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is an active body in India’s near-neighborhood. We have seen this organization grow with interest. The aims and objectives of SCO are issues, which also interest India deeply. The fight with terrorism concerns the member countries of SCO as well as India. The economic development of the Central Asian region, including development of its energy resources, is another area of our common interest.

Because of this, many members of the SCO have suggested that India’s membership of the organization would be mutually beneficial. We are thankful for this suggestion.

After the U.S. –led war troops invaded Iraq, many talk about the United Nations at a crisis. Do you think that institute is outdated and needs to be reformed?

To say that because of the Iraq war the UN has become outdated is incorrect. It should be recalled that this is not the first time that military action has been initiated without UN authorization. We have to recognize both the strengths and weaknesses of the United Nations. It is as strong or weak as the resolve of the international community, especially the major powers. The UN is the only international organization with universal membership and it derives its powers form its members.

However, the United Nations does need to be reformed if it is to recover
its weakened authority and role. India has long been of the view that the UN in its present form no longer reflects the global realities. A restructuring of the organization – particularly of the Security Council – is urgently required. We have been calling for an explanation in both, the permanent and non-permanent membership of the UNSC, so as to better represent the different regions of the globe and the interests of developing countries. An expanded, more representative Security Council would also go some way in circumventing avoidable conflicts of the Iraq variety. Russia shares our views and has offered consistent support and cooperation to our efforts on this front, particularly to our aspiration – as the largest democracy and the second most populous nation in the world – for permanent membership of the Security Council.


Your Excellency Mr. Ilya Klebanov,
Minister of Industry and Science & Technology of the Russian Federation,
Distinguished Members of the Russian and Indian Delegations,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Excellency,

Thank you for the welcome. It is indeed a pleasure to be in friendly Russian Federation once again. I wish to thank you also for the warm hospitality. Before I proceed further, let me introduce the members of my delegation. (EAM introduces the Indian delegation).

Excellency, since our last meeting in November 2002, a number of important developments have taken place which have relevance for the work of the Commission. Last year our Prime Minister and President Putin signed a Joint Declaration on Strengthening and Enhancing Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation, which provides a vision of
qualitatively new relations between our two countries in these spheres. This Commission was entrusted with the additional responsibility to monitor the implementation of the Declaration through a Joint Task Force. On our part, the Ministry of External Affairs will head the Task Force and we will nominate the members within 30 days. I hope that it will be possible for Your Excellency also to nominate the Russian members of the Task Force.

Excellency, this Commission is also a mechanism to constantly attune our institutions to the changing needs and ever-new challenges faced by the entrepreneurs and businesspeople of the two countries. We have taken some steps in this direction since our last meeting. To cite a few instances, since November 2002, most of the working groups have held their meetings, there was an Indian exhibition in Moscow in February, which Your Excellency so kindly inaugurated, there was also a meeting of the Joint Business Council in Moscow in February, a privileged sighting of rough natural diamonds for Indian buyers was organized in April, and the delegations of the Vneshtorg Bank and the ICICI visited India and Russia, respectively.

Unfortunately, these initiatives have not resulted in very significant increase in our trade turnover. Our bilateral trade has stagnated over the past few years at about 1.3-1.6 bn USD. The percentage share of India’s trade with Russia in the Russian Federation’s overall trade is around 0.98%. There is no denying that there has been some progress in improving this situation, but it has been slow in a number of priority areas. It is extremely important to implement the decisions of the IRIGC quickly without overshotting the timeframe foreseen for them.

Excellency, our entrepreneurs have been facing a serious problem in sending their delegations to Russia due to stringent rules for issue of visas. Even the public sector undertakings in India are affected, and last week two members of the Working Group on Power were initially refused visas by the Russian Embassy in New Delhi since they had no clearances from Moscow, despite the fact that the meeting of this Working Group is part of the work of this session of the IRIGC. While we will tackle visa issues separately, there is need for an administrative decision at a high level, here in Moscow, to exempt at least the IRIGC members from the stringent visa requirements.

In order to reinvigorate our trade, it would be worthwhile establishing a Sub-Group on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) within the Working Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation. Our Joint Business Council could also concentrate on the SMEs of the two countries cooperating with each other.
Excellency, I would like to suggest that if future meetings of the Joint Business Council could be held alongside the meetings of the IRIGC, it will send a positive signal of necessary political support and facilitation to our business communities.

We also need to take initiatives, and continue those already taken, in the fields of natural diamonds, ad campaigns for Indian tea, export of Indian bovine meat, export of rubber, fruit, horticulture products, rice and sugar from India, setting up of joint venture banks in each other’s countries, enhancement of cooperation between our insurance companies and shipping lines, etc. It would be helpful if Russia could accept the Indian certification of veterinary requirements based on EU norms, to which both countries subscribe, and not insist on higher standards. While we have yet not been able to buy natural diamonds from Russia, we are looking forward to further sightings for our businessmen this year, as agreed by the concerned Joint Working Group. We would also like that the concerned companies consider the idea of setting up joint ventures for making jewellery which will be to mutual advantage, more than the mere buyer-seller relationship.

We look forward to early operationalisation of the Joint Task Force that will look into utilizing Rupee debt fund for equity in Indo-Russian joint ventures. Another outstanding issue is the resolution of claims on both sides. It is also regrettable that there has been no progress in settlement of pending claims of Indian exporters. While India has made substantial payments on account of short payments to the Russian side, not even one claim of Indian exporters has so far been settled by the Russian side. This is becoming a difficult issue since such pending claims discourage our businessmen in doing business with Russia. I welcome the understanding reached in the concerned Sub-Group and Working Group on the issue of outstanding freight payments due to Indian shipping lines for shipment of cargo in Indo-Soviet trade upto March 1992. The amount thus owed to Indian companies could be adjusted in the Rupee-debt repayment.

Excellency, since it will not be possible to rely entirely on the debt fund for joint ventures between our two countries, I propose to set up a Joint Venture Capital Fund for a modest amount. A beginning has been made in this direction by the Russian investment in Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant and by ONGC Videsh Limited in Sakhalin-I. For investments to take off, it is also important that financial and banking links are strengthened. We hope that the joint venture between State Bank of India and Canara Bank for opening a branch in Moscow will receive quick
necessary approvals, and Russian banks will also be encouraged to set up operations in India.

The North-South Transport Corridor is an important venture between India, Russia and Iran and it has already attracted interest of some other countries. For it to be a big success for the growth of bilateral trade, it is important to provide for right investments and upgradation along the route, especially in the important ports, railways, containerization and warehousing sectors.

Excellency, the world energy scenario is changing quickly. Even though large discoveries of oil and gas reserves have been made recently in India, we are poised to import a larger share of world energy in the years to come, due to our strong economic growth. Russia, endowed with large discovered and yet-to-be discovered oil will continue to be among the top suppliers to the world market. In the emerging scenario therefore we have complementarity, which opens large opportunities for close cooperation. While we continue to discuss oil and gas related issues in the Joint Working Group on Petroleum, to monitor existing projects as well as those under consideration and to discuss development of transport, transit pipeline and trilateral projects involving Russia, we envisage transferring this exercise for the larger picture to a full fledged Energy Forum, a proposal we had made two years ago. We envisage a forum which will function somewhat like the Russian energy dialogues with the EU, the USA and China.

We are happy to note that our cooperation in hydrocarbons sector is progressing well with the participation of the ONGC Videsh in the Sakhalin – I Project. We note with satisfaction that the production is likely to commence in 2005. We look forward to Russia working in a sustained manner to ensure problem-free progress in this venture. We expect that the cooperation would expand to the Caspian Sea as well, where discussions are on to include ONGC Videsh in the exploration of Kurmangazi. As advised by the Russian side, we have asked our oil companies to initiate dialogue with their Russian counterparts. We also seek your support for faster progress in this matter. I welcome the initiative to cooperate in third countries, which emerged from the recent meeting of the concerned Working Group. I also take this opportunity to invite Russian oil and gas companies, to take a more active part in exploration ventures in India.

We have placed considerable emphasis on the growth of the power sector in our country with participation of the private sector and investments
from abroad. We are aware of the strengths of the Russian Federation in this sphere and hope that Russia would be able to avail itself of the considerable opportunities available for cooperation in this important sector.

Russian expertise has contributed significantly to coal mining in India. We are interested in further expansion of cooperation in this field. The Indian side has already submitted physico-mechanical properties of the roof and floor rocks of Jhanjhara mine. We hope the Russian side will expedite detailed specification of requirements so that the cooperation in Jhanjhara mine project continues. We also invite the Russian companies to participate in the tendering processes for new mines in India. This sphere presents good scope for Russian investments in India.

India and the Russian Federation have traditionally enjoyed close cooperation in the field of metallurgy. The steel plants of Bhilai, Bokaro and Vishakhapatnam are examples of this cooperation, which have contributed to the development of the Indian steel industry. The organisations in our countries are also treading new paths in the field of cooperation by forming joint ventures. Romelt-SAIL is an important symbol in this direction and we shall strive to introduce such environment friendly processes in the field of metallurgy not only in India, but in other countries as well. We also welcome the continuing interest shown by Russian enterprises to participate in upgradation of Indian steel plants as well as in solving their maintenance/operations related problems. The outstanding issue of debts owed to SAIL needs to be addressed.

Pharmaceuticals is an important area in our commercial cooperation where we have strong trade ties and immense possibilities. It is a matter of satisfaction that the first meeting of the Working Group on Pharmaceuticals was held in Moscow earlier this year. The two sides discussed several initiatives for furthering cooperation in this field. These need to be followed up in earnest. Russian companies can also explore the profitable possibilities of supplying chemicals to the Indian bulk drug and raw material industry, which is engaged in contract manufacturing for world leaders.

We are also glad that the 2nd session of the Working Group on Information Technology was held in Delhi on 7 April and the two sides could crystallize areas of mutual interest to collaborate in this field. The issue of supply of Indian computers to Russian schools through the Rouble-Rupee debt route for payments needs to be addressed. We would also
like to suggest an area-specific agreement on mutual recognition of degrees, diplomas and certificates in IT sector to facilitate active exchange of experts and developing closer cooperation in this field. Excellency, I will like to draw your attention to the cooperation projects highlighted during the visit of the then Minister of Information Technology Mr. Pramod Mahajan to Russia in September 2001 and reflected subsequently in a Memorandum of Understanding. These include better business interaction, eg., joint ventures, joint marketing, Indian involvement in Russian telecommunication sector and Russia’s investment in India in this sphere. There is also potential for cooperation and collaboration in areas like information security, testing and certification.

Science and technology is probably one of the most flourishing areas of our bilateral cooperation. During President Putin’s visit to India in December 2002, the two sides signed a new protocol on protection and use of intellectual property rights arising out of bilateral scientific collaboration. As a follow up, interaction has been initiated with industrial houses for development of industry-oriented joint scientific collaboration. In this respect, the establishment of the Science & Technology Centre in Moscow would catalyze marketing of technologies. Unfortunately, we have been faced with the visa problems in this field also. The Indian Department of Science and Technology has informed me that the Indian scientists visiting Russia under inter-governmental programmes are now facing a lot of procedural delays in securing Russian visa. In order to strengthen cooperation in the sphere of science and technology, one suggestion could be coordinated meetings of the Ministries of science and technology and trade and economic cooperation which will provide an integrated view of the cooperation in commercialising results of joint projects in this sphere. It will also provide a forum for discussing and finding sources for funding such activity. There is need for paying attention to the functioning of the S&T related centres jointly set up in the recent years and expedite consideration of the new ones being discussed. Our Cooperation in environment is progressing satisfactorily. We may explore the possibility of including study of green house effect, climate change, etc.

Cooperation between the States of India and the Regions of Russia is an important part of our multi-faceted cooperation. Last year two documents were signed on cooperation between Gujarat and Astrakhan region and between Hyderabad and Khazan city. During the visit of President Putin in December 2002, we signed a Protocol on cooperation between Karnataka and Samara Region. There has also been some follow up action on cooperation in this area by visit of a delegation of Astrakhan
to Gujarat earlier this year where they signed a set of Agreed Minutes on cooperation. There are also proposals for exchange of visits between Andhra Pradesh and Tatarstan. We welcome these exchanges which hopefully will result in concrete economic and trade relations between our regions. However, we need the Russian side to urgently nominate the co-chairman of this Group so that it can hold its meeting. Contacts between regions will also increase contacts between small and medium enterprises of the two countries.

Excellency, relations between India and Russia go beyond politics and trade. I cannot overstress the importance which should be attached to the finalisation of a new Cultural Exchange Programme between India and Russia. We also welcome the decision to hold Days of Russian Culture in India and of Indian Culture in Russia. A delegation of the Russian Ministry of Culture will visit India in the next few days to finalise the arrangements in this regard. I am sure these events will significantly promote people-to-people friendship and appreciation of each other’s cultural and civilisational heritage.

Excellency, our special efforts over the last two months have resulted in an increase of the traffic of Russian tourists to India. This will have reciprocal opportunities for Russia. There is scope for more contact between good tourist operators and effective mutual facilitation.

Excellency, before I end, I would like to make a few proposals for enhancing the efficacy of the IRIGC. First of all, the Calendar of meetings of the Joint Working Groups for the entire year should be drawn up soon after an IRIGC meeting, so that these Groups do not meet in a hurry on the occasion of our IRIGC meeting. Secondly, we should agree, Excellency that the Secretaries of the Joint Commission should meet every two months and submit joint report of progress to us. If there is any issue where progress is not satisfactory, we should be able to bring it to each other’s notice.

Excellency, I am sure that our work today will be productive and mutually beneficial. I look forward to working closely with you in our joint endeavour to further consolidate our bilateral relations for mutual benefit.

Thank you for your kind attention.
Shri Kanwal Sibal: This Press Conference was called to brief you on Prime Minister’s visit to Germany, to St. Petersburg, and to Evian. However, I will take this opportunity to brief you also on the meeting of the CCS that took place today. In fact, I will begin with that.

**[FOR BRIEFING ON THE CCS PROCEEDINGS ON IRAQ PLEASE SEE DOCUMENT No. 254]**

With regard to Prime Minister’s visits to these three countries, he will begin with the visit to the Federal Republic of Germany from 27 to 30 May. This is the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Germany in nearly a decade, the last being that of former Prime Minister Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao in February 1994. The visit assumes special significance since it is a follow-up of a decision taken during the Chancellor Schroeder’s visit in October, 2001 to hold the annual summits alternately in New Delhi and Berlin. Our Prime Minister will be accompanied by Shri Yashwant Sinha, the Minister of External Affairs; Shri Arun Jaitley, the Minister for Commerce and Industry.

You are probably aware that a high-level interaction in the last two years had been maintained between India and Germany, as envisaged in the agenda for Indo-German partnership in the 21st century signed in May, 2000 between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries. There have been several exchanges of high-level visits. From the Indian side, the Ministers of External Affairs, Finance, Human Resources Development, Commerce, Home, Health; the Minister of State for External Affairs and the Minister of State for Non-Conventional Energy Sources have visited Germany. From their side there have been two visits by their Foreign Minister and a visit by their Defence Minister, apart from a highly successful visit of the German Chancellor who was accompanied by his Ministers of Economics and Technology and Interior.

The most recent visit from the German side has been that of the German President Johannes Rau during 1-6 March 2003 underlying the
continuing priority which Germany accords to this political and strategic dialogue at the highest political level. I may also mention that the German Foreign Minister's visit to India is under consideration for 4th July. During his stay in Berlin the Prime Minister will call on President Rau, he will have a meeting with Chancellor Schroeder who will host a lunch in his honour. The German Foreign Minister Mr. Fischer will call on the Prime Minister, he would also be having a separate meeting with the EAM. Prime Minister will also have a meeting with the President of the German Bundestag and interact with the German Parliamentarians including the members of the Indo-German Parliamentary Friendship Group. You may be aware that recently the Speaker of the Lok Sabha has constituted an Indo-German Parliamentary Group in the Indian Parliament to deepen and strengthen Parliamentary interaction between the two countries. A Parliamentary delegation from India recently visited Germany. When the Prime Minister is in Berlin, the Mayor of Berlin will receive him at Brandenburg Gate where he will sign the Golden Book. The Leader of the Opposition and the President of the Christian Democratic Union Ms. Angela Merkell and the President of the Free Democratic Party will also call on the Prime Minister. Finally the Prime Minister will interact with the Indian community in a reception hosted by our Ambassador in Berlin.

Prime Minister’s visit also includes a visit to Munich, the leading hitech region of Germany. The recent opening of our Consulate in Munich is recognition of the potential for expanding our trade and commercial ties with that State. Bavaria with its eleven universities, 15 technical colleges, and an economy dominated by hitech sectors like electronics, information and communication technology, mechanical engineering, automotive industry, and aerospace industry provides a very good opening for Indian businessmen in European markets. Many Indian companies have opened their branch offices in Munich recently such as Tata Consultancy Services, Hansoft Systems, TSC Software, Wipro, Satyam, Infosys, etc. Bavaria is also keen to develop business research and academic links with India in particular, and in India with Karnataka. The highpoint of this programme in Munich will be the interaction with Germany industry and business organized by Federation of German Industry and the meeting with Minister President of the State of Bavaria, Mr. Stoiver, who will also host a dinner for our Prime Minister. Before his departure for St. Petersburg on May 30, the Prime Minister will also have a meeting with Indologists and members of the Friends of India Group in Munich.

Germany as you know is one of India's major strategic partners. Maintaining close political ties with Germany is a priority for India given
Germany’s stature and influence in major international institutions and its leading role within the EU. The decision to institutionalize annual summits demonstrates the importance that both countries attach to the relationship. The Indo-German Strategic Dialogue, the Indo-German Consultative Group, the Joint Working Group on Terrorism, the Joint Commission and various bilateral Working Groups have contributed to the development of a multi-faceted relationship between our two countries. In economic terms, Germany is India’s fourth largest trading partner, sixth largest investor, although German investment has dropped substantially and this is something which we need to address and we hope that the Prime Minister’s visit and especially the interaction with German industry in Munich will help us to redress this.

Germany has been a partner in India’s education system particularly in the field of technical education, Industrial Training Institutes. It is one of our oldest partners in science and technology with institutional cooperation beginning with the establishment of the IIT, Chennai in 1959 and the opening of the German Academic Exchange Service in 1960. In the past 25 years, more than 650 joint research projects have resulted in 1200 joint research justifications, monographs. It will be useful to expand these contacts. Our objectives from this visit would be (1) to project the new India in high level political interaction and in interaction with the business community; (2) to promote India’s strength in the knowledge-based industries; (3) to demonstrate willingness of the Indian industry to invest in the German market and seek greater German economic engagement in India; (4) to promote science and technology and educational exchanges through student exchanges and tie-ups with educational institutions; (5) to use the democratic dividend and project ourselves as a key strategic partner of Germany in the maintenance of international peace and stability; and (6) to outline our vision of a cooperative, integrative international framework that would permit free flow of people, goods and capital.

After his visit to Germany the Prime Minister will go to St. Petersburg. He will be in St. Petersburg on 30-31 May in the context of tercentenary celebrations of the city of St. Petersburg. President Putin specially invited the Prime Minister to participate in the celebrations during President Putin’s visit to New Delhi in December, 2002. The invitation was renewed. Prime Minister’s programme includes participation in various events organised on the Russian side in connection with the tercentenary celebrations. I have the list of places that he is going to visit. I do not know how much interest you may have in those. The Prime Minister may not himself attend all these events because the programme is quite heavy. It is Isaac
Cathedral, State Academy, Marinsky Theatre, Palace of Congress, Acatarena Palace, State Museum, State Hermitage Museum, etc., etc.

I have a lot of write up here about Indo-Russian bilateral relations but clearly this visit is not bilateral. So, I do not think I will tax you and myself by reading out all these details. But basically, the invitation to our Prime Minister and the keenness to have our Prime Minister was intended to signal to us how keen the Russian side is to have our Prime Minister present there at these tercentenary celebrations. You can well imagine that we have had very high level exchanges of visits very regularly with Russia. Normally speaking, the Prime Minister would not have gone to an event of this nature because of the fact that he is hard-pressed for time. But, from our side also it is intended to reciprocate the Russian gesture in inviting us to also to convey the importance we attach to a very strong and growing strategic relationship with Russia.

After his visit to St. Petersburg the Prime Minister will visit Evian for the G-8 Summit in last dialogue. He will be attending the informal summit prior to the formal G-8 summit meeting in Evian at the initiative of President Chirac. The other countries invited are China, Malaysia which is the Chairman of NAM, Brazil, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, NEPAD-5 from Africa, Egypt, Senegal, Algeria, South Africa, Nigeria, Greece as EU President, Mr. Prodi as President of the European Commission, the UN Secretary-General and Heads of IMF, World Bank and WTO. President Chirac’s proposal is a continuation of the initiative taken earlier by Japan, Italy and Canada. During the Okinawa G-8 Summit in 2000, informal consultations had been held with leaders of developing countries. During Italy’s chairmanship in 2001, Italy had sought to engage in a more formal dialogue with non-G-8 members on poverty reduction which was the main theme of the 2001 Summit. But Italy has invited only the President’s of South Africa, Mali and Nigeria as well as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. In 2002 G-8 Summit Heads of State of Algeria, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa had attended. So, you can see that the Evian G-8 Summit Enlarged dialogue is intended to consult emerging countries as well as least developing countries on the major issues facing the world today and is a part of President Chirac’s desire to see greater involvement of the non-G-8 countries in the consultative process of the G-8.

During the New Year Address to the diplomatic corps on January 7, 2003, President Chirac had elaborated on the proposed themes of this informal Summit. These include (1) solidarity with particular emphasis on the partnership for Africa’s development and access to water for all - that
explains the invitation to NEPAD-5; (2) the spirit of responsibility that not only Governments but all economic actors, especially business corporations, need to display in the financial, social, environmental and ethical spheres; (3) security in order to strengthen the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and (4) democracy through ongoing dialogue with civil society and with other States. In his speech on the G-8 Summit on Wednesday, 21 May, President Chirac again reiterated the themes of security, growth and stability, and emphasized the special needs of Africa - continent which is marginalized but whose leaders want to change the situation. The discussions will also cover such issues as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, drug-trafficking and organized crime which are all issues high on the international agenda.

The invitation to our Prime Minister to attend the informal summit prior to the formal G-8 Summit demonstrates also the importance of the bilateral relationship between India and France. I will end here. I am ready to answer any Questions that you may have.

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**Question:** In the Evian Enlarged Dialogue, what will India’s priority be?

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** You know what the themes are. I indicated them to you. From our viewpoint all these themes are relevant. Especially, the issue of international terrorism is very important so far as we are concerned, and all the economic issues.

**Question:** Can you just elaborate a bit on that? When you say international terrorism, what will India really be saying?

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** At the moment, the issue of international terrorism is on top of the global agenda. Despite the action against Iraq, you have seen that there have been very serious incidents of terrorism in Saudi Arabia, in Morocco. We also find that the issue of terrorism has not gone away from our region. We have always said that all these networks are interlinked. We have also said that global terrorism has to be dealt with on a global basis and not on a selective basis. So, our effort would always be to keep the attention of the international community focused on this problem of international terrorism, of which the number of countries that are victims seems to be expanding.

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**Question:** I have two Questions. Firstly, do you think that in Evian they will pass any Resolution on Iraq? Secondly, has India to say anything on Israel’s acceptance on Palestinian State in principle.

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** Are you talking in reference to Evian?

**Question:** Yes.

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** Evian, I told you what the themes are.

**Question:** Is it about to discuss this Iraq only, as to who will get what, etc?

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** No, Iraq is not mentioned at all. I just told you what the themes are.

**Question:** This is what the G-8 meeting is about.

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** G-8 was first set up to deal with economics. The agenda was purely economics. Some countries are not happy that over the years the G-8 has started pronouncing on political issues. The French themselves have not been very happy because the French believe that it is only for the UN Security Council to deal with political issues, especially those relating to security. Yet, it has been the practice of the G-8 at the Foreign Ministers’ level to pronounce on political issues. They have in the past also pronounced on India-Pakistan issues, though fortunately their declarations have been positive from our point of view. So, the G-8 agenda at its core is economic. So, the issue that you are talking about may be discussed when there are informal bilateral meetings on the sidelines since these leaders are present, but not in the formal setting.

**Question:** The day before yesterday Israel had accepted Palestinian State in principle.

**Shri Kanwal Sibal:** The less one says the better because it is a saga that is continuing. Things are accepted, things are not accepted, they change, other problems occur, it is a very complicated thing. So, I do not think one should pick up one particular development and try and base one’s entire outlook on that. I think one should keep one’s fingers crossed and hope that things are moving in the right direction. In the past, ever since they met in peace process, and Camp David, and everything else, hopes have been very high. The appearance of a breakthrough has been there and
then things have actually not only collapsed but have become worse. So, when it comes to the Middle-East, the watchword should be prudence.

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New Delhi, June 16, 2003.

Shri Yashwant Sinha: Ladies and Gentleman,

I welcome all of you. It is a great pleasure for me to have amongst us His Excellency Mr. Igor Ivanov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. As you know, Mr. Ivanov is on an Official visit to India.

Indo-Russian relations are multifaceted. We have strategic partnership under which we hold very intensive dialogues on issues of mutual interest. There are regular exchanges between our leadership and officials. Our Prime Minister was in St. Petersburg a fortnight back, when he held an important bilateral meeting with President Putin.

Today, we reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations between India and Russia. We have agreed that our two countries have to take new initiatives in order to boost trade and economic ties. We have to expand trade in high value, hi-tech items, as well as in areas such as oil and gas, diamonds, etc. so that our trade and economic ties are commensurate with our excellent political relations. There is also a need for increasing mutual investments.

We also discussed regional and international issues of common concern. There exists similarity of views between us on major issues. We agree that the menace of international terrorism has to be fought by the international community collectively. Our own cooperation in this field will be institutionalized with the setting up of a joint Indo-Russian Working Group on Combating International Terrorism. We have decided that the first meeting of this Group should be held later this year.
We also discussed the situation in the region and agreed that it is imperative for Pakistan to seize the opportunity and stop cross-border terrorism and dismantle the infrastructure supporting terrorism so that progress can be achieved on the latest peace initiative of the Prime Minister of India. We agreed on the need to keep monitoring the situation in Afghanistan, so that Afghanistan does not go back to the days of religious extremism.

Foreign Minister Ivanov and I will both attend the meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum in the next few days. We have shared interest in peace and stability in the region. On Iraq, we agreed to maintain regular contacts so that we can work together with the international community to help restore peace and stability in Iraq and promote the process of economic reconstruction.

I would now give the floor to Mr. Ivanov.

Mr. Igor Ivanov: Thank you very much, Ladies and Gentlemen. First, I would like to thank my dear friend and colleague the Minister of Foreign Affairs of India for his invitation to visit India. The Russian-Indian relations have been marked over the recent several months with high intensity which corresponds to the higher level of cooperation. Of special significance are the highest level meetings; the one which was hosted in St. Petersburg between President Putin of Russia and Prime Minister of India. On our agenda we have the preparation for the next India-Russia Summit which will take place in Moscow. Today I already had talks with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence of India and also a meeting with the Prime Minister and the President of India.

In the course of negotiations and conversations we have discussed topics of regional and international security and the counteraction of international terrorism and drug trafficking. At the same time it is in our mutual interest to strengthen the international legal basis for such cooperation. Our special attention was paid to the situation in Iraq and the Middle East and also Afghanistan and it is with satisfaction that we notice that the position of India and Russia is in many aspects identical towards this problem. While discussing the issue of Afghanistan we spoke about the unacceptability of the opposition of states or group of states in the territory of Afghanistan and the necessity of cooperation of the international community with the authorities in Afghanistan. Bearing in mind the complex situation in Afghanistan, Russia proposes an international meeting which has to be held in September to discuss the matter of Afghanistan and we will be pressing this issue in the United Nations.
We have definitely discussed the situation in South Asia as well. Russia welcomes the proposal of India to re-establish the diplomatic relations with Islamabad at the level of high commissioners and also the restarting of the air and bus transport between the two countries. These initiatives show the sincere intention of India to stabilise the situation and we welcome these efforts. Russia supports these efforts and of principal importance here is the continuation of a dialogue from both sides. That is why the efforts by Pakistan are important to cut and eradicate cross border terrorism. As a conclusion I would like to say that we respect very much and cherish these warm and respectful relations which have been established between us and the Indian leadership. I once again felt this special atmosphere in the course of this visit. I am convinced that the results of today’s meeting will contribute to the strengthening of our relations both in bilateral and international levels.

Thank you.

**Question:** I would like to know the position of Russia and India with regard to the possible aggravation of the situation in Iran and would also like to find out whether this was discussed in the course of negotiations?

**Mr. Igor Ivanov:** We are expecting the IAEA report on this item which can result in the conclusion and decision with regard to this matter. At the same time the principled position of Russia is well known. We are against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction including the nuclear weapons in the case of Iran. We are developing cooperation with Iran in the nuclear field. But this is an exclusively peaceful means and peaceful matter of cooperation and everything in under the control of IAEA and safeguards. We hope that Iran will sign the additional IAEA protocol which will allow the supervision of the IAEA over all the nuclear projects in the territory of the country and thus will allow to wipe out any concerns with regard to that matter.

**Shri Yashwant Sinha:** We discussed the Iranian situation and what Mr. Ivanov has stated reflects the Indian position also to a very large extent. We are against clandestine nuclear proliferation. Iran is a signatory to the NPT. We are also waiting for the report of the IAEA and I hope it will be possible for Iran to convince the international community that it does not have any nuclear weapons programme.

**Question:** I wonder if the question of military and technological cooperation was discussed in the course of negotiations and what is the prospect for such cooperation?
Mr. Ignor Ivanov: In the course of talks with the Minister of Defense, we discussed matters of military and technological cooperation. With satisfaction we noted the successful implementation and the conduction of joint naval manoeuvres between Russia and India. We have underlined the importance of further developments of military cooperation between our countries. Military and technological cooperation also holds an important place in our bilateral relations and we are interested in the further development of this cooperation.

Question: Pakistan President General Musharraf has stated that he does not rule out another Kargil(inaudible)....... .......In your talks with Pakistani leadership was this discussed?

Mr. Igor Ivanov: The position of Russia with regard to counteracting international terrorism is perfectly clear and it has been numerous stated on different levels including the highest one. We have been always condemning and we continue to condemn terrorism in any form independent of from which side it arises. We are convinced that all countries are obliged to counteract terrorism and combat those structures which provide assistance to terrorist organisations and shall not allow the existence of such organisations in their territory. It is based on the corresponding United Nations Security Council Resolution which states that countries should not only combat terrorism but should also have to cut and eradicate activities of such organisations in their territories which provide assistance to international terrorists. Pakistan is well aware of the position of the Russian Federation because this position was stated in the course of President Musharraf’s visit to Moscow and I reiterated it in the course of my visit to Pakistan. But at the same time our judgement with regard to the question of terrorism and other matters must be made not upon just statements but upon the actions and deeds. We know that the leadership of Pakistan has recently undertaken a number of actions to curb the activity of extremists and terrorists in the territory of Pakistan and we hope that this work will be continued.

Question: On India not sending troops to Iraq?

Mr. Ivanov: It is the sovereign right of India and we don’t intrude into their internal affairs. I can only say that we are not planning to send our troops there.

Thank you.
407. Statement by Official Spokesperson on terrorist attack at Moscow’s Tushino airfield.

New Delhi, July 6, 2003.

The Government of India strongly condemns the terrorist attack at Moscow’s Tushino airfield on 5 July 2003, in which several innocent civilians were killed and wounded. We convey our deepest condolences to the members of the bereaved families.

We express our deep sympathy and solidarity with the Government and people of the Russian Federation in their hour of grief. We stand together with the Russian Federation in the fight against terrorism, which seeks to undermine the very basis of civilized dialogue within democratic, pluralistic societies.

India firmly believes that such acts of wanton terror cannot be justified on any grounds, and that terrorism must be eradicated wherever it exists. We are committed to addressing this global menace together with the Russian Federation in bilateral and multilateral forums. This abhorrent attack should further strengthen our resolve, and that of the international community, to fight the menace of terrorism with renewed vigour and determination.

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408. Suo Motu Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the Lok Sabha on his visits to Germany, Russia, France and China.


Please see Document No. 388

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409. Interview of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal to the Russian paper Kommersant.


Indian Foreign Secretary Does not want to have friendship against some else.

Interview by Sergey Strokan, Kommersant

[Yesterday was the last day of Indian Foreign Secretary Mr. Kanwal Sibal’s visit to Moscow. On the eve of UN General Assembly, Moscow and Delhi announced the beginning of their trilateral talks among India, Russia, and China. The Indian diplomat talks about it in the interview to Sergey Strokan.]

**Question**: This is your third visit to Moscow this year. Your last stay here coincided with the beginning of the Iraq war, because of which the Iraq issue dominated at the talks. What issues have been discussed during this visit?

**Answer**: This time our consultations took place two weeks before opening of the next UN General Assembly in New York. This largely predetermined the agenda of the talks I conducted with FM Igor Ivanov and his deputy Vaycheslav Trubnikov. On the eve of discussions in the UN we synchronized our positions on many issues including Iraq, Middle East, the last year’s initiative of conducting trilateral meetings India-Russia-China, and new Russian-Indian summit planned for November of this year.

**Question**: UN draft resolution on Iraq has become a highly controversial subject. What is Delhi’s attitude to the resolution and what role can India play in restoration of Iraq?

**Answer**: I would like to clarify something first. We are not members of the UNSC, and that’s why we are not able to influence the process of working on the new resolution. At the same time, being a member of the international community, India cannot be unconcerned by what is happening in Iraq. We firmly believe that the key role in restoration of Iraq should belong to the UN. Just like the Russian side, we think that the situation in Iraq is rapidly becoming worse, which demands collective efforts of the international community to normalize life in Iraq. We are prepared to contribute to restoration of the infrastructure and solving humanitarian problems. For instance, in association with Jordan we are building a hospital in Najaf. In addition to that, we announced about
giving $20 mln for restoration of Iraq and delivery to the country 50 metric tons of wheat.

**Question:** Let’s speak frankly. Americans don’t need your wheat in Iraq; they need your troops to relieve them from their burden. Is it possible that under certain circumstances Indian troops will be sent to Iraq?

**Answer:** I think it’s too early to ask this kind of question.

**Question:** You mentioned the initiative of conducting trilateral meetings among India, Russia, and China. What is it, a new triangle of force or new Asian axis?

**Answer:** Let us not use such an expression. This understanding is of another era. This approach is not applicable here. The talk is not about creating an axis of power or a ‘triangle’. The basis for such a relation is that substantial population; resources and potential belong to India, Russia and China - the major powers in the world. Therefore, with some key areas if we begin to synchronize our positions, it allows each of us to achieve much more. It is important to note yet another aspect, all the three countries are interested in improving relations with the United States. Hence all the talk that this is an axis of power or friendship against some one is misplaced.

**Question:** You already have reminded us about the November meeting of President Putin with Prime Minister Vajpayee. What are the areas that need more attention and which are the priority tasks?

**Answer:** Trade and economic relation is the area, which needs more attention. Just for comparison, our trade with China few years ago was USD 200 million, which now has grown up to USD 6 billion dollars. Bilateral trade of India with the United States, a strong economic partner, is USD 26 billion. Bilateral trade with Russia is USD 1.2 billion dollars, which is as much as our trade with Sri Lanka. We have a very strong cooperation in the field of defence, which is a very important area of cooperation, but should not be the only field. The task in front of us is to take our bilateral trade (from rupee - rouble) to a freely convertible currency, simplify custom procedures, develop transport corridors, create of banking channels, allow faster and effective transfer of funds etc.

As far as new areas of cooperation are concerned then - fight against international terrorism is one of them and during the meeting of two leaders this area will assume a significance place.


The First meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism was held in Moscow on 29-30 September 2003. The Indian delegation was led by Ms Meera Shankar, Additional Secretary in India’s Ministry of External Affairs, in charge of coordination of Counter Terrorism and the Russian side by Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Anatoly Y. Safanov. The exchange of views was characterised by traditional warmth, friendliness, and frankness, which are the hallmarks of the strategic partnership between India and the Russian Federation.

The Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism was established as a result of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two countries during the visit of the President of the Russian Federation to India in December 2002. The MoU seeks to further strengthen the cooperation between India and Russia in combating international terrorism in accordance with the determination of the two countries to fight this phenomenon, which is also reflected in the bilateral Declaration signed during the visit of the Prime Minister of India Mr. A. B. Vajpayee to Russia in November 2001.

The Sides discussed a wide range of issues relating to combating international terrorism and the contribution they have already made and that they are prepared to make to global, regional and sub-regional efforts in combating terrorism including mutual assistance and assistance to third countries in developing their potential to combat terrorist threats. They also informed each other about the efforts undertaken at the national level in the fight against terrorism. The Sides agreed to develop cooperation against terrorist organizations with transnational links.

The Sides examined the matter relating to mutual interaction between India and Russia in this area in the United Nations and other international fora. During the exchange of views on the need to strengthen the international legal basis for combating terrorism, special attention was paid to the progress in the UN on India’s Draft Comprehensive Convention on international Terrorism and Russia’s Draft International Convention Against Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.
The Group also discussed in detail the measures that could be taken for the suppression of the financing of terrorism, including through funds raised from illicit drug trafficking.

The Joint Working Group was in agreement that terrorism must be eliminated wherever and in whatever form it exists. To this end, the meeting also served to reiterate the resolve of both India and Russia to continue cooperating in the fight against international terrorism.

The next meeting of the Joint Working Group will be held in 2004 in India.

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New Delhi, October 14, 2003.

India has followed with interest the Presidential elections in the Republic of Chechnya of the Russian Federation held on October 5, 2003. Following the referendum held there in March 2003 on a draft Constitution for the Republic as well as on electoral laws holding Presidential and Parliamentary elections, the conduct of the elections is yet another step towards the consolidation of normalcy in Chechnya.

India supports the measures taken by the Russian Federation in Chechnya for combating the threats and acts of terrorism by outside forces with transnational links. Such measures are vital for Russia for the protection of its territorial integrity and constitutional order. India and Russia, being among the largest multiethnic, multilingual, and multireligious States, recognise their responsibility for opposing the threats to democracy and peace together with other members of the world community.

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New Delhi, October 15, 2003.

The first meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group on Global Challenges was held in New Delhi on 13-14 October, 2003. The Indian and the Russian delegations were led by Foreign Secretary Shri Kanwal Sibal and First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr. Vyacheslav Trubnikov, respectively. Exchange of views on a wide range of issues took place in the environment of friendship, openness and warmth which characterise the strategic partnership between India and the Russian Federation.

The Joint Working Group on Global Challenges was established as a result of co-operation between India and Russia through the Joint Working Group on Afghanistan. The need to recast the format of the JWG on Afghanistan emanated from the common understanding of India and the Russian Federation to enlarge the scope of their highest level dialogue at the Foreign Ministry level by exchange of views on global challenges and the necessity to address these challenges in a concerted and comprehensive manner.

The two sides principally focused on ways of strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the combat against new challenges and threats and the setting up of effective mechanisms to counter the threat of terrorism.

It was emphasized that the transnational nature of the challenges and threats requires consolidation of the international community through multilateral dialogue and collective action, with the UN playing a key coordinating role.

Substantive discussion took place on key international and regional issues, in particular, the situation in Middle East, Iraq, Afghanistan, Central and South Asia.

The meeting of the Joint Working Group on Global Challenges once again brought forth the similarity in views and approaches of India and the Russian Federation on major global issues. The meeting also underscored the significance of consultation and cooperation between the two countries for regional and global peace, stability and security. Deliberations of the Group were timely and useful in the context of the
forthcoming visit of the Prime Minister of India Shri A.B. Vajpayee to the Russian Federation from 11-13 November, 2003.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Group will be held in Moscow on mutually convenient dates.

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413. Special Media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Russia, Tajikistan and Syria.


OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN (SHRI NAVTEJ SARNA): Good evening ladies and gentlemen. We have Foreign Secretary here for a briefing on the Prime Minister’s forthcoming visit to Russia, Tajikistan and Syria. May I request the Foreign Secretary to address the press.

FOREIGN SECRETARY (SHRI KANWAL SIBAL): First of all, I apologise for being late.

We will begin with the Prime Minister’s visit to the Russian Federation. This will be the second visit by our Prime Minister to Russia this year, from 11th to 13th November. You would recall that in May this year he had attended the Tercentenary Celebrations of St. Petersburg at the invitation of President Putin. During that visit the two leaders had had a bilateral meeting and they had later met in New York, on the sidelines of the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Since President Putin’s visit to India last year in December 2002, the forthcoming Summit between the two leaders in Moscow will be their fourth meeting within a space of twelve months. This regular interaction at the highest level is symptomatic of our close contacts and regular exchanges with Russia at all levels, which is in keeping with the Strategic Partnership between our two countries.

On this visit, Prime Minister will be accompanied by the External Affairs Minister and other senior officials from concerned Ministries and Departments as well as business and media delegations. A strong business delegation comprising of up to 90 businessmen from various
sectors of our industry and trade has been put together by FICCI, CII, ASSOCHAM and All India Association of Industries. The heads of CII and FICCI are part of the business delegation.

In terms of the programme, upon his arrival the Prime Minister has been invited for a quiet one-to-one dinner with President Putin in a dacha. This would be on 11th evening. On 12th Prime Minister will have delegation-level talks with President Putin. That evening there will be a banquet in his honour by the Russian President. The Deputy Prime Minister Ilyushin will be the accompanying Minister for our Prime Minister. Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov will be calling on our Prime Minister. Prime Minister will also visit the Russian Academy of Sciences and deliver an address there. He is also slated to meet members of the Indian community in Moscow and address a special business event involving major representatives of Indian and Russian businesses on 13th November. He will leave Moscow for Tajikistan on 13th November.

Several bilateral documents are expected to be signed during the visit. It is a very significant number; ten in all in terms of documents and eleven if you include the Joint Statement. So, in all eleven documents will be issued or signed during the visit. These cover the areas of scientific cooperation, space cooperation, industry, establishment of an Indo-Russian Centre for Earthquake Research. Another agreement is on Joint Publication of Bilateral Archive Documents. Some interbanking agreements are there.

As you know, Russia especially is focusing a great deal on global challenges and threats to world security and stability which is currently one of the important areas of focus of their diplomacy. We intend to issue a declaration on this. More details will be naturally given to you in Moscow.

It is clear from the number of documents that will be signed that this will be a substantive visit. The focus will be on giving greater thrust to bilateral trade and investment. There is urgent need to boost the stagnant bilateral trade and promote new investments. A number of steps in this regard are being taken which include: intensification of exchange and contacts between entrepreneurs of the two countries. The Joint Business Council has been revived this year and it met in Moscow in February this year when a senior Indian business delegation participated in an Indian Exhibition. The response was encouraging. There has also been an increase in visas issued to Russians traveling for business and leisure to India. FICCI has also invited its counterpart, the RFCCI, to visit India to
coincide with the India International Trade Fair 2003. CII is resuming its operations in Russia.

These steps need to be supported by development of inter-banking relations and other steps. We expect that the SBI-Canara Bank joint venture in Moscow will soon get the necessary approval and start its commercial operations. ECG will sign an MoU on cooperation with Vneshtorgbank of Russia during the visit. It is also expected that the Joint Task Force constituted to look into issues of utilization of remainder of Rupee-Rouble Debt Repayment Fund – the balance with RBI is Rs.2792 crore as on 12th September this year - and outstanding mutual financial obligations will meet at the earliest to address the issues.

We are aware of the need to facilitate travel by businesspersons by putting in place a more conducive visa regime. Discussions on this issue will be on the agenda of a Working Group, which will meet in India in January 2004.

The Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC) has continued to oversee and guide our bilateral economic cooperation.

The Indo-Russian defence cooperation has transcended a buyer-seller relationship. The recent successful testing of the jointly developed Brahmos missile, which is the world’s first supersonic cruise missile, is an example of this. In the past few months the ongoing contracts have continued to be implemented. The Indian Navy has acquired three state-of-the-art frigates, built on order in St. Petersburg. The two sides held joint naval exercises in the Arabian Sea, as you may recall, in May this year. Prime Minister’s visit will naturally provide an opportunity to review defence cooperation at the highest level.

Our cooperation in atomic energy and space for peaceful purposes has been progressing satisfactorily and will also be reviewed. I mentioned to you that we are going to sign some important documents in the area of science and technology which will take our cooperation in high technology forward.

India and Russia share a rich legacy of cultural relations. The success and popularity of the ongoing Days of Russian Culture in India from 1 to 8 November in three India cities – Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai – is an example of this. Days of Indian Culture will be held in Russia next year.
India and Russia have an extensive and deep dialogue and cooperation in meeting the challenges which the world is faced with today, most importantly – terrorism, drug trafficking, illicit arms trade and related phenomena. There is a very strong governmental framework for such cooperation under the aegis of Joint Working Groups on Combating International Terrorism and Global Challenges, the first meeting of which was held very recently and which is chaired by Mr. Drubnikov on the Russian side and by me on the Indian side. The forthcoming Summit will also provide the two leaders an opportunity to discuss Indo-Russian cooperation in this regard both bilaterally and at multilateral fora.

To sum up, Indo-Russian relations have acquired a new dimension and significance while preserving and enhancing their traditional warmth, friendliness and mutual trust, understanding and concern for each other’s interests. We share a very wide range of cooperative activity and there is a great deal of identity of views with Russia. The thrust of the visit of our Prime Minister will be to reinforce the mutually beneficial nature of this relationship by focusing on potential for further development in key areas. This will contribute to further strengthening and consolidating of the Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership.

**Following his visit to Russia, Prime Minister will go to Tajikistan from November 13 to 14.** This would be the first visit by the Prime Minister of India to independent Tajikistan which became independent as of September 9, 1991.

In terms of calls, Prime Minister will be calling on the President of Tajikistan Emomali Sharifovich Rakhmanov and will hold restricted and delegation level talks with him. He will also be meeting the Prime Minister of Tajikistan, Mr. Akil Gaibullaevich Akilov. President Rakhmanov will be hosting a luncheon in honour of the Prime Minister on November 14.

Prime Minister would be unveiling a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Dushanbe. He will also be visiting a ‘Made in India’ exhibition, specially put up by the CII.

Two agreements are expected to be signed during the visit. One is an agreement between the two Governments on cooperation in the field of terrorism and the second is a protocol on exchange of instruments of ratification on the agreement between the two Governments on encouragement and protection of investment. From the map you will see that Tajikistan is our closest neighbour geographically in Central Asia.
The country is secular and democratic, those again are values we share with them.

Earlier this year in February, Tajik Airlines started direct flights between Dushanbe and New Delhi which is an indication of stepping up of the relationship and general contacts between the two countries. As a further step in that direction, just before our Prime Minister’s visit, Tajikistan has opened its Embassy in New Delhi in October. With this starting of the direct flights between Dushanbe and New Delhi, India is now connected for the first time with every country in Central Asia by air. It also has, for the first time, diplomatic representation both ways with every Central Asian country.

**Following his visit to Tajikistan, Prime Minister will be visiting Syria** which will be a 3-day State visit beginning on November 14. I have already mentioned to you his accompanying delegation. The State visit would be the first VVIP visit exchanged since Shri Rajiv Gandhi visited Syria in 1988. So there has been a long gap. Prime Minister was scheduled to visit Syria in March 2003 but because of the precarious situation in the region at that time and possibility of war in Iraq this visit was postponed. Prime Minister did visit Syria but as External Affairs Minister in 1979. This would be the first meeting that our Prime Minister will have with President Dr. Bashar al-Assad, who took office in the year 2000. The Syrian President has been invited to India and the visit is likely to take place in early 2004.

During the visit, Prime Minister will naturally hold discussions with the Syrian President Dr. Assad. He will also have a meeting with the Syrian Prime Minister Engineer Mohammad Naji al-Otari. A number of bilateral Memoranda of Understanding, etc., are expected to be signed in such sectors as science and technology, IT, BT, agriculture, technical cooperation, education, culture, small-scale industries, etc. Our Prime Minister and the Syrian President will jointly inaugurate the Syrian National Biotechnology Centre in Damascus. Before returning to India, Prime Minister is also likely to visit historic sites like the Omayed Mosque in Damascus and Roman ruins in Palmyra.

The visit would provide a useful opportunity to re-emphasise our bilateral ties and is likely to give a fillip to India’s economic profile in the region. India’s exports to Syria have gone up in recent years to reach Rs.586 crore, i.e., US$ 122 million, in 2002-03. Imports from Syria during the same period are not very high - Rs.43 crore which amounts to not a very impressive figure of US$ 9 million. The composition of our export basket to Syria has become more varied and comprises of more finished goods.
Syria also acts as an entrepot to the Iraqi market. The visit should give a fillip to these developments. Opportunities we feel exist for export of Indian projects in areas such as railways, steel, cement, software, etc. ONGC Videsh Ltd has recently been awarded its first oilfield exploration and prospecting block in Syria and a contract is likely to be signed soon.

Syria would be interested in the Indian experience in upgrading its industrial and economic infrastructure. We can offer them expertise in high tech areas of Information Technology and Biotechnology for peaceful purposes. Similar possibilities exist for promotion of mutual investments, services and transfer of technology.

The political context of the visit naturally is very significant with Syria – a frontline State with both Israel and Iraq – as the key regional player. The visit would enable us to discuss our perspectives on both these volatile issues with the Syrian leadership. In its capacity as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Syria has been useful for us with regard to a number of our concerns. We must also keep in mind Syria’s influence in the OIC and, of course, its role in the Non-Aligned Movement.

Syria and India have many similarities. Both are ancient civilizations and yet modern countries. We achieved independence in the forties from colonialism. We have common interests in both United Nations and NAM and we do share perceptions on several regional and international issues. The secular orientation of Syria is, of course, important to us. The commonality of perception and background has contributed to understanding between the two countries and this is renewed by high level visits that we exchange regularly with this country.

That is it insofar as my prepared brief is concerned. If you have any questions to ask, do please ask them. The Joint Secretary from WANA Region is with me and he can add to what I am not able to clarify to you with regard to the visit to Syria.

QUESTION: The Defence Minister recently stated that there was an attempt to finalise the modalities for the purchase of Admiral Gorshkov. What is the outcome?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I knew you were going to ask that question and I knew I was going to tell you that I really have nothing to say on this.

QUESTION: Which means what?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Which means that, as you can see, I did not say
anything about Gorshkov; I did speak about defence cooperation and several things that had happened in that area. On this I think I will leave it to the Defence Ministry when the occasion comes to say whatever needs to be said.

QUESTION: One of the issues with Russia is nuclear supplies. Are you likely to raise this issue because we are interested in …

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Not in the sense in which you are saying but you know, we have this ongoing cooperation in the civilian nuclear sector with Russia. It is clear that both sides are interested in stepping up this cooperation. Certainly India is interested in more Russian nuclear power reactors. However, there is this problem which not only relates to Russia but also to other prospective partners like France which is their international obligations, especially their membership of the NSG. Then how to square the circle where there is clear political and commercial interest in cooperating with us. Yet it needs to be done in a manner which is not seen as being violative of the international obligations. So, this is a problem to which we have not yet found a solution. But this is a subject which is constantly under our attention. Certainly there are continual exchanges with Russia on this subject.

QUESTION: You referred to Prime Minister’s visit to Syria in the context of its proximity to Israel and Iraq…

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Let me put it this way. The visit is bilateral. I am just saying that Syria is located in a geo-politically sensitive area and its relationship with Israel and Iraq and the fact that it is neighbour to both countries gives it a special geo-political importance. So, it is not that India is going because Syria is neighbour to Iraq and Israel. per se. We have always held our relationship with Syria to be important.

QUESTION: What I was asking was we had this high profile visit of Israeli Prime Minister which seems to have been understood in a certain way by some of our Arab friends. Is this an effort to balance our relationship with Israel?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I think that would mean as if we are in any way on the defensive, that if we have a relationship with one country we need to consciously try and balance it with another country. It is not like that. I think it is a natural relationship that we have with the Arab world. Now we are developing what should have been a natural relationship with Israel but there is no effort on our part to do a balance. We have to pursue
these two tracks in our diplomacy in this area, separate the two, not allow confusion to be created on this account, and to put ourselves in a position where, because of the fact that we have a multi-layered diplomacy in this area, our overall diplomatic position in this area is recognized to be more relevant and important.

**QUESTION:** You said that the thrust of Prime Minister’s visit to Russia is economic cooperation. What do you consider are the impediments in the bilateral trade?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** That is a disappointing area of our relationship because bilateral trade still remains on 1.4 billion dollars which is very little if you compare it with the kind of figures that we are able to register with China for instance. This year hopefully bilateral trade with China will be seven billion dollars. Given the importance of our political relations with Russia, it is absolutely necessary that this is underpinned by strong growth in our economic relationship, and that is not happening. Both sides are trying to see how this problem can be overcome. One issue that needs to be addressed is this Rupee-Rouble Debt Repayment business which is now recognized by both sides as being actually an impediment in developing more trade that we must move on the hard currency trading arrangements. This is what the goal is. Then, of course, we have to develop better interbanking arrangements, which is why we are focusing on this area and some agreements will be signed.

Then there is this larger question of attracting Russian business to look at India. Russia now is a pretty freewheeling market economy. The private sector is pretty active. In some sectors, of course, like oil they have a very large share of the world trade. But we have not as yet been able to send the right kind of message to the business community in Russia to look more closely at India.

Last time when President Putin had come, you would recall, for the first time an economic cooperation declaration was signed between the two countries. The idea was to focus on this weak element in our relationship at the highest Government level so that the necessary impetus is provided to players, especially in the private sector to be more active. Then there are other things which I mentioned. CII is re-opening its office. We have this exhibition in Russia and a very large business delegation is going from our side. So, we are putting in a lot of effort to expand our commercial ties and trade ties with Russia.

**QUESTION:** Gen. Musharraf had said that he had been assured by
President Putin that during Prime Minister Vajpayee’s visit he would take up some of the Pakistan’s issues.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: This is what Gen. Musharraf said.

QUESTION: Do you expect this to come up?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: On the basis of what Gen. Musharraf has said?

QUESTION: President Putin has also said that.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: There were two versions of what he said. The version which seems to me to be the more plausible one is that he had met Gen. Musharraf, he may have heard something from Gen. Musharraf, and when President Putin is going to meet our Prime Minister it will be natural and normal for him to perhaps give him a briefing of what happened, but nothing beyond that. The earlier kind of slant that was given that he has some message to convey has not really come out in the correct translation that we asked for of what President Putin has said. So, I would not attach any importance to that.

QUESTION: Given that the Indian draft convention on terrorism at the UN is pretty much stuck on key definitional area on whether people in occupied territory have a right to take up arms, etc., and the Syrian delegation has particularly played a strong role in pushing for a certain view, will there by any attempt to politically resolve this?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I do not think that this is something that can be resolved that easily because it is a genuine problem in terms of creating a consensus in the United Nations. For that matter even in the NAM we had a lot of difficulty on this. If you see, the NAM declaration on terrorism has contradictory paragraphs. It has this thought which you just expressed which is contrary to the thought that no cause justifies terrorism. So, there is in it everything for everybody. The point is that the whole issue of international terrorism has been seen and continues to be seen through the optic of the Middle-East situation. Israel-Palestine, Israel-Syria, the occupation of territories, what is seen as liberation struggle, this has coloured the perception and there has been a high degree of terrorist activity in this area. Our point is that while this may be true, this is a sui generis situation in the Middle-East, and the particular situation in the Middle-East should not colour the dialogue on the whole issue of terrorism elsewhere. For that matter, countries which are involved in sponsoring terrorism should not use the Middle-East paradigm to justify what they are doing.
QUESTION: My question is somewhat related to this. How high a priority is it on Prime Minister’s agenda to take up Pakistan exported terrorism to India and India’s peace initiative with Pakistan? Is he going to take it up with these particular Heads of Government, and particularly, will he take it up with President Putin in order to exert some pressure on Pakistan?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I do not think he needs to take it up. As you know, the international community as a whole has very warmly welcomed Prime Minister’s initiative which he announced earlier on and the latest steps we have announced. So, what I expect would be is a spontaneous expression of appreciation and support for India’s efforts and Prime Minister’s wisdom and statesmanship. I think we can take it virtually for granted that this will be so.

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QUESTION: Will the convergence of views on situation in Iraq be a serious point of debate between Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Assad of Syria?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No, I would not call it as a serious point of debate. Why should we debate this issue? Iraq is an issue which interests the international community. The current situation on the ground is becoming more and more difficult. Syria is very well placed, being the neighbouring country, to give us a perspective on how they see the evolution of the situation in Iraq, what the prospects of peace are, what the prospects of stability are, and what could be the effective role of the Governing Council. They can give their appreciation of the latest UN Security Council Resolution and what contribution it can make to enhancing peace and stability there, and very importantly, the whole issue of economic reconstruction, and I think some perspective on what is now seen as a mounting tide of terrorism in Iraq, and what the dimensions of that problem are. Over and beyond that, of course, as a neighbouring country with vital interest in Iraq in terms of the ethnic, religious balance between Iraq - which is key to Iraq’s sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, what the perspectives are. So, this would be more in terms of exchange of thinking and views, but no debate.

* * * * *

Thank you,
414. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee before his departure for his tour of Russia, Tajikistan and Syria.

New Delhi, November 11, 2003.

I leave today on bilateral visits to the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

My visit to the Russian Federation is in keeping with the agreement between our two countries to have annual summit meetings, so that we can constantly review and build on the progress in various elements of our strategic partnership. My discussions with President Putin and other representatives of the Russian leadership will also cover major global and regional political and economic developments.

A nearly 100-strong Indian business delegation will be in Moscow during my visit. I hope they will establish useful contacts with Russian business and industry, so that our trade and investment relations can put on a firm footing even after the Rupee-Rouble arrangement ceases to operate.

Our relations with Tajikistan go back to ancient times. It is our closest neighbour in central Asia. We share the common values of faith in democracy and secularism. We have had fruitful cooperation in recent years, both bilaterally and on regional matters.

My visit returns that of President Rakhmonov in May 2001. I look forward to renewing contact with the Tajikistan leadership exchanging views on matters of bilateral interest, as well as international and regional issues.

India sees the Syrian Arab Republic as an important partner in West Asia. We have had civilizational contacts and enjoy traditionally friendly ties. This is the first interaction at the leadership level in nearly 15 years; my visit is therefore timely and important. I am looking forward to detailed discussions with President Assad on important bilateral and international issues. My visit will also give us the useful opportunity of exchanging views on recent developments in the West Asian region.
415. Address of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Moscow, November 12, 2003.

I am deeply honoured to be addressing this eminent gathering today. The Academy has played a significant role in the expansion of human knowledge, which has benefited not only Russian society, but, indeed, the entire world.

We in India have always admired the spirit of enquiry and the search for excellence that have marked the activities of the Academy. This is evident from the steady stream of internationally renowned scientists, including many Nobel Laureates that Russia has produced. I am happy that some of them are in our midst today.

I often wonder what accounts for the extraordinary stability and warmth of the relations between India and Russia. What nourishes the enduring goodwill between our two peoples? One thing is certain. The tree of our friendship does not have its roots in the thin topsoil of politics and ideology. For it has continued to grow in spite of the political upheavals and structural changes in our two countries.

Perhaps, a deeper reason lies in the spiritual and cultural affinity between India and Russia, which manifested in the extraordinary resonance between the best minds of our two countries. They were men who represented the “soul” of our two great nations. They were towering names in culture and arts, literature and poetry, science and technology who gave voice to the universal concerns and aspirations of mankind.

For example, we know what an immense influence the great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy had on Mahatma Gandhi in his formative years in South Africa. It inspired the Mahatma even to establish a Tolstoy Farm near Johannesburg for his early experiments in truth, non-violence and self-realisation through community service. Similarly, Rabindranath Tagore, the great Indian poet, was widely admired and revered in Russia for his passionate appeal for universal peace, love and harmony. Shortly before his death in 1941, which were the darkest days of World War II, he predicted that your country would be victorious against the forces of fascism. That prediction came true, thanks to the unparalleled heroism of your people.

This mutual resonance is also seen in the long tradition of intellectual interaction between our two countries in the various disciplines of the
humanities and sciences that comprise the totality of human knowledge. The legendary Gerasim Lebedev, one of the first Russian scholars to write on India, learnt Sanskrit, Hindi and Bengali, and published his grammar of Indian languages in the late 18th century. F.I. Sherbatsky was one of Russia’s most well known specialists on Indian religions, philosophy and literature. A.P. Barannikov translated Saint-Poet Tulsidas’ Ramacharitamanasa into Russian. I.P. Minayev, well known for his rich library of Sanskrit and Pali manuscripts, had established close friendship with Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bankim Chandra Chatterji, two of the most respected names in India’s Freedom Struggle. I am glad that this rich tradition of Indology, nurtured by the Institute of Oriental Studies and other institutions, has continued up to the present day.

The Roerich family occupies a unique place in the artistic, intellectual and philosophical interaction between India and Russia. Nikolai Roerich, one of the greatest painters in the 20th century, not only traveled to India, but made the Himalayas his home. His older son and fellow-explorer George Roerich has left behind scholarly work on Tibetan Buddhism. Next year marks the birth centenary of his younger son, Svetoslav Roerich, the great artist who lived in Bangalore. We are taking steps to restore his beautiful estate and turn it into a befitting cultural park. We are also planning to establish an International Roerich Art School in India. I am particularly glad that during my Prime Ministership, we have been able to make significant contributions to safeguarding the precious legacy of the Roerichs, which is our common heritage.

Today I applaud the seminal work produced by the Indo-Russian Joint Commission on Social Sciences, in which your Academy participates with its counterpart institution in India, the Indian Council for Historical Research. Perhaps in no other foreign language has so much of great Indian literature, both ancient and modern, been translated as in Russian. It is a matter of pride for us that today more than 1400 Russian scholars and students are studying Hindi in Russia. Two years ago, during my visit to St Petersburg, I had announced the establishment of chairs for the study of India at various institutions and universities in Russia. I am happy to hear that these chairs have since been activated, and are arousing great interest among the younger generation.

It is a matter of immense satisfaction for us that Indo-Russian cooperation in science and technology has evolved continuously. Today it represents perhaps the most dynamic aspect of our overall relationship. The Integrated Long Term Programme of cooperation in science and technology (ILTP) is one of the most elaborate bilateral programmes in
the world. More than 2,500 scientific exchanges have taken place during the 15-year existence of ILTP.

Keeping with the challenges of modern times, our scientific cooperation now extends to the frontier areas of scientific research including bio-technology, informatics, nano technology, environmental protection, drugs, and development of new materials. This is in addition to the traditional area of cooperation in space, atomic energy and defence technologies.

Thus, what defines Indo-Russian relations is their all-sided and ever-growing character. During the past few years, dialogue and summit level meetings have become more frequent and productive than ever before. This has helped us evolve a comprehensive vision of Indo-Russian ties for the 21st century, reinforcing our conviction that the strategic partnership between India and Russia is a reliable factor in promoting peace, security and stability both in Asia and the world. Our current efforts are dedicated to enhancing this partnership to even higher levels. We are confident that this can be achieved with ease.

The reason for this optimism is that we have a long tradition of stable and continuous relationship unaffected by the tumultuous changes that have taken place in the world. There are no divisive issues in our relationship. Neither India nor Russia perceives a threat from the strength of the other. On the contrary, each sees a benefit for itself in the increased political and economic strength of the other. This is best illustrated by Russia’s public and unambiguous support to India’s permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council. Both countries have a common interest in the evolution of a multipolar world based on a cooperative security order. We are both opposed to unilateralism in international matters.

The fundamental factor behind the stability of Indo-Russian ties is the exemplary sensitivity both countries have shown to each other’s concerns, including security concerns. We in India deeply appreciate Russia’s consistent and strong support to our campaign against terrorism, inspired by religious extremism. This dangerous phenomenon is rapidly spreading its tentacles, posing a threat to the entire civilized world. Specifically, it is threatening the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of both India and Russia. President Putin minced no words in his address to the Indian Parliament three years ago, when he said that the same individuals, the same terrorist and extremist organizations are involved in
terrorist acts from the Philippines to Kosovo, including in Kashmir, Afghanistan and Chechnya.

Both India and Russia are multi-ethnic, pluralistic, democratic countries. Therefore, intellectuals, scientists and all public figures have an important role to play in the fight against the forces of intolerance and violence. Our two countries have established a sound legal basis and a useful institutional mechanism for cooperation in the struggle against international terrorism.

The only area where our bilateral relations have made less than desired progress is economic cooperation. It is also that area whose importance in international relations has grown tremendously in recent times. Both President Putin and I have been concerned that the volume and quality of our economic ties does not conform to the excellent level of our political relationship. We need to convert the extraordinary goodwill between India and Russia into a thriving, visible, vigorous and mutually beneficial economic relationship. In this endeavour, we need to show both innovation and a sense of urgency.

We in India have followed with much admiration Russia’s strong economic revival, overcoming the transitional difficulties your country faced a few years ago. In the same period, India has emerged as one of the fastest growing economies in the world, and become the world’s 4th largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity. The world has begun to take note of India’s rapid strides towards developing a knowledge-based economy.

Perhaps the most well-known of Indian achievements in the last few years have been the emergence of our software industry and India’s preeminent position in IT and IT-enabled services. An Indian made supercomputer PARAM is being used at the Institute for Computer-Aided Design of this Academy. Today India is the fastest growing telecom market in the world. The information and communication revolution in India is closely followed by the emerging biotechnology revolution. We are expanding and modernizing our physical infrastructure – roads, railways, ports, airports and the energy assets – in a determined manner.

Although many economic and social problems persist, any visitor can see that India is now a nation on the move – stronger, more prosperous and more self-confident than ever before. We have now set before ourselves the goal of transforming India into a Developed Nation by 2020. President Putin is likewise committed to making Russia one of the world’s
great economic powers. Thus, both India and Russia are pursuing a similar goal, relying on our enormous human and natural resources.

How can we achieve this goal? I think that one of the most efficient ways would be through a synergy between scientific endeavours and business enterprises of our two countries. Such a synergy can bring rewards not only to business corporations, but also to scientists. More importantly, commercially sound application of science and technology will benefit millions of common people in their daily lives, both in our countries and around the world. India and Russia have already experienced this in the past. For example, India’s pharmaceutical industry, which is today globally recognized for its cutting edge R&D and its success in the low-cost development of new drugs, was established largely through our bilateral cooperation with Russia several decades ago. I see no reason why such an example cannot be emulated in the widest possible range of opportunities that can be identified in the regular interaction between the Academy and its partner institutions in India.

I have brought with me a 95-member business delegation from India on this visit. I am confident that our captains of trade and industry, and their Russian counterparts, would contribute to our reaching this goal.

Thus, I see a bright future for Indo-Russian relationship. However, I would like to inject here a note of realism. We should not rest on past laurels. Otherwise, stagnation would set in. We must follow a determined course towards continuous strengthening of political, economic, scientific and cultural ties. The Russian Academy of Sciences has a major role in this regard. We are ready to work with you.

I conclude by recalling the words of Nikolai Roerich, which are very apt for this occasion: “The Indian heart is drawn irresistibly to the boundless spaces of Russia and India too has a great magnetism for the Russian heart. There is great beauty in this magnetism between India and Russia. Heart speaks to heart.”

I wish each and every one of you good health, prosperity and success in your endeavours.

_Pust Vsigda bujdit Indiiskaya-Rossiskaya druzba!

Long-Live Indo-Russian Friendship!_
416. Media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on talks between Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Russian leaders.

Moscow, November 12, 2003.

FOREIGN SECRETARY (SHRI KANWAL SIBAL): I will begin by making some general observations on the talks, their content, their nature, the atmosphere and the substance.

The talks were held between the Prime Minister of India and President Putin. Both the one-on-one and the restricted-level talks that they had yesterday and today, as well as at the delegation-level talks were detailed, wide-ranging, and substantive. The atmosphere was of trust, full understanding and mutual comprehension. The talks were underpinned by a clear community of interest, similarity or identity of perspectives, shared vision of international relations and a forward looking approach based on developing a longer-term strategic relationship. The element of strategic partnership was reiterated several times by both the leaders during the course of discussions. You would recollect that in his press statement at the end President Putin once again referred to this.

It was agreed by both leaders that the annual summits and other dialogue mechanisms that have been created serve to bolster this strategic partnership. Defence, high technology, and scientific cooperation are clearly the building blocks of this strategic partnership. As part of our increased vistas of economic cooperation, several areas were identified for increasing such economic cooperation. Later on I can spell out some of these.

Coincidence and identity of views on international and regional issues is also a vital element of this strategic partnership. In terms of subjects that were touched upon in the various discussions that took place, apart from a very strong bilateral content, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan figured in the discussions. In the case of Afghanistan in particular, the threat posed by revival of Taliban activity was noted. The need for continued concertation and consultation between India and Russia with regard to the way in which peace and stability in Afghanistan can be promoted and consolidated was discussed.

There was naturally a reference to South Asia. You would have seen that President Putin in his press statement lauded the initiative taken by our
Prime Minister for improved relations with Pakistan. In this regard I would like to state that notwithstanding some speculation that has been made in the press from time to time and the contacts at some levels that have taken place between Russia and Pakistan, the outcome of discussions during the visit made it very clear that there is nothing in the Russian position on these matters which should be an element of concern insofar as we are concerned. This message came out quite clearly.

In defence cooperation, one of the problems that we do face relates to spare parts. This was mentioned, and reassurance was given that the problem would be attended to and resolved expeditiously. There was a reference to joint ventures in the area of defence. Naturally the fifth successful trial of the Brahmos missile was mentioned.

Space cooperation has traditionally been a very important area of our bilateral relations with Russia. You would have seen a short while ago that an MoU in this area has been signed between ISRO and the concerned Russian space organisation. During the course of the delegation-level talks, the head of the Russian Space Agency briefed the two sides on prospects of future cooperation in this area. Reference was made to some proposals that have been made from the Indian side, which the head of the Russian Space Agency found very interesting.

On the issue of terrorism, there is a clear community of interest and mutual support. In this connection, India’s proposal for a resolution on comprehensive combat against international terrorism as well as the Russian resolution on nuclear terrorism were mentioned. It was underlined that both countries would continue to support the passage of these resolutions in the UNGA.

In the Joint Statement that will be made available to you tomorrow, there are two paragraphs on terrorism. I might as well read this out to you, although the full text will be made available tomorrow. It says:

“There was a complete identity of views of India and the Russian Federation on the acute threat posed by international terrorism to the two countries and to international peace, stability and security. Both sides noted with deep concern the growing transnational linkages of terrorist organizations and also the role of trans-border organized crime and illicit trade in arms and drugs in supporting terrorism, particularly by financial means. The sides strongly condemned terrorism everywhere and called upon the international community in accordance with UNSCR 1373 and 1456 to take decisive action against this global menace and against those
who aid and abet terrorism across borders, harbour and provide sanctuary to terrorists and provide them with financial means, training or patronage. They reiterated that international action against terrorism cannot be selective but has to be uniform, comprehensive, continuous, and multifaceted.”

You have already been made aware that India has issued a notification yesterday on recognizing Russia as a market economy in the context of the anti-dumping investigations that have been conducted against some Russian companies, and the Russian concern that although the Joint Statement issued during President Putin’s visit to India last year recognized Russia as a market economy nevertheless our Ministry of Finance resorted to provisions in our laws which, when it came to investigations for dumping, treated in practical terms Russia as a non-market economy. That ambiguity has been removed by this notification.

You have also been made aware of the additional Aeroflot rights that have been announced - Aeroflot will be able now to have five additional flights to Mumbai - as also the important announcement made about according Aeroflot fifth freedom rights for flying to Afghanistan from Delhi and Mumbai, subject, of course, to the agreement of the Government of Afghanistan.

On civilian nuclear cooperation, during the delegation-level talks the Russian Minister for Atomic Energy briefed the two sides on progress in the implementation of the Kudankulam project. It was noted that satisfactory progress was being made.

I may also mention that in the Joint Statement that will be issued tomorrow Russia has reiterated its support for India’s permanent membership of the Security Council. It says:

“Both sides agreed on the need to expand the UN Security Council to make it more representative and more effective. Assessing India as an important and influential member of the international community, the Russian Federation reaffirmed its support to India as a deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership in an expanded UN Security Council.”

Finally, the Joint Declaration on global challenges and threats to world security and stability, the text of which you have, should be seen as part of the consolidation of the strategic partnership between Russia and India. As you are aware, the larger subject of global challenges and threats to
world security and stability and how to meet them is becoming a very important element of Russian diplomatic effort. There is clearly a community of thinking between India and Russia on this.

Finally, I should mention also that the Joint Statement, which we will share with you tomorrow, has a full passage on the situation on South Asia. I might as well also make some references to that in my briefing to you. This is what it says:

“Both sides discussed in detail the situation in South Asia. They emphasized the need for Pakistan to implement in full its assurances to prevent infiltration of terrorists across the Line of Control into the State of Jammu and Kashmir, and at other points across the border as well as to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-controlled territory as a prerequisite for a purposeful dialogue between the two countries to resolve all outstanding issues in a bilateral framework as envisaged in the Simla Agreement of 1972 and the Lahore Declaration of 1999.”

It goes on to say a few other things but let me not divulge to you the entire content of this Joint Statement. There is more to it. So, there would be something for you to write tomorrow too.

I think I had better stop here because we do not have much time. If you have any questions, I would be happy to answer them.

**QUESTION:** Can you tell us what was the specific proposal made by ISRO to Russian Space Agency which they found interesting? And what is the give-and-take in this cooperation?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** One of the very major elements in this would be India’s collaborative effort in the satellite navigation system that Russia is putting up - the Glonas system. This would involve launch and fabrication of satellites. It has a major potential in terms of space cooperation.

**QUESTION:** Does this space cooperation proposal include Russian assistance to India’s proposed mission to the Moon?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** This was also mentioned. In the delegation-level talks the head of the Russian Space Agency did speak about Russian interest in assisting India in its lunar programme. Yes, this was mentioned. This does not mean that discussions have taken place and everything has been decided. But in terms of in-principle-interest, yes.
QUESTION: You said that certain sectors have been identified for development of trade and economic relations. Would you brief us on that?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: The Joint Report on implementation of steps elaborated in the Joint Declaration 2002, the one I signed, lists all that has been done since the Joint Declaration on economic cooperation which was signed last year in December. It speaks of all that has been done by way of implementation. It talks about the utilization of the rupee debt business and the Joint Task Force that has been set up. It also lists the increased contacts between business organizations and financial institutions; India’s participation in international exhibitions in Russia; visiting Indian trade delegations in various sectors like automobiles and components, leather goods, textiles, IT and telecom, tourism, pharmaceuticals, tea and tobacco; Indian business delegations that have been going to various regions of Russia; and Russian business delegation which participated in the Engineering Trade Fair sponsored by CII. Russian companies from various regions have confirmed their interest in participating in the India International Trade Fair this year. The Joint Business Council, which was revived after a gap of six years met in Moscow in February this year. We are also expecting a Business Delegation headed by Mr. Primakov to India next year.

The delegation led by our Minister of Shipping to discuss means of strengthening transportation links as well as facilitation of smooth operation and use of the North-South transportation corridor, is very important. This is mentioned by our Prime Minister also in his press statement. Some progress has been made in the banking sector. As you know, two commercial banks – the State Bank of India and the Canara Bank – are opening bank branches here. They are likely to commence commercial operations this year. Commercial banks of both the countries have also been actively exploring possibilities of cooperation with the support of the RBI and the Central Bank of Russia.

The CII, as you know, is opening a representative office a little later today. One of the problems that the two countries have been facing is with regard to difficulties in obtaining visas, including for bona fide businessmen. In this connection, Consular talks have already been held and the concerned Working Group is going to meet in January to hopefully resolve this problem so that there can be easy entry of business people into Russia.

We have been talking about increasing the possibility of diamond trade. In this connection, regular sightings of rough diamonds have been held.
This is an area in which there is considerable potential.

There is also the possibility of selling Indian meat to Russia. We have invited a delegation of Russian experts to visit India to see the epizootic situation in respect of animal contagious diseases.

There has been some concern about utilization of the line of credit extended by the Exim Bank of India. We have, during the course of these talks decided to explore diversifying the lines of credit. ECGC has also signed an agreement with the corresponding bank here.

President Putin mentioned in the Joint Statement the review of the progress of Sakhalin-I, to which both sides attach a great deal of importance. There was, to answer your question, during the delegation-level talks, interest expressed by Russia in actively participating in the execution of infrastructure projects including road and pipeline construction, exploration and operation of oil and gas fields. In this connection, Gazprom’s efforts in the Bay of Bengal were mentioned. Then there are many things including, of course, reaffirmation of our support for early accession of Russia to the WTO.

**QUESTION:** On the energy front, there is a reference which our Prime Minister also made to high-level monitoring of the Sakhalin project. Is there any problem there, or is it just to ensure that schedules are kept to?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** The latter. Any delay means increase in costs, cost overruns, which are chargeable to the project which makes the project less profitable for both sides. So, there is a mutuality of interest to ensure that there are no delays.

**QUESTION:** Any other projects in the energy sector, which India is interested in?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** There is, from our side interest in the area of civilian atomic energy. You know what our plans are – 20 thousand megawatts by the year 2020. There is, therefore, clearly a very considerable scope for Indo-Russian cooperation in this area provided, of course, that the problem that we know exists could be overcome. There was an affirmation by our side of our readiness to expand energy cooperation in the oil and gas sectors. Gazprom is already active in West Bengal, but they could explore oil and gas elsewhere. In this connection, we reiterated our interest in setting up a forum for energy, Indo-Russian Forum for Energy.
QUESTION: Can you please tell us more about the Earthquake Research Centre? Secondly, would you please give more elaborate information on diamond trade?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: On diamonds trade, what we are saying is regular sightings of rough diamonds have been held leading to mutually beneficial results. Both sides have been able to achieve a modest breakthrough. The Indian side has been reiterating its desire to conclude a long-term supply arrangement for rough diamonds from Russia.

Insofar as the earthquake research, in the field of science and technology both sides have made progress towards implementation of important projects relating to the setting up of Indo-Russian Centres for Gas Hydrates and for Earthquake Research. Since I was not telling you everything, now piecemeal I have to tell you everything. Business Forum on Energy has been signed and this is reflected in the Joint Statement.

QUESTION: Will this Centre for Earthquake Research be in Gujarat or somewhere else?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: In Hyderabad.

(Text in italics is a translation from Hindi)
417. Speech by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a banquet hosted in his honour by President Vladimir Putin.

Moscow, November 12, 2003.

Your Excellency, Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you Mr. President for your kind words of welcome. My delegation and I deeply appreciate the warmth and generosity of our Russian hosts.

It is an immense pleasure to be here again in this capital city of Russia. I cherish the memories of my earlier visits to Russia, including the most recent one to St Petersburg for its historic 300th anniversary celebrations.

Mr. President,

Today we had our 4th meeting in the past 12 months. This reflects the vibrancy of the India-Russia strategic partnership.

Our close relationship originated in a different global era, whose unique strategic assumptions were based on equations of the Cold War. Emergence from the Cold War prompted different kinds of political adjustments and economic transformations in both our countries. Through these turbulent events, there was an almost seamless continuity in the India-Russia partnership. This is an eloquent testimony to the bonds of geography, history, tradition and culture, which invest our relationship with a unique enduring quality.

Today, our shared commitment to democracy, pluralism and multilateralism is another important dimension of our bilateral relationship and global responsibilities.

In our meetings today, we have agreed on the contours of future development of the traditional sectors of our cooperation. These include military technical cooperation, space, nuclear energy, science & technology, among others. We have reinforced our decisions with bilateral documents, which commit our two sides to concrete time-bound actions.

We have also agreed that we will give our links in trade and
investment a more contemporary focus. As two large and modernising economies, India and Russia have complementary interests in the emerging global economic order. We should maximize the mutual benefit from our industrial and technological synergies.

India’s investment in the Sakhalin oilfield and Russia’s assistance for our Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant herald significant breakthroughs in our energy cooperation. We can diversify into midstream and downstream projects in all segments of the energy sector.

We have other new opportunities in information and communication technologies, biotechnology, electronics, banking and financial services. Our energetic pursuit of these opportunities will secure the economic underpinning to our political understanding, strategic convergences and defence cooperation.

Mr. President,

You have personally taken the initiative at various international forums to focus the world’s attention on new global challenges and threats and to seek cooperative ways to tackle them. We are with you in this endeavour.

India and Russia have collaborated closely in recent years for peace, security, democracy and tolerance in our common neighbourhood. This work is still unfinished.

We share your perspectives about countering terrorism with a firm conviction and joint determination. We have to break the nexus between terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and drug trafficking.

We agree on the need to restore credible multilateralism in the conduct of inter-State relations. The United Nations needs to salvage its prestige to again become a forum for genuine consensus building and collective decision-making. Its structures need to be reformed and renovated.

These are not easy challenges. They require painstaking effort, resilience and courage. These are qualities which both Russia and India have displayed in abundant measure in their nation-building efforts.

As your legendary author, Fyodor Tyutchev, wrote:

“I love thundershowers in the spring....
All things echo thunder’s heavenly joy!”

India and Russia need this indomitable spirit of cheerful determination in their joint efforts to tackle the modern-day challenges to global peace and security.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I invite you to join me in a toast to:

- The health and happiness of His Excellency President Putin;
- The further prosperity and progress of the Russian people; and
- The strength and vitality of the strategic partnership between India and Russia.

Thank you.

✦✦✦✦✦

418. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with the Russian newspaper Izvestia.

Moscow, November 12, 2003.

Two years ago in interview to Izvestia, you rated possibilities of cooperation between India and Russia as excellent. What has been realized since?

Two years ago, my visit to the Russian Federation came in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the US. Those attacks awakened the world to the reality of international terrorism, a scourge which both India and Russia had been suffering from, and were warning the world about, for many years. After 2001, our strategic partnership acquired an additional dimension of enhanced bilateral cooperation in the fight against international terrorism, besides our active participation in the international coalition against terrorism. A Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism has been constituted for regular bilateral information exchanges. Another new bilateral initiative is the Joint Working Group on Global Challenges. These mechanisms, and ongoing
regular contacts and exchanges at all levels have helped India and Russia to constantly upgrade bilateral cooperation and to work closely together to meet the various regional and global challenges facing us as plural democracies.

In other areas of our bilateral cooperation also, such as defence, space, nuclear energy, science and technology, trade and investment, culture etc, there have been significant achievements and our strategic partnership is being consolidated. I am happy that the first few years of the new millennium have lent new and ever growing dimensions to the age old relationship of warmth and friendliness between our two countries and peoples.

**What areas of trade and economic cooperation are still lagging—and why?**

Important steps have been taken both by the countries to enhance our trade and economic cooperation to a level where it could be commensurate with the complementarities of our economies. There is need to encourage the business communities of the two countries to interact more regularly and extensively so that they can complement each other's strengths and benefit from them. This is the reason why a strong business delegation is accompanying me on my visit to Moscow this time. At the governmental level, the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission has served as a useful instrument for providing direction to our bilateral cooperation and identifying new projects of collaboration. There is need to reinforce the banking and financial framework for trade and investment facilitation. A Joint Task Force is to study the utilization of the balance in the Rupee debt fund for investments in both countries. In short, we are exploring every avenue for injecting further vigour and momentum to our economic cooperation.

**Three years ago, India and Russia proclaimed strategic partnership. What specific manifestations of this partnership have developed since?**

The Declaration on Strategic Partnership, which President Putin and I signed in October 2000, reflected the traditional cooperation, shared perspectives and geopolitical convergences, which have cemented our bilateral relationship over the last many decades. In recent years, our interaction has been further enriched by our joint actions against international terrorism, our coordination of positions on Afghanistan and our consultations on other global issues.
Meanwhile, we continue to intensify, expand and diversify all aspects of our bilateral cooperation.

**Russia supports placing India among the permanent members of the UN Security Council. What is your point of view concerning role of the Council in world affairs?**

As outlined in the UN charter, the primary mandate of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and security. The Security Council has to evolve suitable decision-making mechanisms, which ensure better representation of the collective will of the international community. There is need for enhanced transparency, greater accountability to the membership of the UN and the need to preserve the balance envisaged in the UN Charter between the Security Council, UN General Assembly and other organs.

Terrorism is the gravest threat, which the civilized world faces today. The UN Security Council has been playing an important role in dealing with this threat. We believe that the Council should carry forward international efforts against international terrorism and strive for credible multilateral instruments to ensure universal compliance of the Council’s resolutions against terrorism.

**Your government decided to refrain from sending Indian troops to Iraq. Do you envision common actions of Russian and Indian peacekeepers, or even combat units, in any parts of the world – other than manoeuvres?**

India is amongst the long-standing supporters of and the largest troop contributors to the UN’s peacekeeping activities. At present, India is contributing more than 3,000 personnel to 9 out of the 14 ongoing UN peacekeeping missions. In some of these missions, Indian peacekeepers do work side by side with their Russian colleagues as part of the UN forces. (For instance, our personnel are working alongside each other in Kosovo). There is room for more cooperation as situations develop.

**Indian wide reliance on arms imported from Russia seems to be giving way gradually to more even choice of partners. Is the change more influenced by political or economic considerations? Do you foresee new chances for Russian arms producers in the Indian market in the years ahead?**

Indo-Russian relations in the sphere of defence and military-technical
cooperation are mutually beneficial and have deep roots. Our military technical cooperation is an ongoing process, is growing from strength to strength. Having transcended the relationship of buyer and seller, India and Russia have now graduated to joint designing, development and production. The jointly developed “BrahMos” missile is a glowing example of the new dimensions of the Indo-Russian cooperation in this sphere. India and Russia have also entered into an agreement to jointly design and produce the fifth generation aircraft. Frigates of a new generation are being built in Russia for the Indian Navy and two of these were recently acquired. For Indian Air Force, the contract for purchase and licensed production of Su-30 MKI aircraft is under implementation. For the Army, T-90 tanks are being acquired from Russia. These and other ongoing projects are indicative of the rapidly expanding relationship in this area. India’s defence cooperation with other countries cannot dilute the fundamental strength of the India-Russia defence cooperation.

Less than a month ago, China sent its first cosmonaut in space. Does India pursue a similar goal, or are there no less ambitious but completely different goals?

I congratulated the President and Premier of China on China’s success in sending its first astronaut into space.

Like China, India also has a well-developed space sector; we are among only six space faring nations in the world. India has concentrated on the developmental applications of space technology; our space Missions have also supported a variety of scientific and technological research activities. We have an ambitious plan of sending a space mission to moon by 2008.

Eradication of poverty seems to be one of the common goals between our two countries. Do you see any chance of joining efforts to reach that goal?

India and Russia are both economies, endowed with rich human and natural resources and enormous potential for growth. Both of us also seek to address our economic challenges in a democratic framework. There is certainly commonality of interests and complementarity of efforts in this area, both bilaterally and multilaterally. Various steps taken by us to bolster our economic cooperation are all aimed at, directly or indirectly, addressing our developmental goals and seeking greater prosperity for our peoples. At the multilateral level, India has supported Russia’s accession to the World Trade Organization and has offered regular
consultations on related issues. I am happy to note that such consultations have been found useful by both sides.

**Indian political parties believe that economic growth and reform should be mantra that will lead India ahead. You yourself have indicated several figures of desirable GNP growth. What should be, in your opinion, sources and ways of this growth?**

There is broad consensus across political parties for the ongoing economic reforms. Business and the people of India have seen the benefits of liberalization. Prices of consumer items and services have come down and there are more choices for the consumers. The private sector is expanding and diversifying to take advantage of the opportunities arising from liberalization.

Our target is to reach an annual growth of 8% from the present rate of over 6% this year. In this context, it is to be noted that India has sustained an average growth of 6% in the last decade of economic reforms. The fact that 54% of our population of India is under 25 years of age augurs well for our future productivity and economic growth. The fundamentals of the economy have become stronger with low inflation, low interest rates, large and growing foreign exchange reserves, and increasing foreign investment. The Government is improving infrastructure, promoting research and development, developing human resources and empowering people through Information Technology. In the external side, India is seeking to accelerate trade and investment through Free Trade Agreements with some countries and regions. India has already emerged as a global player in the knowledge-based Economy. All these developments indicate that India is well positioned for a future of sustained high growth. We want this growth to be built on both exports and domestic enterprise.

**In your speeches, you often refer to treasures of national cultural heritage or even recite verses (the latter would be very uncommon for a Russian political or state leader). What is, in your opinion, role of national culture in approaching proclaimed national goals?**

The cultural and spiritual ethos of a country naturally shapes its national goals and aspirations for its internal development and its external posture. It is so with India as well. Our independence struggle, our non-aligned foreign policy and our developmental perspectives all bear the stamp of a distinctive Indian inspiration.
Several lines of Indian culture enjoy popularity in Russia. Is there, in your opinion, place and need to broaden Russian cultural presence in India?

Just as Indian culture in Russia, Russian cultural and literary heritage enjoys popularity in India and is held in high esteem. Generations of Indians grew up reading Russian literature, enjoying Russian ballet and appreciating Russian theatre and opera. Everyone is familiar with the contribution of the legendary Roerichs to the world of arts and to Indo-Russian relations. Since long years, there has been constant cultural interaction between the two countries and there is a strong framework of governmental support for facilitating cultural exchanges. We have had Festivals and Days of culture of each country in the other. In recent years, however, there may have developed a gap in the awareness within some segments in both India and Russia about each other’s contemporary life, literature and culture. Steps like holding Days of Russian Culture in India this month, and Days of Indian Culture in Russia next year are designed to bridge this gap. We would like to encourage and facilitate further interaction between our two cultures and civilizations, which have much in common.
419. Remarks by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Russian President Vladimir Putin at a press interaction.

Moscow, November 12, 2003.

It is a great pleasure to be here in Moscow and I would once again like to express my deep appreciation for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to my delegation and to me in Russia.

In keeping with the strength of our relations and the diversity of our cooperation, our decisions today covered a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual concern. The various documents we have just signed are a reflection of our convergences and the extent of our continuing cooperation.

Cooperation in energy has long term significance for both our countries. We have taken stock of the Sakhalin-I project and have agreed to monitor its progress at a high level to ensure its timely completion. The construction of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant with Russian assistance is progressing well. We have agreed to expand our cooperation to other areas of the energy sector. Our cooperation on civilian space technologies has been very fruitful. We are discussing cooperation on a satellite navigation project.

We believe that our economies have many complementarities. We are looking at new ways to enhance our bilateral trade and investment. A Joint Task Force has been set up to recommend specific measures in this regard. There is a large business delegation accompanying me from India. The businessmen have to take advantage of the new opportunities and of the framework we are putting in place to facilitate the growth of trade. To boost trade, we also need to promote greater interaction between our people. We have agreed to increase the frequency of air connection between Russia and India. Russian airlines are also being granted fifth freedom rights to Kabul from India subject to the agreement of the Afghanistan Government. We also look forward to the early opening of an Indian Joint Venture Bank in Moscow.

India-Russia defense cooperation has acquired great versatility, and encompasses a wide range of joint research, design, development and co-production. The Brahmos missile, whose fifth successful trial launch was just a few days ago, is an example of this. We discussed other projects
and areas of defense cooperation.

We have agreed to strengthen and widen our cooperation against terrorism both in bilateral and multilateral form. We have a Joint Working Group, which meets regularly to exchange information and analysis of terrorist treats in our region. In this context, we discussed the developments of concern in our common neighborhood.

I have invited President Putin to visit India, so we can continue our very rewarding tradition of annual summits. We look forward to receiving him at his convenience.

Thank you.

President Vladimir Putin: Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me real pleasure to once again welcome our honoured guest the Prime Minister of India Mr Vajpayee. We see this visit as an important step in the development of our bilateral relations. Our relations were always built and continue to be founded on the principle of equality and are developing in a spirit of friendship and openness.

The outcome of these talks is that we have signed a Declaration on Global Challenges and Threats to International Security and Stability. This declaration sets out the main areas for cooperation between our two countries on the international stage in the twenty-first century. As the Prime Minister noted, one of the most serious modern threats we face is terrorism. Other challenges before us are drugs, organised crime and other problems afflicting the modern world. We are working together on building up the international legal framework we need for cooperation in the fight against terrorism. In this respect I would like to express our gratitude to our Indian colleagues for their support for Russia’s initiatives on creating a global system to counteract the new threats and challenges we face. We share a common approach to the majority of global problems. We are united in our determination to achieve serious results in resolving the problems the world community faces, and we are united in our belief that this can only be done through coordinated collective efforts and with the United Nations playing a central role.

We also discussed the situation in South Asia. Russia welcomes India’s new initiatives to improve relations with Pakistan.

During our talks we had a detailed discussion on the prospects for
our bilateral cooperation. We believe it is important to develop all the aspects of the Russian-Indian strategic partnership. We discussed carrying out a number of major projects, which my colleague just mentioned. We also talked about scientific-technical and military-technical cooperation and about the promising objectives that our two countries have in this area.

Our common priorities include increasing our mutual trade turnover, giving the private sector a greater role in trade and economic cooperation and strengthening ties in the high-technology sector and in banking contracts. It is also our firm intention to develop interregional ties, humanitarian contacts between people and scientific and cultural exchanges.

Next year we plan to hold a cultural event, Days of Indian Culture in the Russian Federation, and we are sure that this will be a success.

The substantial packet of documents\(^1\) that was signed today aims directly at reaching precisely all the objectives I referred to.

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1. **Indo-Russian Political Declaration on Global Challenges and Threats to World Security and Stability:**

   The Joint Declaration signed by the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India and the President of the Russian Federation Mr. Vladimir Putin is aimed at further enhancing political cooperation between the two countries in dealing with challenges and threats presently faced by the world. (For Text See Document No. 420)

2. **Protocol between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on Joint Publication of Bilateral Archive (Diplomatic) Documents:**

   Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs will jointly prepare and publish a compilation of archive (diplomatic) documents relating to relations between the two countries. Joint efforts will be made to organise both the already published documents and those which have yet not been published.

3. **MOU between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Russian Aviation and Space Agency on Cooperation (Rosaviakosmos) in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes:**

   The MOU outlines various technical areas of ongoing and prospective Cooperation between ISRO and Rosaviakosmos for the use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

4. **Agreement on Scientific Cooperation and Scientific Exchange between the Department of Science and Technology and the Russian Academy of Science:**

   The mutually beneficial cooperation between scientific institutes and scientists of India and Russia will be carried out by combining research efforts of the two countries and joint utilization of R&D resources. Scientific cooperation will be conducted through joint research and development projects, joint workshops and symposia and use of 200 man-weeks per year for exchange of individual scientists for such purposes.
In conclusion I would like to note particularly that these talks have confirmed the trust inherent in our dialogue and the uniqueness and diversity of Russian-Indian strategic cooperation. I am confident that our relations will continue to develop rapidly and positively in the interests of our peoples and in the interests of peace and stability in the world.

5. Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Science & Technology of the Government of India and the Russian Academy of Sciences for Establishment of Indo-Russian Science and Technology Centre for Gas Hydrate Studies:

For realizing the potential of gas hydrates in the continental margins and slopes of exclusive Economic Zones. The Centre is proposed to be established in National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai. The Department of Science and Technology and the Russian Academy of Sciences will support this programme under the bilateral Integrated Long Term Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology.

6. Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Science & Technology of the Government of India and the Russian Academy of Sciences for the establishment of the Indo-Russian Centre for Earthquake Research:

This Centre has been proposed to be set up at Indian Meteorological Department, New Delhi. The Centre would carry our research in basic applied management related studies in this area. It will undertake software and hardware development, technology transfer, joint manufacturing and commercialisation of seismological and geo-physical equipments. The Centre will also establish testing and collaboration facilities in India for standardization of seismological equipment. The Centre will be supported under Integrated Long Term Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology by the Department of Science and Technology and the Russian Academy of Science. The Joint Research Council will oversee the scientific programmes of the Centre.

7. Agreement on Scientific Cooperation and Scientific Exchange between the Indian National Science Academy and the Russian Academy of Sciences:

Both Academies would support fundamental research in science and technology with special emphasis on specifically chosen areas. They would be facilitated by exchange of scientific information, research visits, bilateral workshops and symposia.


This agreement is aimed at formalising cooperation between the Indian State of Andhra Pradesh and the Republic of Tatarstan of the Russian Federation in the field of trade and economy, science and technology and culture. The two sides will contribute in this direction, including by creating favourable legal, organisational, financial, economic and other necessary conditions. This agreement is in line with the efforts being made by India and Russia in promoting regional level cooperation between the two countries.

I would like to thank the Prime Minister for his invitation to visit India. We will agree on a date through the Foreign Ministry.

Thank you for your attention.

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Moscow, November 12, 2003.

The Republic of India and the Russian Federation,

GUIDED by noble purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter,

RELYING on the provisions of the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000 concerning shared responsibility of States for managing threats to international peace and security and for promoting principles of human dignity, equality and justice at the global level,

NOTING the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 57/145 entitled “Responding to Global Threats and Challenges” of 16 December 2002,

RECOGNISING globalisation and interdependence in the world as

Under para 20 of the Joint Declaration on Strengthening and Enhancing Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation, signed in December 2002 in New Delhi, the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission was required by the two leaders to submit a Report to the Summit. This Joint Report deals with the implementation of the provisions of the Joint Declaration since the last Summit.

10. Memorandum of Understanding between the Bank of Foreign Trade (Vneshtorgbank) Russia and the Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India Ltd. (ECGC):

The purpose of the MOU is to establish a framework for cooperation between the parties in supporting and encouraging trade and investments between India and Russia. The MOU covers sharing of information, training and consideration of schemes to facilitate investment.
natural processes in evolution of mankind, which offer both opportunities and challenges,

**TAKING** into account the fact that uneven distribution of benefits and costs of globalisation have resulted in growing disparities among countries of the world,

**DETERMINED** to cooperate in countering global challenges and threats, which emanate from international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, transnational organized crime, illicit drug trafficking, money laundering and environmental and developmental challenges,

**PROCEEDING** from an urgent need to consolidate efforts of the international community and the role of the United Nations in eliminating these global challenges and threats,

**CONSCIOUS** of their common values and responsibilities as pluralistic democracies,

**DESIRING** to continue to closely cooperate in contributing to world peace and progress,


**HEREBY DECLARE:**

India and the Russian Federation recognise that the aim of promoting global peace, security and stability through dialogue, consultation and cooperation among countries concerned is essential. As strategic partners, India and the Russian Federation reaffirm their commitment to cooperate bilaterally and at the multilateral level on strategic
issues, and to evolve a universal effective system of countering global challenges and threats of the 21st Century. The UN should continue to play a leading role in this regard.

India and the Russian Federation as two large and influential democracies are to play a significant role in this context. Both countries are committed to promoting to the maximum extent, democratic values in international relations. India and the Russian Federation affirm that the future international order based on multi-polarity, should be determined by collective and multilateral processes rather than unilateral ones. Both countries stand for building a unified, just and democratic world order and a comprehensive system of collective security based on respect for rule of law and international norms, reciprocal trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation.

India and the Russian Federation stress that the United Nations Organisation has a vital role in tackling major international issues. The United Nations can and should be reformed to reflect the current realities, with a view to preserve and enhance its efficacy and efficiency. India and the Russian Federation proceed from the idea that the reform of the UN should include an early expansion of the UN Security Council. The UN should continue to play an important role in the prevention and peaceful settlement of conflicts in conformity with the UN Charter and international law.

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India and the Russian Federation are convinced that greater interaction and mutual respect among diverse societies and cultures will lead both to enrichment of these cultures as well as to enhanced harmony and security in the world. In this era of globalisation, it is by preserving pluralism that true multipolarity – in its political and economic as also social and cultural dimensions – will be attained. India and the Russian Federation also resolutely affirm that there is no place in today’s pluralistic and diverse global village for any type of extremist ideology and intolerance. They will resist with their full might all forms of extremism, including religious extremism, which has proved to be a hot bed of terrorism in their common neighbourhood.

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India and the Russian Federation are united in their fight against the
evil of international terrorism. They actively cooperate with each other and with other countries in anti-terrorist activities. Both countries resolutely declare that international terrorists, whatever be their stated objectives and the causes they espouse, will never succeed in bringing the world to its knees.

India and the Russian Federation believe that most urgent and essential steps in effectively and comprehensively dealing with the threat of international terrorism should be:

- **creation** of environment for total rejection of terrorism and absolute unacceptability of any of its forms;

- **consistent** and uncompromising approach to terrorism and giving up “double standards”;

- **preventing** the flow of funds for terrorist activities,

- **effective** implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1373 aimed against those who support, fund, or abet terrorists or provide them shelter or asylum to engage in cross-border terrorism;

- **promotion** of confidence between members of the antiterrorist coalition by, *iner alia*, due consideration of interests of each one of them and ensuring that the fight against terrorism is strictly based on rules of international law and principles of the UN Charter;

- **reinforcing** national and international legal instruments for countering terrorism, making the existing antiterrorist Conventions genuinely universal, and earliest completion of negotiations on the draft Conventions in the UN, including the Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism submitted by India and the International Convention on Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism submitted by the Russian Federation;

- **steadfast** cooperation to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and materials and technology related to their manufacture;

- **improvement** of mechanisms of legal assistance and extradition in order to ensure the inevitability of punishment for terrorist crimes;
- efforts to promote coexistence of different religions, cultures and civilizations by stressing greater mutual understanding and respect amongst them, especially the idea that terrorism cannot be identified with any particular religion or ethnic group.

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India and the Russian Federation are concerned that trafficking in illegal drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors is assuming ever more threatening dimensions. Strong and effective measures are required by the international community to handle this threat, especially as narco-business serves as a source of financing to international terrorism. Both countries are taking specific practical steps to counter traffic in illegal drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, especially in their common neighbourhood.

India and the Russian Federation believe that one of the most urgent challenges today is strengthening multilateral cooperation for countering the global narco-threat. India and the Russian Federation underline the urgency of the need for the development of a comprehensive strategy, under the auspices of the UN, to effectively counter this problem and reiterate their commitment for close cooperation with the United Nations and other international organizations within the framework of UN Drug Control Programme.

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India and the Russian Federation support the efforts by Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan to rebuild the nation and express full support to all international efforts aimed at promoting peace, stability, national reconciliation and economic reconstruction. It is important to adhere to the time-table, as envisaged in the Bonn Agreement, in implementation of its provisions leading to the holding of democratic elections next year. India and the Russian Federation strongly believe that Afghanistan should emerge as a peaceful, strong, prosperous, united and independent nation that would be free from external interference and living in peace and harmony with its neighbours.

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India and the Russian Federation are convinced that a concrete and time-bound plan of action under the UN aegis should be adopted for the earliest restoration of Iraq's sovereignty, stabilization of political and
humanitarian situation in the country, and ensuring its economic growth, through broad international efforts.

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India and the Russian Federation call for the prevention of the failure of the Road Map drawn to settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The failure of the Road Map may result into the situation in Israel and Palestine, as also in the entire Middle East, spiraling beyond control. This may have adverse consequences not only for the region but for the whole world.

* * *

India and the Russian Federation support the efforts of the countries concerned and the international community for a peaceful settlement of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula and maintaining its non-nuclear status. They also support all efforts including the continuation of six-party talks, started at Beijing, to bring about mutually acceptable solution, as well as further development of the inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation.

* * *

India and the Russian Federation are convinced that success of the efforts aimed against contemporary global challenges and threats largely depends on adequately addressing social and economic issues, such as elimination of poverty, mass unemployment, illiteracy, and racial, ethnic and religious discrimination. Both countries believe that it is essential to promote steady and sustainable development of the world economy to ensure prosperity of all countries. One of the ways to achieve this goal, as they see it, is to ensure access of the majority of people around the world to high technology- a driving force of globalization. Wider reach of scientific and technological achievements and benefits will bring more prosperity to a larger number of people, reduce the gap between the developed and the developing world and neutralize some of the impulses which trigger conflicts.

India and the Russian Federation, which are important partners in science and high technology, possess a vast potential for joint development of alternative technologies. They are convinced that multi-polarity in the world of high technology will make an immense contribution to the enhancement of political and economic multi-polarity in the modern world.

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India and the Russian Federation declare that through their longstanding relationship as reliable, predictable and responsible strategic partners, they are dedicated to strive for finding effective and long-term solutions and appropriate responses to the aforementioned new global challenges and threats to humanity, basing their efforts on the UN Charter and principles of international law.

PRIME MINISTER OF
REPUBLIC OF INDIA

PRESIDENT OF THE THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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421. Keynote Address by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee
at the joint meeting of Indian and Russian businesspersons.

Moscow, November 13, 2003.

Your Excellency, Deputy Prime Minister Alyoshin,

Distinguished representatives of Russian Government and of the Regions of Russia,

Representatives of Indian and Russian business and industry,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is a landmark event in the history of India-Russia commercial relations. India and Russia have a time-tested relationship, which is marked by close political understanding, strategic convergences, defence cooperation and cultural affinities. There has also always been a strong economic dimension to our relationship, but its content has largely been determined by government facilitated trade and investments by our State-owned enterprises.

Today, it is a pleasure to see that nearly 100 senior Indian businesspersons have travelled to Moscow for my visit, and have received such an enthusiastic response from Russian business and industry. It signals the encouraging prospect of a new vigour in India-Russia trade and investment relations, which would be driven by the private business and industry of the two countries.
The wider macro-economic picture is very encouraging. Both India and Russia are dynamic economies with tremendous potential for growth. India is a large and growing market, with a large pool of excellent human resources and a favourable demographic profile. Russia has enormous natural resources as well as acknowledged scientific and technological excellence. Both have made impressive progress with structural reforms in recent years, blessed with a broad policy consensus and inspired by the desire to occupy their rightful places in the global economy.

The facts speak for themselves. During a period of major economic slow down around most of the globe, India and Russia have continued to grow. In fact, by the yardstick of average GDP growth during the last four years, both countries are among the top ten performers in the world.

Equally importantly, the growth in both our countries has been broad-based, covering both the domestic and external fronts. Both countries are today in the forefront of developing and introducing cutting edge technologies. Our advances in the knowledge-based industries have transformed our economic landscapes and developed new capabilities and synergies. We have both achieved expertise and even dominance in certain areas of technology.

The new dynamism in India’s economy is receiving more and more attention around the world. In the last ten years, GDP doubled; and we hope to redouble it in less than a decade. India is today the fourth largest economy in the world on purchasing power parity. Our external reserves are over US$ 90 billion and are increasing by a billion dollars every two weeks. We are rapidly reducing our external debts, even by repaying them before they are due. This year alone we have already pre-paid over 3 billion dollars. Inflation is low and interest rates are on a declining curve. There is a strong increase in business confidence in recent months. Foreign trade is growing at double digit rates.

The world is also beginning to recognise the quiet revolution in the integration of the Indian economy into the global mainstream. Indian enterprises are achieving global scales in quality and output. India has become a production base and export hub for a range of products, from agricultural goods to automobile components to high-end services. Indian firms are now part of global production chains – importing sub-assemblies, adding value to them and re-exporting them. Corporations from all over the world are establishing themselves in India for manufacturing and services. Taking advantage of its pool of high-quality scientific talent, they have also established large R&D centres in India.
India is one of only three countries to have indigenously built super computers and one of six countries in the world that build and launch satellites. A few months ago, we launched a satellite into geo-stationary orbit. We plan to send a spacecraft to the moon in the next five years.

In many areas of this Indian success story, there is a strong Russian connection. Particularly in the early decades of our independence, we received the most valuable assistance from the Soviet Union in the establishment of our infrastructure and heavy industries. Both in our space programme and in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, India owes a strong debt of gratitude to Russian scientific and technological assistance. Our close collaboration in scientific and technological research and development has extended to diverse disciplines. You would be amazed at how many Indian scientists and engineers in India, specially of the older generation, can speak or understand Russian!

This longstanding, robust and multifaceted bilateral engagement is the firm base on which we seek to build a more modern economic edifice. We need a concerted joint effort to invigorate the traditional economic relationship and to integrate it with market determined forces.

Our bilateral trade has been largely conducted under the framework of a rupee-rouble agreement from Soviet times, and a subsequent credit repayment agreement. While this has been a steady relationship, it has also been limited in its flexibility. Our existing annual trade level of under $1.5 billion does not correspond to the transformations in our economies.

Our two Governments are acutely conscious of this anomaly. When President Putin visited India last year, we signed a Joint Declaration, which spells out our shared vision for a new dynamism in the India-Russia economic partnership. We recognized that there is huge untapped potential, not only for an exponential growth of bilateral trade and investment, but also for jointly exploring other markets through pooling of resources. With our vast resource base and intellectual capital, Russia and India should jointly explore avenues for generating and meeting demand on a regional and global basis.

Business and industry should take this up in their own commercial interest. A number of core sectors can be easily identified for focused cooperation. They include machinery and equipment, IT and telecom, automobile components, gems and jewellery, food processing, tourism, pharmaceuticals and energy.
Information Technology is a glaring example of unutilized bilateral opportunity. India is today one of the world leaders in IT and IT enabled services. Our annual exports in this sector are nearly US $ 10 billion – most of it to Europe and America. Russia has a large and sophisticated IT market, and yet India’s IT exports to Russia are negligible. Quite often, Russia has been importing these products from Europe, which have been sourced from India at much lower cost. The middleman benefits, the consumer loses.

India is today undergoing a qualitative transformation in its infrastructure. We have launched an ambitious project which involves building or upgrading about 15,000 km of highways, which would link our major metropolitan centres and provide improved connectivity to our rural areas. We are upgrading our ports facilities; modernizing our airports and building new metros. We are improving the efficiency of our power generation, transmission and distribution. In the last few months, India has been adding nearly 2 million mobile telephone connections every month.

Russian companies, which have both the expertise and the spare capacity in these industries, have not yet fully grasped the opportunities for contracts in various infrastructure projects in India.

Energy cooperation is another key area of interest. Russia has emerged as one of the leading suppliers of energy and India is one of the largest and fastest growing markets for energy. Indian companies are keen to invest in energy projects covering upstream, midstream and downstream areas. India’s investment of about US $ 1.5 billion in the Sakhalin Oilfield illustrates this. Our companies have also significant investments in the oil and gas sector in Sudan and Vietnam. There is an India-Russia synergy for projects within our countries and in third countries. Our business communities should take the initiative for an Energy Forum between India and Russia.

Connectivity and transport linkages are crucial inputs to trade and economic collaboration. The new multi-mode North South transport corridor, which links India to Russia through Iran and Central Asia, provides an important cargo route between the two countries. Goods are already moving from India to Russia on this route. Russian exporters should also explore this route, so that it becomes more economically viable. It will also provide the incentive for upgrading infrastructural facilities on this route.
A sector of great potential in India-Russia collaboration, and one which has been somewhat neglected, is small and medium enterprises. In India, this sector which has contributed significantly to employment, development and exports. Small enterprises in India extend from relatively low-tech, labour intensive industries to high-tech areas, including Information Technology. Today, India’s pharmaceuticals industry has achieved national self-reliance with high quality medicines at affordable prices. This achievement was mainly due to our small pharmaceuticals enterprises.

We know that Russia is now devoting attention to the development of small and medium enterprises. I was happy to learn that the Russian Public Organization of Small and Medium Size Enterprises has just concluded an MOU with our Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry to explore synergies in this vital sector. Our cooperation can span a wide spectrum, such as training, exchange of experts, management, supply of machinery and equipment and even turnkey execution of projects.

Mutual investment flows is an important pillar of a vibrant economic partnership. Both our countries are attracting increasing flows of foreign investment. Our firms are also looking for investments abroad. It is time that Indian and Russian firms availed of more opportunities in each other’s country. Our major bilateral investments –the Sakhalin Oilfield in Russia and the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant in India - illustrate the benefits of mutual collaboration. We need to broad-base investment flows. This also needs closer links between our banks and financial institutions. The establishment of commercial branches of banks in each other’s countries should be a priority goal.

India-Russia economic cooperation has extended to multilateral forums. Both our countries support the strengthening of multilateral institutions to sustain a balanced and equitable global economic order responsive to the needs of our countries. We have actively supported Russia’s accession to the WTO, not only in the spirit of our strategic partnership but also in the firm belief that Russia’s membership would bring balance and strength to the WTO. India and Russia can play an important role, in concert with other major emerging markets, in encouraging the WTO to operate for the common benefit of all its member countries.
Friends,

India and Russia have developed strong bonds of friendship and cooperation over many decades. Our shared political perspectives, convergences of strategic interest and our cultural affinities have been the foundation stones of our strategic partnership. A dynamic and multifaceted economic partnership provides a secure underpinning to the other elements of this relationship. It is in the hands of the business community to strengthen this underpinning. There are objective factors propelling you towards this objective.

Thank you.

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422. Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Russia.

Moscow, November 13, 2003.

The Prime Minister of India Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee paid an official visit to the Russian Federation from November 11-13, 2003.

The Prime Minister of India held detailed discussions with the President of the Russian Federation Mr. Vladimir Putin. Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Mr. Boris Alyoshin, Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Mr. Igor Ivanov and Defence Minister of the Russian Federation Mr. Sergei Ivanov called on the Prime Minister of India.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of the Russian Federation discussed a wide range of issues of bilateral, regional and international importance. The talks took place in an atmosphere of warmth, friendship, openness, trust and mutual confidence that characteristically mark the strategic partnership between the two countries.

The visit of the Prime Minister of India to the Russian Federation provided continuation to the practice of holding of regular annual Summits between the two countries since the year 2000, when the Declaration on Strategic Partnership between India and the Russian Federation was signed. This visit saw the fourth meeting between Prime Minister Vajpayee
and President Putin within twelve months. After President Putin’s successful visit to India in December 2002, the Prime Minister of India had visited St. Petersburg in May 2003 at the invitation of President Putin to attend the Tercentenary celebrations of the city of St. Petersburg. The two leaders also met in New York during the 58th Session of the UNGA in September this year.

During his present visit to Russia, the Prime Minister of India was accompanied by Ministers and senior officials, besides a 90-member high-profile and well-represented business and industrial delegation from India comprising prominent members and leadership of the apex Indian industry and trade chambers, such as Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Confederation of Indian Industry, Associated Chamber of Commerce and All India Association of Industries.

The Prime Minister of India addressed a meeting of distinguished scientists and intellectuals at the Russian Academy of Sciences.

A ‘Joint Declaration on Global Challenges and Threats to World Security and Stability’ was signed by the Prime Minister of India and the President of the Russian Federation during the visit. Based on the profound understanding of each other’s interests and concerns, the document has further reinforced the commitment of the two countries to work closely together in meeting the new threats and challenges faced by India, Russia and the world as a whole. A number of other bilateral agreements were also signed to further augment the development of Indo-Russian cooperation in a wide variety of areas of mutual interest.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the useful practice of holding regular annual Summits, as also the frequent and regular exchanges and interactions at Ministerial and other levels. Both sides recognised the significant contribution that intense bilateral interaction at all levels makes to further developing their strategic partnership and wide-ranging dialogue to mutual benefit. The two sides reiterated the need to further continue, expand and consolidate the excellent political contacts between the two countries. They agreed that focused, detailed and regular bilateral Foreign Office level consultations at regular intervals on a large number of regional and international issues have been particularly meaningful and productive.

Both sides reaffirmed the centrality of a vibrant and robust economic and commercial engagement to their strategic partnership. Both sides agreed that the Joint Declaration on Strengthening and Enhancing Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation, signed during the
last summit in December 2002, provided a broad framework as well as a roadmap towards revitalisation of trade and investment ties. The two countries took note of the important developments since the signing of the Joint Economic Declaration. They welcomed the revival and meeting of the Joint Business Council and the holding of an Indian Trade Exhibition, with participation of more than 200 Indian companies, in Moscow in February 2003.

The Joint Economic Declaration had acknowledged the essential central role of the Indo-Russian Inter Governmental Commission (IRIGC) in overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the provisions of the Joint Declaration. Through its nine Plenary sessions and a number of functional meetings of its 12 specialised Working Groups, the IRIGC has proved to be an important vehicle to initiate and promote bilateral cooperation in diverse areas. The two sides welcomed the results of the Commission’s 9th Session held in Moscow in May 2003. They positively assessed the developments in various areas of cooperation including rough diamonds, agricultural products and ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy.

The two sides emphasized the need to jointly find new ways and means to further strengthen bilateral trade and economic relations, including by promoting investments and trade as well as removing trade barriers. The leaders agreed to accord high priority to discussing and formulating policies to encourage and facilitate mutually beneficial interaction between the private sectors of the two countries. To this end, the sides agreed to devise a long-term strategic approach taking into account the mutually complementary strengths of the two countries, the changes anticipated in the nature of bilateral economic ties and the emerging trends at the global level.

Hope was expressed that more frequent interaction between the business communities of the two countries would lead to an enhanced level of understanding between them on each other’s existing potential and emerging capabilities. The sides agreed to consolidate the practice of organising and participating in exhibitions in each other’s countries on a regular basis, especially in key areas of bilateral economic interaction including textiles, leather, information technology and telecommunication, tourism, food processing, tea and tobacco, automobile components, power, construction, etc. Both sides expressed the hope that the visit of a high level Russian business delegation at the invitation of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry during the India International Trade
Fair in November 2003 will further catalyse bilateral economic interaction. The two sides also welcomed the re-opening of the office of the Confederation of Indian Industry in Moscow.

Both sides reiterated their decision to hold at an early date the first meeting of an Inter-Governmental Task Force which will study the issue of utilisation of Rupee debt fund payable to the Russian Federation for the credit of the former USSR and the Russian Federation for investments in both countries in mutually beneficial and priority sectors and the issue of settlement of mutual financial obligations. Utilisation of the debt funds for investment purposes will give a new impetus to bilateral Indo-Russian economic cooperation.

Both India and Russia represent expanding market economies that have achieved high growth rates in recent years. Economic growth and rapid globalisation have led to emergence of new capabilities as well as new avenues for meaningful collaboration. In order to enable the business sectors of both countries to grasp new possibilities for cooperation, the sides considered it essential to ensure sharing of information on a regular basis. To this end, the sides agreed to facilitate early establishment of an Indio-Russian Business Centre during 2004 with the assistance of the Joint Business Council and their other apex trade and industry bodies.

The bilateral trade basket has shown encouraging signs of expansion. While both sides have striven to consolidate existing trade in traditional items, there has been growing interest in trading in new items such as engineering goods, automobile and components, plastic products, chemicals, IT and telecom goods. Consolidation and expansion of trade requires understanding of national standards and certification regulations. Such an understanding is also important for encouraging investment. Both sides, therefore, agreed to schedule a joint meeting of the concerned statutory bodies of both countries during 2004 for discussing and harmonising national standardization and certification regulations relevant to trade and investment, with a view to removing technical barriers to trade between the two countries.

The North South Transport Corridor Project has the potential to radically transform the existing connectivity between India and the Russia Federation. Both sides noted with satisfaction the effort exerted towards effective operationalisation of this project during 2003, and underlined their commitment towards acceleration of this process through improvement of infrastructural links and harmonisation and standardisation
of procedures. Both sides agreed to strive to actively involve their business sectors in this endeavour.

Enhancement of contacts between the businessmen requires establishment of a mutually coordinated visa regime. Both sides agreed to consider liberalising travel laws for businesspersons of each other’s country accredited with their nationally recognised trade bodies. The two sides emphasised the importance of increased people-to-people exchanges in the process of sustaining economic growth and development of their bilateral relations. In this context, they recognised the vast potential to build on the significant increase in the flow of tourists from Russia to India during the past year. Both sides agreed to encourage greater contacts between the tourism and hospitality sectors to sustain the growing interest.

Both sides acknowledged that increased cooperation between financial institutions was crucial to facilitating growth in investment and trade. The setting up of a commercial bank in Moscow by State Bank of India and Canara Bank was welcomed. Both sides expressed their readiness to facilitate the setting up of at least one branch of a commercial bank of India and Russia in each other’s markets by the year 2005. They also underlined the need for effective and expeditious use of Lines of Credit extended to the Russian Banks by EXIM Bank of India.

The Indian side reaffirmed its support for early accession of Russia to the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The first Indo-Russian Inter-Ministerial Consultations on economic issues and WTO held in New Delhi in March 2003 marked a good initiative and both sides agreed to continue with such consultations in Geneva and in each other’s capital. The two sides agreed to strengthen their coordination and cooperation in this regard and to share experience on economic reform and liberalisation in the two countries. Both sides also agreed to continue the process of consultations on various tariff and non-tariff issues relating to bilateral trade.

Both sides reiterated that mutually beneficial cooperation in energy was an area of good potential. In this regard, they welcomed the initiative to set up a Business Dialogue Forum on Energy, which will enable the two countries to regularly exchange views on this vital area of economic activity with the view to, inter alia, evolving a comprehensive joint approach to foster a sustainable and reliable energy future in mutual interest.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the progress of the project
of construction of the nuclear power plant at Kudankulam. Their discussions in this area explored the possibilities of expanding cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The sides expressed satisfaction at the ongoing cooperation in the field of space. Given the existing potential, both sides reiterated their commitment to further expand cooperation for the development of space technology for peaceful purposes. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Indian Space Research Organisation and the Russian Aviation and Space Agency (Rosaviakosmos) on Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes, which charts out future areas of cooperation in this field.

Both sides noted with satisfaction the progress being made in expanded bilateral military technical cooperation, including joint research, development and training, as well as inter-services exchanges. Such cooperation is mutually beneficial and meets the national interests of the two countries, besides promoting peace and stability at regional and international level. They also expressed confidence that the visit of the Indian Defence Minister to the Russian Federation in January 2003, during which he co-Chaired the 3rd Session of the Indo-Russian Inter-governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation, and the forthcoming visit of the Russian Minister of Defence to India, expected to take place towards the end of November 2003, will further strengthen their cooperation in this vital area of bilateral interaction. Both sides also welcomed holding of the joint naval exercises by India and the Russian Federation in 2003 and agreed that such exercises and service-to-service interaction should be held on a regular basis.

Both sides expressed satisfaction at the progress of bilateral cooperation in the field of science and technology within the overall framework of the Integrated Long-Term Programme (ILTP). In the series of establishment of joint science and technology centres, they welcomed the signing of the MoUs on the establishment of joint centres on gas hydrates and seismology in India. Signing of the Protocol on further cooperation between Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) and Government of India’s Department of Science and Technology and an Agreement between RAS and Indian National Science Academy will further bolster cooperation in this sphere. It was agreed to keep the focus on specific projects and objectives and to strive for promoting commercial benefits from joint endeavours in the area of science and technology.
Both sides reiterated the contribution and importance of the traditional cultural and people-to-people contacts in consolidating the long-standing and deep-rooted civilisational ties between the two countries. They welcomed the successful organisation of the Days of Russian Culture in India from 1-8 November 2003 and hoped that this event and the organisation of Days of Indian Culture in Russia in 2004 will serve as means of bringing the two peoples further closer. The significance of inter-governmental framework of support for facilitating intense interaction in this sphere, including through Cultural Exchange Programmes, was underlined.

Both sides reaffirmed their keen interest to implement the decision to jointly publish documents on Indo-Russian relations and welcomed the signing of a Protocol between Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation in this regard.

The two sides had an in-depth exchange of views on regional and international issues of mutual interest and concern. They noted a high degree of mutual understanding and close identity of views.

India and the Russian Federation are convinced that their strategic partnership has served as a factor in global peace and security. India and Russia, as strategic partners, reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate bilaterally and at international fora towards the establishment of a multi-polar and just world order based on sovereign equality of all States, their territorial integrity and non-interference in their internal affairs. Threats to global security and strategic stability should be dealt with taking into account the legitimate security considerations of all States.

Both sides supported the continued disarmament process and multilateral negotiations aimed, inter alia, at nuclear disarmament. Both sides reiterated their commitment to further strengthen their systems of export controls without adversely affecting the peaceful application of dual use materials and technologies.

The two sides acknowledged the importance of the central role of the United Nations in the preservation of world security and stability in accordance with its Charter. They confirmed their opposition to unilateral use or threat of use of force in violation of the UN Charter. Both sides emphasized the need for reform of the UN system to further strengthen it and agreed to work towards promoting an early consensus in this regard.

Both sides agreed on the need to expand the UN Security Council
to make it more representative and more effective. Assessing India as an important and influential member of the international community, the Russian Federation reaffirmed its support to India as a deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership in an expanded UN Security Council.

There was a complete identity of views of India and the Russian Federation on the acute threat posed by international terrorism to the two countries and to international peace, stability and security. Both sides noted with deep concern the growing transnational linkages of terrorist organizations and also the role of trans-border organized crime and illicit trade in arms and drugs in supporting terrorism, particularly by financial means.

The sides strongly condemned terrorism everywhere and called upon the international community in accordance with UNSCR 1373 and 1456 to take decisive action against this global menace, and against those who aid and abet terrorism across borders, harbour and provide sanctuary to terrorists and provide them with financial means, training or patronage. They reiterated that international action against terrorism cannot be selective, but has to be uniform, comprehensive, continuous and multifaceted.

Russia expressed support for India's initiative at the UN General Assembly on “measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction”. Both sides expressed their deep concern on the growing risk of the use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and emphasised the need for wide international cooperation in combating it.

The sides agreed to further develop mutual cooperation and assistance in meeting the threats and preventing acts of international terrorism. They positively assessed the growing cooperation and dialogue between their concerned agencies, including the National Security Council of India and the Security Council of the Russian Federation. They also underlined their resolve to promote cooperation in this area at the United Nations and other international organizations and fora, including the efforts to move further ahead with the draft International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the draft Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism.

Both sides noted that cooperation in combating international terrorism is an important aspect of their strategic bilateral ties. In this context, they appreciated the continued exchange of views and further
consolidation of their close cooperation against international terrorism at the recently held meetings of the Joint Working Group on Global Challenges (which has as its precursor the Joint Working Group on Afghanistan) and the Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism, established under the provisions of the MoU signed during the visit of the President of the Russian Federation H. E. Mr. Vladimir Putin to India in December 2002.

The Russian Federation supported the steps taken by India in the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir in combating international terrorism. India reiterated its support to the measures taken by the Russian Federation in the Republic of Chechnya for the protection of Russia’s territorial integrity and Constitutional order. Having noted the recent Presidential elections in the Republic of Chechnya, an integral part and constituent unit of the Russian Federation, on 5 October 2003, India expressed the hope that their results will lead to the return of complete normalcy in Chechnya.

The two sides discussed the situation in Afghanistan and expressed full support to all international efforts aimed at reconstruction, and emergence of Afghanistan as a peaceful, strong prosperous, united and independent nation. They expressed support for the broad based government led by Mr Hamid Karzai, the President of Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan. Stressing that non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan is a crucial factor in the return of peace and stability, they called upon the neighbouring states of Afghanistan to adhere to their commitments as outlined under the Kabul Declaration on Good Neighbourly Relations signed on 22 December 2002. The two sides expressed concern at the escalation of subversive and terrorist activity by the remnants of Taliban and Al-Qaeda. The regrouping of Taliban with support from outside was seen as a most worrisome development. Concern was also expressed at the large increase in production of narcotics in Afghanistan and illegal drug trafficking.

They reiterated support to the continued important role of the UN in the post-Bonn Agreement processes in Afghanistan, including constitutional and democratic institution building. The two sides agreed that Afghan ownership must be accorded fundamental importance in Afghanistan’s reconstruction and institution building efforts. They agreed to continue coordinating their efforts on Afghanistan in international forums.

Both sides reviewed the situation in Central Asia and noted that
security and stability in that region is of vital interest to both of them. They supported further progress of Central Asian states along the path of democracy. India and Russia emphasised the importance of the consultations between their Foreign Offices, including in the context of the region’s traditional ties and contemporary significance for both of them as regards economic cooperation and challenges and threats to security and stability in the region from phenomena such as extremism and illicit drug trafficking.

Both sides discussed in detail the situation in South Asia. They emphasized the need for Pakistan to implement in full its assurances to prevent infiltration of terrorists across the Line of Control into the State of Jammu and Kashmir and at other points across the border, as well as to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan controlled territory as a prerequisite for a purposeful dialogue between the two countries to resolve all outstanding issues in a bilateral framework as envisaged in Simla Agreement of 1972 and the Lahore Declaration of 1999. The Russian Federation appreciated and supported the peace initiative made by the Prime Minister of India in April 2003 under which High Commissioners have returned to each other’s capitals, the Delhi-Lahore-Delhi bus service has been resumed and people-to-people contacts are taking place at non-governmental and business levels. Russia also welcomed further measures announced by India’s External Affairs Minister on 22 October 2003 and hoped that Pakistan will come out with a positive response.

Both sides noted the ever-increasing importance of Asia-Pacific Region and stressed the significance of the bilateral and multilateral relations, including in the framework of ASEAN Regional Forum, with the countries of this region in the interest of stability and security in this vast region.

Both sides emphasized the urgent need to restore peace, security and stability in Iraq and to safeguard its unity and territorial integrity. They called for an early transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi people and need for continued efforts of the international community to ensure a central role for the UN in political and economic reconstruction of Iraq.

Both sides expressed their concern over the developments in the Middle East. They described the present situation as critical and called upon all concerned for de-escalation and ending the cycle of violence. The sides firmly advocated a negotiated settlement between Palestine
and Israel on the basis of the Quartet Road Map to bring about a just and durable peace where both Palestine and Israel live side by side in peace and security.

Both sides reiterated that the strategic partnership between India and the Russian Federation was based on mutuality of interests and shared perceptions. It is aimed at the further development of mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation in diverse areas, and at strengthening international peace, stability and security through joint efforts.

The Prime Minister of India invited the President of the Russian Federation to visit India. The invitation was accepted with gratitude. The dates for the visit will be decided through diplomatic channels.

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423. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with the Russian paper Kommersant.

Moscow, November 14, 2003.

[Yesterday in Moscow an official visit of Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee was completed. Yashwant Sinha, Foreign Affairs Minister of India sums up the latest Russian-Indian summit in an exclusive interview to a “ý”s observer.]

Moscow is a starting point of Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s foreign tour, in the course of which he is also supposed to visit Tajikistan and Syria. The route looks quite unusual. Is there any hidden implication in it for Indian diplomacy?

- On the face of it, such a route seems quite unusual, indeed. However you shouldn’t look for any ulterior motives in it. Everything is much more simple. In the of the fall Prime Minister had an opportunity to spend some days on a foreign trip, and he made up his mind to avail himself of his old friends’ invitation. So the route Moscow - Dushanbe

- Damask has been drawn up. Prime Minister has a special agenda in each country. Nevertheless, there are common questions which are to be discussed in each of these countries. Without going into details I can say that the problems of global and internal security
are supposed to be under discussion, i. e. that what the world community is worried about most of all.

**The first “Moscow” part of the trip is coming to an end. What is your evaluation of the results of the latest Russian-Indian summit? What is worth paying attention at?**

- It a complicated question. I mean, it is not easy to highlight something special, saying that such and such matters are more important than the others. For the last years the two leaders have worked out the mechanisms of constant interaction. Summits are held yearly. Besides, the leaders of the two counties interact closely during various international events, such as celebrations of the 300th anniversary of Saint Petersburg or the 58th session of the UN General Assembly in New York. This is his fourth meeting with Mr. Vajpayee, after Mr. Putin payed an official visit to India in December, 2002. Each meeting adds something new in our relations. As it is known, evolution is based on the principle of increase. So we are stepping into a new stage.

Paying special attention to the development of our bilateral trade and investments is the main feature of the present summit. This the first time when Mr. Vajpayee has come to Moscow with a delegation of Indian business circles included 90 persons. Moscow saw the flower of Indian business. It shows that the Indian part is eager to make a breakthrough in the economic relations between our countries.

**What is to be done for it?**

- First of all, we should renounce our old stereotypes, which hold the representatives of our business circles in captivity. Our businessmen should treat each other in the same way as they treat their business partners from other countries, and build economic relations on the same basis. We should move up our trade into settling in convertible currency. We also should make it possible to have the part of the debt, which India has not payed off to Russia, not only used as means for purchasing new goods, but also reinvested in joint projects.

Last week India tested the cruise missile “Brahmos” made in cooperation with the Russian part. Nevertheless, as India is expanding the sources of purchasing arms, from Western suppliers, India is seemed to step away from Russia. How could
you comment on it?

- Military-technical cooperation with Russia has always been the basis of our relations. So does it today. I am absolutely sure that we’ll keep the level and even increase our cooperation in this field. It is crucial, that a new stage of cooperation should begin, when we are not just the seller and the customer. We set up joint ventures, producing up-to-date arms in order to sell them in the third world countries. As for the statement saying that we turn aside from Russia in this area, it does not correspond the facts.

In the course of the last summit the parties coordinated the last details the transaction concerning the purchase of aircraft carrier “Admiral Gorshkov” to India. The transaction is expected to be made by the end of November, this year. According to our information the hot haggling went on a long time, up to the last moment. Are you satisfied with the final terms and conditions of the deal?

- It is natural, that the parties haggle before making such kind of transactions. The talks were tough, but taking into account the scale of this deal, it can be considered to be normal. I am glad that we have drawn out terms and conditions, which satisfy both parties. I would like to underline that acquisition of this aircraft carrier will be crucial in strengthening defensive capability of India.

In the end of October Indian leaders came forward with a new initiative on settling the relations with Pakistan. The previous initiatives were futile. Are there any chances this time?

- There are no guarantees that we will manage to avoid the repetition of the past. When there are two parties who touch the subject, it is very difficult to predict which way they will behave. Now we do not agree with the Pakistani point of view.

President Putin suggested being an intermediate. Why did you refuse the Russian proposal?

- You should understand one simple thing. In 1972 Indira Gandhi signed the Simla Agreement with the Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in accordance with which the problem should be solved by both parties. So we want to be logical.
424. Interview of External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha with the Russian paper *Vremya Novostei*.

Moscow, November 14, 2003.

[Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee stated yesterday that his visit was “effective.” The Indian leader also said that he saw a “great future of our relations.” In the following interview to Vremya Novostei Minister of External Affairs Yashvant Sinha talks about the current condition and prospects relations between Russia and India.]

Q: How do you assess the results of the Russian-Indian summit?

A: Our leaders have signed several very important documents. We have discussed many global and bilateral problems. I would say that we have made some progress in mutual understanding in all these issues. Both leaders confirmed their commitment to further improvement of our relations. You should keep in mind that it was the third meeting of our leaders for the last several months. They met in May in St. Petersburg, in September in New York, and now in November in Moscow. I would describe this meeting neither as a breakthrough nor routine. Any meeting on such level is important, including the recent one. I think we have made steps forward in defense, cultural exchanges, political understanding, and trade and economy.

Q: What’s more important for our future economic ties - oil and energy sector or high technologies?

A: We don’t have to put aside one sector to develop another. These don’t compete - they add to each other. Energy is very important. We have already been cooperating in nuclear energy and hydrocarbon. High technologies are also important, and we are having many joint research projects. This area will remain a top priority in our cooperation.

Russia and India are modern and young countries. Both countries have highly qualified and professional work force. Russia traditionally holds strong positions in high technologies, whereas India has achieved leadership in IT and is doing great progress in biotechnologies. We have a tremendous potential for cooperation in these areas. This time our prime minister has brought with him a group of businesspersons who represent not only pharmaceutical and chemistry industries, but also representing electronics, consumer goods, software and IT. This opens opportunities for contacts among private companies. We also cooperate in the area of
defense and military equipment. Brahmos missile and peaceful nuclear energy space research are examples of such cooperation.

Q: India invests in development of Sakhalin oil projects. Are you worried for your investments due to the Yukos case?

A: No, we are not worried about it. Russia should independently solve this issue. I don’t think this conflict has any international meaning, and I don’t see how it could possibly affect our cooperation.

Q: In 1991 our countries started liberal market reforms that led to decrease in trade between Russia and India. Can the market path return us to previous levels in trade?

A: The market factor is very important since we are still in the process of conducting our reforms and liberalizing our economies. It opens more opportunities for our cooperation. We are facing the same problems and tasks in meeting demands of our people. I think as reforms and liberalizations continue developing, importance of ties between Russia and India will increase.

Q: At the recent WTO meeting in Cancun India was actively trying to unite efforts of developing world to attain various concessions from developed nations in trade. Can India and Russia unite on the issue?

A: Our interests are close here but Russia is not a member of WTO yet. That what was being said at the Cancun meeting of ministers was for WTO members. However, judging by the exchange of our opinions on international trade, we have a lot in common in this area.

Q: Will India help us to become a WTO member?

A: We want Russia to be a WTO member, and we promised Russia to do what we can for it.

Q: In the past you were managing your country’s finances. What do you think about foreign criticism of slow pace of Indian privatization?

A: India chose the path of comprehensive and long-term economic reforms over 10 years ago. As a result of that we have now a strong and fast growing economy, technological progress, and quality of life growth. Our reforms are developed in correspondence with our goals. Reduction of subsidies to state controlled and public enterprises is only a part of our reforms. These reforms are based on a wide consensus regarding
economic reforms and goals in India. Realizing these processes in such a big democracy as India has some difficulties, but our government’s commitment to reform is beyond all doubts.

Q: Let me remind you of Primakov’s famous triangle. Recently Russia and India conducted joint naval exercises, and just now Indian fleet has set off for joint exercises with China. Is this a step toward the triangle of Russia, China, and India?

A: The concept of the triangle should be understood correctly. This year our foreign ministers, I mean the ministers of the three countries, had the second meeting in the lobby of the UN in New York. We discussed issues that the international community has to address. We decided to increase our cooperation among the three countries. I think India and China agree with Russia that we should spend some time to discuss these issues more deeply. I hope it will happen in the near future.

Q: In the middle of October you announced a number of peace initiatives aimed at normalization of relations between India and Pakistan. On the eve of his visit to Moscow Prime Minister Vajpayee took part in the SAARC meeting of Information Ministers. The Pakistani information minister said many warm words about Vajpayee and invited him to the next SAARC session that will take place next year in Islamabad in January. Were you content with Pakistan’s reaction to the Indian initiatives?

A: Unfortunately, as I previously said, Pakistan’s response was not adequate. Only several out of our 12 initiatives were accepted. In some cases Pakistan’s response was discouraging at least. Regarding SAARC it’s a multilateral process created by a group of seven South Asian countries, and it should be distinguished from bilateral relations between India and Pakistan. SAARC meetings are very important, and progress of this organization is also important, but these meetings bear no considerable influence on relations between India and Pakistan.
Statement to the Indian Media by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the conclusion of his visit to Russia, Tajikistan and Syria.


“I have just completed a satisfying visit to Russia, Tajikistan and Syria.

My visit to Russia continued the tradition of annual Summits that President Putin and I have established since his State visit to India in 2000, as part of the India-Russia strategic partnership.

President Putin and I, had extensive discussions over two days, on all aspects of our very wide bilateral relationship, as well as on regional and international issues. Russia has shown understanding on all major issues of our concern and shares our perspectives on developments in our common neighbourhood. This identity or similarity of views is reflected in our Joint Declaration. We paid particular attention to our cooperation against terrorism.

We discussed further strengthening of our defence cooperation. We have agreed to expand our cooperation in the energy sector while continuing the existing cooperation at the Kudankulam nuclear power plant as well as in the Sakhalin-I oilfield project. We have decided to discuss further cooperation in the field of space technologies, especially in satellite navigation.

A Joint Task Force has been set up to suggest specific measures to enhance India-Russia bilateral trade and investment. We look forward to receiving its recommendations soon. A large business delegation accompanied me to Russia. I understand that the members of the delegation had fruitful interactions with Russian business and industry. This augurs well for the development of our economic and commercial relations with Russia, independent of the rupee-rouble arrangement. To facilitate travel of tourists and business representatives, India has agreed to increase the frequency of flights between India and Russia. We have also offered the Russian national carrier the fifth freedom right to link Afghanistan with our two countries.

My visit to Tajikistan was timely. Tajikistan is India’s nearest Central Asian neighbour. It is a resource-rich nation in the strategic heartland of Asia. We are building a wide ranging and intensive relationship based on
our shared cultural traditions and our commitment to democracy and secularism, as well as our common interest in regional stability. We are intensifying our interaction in defence and security, while building an equally extensive economic and commercial relationship. We agreed to strengthen our cooperation against terrorism, particularly in our shared neighbourhood. The bilateral documents which were signed, and announcements on economic cooperation which were made, demonstrated our close understanding on political issues, and our commitment to the further strengthening of all aspects of our relationship. We are working to expand people to people ties. President Rakhmanov and I agreed that we should actively cooperate in upgrading surface transport links between India and Tajikistan through Iran and Afghanistan.

The visit to Syria served to re-establish high level contact with a traditionally friendly country. The India-Syria relationship is based on historic links, and our common position in international fora including the Non Aligned Movement.

President Assad and I agreed that the economic and commercial relationship needs to be developed extensively to raise it to a level commensurate with our political relations. New vistas of cooperation have emerged with economic change in both countries. We have also agreed to set up a Group of Experts to make specific recommendations regarding areas for bilateral cooperation. Particular interest was expressed in expanding Indian presence in Syria in sectors such as hydrocarbons, fertilizers, power generation, irrigation, as well as in information technology and biotechnology. We offered Syria a credit line of US $ 25 million to stimulate bilateral trade.

To develop the Syria National Biotechnology Centre as a centre of excellence in the region, India has extended a grant of one million dollars to this jointly-established institute. Both sides see this as a significant step in our growing cooperation in the use of technology for peaceful purposes.

We remain concerned at the continuing cycle of violence and counter-violence in the region. I reiterated India’s continued commitment to the Middle East peace process, and to a comprehensive and lasting peace, based on full implementation of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, and the Land for Peace principle.

This visit has strengthened our bilateral relationship with Russia, Tajikistan and Syria. Our strategic partnership with Russia not only encompasses our political, economic, defence and cultural cooperation;
it is also an important element in our efforts for a multipolar world order. Both Tajikistan and Syria are important countries in regions of great political, economic and strategic significance for us. I am confident that our exchanges during this visit will provide a fresh impetus to our bilateral cooperation with these countries, as well as our interactions in regional and international forums.

We look forward to the visits of President Putin, President Rakhmanov and President Assad to India on mutually convenient dates.

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426. Statement of the Government of India on terrorist blast on a train in Russia.

New Delhi, December 5, 2003.

The Government of India condemns the terrorist bomb blast on a train near Yessentuki station in the Caucasian region of Russia, in the morning of 5 December, which resulted in a large number of casualties. We convey our condolences to the members of the bereaved families.

We express our solidarity with the Russian Government in its efforts directed towards tackling the problems of terrorism, fundamentalism and extremism, which have international links. India and the Russian Federation, as strategic partners, are committed to act firmly together against international terrorism. This attack is yet another reminder to the international community that it must step up collective efforts to eradicate terrorism wherever it exists.

The Government of India supports all efforts of the Government of the Russian Federation to ensure that this cowardly act does not disrupt the forthcoming elections to the State Duma.

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Slovenia

427. Press release of the Ministry of External Affairs on the signing of the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention with Slovenia.¹


India signed a Convention with the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and for the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and Capital today (13th January, 2003) in Ljubljana. The Convention was signed by H.E. Mr. Gingee N. Ramachandran, Minister of State for Finance (Revenue) on behalf of Government of India and by Mr. Darko Koncan, State Secretary in the Ministry of Finance on behalf of Government of the Republic of Slovenia in the presence of H.E. Mr. T.P. Sreenivasan, Ambassador of India to Slovenia.

The Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) between India

¹ As per DGCI&S sources, the Indo-Slovak total trade which was UD$ 38.12 million during 1997-98 decreased to US$ 17.49 million in 1998-99 and US$ 17.57 million in 2000. This further decreased to US$ 16.28 million in 2000-2001 and increased to US$ 21.30 million in 2001-2002. India’s exports to Slovak Republic during 2002-2003 was US$ 10.99 million and imports from Slovak Republic was US$ 11.38 million. The Balance of trade which was in favour of the Slovak Republic during 1997-98 to 1999-2000 turned to India’s favour only during 2000-2001 with Exports of US $ 9.39 million and imports of US$ 6.89 million. The main items of exports are agro-based products; processed minerals; finished leather; leather goods; drugs, pharmaceuticals & fine chemicals etc. The major items of Imports from the Slovak Republic are Leather, other crude minerals, medicinal & pharmaceutical products, iron & steel; electrical machinery except electronics etc. In order to further promote bilateral growth a Joint Business Council has been set up and its 5th session will be meeting shortly after President Schuster’s visit to India. An Indo Slovak Joint Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation also exists and its 5th session will be meeting shortly before the year end to boost overall bilateral relations. An Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology was signed during President Shanker Dayal Sharma’s visit to Slovakia in October 1996. In order to implement this Agreement, India and Slovak Republic have agreed to establish a joint committee on science and technology Cooperation. Indo Slovak defence cooperation is active. The President of Slovakia and members of his delegation will also visit Agra and Mumbai and meet with Indian Business there before embarking on a visit to Indonesia.

India’s relations with the Slovak Republic, an important Central European country, are warm, friendly and characterized by cooperation in several spheres. President Schuster’s visit to India, the first ever by the President of the Slovak Republic, will further strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.
and Slovenia will cover in the case of India, income-tax including surcharge thereon and in the case of Slovenia, the tax on profits of legal persons, the tax on income of individuals, including wages and salaries, income from agricultural activities, income from business, capital gains and income from immovable and movable property (corporation tax and tax on capital gains are included in income-tax in India).

The DTAC provides for lower rates of tax vis-a-vis the domestic rates in India in respect of interest and royalties.

In regard to taxation of capital gains from alienation of shares of a company, the same will be taxable in the country where the company is resident.

The incidence of double taxation will be avoided by one country giving credit for taxes paid by its national in the other country.

The Convention provides that the nationals and enterprises of one country will not be taxed at a rate higher than the rate applicable to its own nationals and enterprises. In India, permanent establishments are taxed at a higher rate than domestic companies since the former are not obliged to declare dividends here. Hence it has been provided specifically that such a practice will not be considered discriminatory.

There is also a provision for exchange of information in cases, which are under investigation in either of the two countries.

The Proposes Convention is in line with most of the conventions which India has entered into in the recent past.
Switzerland

428. Agreement between the Republic of India and the Swiss Confederation on Cooperation in the event of Disasters.


The Republic of India and the Swiss Confederation, considering that aid in the event of disasters, natural or man made, is an important part of international cooperation and solidarity and convinced of the need for cooperation between the two countries in order to facilitate assistance in the event of such disasters have agreed on the following provisions:

Article 1

Object

The aim of the present Agreement is to define the detailed procedures under which the Swiss Government may offer and place at the disposal of the Government of India, the aid unit of the Humanitarian Aid of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in the affected area subject to acceptance of offer by the Government of India and to provisions hereinafter contained.

Article 2

Definitions

In terms of the present Agreement, the following expressions, shall have meaning assigned to them hereinafter:

“Receiving State” Shall mean the Republic of India

“Offering State” Shall mean the Swiss Confederation

“Affected area” Means an area within the territory of India which is struck with disaster and which in the opinion of the Receiving State, needs assistance of aid units upon mutual agreement of the Offering and Receiving States-

“Aid Units” Any specialist (s) sent by the Humanitarian Aid of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC/HA) including Swiss Rescue
etc., which in the judgement of the Offering State have the requisite professional and technical expertise in their area of operation.

“Assistance” Shall mean search, rescue and if necessary immediate resuscitation of persons or animals trapped in collapsed or damaged structures or otherwise marooned as a result of a disaster in such a manner that access to such persons or animals is not ordinarily possible.

“Disaster” Means an event of sudden emergency whether natural or man made.

“Equipment” means materials, telecommunications and personal equipment intended for aid units.

“Operational Requirement” means materials and supplies obtained locally which are necessary for the operation of the equipment, as well as supplies for the aid units, in particular and in agreement with the Receiving State; vehicles, fuel, water etc.

Article 3

3.1 The authorities specified below shall be competent to execute the present Agreement:

(a) for the Republic of India, the Special Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

(b) for the Swiss Confederation, the Delegate for Humanitarian Aid and Head of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit.

3.2 The authorities may communicate ordinarily through diplomatic channels save in emergencies and shall keep each other informed of the full particulars of such other authorities as may be assigned functions, operational or otherwise under this Agreement.

3.3 The list of other persons responsible for carrying out the purposes of this Agreement with their respective addresses is set out in Annexure of the present Agreement which shall be updated by the authorities regularly.
Article 4

4.1 The deployment of the aid units within India shall be decided by mutual agreement between the authorities mentioned in Article 3.1 subject to the Government of India specifying the territorial limits of such deployment.

4.2 In accordance with the requirements of Article 8, the head of the aid unit shall, as soon as may be, provide the appropriate authorities of the Receiving State, a comprehensive list of the personnel, equipment, dogs, and allowable personal effects.

Article 5

The assistance mentioned in Article 1 of the present Agreement shall be provided by SDC/HA either directly, or indirectly through aid units including Swiss Rescue along with necessary equipments and rescue dogs.

Article 6

Swiss Rescue and their dogs and equipment may be sent by surface, by air or by water so as to reach the affected areas within the shortest possible time.

Article 7

7.1 The assistance supplied by the Offering State shall be free of charge.

7.2 If the needs of the operation so require, upon the request of the aid units, including Swiss Rescue, as the case may be, and upon its agreement, the Receiving State shall, at its own cost, make available to the aid units such assistance as may be mutually agreed upon.

Article 8

8.1 The authorities shall take all measures necessary to ensure that assistance reaches the affected area in the shortest possible time.

8.2 To the above end, the competent authorities of the Receiving State shall undertake:

- To ensure rapid transport to the location of the disaster and to exempt as far as possible from clearance formalities the aid units, their dogs and equipment.
- To facilitate entry into the territory of the Receiving State of aid units to take place in an organised manner. The members of aid units shall be in possession of valid identity papers. The dogs be covered by valid vaccination certificates on the basis of which all veterinary restrictions including quarantine for admission of animals shall be waived.

- The head of the aid shall immediately on crossing the customs frontier of Receiving State at the first point of embarkation, or as soon as thereafter, as may be, a comprehensive list of persons, equipments and dogs, upon which it shall be the duty of the authorities of the Receiving State to ensure ingress to and exit from the customs frontier of India of persons, animals and equipment without let or hindrance.

- to exempt from all customs and other duties and charges all equipment, dogs and aid supplies used during an aid operation, either at the point of entry or departure from the Receiving State.

- to guarantee over-flight in the airspace of the territory of the Receiving State and landing and take off to the airport near the affected area of aircraft used by the Corps or other aid units. For the duration of the aid, the aircraft used by the aid units shall be admitted to the Receiving State under the temporary admissions system

- the intention to use aircraft during a mission shall be communicated immediately by the aid units to the Receiving State with as precise as possible an indication of the aircraft’s type and registration number, flight crew, load, likely times of take off and scheduled landing, intended route and place of landing.

- to facilitate the operation of the aid units in all phases of assistance, including the entry, stay and movement, individual or collective, of the aid units on the territory of the Receiving State and to take all necessary measures, including provision of adequate facilities, to enable the aid units to carry out their duties.

- to facilitate the use by the aid units of the local telecommunication systems or the establishment by the aid units of an emergency local telecommunications system.
**Article 9**

9.1 The coordination and management of aid missions shall be the responsibility of the authorities of the Receiving State.

9.2 While agreeing to obtain the assistance of aid units of the Offering State, the authorities of the Receiving State shall specify the tasks intended to be entrusted to the aid units.

9.3 Any directives addressed to the aid units by the Receiving State shall be delivered only to the heads of the teams, who shall issue instructions accordingly to their teammates.

9.4 The authorities of the Receiving State shall provide protection, security and assistance to get the operational requirements to the aid units of the Offering State.

**Article 10**

Within the framework of the present Agreement, the Receiving State undertakes to assume responsibility for any damage caused by the aid units in carrying out their mission, unless there are good sufficient reasons to believe that the damage has been caused intentionally or through gross negligence.

**Article 11**

The present Agreement shall not affect the validity of any multilateral agreements concerning disasters either existing or in future.

**Article 12**

12.1 The authorities named in Article 3 shall compile a manual of operations detailing various procedural arrangements and operating measures and other ancillary details covering deployment of aid units after their arrival in the Receiving State and operations in the affected areas.

12.2 The competent authorities designated in Article 3, with mutual agreement, take steps to arrange training programmes and other measures for:

- enhancing early warning system, human resource development and preventing and overcoming the baneful consequences of disasters by the exchange of relevant experience and information.
- enhancement of capacity building, preparedness and training of rescue teams.

- seeking out and identifying persons and goods damaged during aid missions, pursuant to the current legislation of the parties, and enquiring into the causes of any accidents, if any, occasioned by the activity of the aid units.

**Article 13**

The authorities undertake to resolve through diplomatic channels any differences relating to the interpretation of the terms of the present Agreement or the execution of the services referred to in it.

**Article 14**

14.1 The present Agreement shall come into force one month after the date of the written notification by the authorities, through diplomatic channels, indicating that the local legal and procedural requirements for conclusion of such agreements have been complied with.

14.2 Any amendment or revision of the text of this Agreement shall be made by the mutual consent of the authorities. Such amendments shall also come into force in the manner laid down in Article 14.1.

14.3 This Agreement shall remain in force and effect, unless one of the authorities officially notifies the other, through diplomatic channels and in writing, of its desire to suspend or terminate it.

Signed in New Delhi on this day of November 10\(^{th}\), 2003 in English and Hindi languages, both texts being equally authentic. In case of any doubt, the English text shall prevail.

**FOR THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA**
Name: Shri Shashank
Designation: Secretary (EAA)
Ministry of External Affairs

**FOR THE SWISS CONFEDERATION**
Name: Dr. Walter B. Gyger
Designation: Ambassador of Switzerland
Turkey

429. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with Turkish paper *Yeni Safak*.


Q. How India is considering itself in the world arena? The challenges and opportunities of the present situation of the world?

Despite the many and serious challenges that we faced at independence 56 years ago, India has taken large strides on the road to development. We are today the fourth largest economy in the world on purchasing power parity. We are at the vanguard of the technologies, which drive the knowledge economy of today. Our large and expanding middle class not only provides the skilled manpower for a wide range of scientific, technological and managerial requirements, but also constitutes a huge consumer market. This economic resurgence, coupled with our independent foreign policy, has given India a standing and recognition, which enable it to play an active and positive role on the world stage.

We still face many challenges, including the need to eliminate poverty and illiteracy, and to create a society in which complete equality of opportunity can be assured. We have achieved significant successes in this effort, but the problems are large, and will take effort and patience to resolve fully.

The world has also changed significantly in the past century. Colonialism and the Cold War have both passed into history. Democracy is spreading across the globe. The effort to eradicate war, disease and hunger is gaining ground, but more work is required. We need to have a more concerted global effort to fight pandemics such as AIDS, TB and Malaria. We must focus our energies at making the international trading and financial system more supportive of the needs of developing countries. Most importantly, our world is increasingly under threat from non-state actors, such as terrorists. Democracies like India and Turkey are particularly at risk from these forces. For these reasons, it is important for like-minded countries such as ours to increase our cooperation in all fora.

Q. What are the corner-stones of the bilateral relations between India and Turkey? The place of Turkey in the mind of Indian Prime Minister? What does history teach us to improve the relations? What are the prospects of furthering them?
Turkey, like India, is an ancient nation, with a splendid history of varied contributions to human civilization. The interaction between Turkey and India has lasted centuries. The Mughal Dynasty, which ruled over India, traced its ancestry to a Turkish people. The imprint of Turkish culture and traditions is traceable in our music, architecture and history. The Sufi mystic, Mevlana Rumi, was an inspiration to poets and thinkers in medieval India. In fact, the Sufi movement was also influenced by the Hindu mystic tradition. In the modern age, Kemal Ataturk was an inspiring figure for our national movement. These are some of the images, which arise in my mind, when I think of Turkey.

Based on our common traditions and experiences, our two countries share a similar commitment to democracy and secularism. Turkey is situated at the junction of Central Europe, Central Asia and West Asia. We are located between West Asia, Central Asia and East Asia. Our geopolitical location gives us shared concerns in the region, as well as some common opportunities.

There is considerable scope for our two countries to work together in a variety of fields. This includes cooperation in economic and commercial areas, science and technology, culture and people to people ties. We should also increase cooperation between our businessmen in third countries. Our bilateral economic and commercial relations have been growing steadily, although, at over US $ 600 million, our bilateral trade does not match the existing potential.

Q. Taking into account that India has the largest Muslim minority as citizens, how is India looking at the Islamic World?

India has the second largest Muslim population in the world. This community is an equal partner with others in the political, economic and social life of our country. The long tradition of Islam in India is the basis of our strong friendship with the Islamic world, based on cultural affinities, mutual respect and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Q. Kashmiri Question, how it can be solved? Nuclear proliferation? Is there any likelihood of Pakistan and India getting even closer in the Sub-Continent?

As we have said many times before, the only way to resolve the issues in our region is through peaceful dialogue. We have been ready to have a comprehensive dialogue with Pakistan on all issues including Jammu & Kashmir. But for any dialogue to be meaningful, terrorism must end, and the infrastructure promoting it has to be dismantled. Meanwhile, we have
achieved significant successes in strengthening the democratic and developmental processes in the state. Only a few months ago, the state elections were held, and they witnessed an impressive voter turnout of nearly 45%, which was a creditable achievement in the context of terrorist pressure to sabotage the election process.

On nuclear proliferation, India has consistently maintained a principled position. We developed a nuclear deterrent in response to our security imperatives. Our nuclear assets are firmly under civilian control. We have adopted a doctrine of no first use of nuclear weapons. We believe that it is highly irresponsible to even contemplate the use of nuclear weapons as an instrument of war. Equally, India does not transfer nuclear weapons materials or technologies to any country.

As far as Pakistan is concerned, India has been consistently extending its hand of friendship to that country. I did so again, in spite of the fact of continuing cross-border terrorism. We believe that the two countries should actively promote mutually beneficial economic cooperation, cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts, so that the present atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion can be transformed into a more cordial environment, congenial for the resolution of hard bilateral issues. Of course, this approach has a chance only if cross-border terrorism ends.

Q. India has become a center for out-source in many fields for Western companies; are there any lessons can Turkey benefit from India’s experience?

Economic enterprise and high technology are both fast-moving and fast-changing skills. No country or people have a monopoly over them! However, we are willing to share our experiences in fields where we have recorded some successes. In some sectors, India has become a favourite location for outsourcing. The automobile industry and pharmaceuticals are examples of this. Gemstone and diamond processing are traditional areas of India’s competitive advantage, while Information Technology is a much newer one.

We are willing to cooperate with Turkey in these areas. Equally, there is a lot that we can learn from Turkey. Your economic reforms began a full ten years before ours did, and we can benefit from your experiences in this regard.
Q. This is your first visit to Turkey. What are the aims of your visit and the issues that will have priorities? What steps can be taken to correct the present trade imbalance between India and Turkey? India has made great progress in technology. What kind of cooperation do you see for India and Turkey in this area? How can culture play a role in bilateral relationship?

The principal objectives of my visit are to establish closer links with the new leadership of Turkey and to set on course a dynamic and closer bilateral relationship in all respects. Turkey and India can contribute a lot together to World peace and to a balanced development of economic relations.

Our bilateral trade is still at a take-off stage. It has made impressive progress in the recent past, but it is not large enough for us to talk of balances or corrections. Presently, many items exported by India contribute in turn to Turkey’s exports. Thus, basic chemicals or bulk drugs imported from India are given value addition in Turkey. Therefore, our trade does not need merely a correction, but a major new thrust. We should discover more avenues of mutual advantage.

Like Turkey, India has also made great progress in technology. A large number of multi-national companies are sourcing high technology components from India. Indian firms have already made India the IT Capital of the World. Our pharmaceutical companies have a tradition of R&D. They are today supplying medicines all over the world, and at affordable prices. Besides, these areas, India and Turkey can cooperate in a number of others, especially in the construction and energy sectors.

Turkey and India are great civilizations, with historically close cultural contact. From ancient times, our people have interacted with each other. There are daily reminders of these ancient links in our Urdu language, family values, and even in some of our cuisine. Cultural ties can play a great cementing role in a bilateral relationship. Our governments and businesses should build on these to expand the field of interaction between the two countries.

Q. How do you feel as the leader of the “world’s largest democracy”? 

It is at once a great honour and an awesome responsibility. The evolution and consolidation of parliamentary democracy in India is one of the great success stories of post-colonial times. In a country of the size and diversity of ours with its major socio-economic challenges, the success of democracy is a tribute to its inherent ethos of tolerance and pluralism. In recent years, we have had multi-party coalitions in our government. This has emphasized the federal character of our polity and enabled greater sensitivity to the aspirations of different regions of the country. For over 5 years now, I have had the privilege of presiding over a coalition of many parties. It has been a difficult but rewarding experience.

Q. What are India’s major foreign policy goals, interests and objectives? Where would you like to see India in the international arena in the near future? What are your priorities for India? You are taking some steps on the Kashmir issue. What advancement can we expect in the near future?

India’s foreign policy has consistently pursued the objectives of international peace, stability and security. We believe that balanced economic development and removal of socioeconomic disparities between different regions of the world are essential to achieve these objectives. It is with these perspectives that India has always sought to develop relations of friendship and cooperation with all countries, and has particularly espoused the cause of developing countries.

Fifty six years after independence, India can proudly look back on its achievements in several fields of human activity. We have made impressive strides not only in traditional economic fields of agriculture and industry, but also in cutting edge technologies – information technology, telecommunications and biotechnology. We are today the fourth largest economy in the world on purchasing power parity. Our large and expanding middle class not only provides the skilled manpower for a wide range of scientific, technological and managerial requirements, but also constitutes a huge consumer market. This economic resurgence, coupled with our independent foreign policy, has given India a standing and recognition, which enable it to play an active and positive role on the world stage.

We still face many challenges, including the need to eliminate poverty and illiteracy, and to create a society in which complete equality of opportunity can be assured. We have achieved significant successes in this effort, but the problems are large, and will take effort and patience to resolve fully.
You asked about Kashmir. We have been ready to have a comprehensive
dialogue with Pakistan on all issues including Jammu & Kashmir. But for
any dialogue to be meaningful, terrorism must end, and the infrastructure
promoting it has to be dismantled. Meanwhile, we have achieved significant
successes in strengthening the democratic and developmental processes
in the state. Only a few months ago, the state elections were held, and
they witnessed an impressive voter turnout of nearly 45%, which was a
creditable achievement in the context of terrorist pressure to sabotage
the election process.

Q. India has experience in the fight against terrorism. The need
for international cooperation in fighting terrorism has been felt by
the leaders of both our countries. How do you see this global
campaign against terrorism?

I have repeatedly said that international terrorism is today a global
monster, which knows no national boundaries or territorial limits of
operation. It exploits the openness and freedoms of democratic societies.
It uses modern technologies and unorthodox techniques to achieve its
destructive objectives. It can only be countered by global, united and
comprehensive effort. We cannot afford selective approaches, which
sacrifice the long-term goal for short-term interests. Differing standards
cannot be applied for judging terrorism.

Democratic societies are most vulnerable to terrorism, which exploits the
freedoms and openness that democracy promotes. Ultimately therefore,
it is only through a determined coalition of democratic countries that we
can effectively counter terrorism. We should not be cowed down by those
who have embraced the cult of violence or extremism. Turkey, too, has
rejected extremist ideologies. Our two countries can do much to promote
the values of tolerance and moderation in an increasingly turbulent world.

Q. What are India’s views on sending troops to Iraq?

The situation in Iraq is very complex. We believe that there is an urgent
need for the United Nations to assume a central role, both in the
humanitarian efforts and the economic rebuilding of the country, and in
promoting and monitoring the political process of handing over sovereignty
to the people of Iraq. This process would, of course, include constitutional
and electoral processes, leading to a representative Iraqi Government.
We hope that the on-going discussions in the United Nations on all these
aspects would reach an early and satisfactory conclusion.
To your question about the possibility of Indian troops in Iraq, I can only say that this would depend on all the factors I have mentioned, as well as some domestic considerations.

431. Interview of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with Turkish Daily News.


Q. It is said that secularism and democracy are the two areas that bind India and Turkey together. Do you share this view? Do you feel secularism can survive in India in view of the current developments in your country?

Historical cultural affinities and civilizational contact have been the bedrock of the bilateral India-Turkey relationship. Both democracy and secularism are values, which are inherent in the Indian ethos and are fundamental ingredients of modern India, as indeed they are of modern Turkey. This certainly forms a natural link between our two countries. But I should add that there are other commonalities and complementarities between our societies and economies, which not only bind India and Turkey, but also create the potential for a rapid expansion of our cooperation.

I do not think we need to fear for the survival of secularism in India. Tolerance and pluralism are ingrained in Indian culture. Of course, there are aberrations – as in any system – and we neither condone nor gloss over them. But the very fact that such aberrations are widely publicized, commented upon and condemned shows that they are rare and strongly arouse our social conscience. Let us also remember that one of the aims of terrorist organizations is precisely to weaken the secular fabric of India. It is the strength of our secularism that has withstood this repeated wounding by terror.

Q. How is it that democratic values have still survived in India despite the vast divergences in your country?

I have earlier mentioned the traditional Indian ethos of tolerance and pluralism. It is this ethos, which has nourished and sustained the institution of parliamentary democracy in India after our independence. With our
regional, religious, cultural and linguistic diversities; and with the widespread illiteracy, poverty and hunger, which we inherited at independence, not many thought India could survive as a democracy for any length of time. We have proved the sceptics wrong. We have preserved the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious fabric of our society within a democratic and federal framework. The scale of this achievement is sometimes not fully appreciated.

Q. You will soon be visiting Turkey. Could you tell us what you aim to achieve at this visit? What will be your priorities?

I look forward to visiting Turkey. It is a nation and a civilization that has many admirers and wellwishers in India. My priority is to take our bilateral relationship forward in all spheres. We have much in common, and the leaders and people of our two countries need to meet each other more often to identify bilateral opportunities and to exploit the complementarities. Our businessmen need to interact more regularly to boost trade and investment. We need to further promote our cultural interaction, student exchanges and tourism.

The objective of my visit is to catalyse the process of all-round development of India-Turkey cooperation, both bilateral and in international organizations.

Q. Both India and Turkey have suffered much in the hands of terrorists. International terrorism remains a global threat as we see more and more attacks all across the world. Are you satisfied about the way the international community is combating terrorism? Do you think the fact that Osama Bin Laden has still not been caught is a setback in this fight?

I have repeatedly said that international terrorism is today a global monster, which knows no national boundaries or territorial limits of operation. It exploits the openness and freedoms of democratic societies. It uses modern technologies and unorthodox techniques to achieve its destructive objectives. It can only be countered by global, united and comprehensive effort. We cannot afford selective approaches, which sacrifice the long-term goal for short-term interests. Differing standards cannot be applied for judging terrorism.

It is of course true that the capture of the more notorious perpetrators of terrorism sends out a good signal of deterrence. But the war against terror is not about one particular terrorist or group. It is a much bigger challenge.
Q. We see that there is an inclination especially in the West to blame Islam as the source of terrorism. Could you comment in this?

We totally dismiss the proposition that any religion is a source of terrorism. Such arguments seek to discredit one of the great religions of the world. No religion prescribes violence against innocent people. Our battle is against extremist elements, who misuse and misinterpret religion to justify terrorism and incite violence.

Q. Do you share the view that Iraq has now turned into a new battleground for international terrorism?

Terrorism constantly seeks new targets; it rapidly moves in to exploit situations of uncertainty or unrest. The situation in Iraq is very complex, and therefore disturbing. It is essential that political solutions involving the Iraqi people are found quickly, so that any possibility of a slide into anarchy is averted.

Q. Why is India so unenthusiastic about sending troops to Iraq? In view of the recent developments in Iraq, are you concerned that the country may split up?

I have already mentioned that the situation in Iraq is very complex. We believe that there is an urgent need for the United Nations to assume a central role, both in the humanitarian efforts and the economic rebuilding of the country, and in promoting and monitoring the political process of handing over sovereignty to the people of Iraq. This process would, of course, include constitutional and electoral processes, leading to a representative Iraqi Government. We hope that the on-going discussions in the United Nations on all these aspects would reach an early and satisfactory conclusion.

To your question about the possibility of Indian troops in Iraq, I can only say that this would depend on all the factors I have mentioned, as well as some domestic considerations.

Q. Are you still concerned that the current situation in Afghanistan may destabilize the whole of Central Asia?

As traditional friends of the Afghan people, we rejoiced in their liberation from the despotic and fanatic Taliban regime. India has participated wholeheartedly in international efforts for rehabilitation and reconstruction in Afghanistan. But a lot more needs to be done, and the international
community has to be far more generous with economic assistance to that war-ravaged country. Equally, the international community should pay close attention to the worsening security situation in Afghanistan, which carries the ominous threat of a regrouping and return of Taliban forces. If this threat is ignored, and decisive action is not taken, there is indeed the potential for destabilization not only in Afghanistan, but also in the region. The government of President Karzai deserves the fullest support to tackle this threat effectively.

✦✦✦✦✦

432. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his departure for Turkey and New York.

New Delhi, September 16, 2003.

1. I leave today for an official bilateral visit to the Republic of Turkey\(^1\) and New York.

\(^1\) On September 15 Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal briefing the media dwelt on the background to India-Turkish relation and said: “Just to give you a little backdrop, the new Turkish Government, following elections in November, 2002, has reciprocated our desire for enhancing our bilateral relationship. The first visit abroad by the Turkish Speaker Bulent Arinc after assuming office was to India in December, 2002. Our External Affairs Minister visited Turkey in August this year. This is a very important because the previous visit of an Indian External Affairs Minister to Turkey was way back in 1976.

There are many things that unite India and Turkey the most important being secularism and democracy. This is not insignificant keeping in mind that Turkey is an Islamic country. At a political level, the outlook of both the countries is guided by liberal and modern values. What also we share with Turkey is that both of us have been victims of terror for long periods. India and Turkey have both embarked on a programme of economic liberalization. Our trade relationship is going steadily. Our exports to Turkey have increased by 60 per cent in 2002 to reach a figure of US$ 546 million. For development of our overall ties, Turkey has decided to open up direct air-links between Istanbul and New Delhi. I think the first flight would take place very shortly. Clearly amongst other issues, those of regional and bilateral interest will no doubt figure. There will certainly be close interest in the developments in the Middle East and in Iraq in particular.

QUESTION: Turkey and Israel have very good relations for a long time. Now that we have renewed successfully our ties with Israel, will there be trilateral cooperation among us?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: We established diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992. When I was Ambassador in Turkey, they had a very flourishing relationship between Turkey and Israel and we did not necessarily find any community of interest between India and Turkey of the kind you are suggesting. I think Turkey has good relations with Israel
2. Our relations with Turkey are as old as its great civilization. We are now witnessing a new commitment and surge to our cooperation. In the recent past, bilateral exchanges have intensified and our trade has increased significantly.

3. We share common values of secularism and democracy with this important country which straddles the continents of Europe and Asia. Both political and economic factors encourage an expansion of our cooperation. My visit will give me an opportunity to establish contact with the leadership of the new Government in Turkey. I look forward to exchanging views on international and regional issues because of certain dynamics that Turkey is part of. Our relationship with Israel is based on totally different dynamics. So, I do not think that we are at all looking for any trilateral arrangement of any kind.

QUESTION: Would any agreements be signed in Turkey on trade?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: On trade, no; but on economic side, yes. These are on the economic side, on information technology and computer software. The business people, of course, have their own agenda. They have done their homework and they have distributed already to you what they see are the key issues and possibilities in our economic relationship with Turkey.

QUESTION: How many companies are participating in the meeting?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Forty-two.

QUESTION: What kind of talks will take place between India and Turkey on the issue of Iraq?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Iraq is a neighbouring country of Turkey. Turkey’s relationship with Iraq has been a troubled one for many years. There is a big issue in their relationship and that is of the Kurdish areas. The problem of terrorism has also been a major issue between them. Turkey still has concerns that in the northern areas the Kurdish areas, they should not get any kind of freedom. If such a situation arises, they have said before and they now say that they could even intervene. If such a thing happens, the integrity and sovereignty of Iraq will get a big blow. So, Turkey will closely follow what is happening in Iraq and in the in which things are moving. Because of this, it is necessary and we will be ready to listen to their perception when we go there. In fact, it could be very beneficial.

QUESTION: Would you like to comment on the press reports saying that India cannot spare its troops for peacekeeping operations in Iraq because of the situation on its western front?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Every country’s first duty is to protect its own borders and its own citizens and its own society. The fact is that there is no let up in terrorism directed against India. You have seen recent events including the Mumbai blasts. I do not think there is any need to add anything more to this.

QUESTION: So, we cannot spare troops for peacekeeping operations in Iraq.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: What I am saying is that our priorities are what they are. That does not mean that India has to give up its international responsibilities. However, at a particular point in time what should be the balance between our domestic needs and our international responsibility, that political judgement the leadership has to make.
with Prime Minister Erdogan and other representatives of the Turkish leadership.

4. Besides Ankara, I will also be visiting the historic and commercial city of Istanbul.

5. A large Indian business delegation is accompanying me in Turkey; an Indian industry exhibition is being held in Istanbul. The business interactions should provide a sound basis for significantly expanded Indo-Turkish economic cooperation.

6. From Turkey I will proceed to New York for the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly. There are a number of issues of international concern facing the world and particularly our region. The role and structure of the UN has itself been called into question by some recent developments. Presence at the UNGA provides the opportunity for exchange of views on these matters with a number of world leaders from different regions.

7. As on all my visits abroad, I will interact with the community of Indian origin in both Turkey and USA to acquaint myself with the community’s perspectives on developments in India and its progress and successes in its country of domicile.

✦✦✦✦✦
I thank Prime Minister Erdogan for his warm words. I would first like to say that my delegation and I are grateful for the warm reception and gracious hospitality, which the Turkish government and people have extended to us.

I have just completed a wide-ranging and fruitful meeting with Prime Minister Erdogan. It has been a very frank and cordial exchange of views on issues of bilateral interest, regional concern and international importance.

Turkey and India have ancient links. We are now set to become modern partners. We share the common values of secularism and democracy. We are growing industrial societies with a similar level of excellence in many fields.

But we still need to unlock many doors of economic opportunity. Our bilateral trade in 2002 was only about 650 million dollars. We have set ourselves a target of one billion dollars by 2005. Even this is a modest target, but it would set a platform for further expansion.

We agreed that a Working Group of our Economic Ministries should meet and make recommendations on diversification of our economic cooperation. They will be mandated to report to the two governments within six months.

We emphasized the importance of direct shipping and air links between our two countries. Direct air links between Istanbul and New Delhi will commence tomorrow. Travel and tourism between Turkey and India should now increase, enhancing people-to-people contacts and encouraging better links between our business communities. Direct banking channels need to be established.

We have invited a delegation from Turkey to discuss cooperation in civilian space technologies.

India’s technical and economic cooperation programme has been offering training facilities at a senior professional level to countries across the world. I have offered that 50 Turkish professionals would be provided
these scholarships on an annual basis from now onwards.

We have established a Joint Working Group on terrorism to enhance our cooperation against this grave threat to democratic societies. Both India and Turkey have suffered greatly from terrorism.

My visit to Turkey has filled a long gap since the last visit of an Indian Prime Minister in 1988. It has also been over 3 years since a Turkish Prime Minister visited India. Prime Minister Erdogan and I have agreed that there should be an increased frequency of high-level meetings between our two countries. We have agreed that our Foreign Ministers would meet at least once a year, either in one of our capitals or in one of the many places to which Foreign Ministers go these days. Our Commerce and Tourism Ministers also need to establish and maintain contact.

Of course, Heads of Government should also maintain contact. I am happy that Prime Minister Erdogan has accepted my invitation to India.

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434. Keynote address by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to the Centre for Strategic Research during his visit to Turkey.


It is a great pleasure for me to be here today. I thank the Centre for Strategic Research for giving me this opportunity to talk to this impressive gathering of Turkish opinion makers. I would like to use this occasion to reflect on the contemporary resonances and future directions of the India-Turkey partnership.

India and Turkey have had a rich and diverse historical connection. The arrival of the Turkic people in India changed the course of our history and led to the brilliant synthesis of Indian and Islamic culture. The philosophy of Mevlana Jelalettin Rumi found a natural resonance in the Indian sub-continent where tolerance and a cosmopolitan approach were already embodied in the sublime traditions of Sufism and the Bhakti movement.
There was a close and regular mutual interaction between Indian rulers and the Ottoman Empire. The activism and ideology of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk made a deep impression on the Indian freedom struggle. The people of India watched with great sympathy the efforts of the Turkish people in freeing their country from the grip of imperial power after the First World War.

Turkey’s extraordinary success in modernising a traditional and conservative society was obviously of consuming interest to a newly independent India, which had many similar problems. This led to growth of mutual interest in the life and culture of each other. Our two great civilizational nations, with no history of conflict or contradiction, were well placed to rapidly expand mutually beneficial ties.

However, the Cold War intervened, with its distorting equations. Indo-Turkish relations did not achieve their potential. There was a period of a few decades in the last century, when the vibrancy of our contacts and the dynamism of our interaction were somewhat more subdued.

The process of rediscovery began again in the mid-eighties of the last century and, since then, we have progressed in a steady forward direction, although in somewhat incremental fashion.

Friends,

History is always an inspiration, but it is contemporary relevance, which sustains and strengthens international relationships in today’s globalized world. As post-Cold War India and Turkey look at each other across a vast Asian landmass, they see that the cultural affinities of the past have been reinforced by new political convergences and economic complementarities. It is these that I discussed today with Prime minister Erdogan, as we attempted to chart out the blueprint of the India-Turkish partnership for the coming decades.

We have some obvious shared strengths and commonalities, which are valuable in today’s world:

- Both our countries are secular in our philosophy and democratic in our institutions.

- The will of our peoples is embodied in the supremacy of our Parliaments.

- Our populations are enlightened and forward-looking.
Both of us have free and vibrant media.
- Our economies are growing at a fast rate.

These commonalities lead to many obvious convergences of interests and objectives. I will particularly emphasize six of them today.

First, terrorism, which is unquestionably the highest priority on the international agenda. I come here with fresh memories of brutal terrorist actions recently carried out in various parts of India. Both Turkey and India have been victims of terrorism well before 9/11. We have common perspectives on this issue. We agree that there can be no double standards in identifying or fighting terrorism. We do not accept the dangerous logic of “root causes” as excuses for inaction against terrorism. Today, the world faces the real and frightening danger of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists. We agree that strong international cooperation is needed to tackle this problem. Turkey and India have collaborated with each other at international fora on combating terrorism. We can expand this cooperation and give it greater practical shape. For this purpose, we have set up a Joint Working Group on Terrorism, which will also forge closer cooperation between the security and law enforcement agencies of our two countries.

Second, as we look beyond terrorism, we recognize our common stake in the development of a just and equitable international order. We need to ensure that all countries play their deserved role in the emergence of a cooperative multi-polar world order, in which their interests and aspirations are given due consideration. Multilateral Institutions have recently come under considerable criticism and strain. Many of them have become ineffective, while others have virtually been paralysed. Most Importantly, the functioning of the United Nations and its various agencies has been less than optimal. India and Turkey can work together for the reform of these institutions to make them more relevant and responsive to today’s world realities.

Third, as developing economies, India and Turkey have a natural interest in seeing a more equitable spread in the benefits from free trade in goods and services. With our large rural populations, we are particularly interested in removing distortions and inequities in the regime for exports of agricultural commodities. The failure of Cancun WTO Ministerial Meeting summit illustrates that those who lecture us on immediate sacrifices for long-term gains are not willing to follow their own prescriptions. If
developing countries are to hold out for a more open and non-discriminatory global trade regime, India and Turkey should coordinate their positions with other like-minded countries. We can also work together on other key global issues like the environment and sustainable development.

Fourth, economic development is crucial for our people. It is in this area that we need to devote maximum attention. Turkey has state-of-the-art expertise in infrastructure construction and development. India is undertaking several ambitious infrastructure development projects, including the biggest highway project in the world – the construction of 13,000 kilometres of four-lane roads across the length and breadth of our vast country. Clearly, cooperation in this sector has great promise for our future cooperation. There are virtually an uncountable number of other such complementary strengths of our two economies, including power, telecom, tourism, health and education. We have to aggressively seek them out to be aware of them and to exploit them.

Fifth, both our countries have attached great importance to science & technology as important catalysts of their development process. Technology drives the knowledge economy, which is at the heart of the globalisation process. It also accelerates the transition from one stage of development to the next. India and Turkey have global scientific traditions. It is natural that we should enhance our linkages in this area. India’s growing strengths in agriculture, Information Technology, biotechnology, space sciences and civilian nuclear power are well recognized. Companies around the world are outsourcing their research to Indian laboratories and institutions. India is also emerging as a world-class centre for health care.

Collaboration in these areas can be a significant force multiplier for our economic cooperation. We have to pursue it with a sense of purpose.

Sixth, and certainly not the least, there is an important role, which India and Turkey can play in maintaining regional peace and stability. We do not share physical borders, but we do have a vast common extended neighbourhood – in Central Asia, West Asia and the Gulf. It is of even greater significance that, while our interests overlap in this area, nowhere do they clash. We are already building partnership in the regions of mutual interest. Indian and Turkish companies are collaborating on the construction of an oil pipeline in Central Asia and in the prospecting for oil in North Africa.
We are in the process of building a more comprehensive dialogue architecture, which would enable regular exchanges of views and perspectives, and coordination of action on matters of mutual concern. One needs only to glance at a map of Asia to see that there are areas of common concern, developments of shared interest and projects of mutual advantage where India and Turkey could act together. Prime Minister Erdogan and I have decided that our Foreign Ministers will meet more regularly, and our other Ministers would also keep in touch. This would ensure that we remain aware at all times of the opportunities for cooperation in bilateral, regional or global subjects.

Friends,

I have only outlined the promise, which the India-Turkish relationship holds out for our two peoples in this 21st century. It is a practical vision, based on objective realities. As Turkey and India step forward together, it would be a cooperation of two civilizations, gaining from their ancient wisdom, building on their current strengths, and driven by their common objectives. Enhanced engagement between India and Turkey is in the interests of regional and global peace and cooperation.

We have had such opportunities before for coming together more closely. In a fast moving world, opportunities do not linger. We should seize this moment and move swiftly to implement the decisions that have been taken during this visit of mine.

Addressing the task of Turkish nation-building over 70 years ago, Kemal Ataturk urged that action should be taken, not according to the lax mentality of past centuries, but as per the speed and movement of the current century. That exhortation seems just as valid in the context of India-Turkey cooperation.
Remarks of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the naming of Rabindranath Tagore Avenue in Ankara.


I deeply appreciate the opportunity to participate in this ceremony to name a road in Ankara after Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. By doing so, you honour one of India’s greatest poet-philosophers; and we celebrate another valuable strand of the India-Turkish connection.

Rabindranath Tagore was not a stranger to Turkey. About eighty years ago, on its way from Europe to India, his ship docked at Istanbul for two days. This brief encounter with your country obviously made a deep impression on him. He sent a request to President Ataturk for books on Turkish literature and culture, for the library of his Viswa Bharati University. History records that Kemal Ataturk sent 41 books to the University. As Chancellor of Viswa Bharati University, I can confirm to you that these books remain the prized possessions of the University.

Even though they never met, there was a strong empathy between Tagore and Ataturk. Tagore admired the nationalism and reformist zeal of Kemal Ataturk. In a tribute to Ataturk in 1938, he said:

“Kemal set us an example of a resurgent Asia...he carried out a crusade against the tyranny of superstition”.

This freedom from superstition was at the core of Tagore's own universal spirit. He sought a heaven of freedom for his country, where:

“The clear stream of reason has not lost its way in the dreary desert sand of dead habit”.

Like many generations of poets, writers, scholars and reformers in India, Rabindranath Tagore was also influenced by your great Sufi mystic, Jalalettin Rumi. Rumi's message of peace and tolerance, oneness of the human race and a world without boundaries found a deep echo in Tagore's consciousness.

Sufism and Rumi continue to enrich the links between India and Turkey. A prominent Indian film director has recently embarked on an ambitious global project to capture on the celluloid screen the multi-dimensional life, thoughts and works of this universal humanist. I am sure this project will receive the encouragement and support of government, business and the arts community in Turkey.
The Rabindranath Tagore Avenue in Ankara will remain a symbol of the friendship between our two peoples. In this, it mirrors the strategically located Kemal Ataturk Marg in Central Delhi, which runs adjacent to the official residence of the Prime Minister of India, and guards the sole public access to it. Both remind us of the intermingling streams in our history. They also inspire us to seek new convergences in the contemporary world, which could pave the road of India-Turkey partnership for the future.

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The Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, hereinafter referred to as “Parties”,

Bearing in mind the close friendly relations between the two countries;

Mindful of the dangers posed by the spread of terrorism and its harmful effects on peace, cooperation and friendly relations between States which may also jeopardize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States;

Recognising the need to prevent, eliminate and unequivocally condemn all acts, methods and practices of terrorism and deplore the impact of terrorism on the life, property, socio-economic development and political stability of countries and on international peace and security;

Recognising further the importance and the purpose of the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and all other relevant UNSC Resolutions and international conventions on terrorism;

Realising that the objectives of the Security Council Resolution 1373 and all other relevant UNSC Resolutions and international conventions on terrorism; can be achieved by mutual cooperation in a spirit of reciprocity within the framework of their respective domestic laws and regulations;
Have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**

**Objectives**

The Parties shall establish a Joint Working Group on Terrorism with a view to:

(i) Share experience concerning terrorism, organized crime and illicit trafficking of humans, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as well as their linkages;

(ii) Coordinate approaches to combat terrorism, organized crime, human and drug trafficking;

(iii) Exchange information on the activities of terrorist and organized criminal groups and their associates that may operate from or use the territories of the Parties;

(iv) Examine possible ways and means to curb activities of terrorists and organized criminal groups and their associates, including those providing finance, safe haven, front or cover to individuals or groups engaged in the planning, promotion or execution of acts of terrorism against the Republic of India and/or the Republic of Turkey in their respective countries;

(v) Establish an institutional framework for such cooperation.

**Article 2**

**Scope**

The Joint Working Group shall;

(i) Consider the ways and means to enhance mutual cooperation in combating terrorism pursuant to the Security Council Resolution 1373; and other relevant UNSC Resolution and international conventions;

(ii) Seek to identify international linkages between groups that support terrorist activities and illicit trafficking of humans, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. It will cover both State and non-State actors;

(iii) Examine procedures for exchange of operational intelligence in this area;
(iv) Suggest ways of enhancing mutual cooperation specially through
(a) Arrest, extradition and prosecution of terrorists and their associates;
(b) Mutual technical assistance, *inter atia*, through training for police / security personnel and exchange of professional expertise;
(c) Identifying, monitoring and preventing the flow of financial and other resources and assets to individuals and organizations engaged in terrorist activities.

(v) Examine ways of facilitating legal action to combat terrorism, organized crime and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

(vi) Share operational and practical experiences in areas of hijack termination, hostage rescue and protection of VIPs;

(vii) Join efforts aimed at preventing easy access to terrorist organizations, operating from either country, to small arms transfers and weapons of mass destruction;

(viii) Monitor and prevent money laundering indulged in by such individuals and groups;

(ix) Coordinate efforts with a view to early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on Terrorism;

(x) Monitor the activities of terrorist or organized criminal groups in their respective regions with a view to implement the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions;

(xi) Discuss ways of enhancing cooperation with the Interpol;

(xii) Address any other matter mutually agreed upon by the Parties.

**Article 3**

**Cooperation in Multilateral Fora**

(i) The Joint Working Group shall work towards coordinating and extending cooperation on matters relating to global campaign against terrorism in the United Nations and other specialized institutions;
Both Sides in the Joint Working Group shall also try to facilitate and assist each other in keeping the other Side informed of the important developments on this subject.

**Article 4**

**Composition**

(i) The Ministry of External Affairs will be the nodal agency on the Indian side responsible for the implementation of this Agreement.

(ii) Similarly, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be the nodal agency on the Turkish side.

(iii) The nodal agencies of the respective Parties may have representatives from their Ministry of Home Affairs and other relevant agencies involved in counter-terrorism activities as well as those dealing with prevention of drug trafficking and money laundering.

**Article 5**

**Modalities**

(i) The Joint Working Group shall meet at least once every year on mutually convenient dates. The venue of the meetings shall alternatively be in the Republic of India and the Republic of Turkey;

(ii) The Joint Working Group shall observe complete confidentiality in the conduct of its work;

(iii) Any confidential information provided by one Party pursuant to this Protocol shall not be passed on or disclosed to a third party without the express consent of the other Party;

**Article 6**

**Duration**

This Protocol shall enter into force on the first day of the subsequent month following the second notification by the Parties that they have complied with the respective domestic requirements for its entry into force and shall remain in force for a period of one year. Thereafter the Protocol shall be extended automatically for a similar period unless either Party gives to the other a written notice of its intention to terminate the Protocol at least three months before the expiry of its duration.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF the following representatives being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments have signed this Protocol.

DONE at Ankara this 17th day of September 2003 in two originals each in Hindi, Turkish and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of the Republic of India

For the Government of the Republic of Turkey

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437. Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the India-Turkey Business Meeting.


Mr. Minister,

Friends from India and Turkey:

It is a great pleasure to be in this historic city of Istanbul. Your tourist guides tell us that this is the only city in the world, which actually spans two continents. Even in our brief stay in this city, we have seen the impressive claim of this city to the heritage of the East and of the West. We see also the imprint of the many cultures, which have passed through this port, when it was a bustling maritime junction for the Silk Route.

Istanbul has retained its strategic importance for international trade. Today, it is the economic capital of Turkey, handling 40% of its foreign trade and host to half its national wealth. It is therefore a most appropriate setting for this meeting of Indian and Turkish businesspersons. I wish you rewarding deliberations and profitable negotiations.

Friends;

This is the last engagement of my deeply satisfying visit to Turkey. I have had cordial and fruitful meetings with the Turkish leadership. I was encouraged by the identity of our views about the need for a new impetus to our bilateral relations.
The long history of friendly contact between India and Turkey should be translated into a vibrant, revitalised economic partnership, based on our respective strengths. This should cover not only trade in goods and services, but also two-way investment, third country projects, scientific research collaboration, joint commercialization of new technologies, and many other areas.

We have agreed that we would constitute a special bilateral Working Group, drawn from our Economic Ministries, to further this agenda. This group should identify areas of promise in hitherto unexplored sectors and analyse how they can best be developed. It would also recommend policy measures to our governments for maximizing the benefits from our cooperation.

To emphasize the urgency of this task, we have specified that the Group will submit its recommendations to the two governments within six months. I am hopeful that the ideas that emerge from this group will be creative and forward-looking.

This effort cannot produce optimum results, without the whole-hearted participation and support of the business communities of the two countries. You have to come forward with constructive ideas, based on your outlook and experiences.

Friends,

In my discussions with Prime Minister Erdogan, we agreed that despite the rapid expansion of trade turnover to about 650 million dollars last year, the full potential is yet to be realized. The first target we have set is a turnover of 1 billion dollars by 2005. Even this is well below the possibilities. I am sure the Bilateral Working Group, which I have just mentioned, will have suggestions for boosting trade. But there are some obvious and fundamental areas, which we can identify straightaway.

The first is the need to strengthen the infrastructure of trade facilitation. The air link between Istanbul and Delhi, which resumed yesterday, is an important first step in travel exchanges including for business travel. Direct shipping links and easy banking channels are priority requirements. We need to go further by establishing closer links between our EXIM Banks and our export credit institutions.

A second obvious problem area is of a lack of awareness in our business communities of the available opportunities. This is an equal problem on both sides.
Since India launched its economic reforms in the last decade of the last century, it has recorded an average annual growth rate of over 6%. It is now the world’s fourth largest economy on purchasing power parity. As we adjusted to globalisation, we sharply reduced tariff and non-tariff barriers, introduced full capital account convertibility for foreign investors and opened up inter-border current account transactions. Our determined thrust for infrastructure modernisation includes construction of 13,000 kilometres of four-lane highways, a massive ports upgradation programme, and an expansion of capacity of thermal, hydroelectric and nuclear power.

Our investment in education and human resource development has equipped us with the second largest scientific and technological manpower in the world. Our advances in science and technology have today put us in the forefront of the knowledge revolution and accelerated our economic development process. We have a rapidly growing middle-class – today estimated at about 300 million – which provides scientific, technological and managerial skills, as well as a huge and growing market.

There is insufficient awareness around the world – including in Turkey – of these compelling facts. Only this can explain the large imbalance in our trade. With Turkey’s strengths and competitive advantage in infrastructure industries, Turkish project exports to India in these areas should normally have surged.

Equally, how many in the Indian business community are aware of the impressive economic record of Turkey? Its economy has shown enormous resilience in the wake of a financial crisis two years ago, and regained its growth in spite of natural disasters, war and instability in its immediate environment. The economic reforms of Turkey have retained their vibrancy. Turkey’s commercial presence in this region extends from infrastructure industries to retail activity and services.

I will give you two examples of obvious gaps in awareness, still to be bridged: · India exports nearly 10 billion dollars of an entire range of I.T. products, mainly to West Europe and USA. However, Turkey’s share in this export is almost negligible.

Our business delegation, which is in Turkey, has discovered great opportunities for cooperation in textiles, chemicals, two-wheeler vehicles and pharmaceuticals.

The short point, therefore, is that we should have much more interaction between our business communities – through increased travel, through seminars and workshops, through trade fairs and exhibitions.
I am happy that the India-Turkey Joint Business Council had a session earlier today, and that an Indian Industry Exhibition has been launched in Istanbul to coincide with my visit. While applauding them, I would only like to point out that such activities should be part of a regular on-going process, and not confined only to high-level visits.

I understand that Turkey is the main international partner for the India International Trade Fair in Delhi later this year. I hope Turkish business and industry will respond enthusiastically to this opportunity to showcase Turkish expertise and technologies to an Indian market, which has a huge demand for them, but is today sourcing them from elsewhere.

Friends,

Both India and Turkey are similarly located in areas of expanding economic opportunity. Turkey is at the crossroads of Europe, West Asia and Central Asia, on the waterways linking the North African coast and the Black Sea. The landmass from Central Asia up to the Mediterranean Coast is a zone where our commercial interests and age-old cultural ties overlap.

Simple commercial logic suggests that our entrepreneurs should join forces in sectors of competitive advantage in these areas. Turkey can be a launching pad for Indian business into an expanding European market. India is itself an expanding market of a billion consumers, and also provides access to vast regions in South and South-East Asia.

India and Turkey have other objective conditions for rapid diversification of economic cooperation. We are stable, democratic nations with a tradition of respect for the Rule of Law. We have the requisite legal framework to protect investments and encourage business. We have effective regulatory bodies and independent judicial systems.

We have the bilateral framework of agreements to support an expansion of our commercial ties. Our business associations have developed relations with each other. I was happy to hear yesterday that the Confederation of Indian Industry now plans to open an office in Turkey.

Thus a proper foundation already exists to build a structure of strong economic links

Friends,

The substance of my message to you – and indeed of my visit to
Turkey – is that we need to raise our relationship to a qualitatively new level. For this, we need a long-term vision of a future India-Turkey partnership, based on our respective strengths and comparative advantages. On this visit, I have been convinced that there is willingness on both sides to develop such a vision.

Governments can only encourage and facilitate this process by creating the necessary infrastructure and ensuring the necessary legal framework. After that, it is for business to pick up the gauntlet. I hope you will devote some thought to this during your deliberations here. I also hope that business and industry on both sides will maintain uninterrupted contact and dialogue to achieve this objective.

Thank you

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Ukrain

438. Agreement between the Republic of India and Ukraine on the Mutual Protection of Classified Information.

New Delhi, August 12, 2003.

The Republic of India and Ukraine hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”,

Intending to ensure the mutual protection of all classified information, which has been classified by one Party and transferred to the other Party,

Desiring to establish the rules for the mutual protection of classified Information which shall extend to all agreements on cooperation to be concluded between the Parties and organizations and to contracts which provide for exchange of classified information.

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Definitions and Comparison of the Terms

For the purposes of this Agreement
The term “classified information” means information with limited access in any form and any documents, products, substances or physical fields on/in which Information is contained or may be recorded and which, in the interests of national security of the Parties, in accordance with their applicable legislation require protection against unauthorized access and have been appropriately classified including those jointly created by the organizations of the Parties in the framework of cooperation and classified on the basis of the applicable legislation of the Parties and jointly coordinated criteria;

The term “originating Party” means the Party to which has classified and transferred classified information;

The term “Recipient Party” means the Party to which classified information is transferred.

The term “organization” means ministry, other State body, any legal or physical person that participates in the international cooperation or in the implementation of the contracts, which are covered by this Agreement;

The term “competent authority” means a State authority controlling the implementation of this Agreement or its separate articles and designated so in accordance with Article 12 of this Agreement;

The term ‘contract’, ‘customer’ and ‘contractor’ will have the same meaning as normally assigned to them.

“Information with limited access” shall include inter alia:

(a) In Ukraine:

Information which covers the areas of defence, economy, science and technology, external affairs, state security and law enforcement, disclosure of which may damage state security and which is recognized as state secrets and is subject to protection by the state, and also information which cannot be disclosed and disseminated in mass media in accordance with national legislation.

Implementation of limitations on spreading of and access to information with limited access shall be fulfilled by classifying of documents and other information as follows:

“Of Great Importance’ shall be applied to information in the area of defence and state security, disclosure of which can cause exceptionally
grave damage to the national security of Ukraine;

“Top Secret” shall be applied to information, disclosure of which can cause grave damage to the state interests and national security of Ukraine;

“Secret” shall be applied to information, disclosure of which can cause damage to the state interests and national security of Ukraine;

“Restricted” shall be applied to information with limited access, which has confidential character and cannot be disclosed or disseminated in mass media;

(b) in the Republic of India:

Information protected by the State in its military, foreign policy, economy areas, as well as in the areas of science and technology, intelligence, counter-intelligence and investigation of crimes, disclosure of which may damage the security and other essential interests of the Republic of India.

Depending on the damage to the security or other essential interests of the Republic of India resulting from an unauthorized disclosure of classified information, such information shall be classified as follows:

“Top Secret” shall be applied to information and material, the unauthorized disclosure of which could be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security or national interest;

“Secret” shall be applied to information and material, the unauthorized disclosure of which could be expected to cause serious damage to the national security or national interests or cause serious embarrassment to the Government in its functioning;

“Confidential” shall be applied to information and material the unauthorized disclosure of which can be expected to cause damage to the national security or would be prejudicial to the national interests or would embarrass the Government in its functioning;

“Restricted” shall be applied to information and material, which is essentially meant for official use only and which should not be published or communicated to any one except for official purpose.
Article 2

Comparison of Classification Levels

The Parties agree that classification levels are comparable as follows:

**In the Republic of India**  **In Ukraine**

TOP SECRET        Of Great Importance
SECRET            Top Secret
CONFIDENTIAL      Secret
RESTRICTED        Restricted

Article 3

Measures of Protection

1. The Parties, in the framework of their national legislation, shall take all necessary measures for the protection of classified information transferred or created. They shall ensure at least the same level of protection of such classified information as stipulated for their own classified information with commensurate level of classification.

2. The Parties shall not grant access to such classified information to a third Party without the prior written consent of the Party under order of which it has been classified. This provision is in force particularly for the rules of archiving and publicizing set up by the Parties. Classified information shall be used exclusively for the specified purposes. In particular, access to classified information shall be granted only to authorized persons in the course of their official duties.

3. The clearance procedure for granting access to authorized persons shall not be different from what is necessary for gaining access to the equivalent classified information of their own State.

4. The Parties shall ensure necessary inspection checks and observance of the rules for mutual protection of classified information within their own territory.
**Article 4**

**Preparation of the Transfer of Classified Information**

When the Originating Party intends to transfer classified information to an organization or the Recipient Party or assigns its organization to do so, it shall preliminarily request the competent authority of the Recipient Party for assurance confirming that the organization of the Recipient Party has passed the procedure granting it security clearance to handle classified information of necessary classification level and has appropriate means to ensure proper protection of classified information. This assurance shall contain an obligation to ensure that measures of protection used by the security cleared organization are in compliance with the requirements of national law and are subject to control and supervision of the competent authority.

**Article 5**

**Carrying out the Transfer of Classified Information**

1. The Competent Authority of the Originating Party shall be responsible for marking all classified information transferred or created in the framework of a contract. Upon request of the competent authority of the Recipient Party it shall notify the markings of the transferred classified information in the form of a list (the list of markings). In such a case the competent authority of the Recipient Party shall simultaneously notify that the organization which receives classified information has undertaken to handle classified information given at its disposal like classified information of corresponding classification level of its own State.

2. When the Competent Authority of the Recipient Party receives requested list of markings, it shall acknowledge in writing the receipt and if necessary forward the list to contractor.

3. The Competent Authority of the Recipient Party shall ensure that the organization which receives classified information handles classified information of the other Party like classified information of corresponding classification level of its own State.

4. Parties shall ensure that the contract with contractors is concluded only after the contractor has taken the necessary steps to protect the classified information.
5. The Parties shall ensure that the contract is concluded and works to which the requirements of protection of classified information apply are commenced only after appropriate protective measures are taken by the contractor.

**Article 6**

**Marking**

1. The Recipient Party shall mark classified information of the Originating Party with appropriate classification markings in accordance with Article 2 of this Agreement.

2. Copies and translations of classified information of the Originating party shall be marked with the same classification markings as the originals and they shall be handled like originals.

3. Classified information, created in the Recipient Party on the basis of the classified information transferred by the Originating Party, shall be marked with the corresponding classification marking which shall not be lower than the classification marking of the transferred classified information.

4. The Recipient Party may change or cancel classification levels of the transferred classified information upon request of the Originating Party. The Originating Party shall notify the Recipient Party about its intention to change or cancel classification level six weeks beforehand.

**Article 7**

**Transfer of Classified Information**

1. Classified information shall be transferred from one State to the other, as a rule, through diplomatic or military couriers. The competent authority shall confirm the receipt of classified information and transmit it further to the recipient in accordance with the national rules of protection of classified information.

2. In specific cases competent authorities may agree in general or subject to conditions indicated in paragraph 4 of this Article, that classified information, excluding “Top Secret” and “Secret” in case of India and “Of great importance” and “Top Secret” in case of
Ukraine, may be transferred by some other means if use of diplomatic or military couriers would unreasonably complicate the transfer provided that the confidentiality is not compromised.

3. If confidential materials are transmitted using information technologies, the relevant responsible organizations of the Parties shall take concerted measures for their protection in accordance with national legislation.

4. It shall be necessary for the cases indicated in paragraph 2 of this Article that:

- the person who carries out transportation is security cleared for classified information of corresponding classification level;
- the list of classified information being transferred is left in the forwarding organization; a copy of this list shall be handed over to the recipient for forwarding to the competent authority;
- the package of classified information is carried in accordance with the rules set up for the transportation within the State;
- the receipt is taken confirming that the classified information is received;
- the person who carries out transportation has courier certificate granted by the competent authority of one of the Parties.

5. For transportation of classified materials of considerable volume, the competent authorities shall establish for each case the method of transportation, route and accompanying guards. The bearer shall be authorized for access to classified information of the comparable security classification. Furthermore, classified information transmitted by Electronic means shall be encrypted, followed by confirmation through diplomatic channels.

**Article 8**

**Visits**

1. Each Party may grant to the representatives of the other Party access to classified information subject to the prior written consent of the competent authority of the visited State. The permission shall be granted only to persons duly authorized and security cleared by the sending State.
2. The consent of the visited State shall be given on an application by the sending State containing the following data about the representative:

- Name, surname, date and place of birth and address.
- Passport number, place and date of issue.
- Position or title, name of the employer.
- Details of security clearance.
- Purpose of the visit.
- Name of organizations and facilities to be visited.
- Names and designations of persons intended to meet.

**Article 9**

**Return/Destruction of Classified Documents/Information**

1. Classified documents/information shall be returned or destroyed following a written notification of the relevant responsible organization of the Party that handed them over.

2. The destruction of classified documents/information shall be documented, and the process of destruction shall prevent their reproduction in the future.

**Article 10**

**Violations of Confidentiality Requirements and Payment of Damages**

1. Any violation of rules of protection of classified information, which has resulted or may result in disclosure of classified information, shall be immediately communicated to the other Party.

2. The authorities shall investigate the violation of the rules of protection of classified information and those found responsible shall be prosecuted in accordance with the law of the State in whose territory the violation takes place. Upon request, the other Party shall render assistance during the investigation; the results of the investigation shall be reported to it.

3. The organization responsible for unauthorized disclosure of
classified information shall compensate the other for the damage caused. The amount and terms of compensation shall be specified individual agreements or contracts.

Article 11

Expenses

The costs for implementation of security measures shall be borne by the Recipient Party after receipt of classified information.

Article 12

Competent Authorities

Fulfillment of the requirements of this Agreement shall be under the control of the following authorities:

In the Republic of India - Ministry of Home Affairs.
In Ukraine - Security Service of Ukraine;

The Parties shall notify each other about the authorities, which are competent for the implementation of this Agreement or its separate articles in appropriate areas of state activity.

Article 13

Dispute Resolution

All disputes regarding interpretation or application of this Agreement shall be resolved through negotiations between the Parties. During the negotiations the Parties shall continue to fulfill their obligations under this Agreement.

Article 14

Consultations

1. The competent authorities of the Parties shall get acquainted with the rules of protection of classified information applicable within the territory of the other Party.

2. With the aim of ensuring close cooperation during the implementation of this Agreement, the competent authorities shall consult each other upon request.
3. Each Party shall allow the representatives of the competent authority of the other Party or any other authority determined by the mutual consent to carry out visits to its territory to discuss with the representatives of the competent authority their own procedures and means for the protection of classified information granted by the other Party. Each Party shall provide support to such representatives while determining whether classified information granted to it by the other Party is sufficiently protected. The details shall be specified by the competent authorities.

**Article 15**

**Entry into Force, Period of Validity, Changes, Termination**

1. This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of receipt of the last written notification about fulfillment by the Parties of internal procedures that are necessary for its entering into force.

2. Each Party at any time may submit a proposal in written form as to the changes or amendments to this Agreement. When one Party submits a corresponding proposal the negotiations concerning the changes and amendments to this Agreement shall be held between the Parties. Changes and amendments to this Agreement shall be drawn up as protocols constituting an integral part of the Agreement and entering into force in accordance with the procedure envisaged by paragraph 1 of this Article.

3. The Agreement shall remain in force until either Party sends through diplomatic channels to the other Party a written notice six months in advance of its intention to terminate this Agreement.

In case of termination of Agreement the classified information which has been transferred or resulted from cooperation shall continue to be treated in accordance with Article 3 of this Agreement until the Originating Party cancels the security classification.

**Done** at New Delhi this 12\(^{th}\) day of August 2003 in duplicate in Hindi, Ukrainian, and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of divergence in interpretation of the provisions of this Agreement the English text shall prevail.

**For the Republic of India**

**For Ukraine**
439. Media briefing by Official Spokesperson on the visit of Ukrainian Foreign Minister.

New Delhi, August 12, 2003.

Shri Navtej Sarna: Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen

As you know the Ukrainian Foreign Minister is in town. He had one to one meeting as well as delegation level talks with the External Affairs Minister Mr. Yashwant Sinha this morning. Two agreements were signed and between the two Ministers and two other documents were exchanged after rectification. It was an extensive one to one meeting, which lasted about 45 minutes and followed by delegation level talks followed by lunch hosted by the External Affairs Minister.

Following were the listed of documents which were signed/exchanged by the two Ministers:

- Agreement between the Republic of India and Ukraine on the Mutual Protection of Classified Information.

- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Tourism between the Government of the Republic of India and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.


It was underlined that the political dialogue can be strengthened through regular exchanges and consultations and several visits are in the pipeline from both sides in the months to come.

Bilateral trade and economic relations were discussed in detail. It was underlined that the effort should be to identify and diversify the trade basket. The two sides agreed that they should aim to reach a total turnover of USD500 million by 2006. Bilateral investment opportunities also need to be explored. Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement and Bilateral Promotion & Protection of Investment agreements are already in place.
Cooperation in Science & Technology as well as cooperation in the field of Space Technology were also discussed. Third meeting of Indo-Ukrainian Joint Science & Technology Committee was held in June this year and has recommended 13 projects to be continued and two new projects to be implemented.

It was underlined that the Extradition Treaty and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters between the two countries have strengthened cooperation against terrorism.

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1. Official Spokesperson Navtej Sarna on August 8 gave a background to India – Ukraine relations and said: “Traditionally the relations between India and Ukraine have been close and friendly. Diplomatic relations were established between the two countries in 1992. There has been significant expansion of bilateral relations since then between India and Ukraine in several areas. This has been marked by a number of high level visits. President Mr. Leonid Kuchma, paid a State visit to India in October 2002. This year the Hon’ble Minister of State for Steel, Shri B. K. Tripathy visited Ukraine in June. In July the 3rd Session of the Indo-Ukrainian Inter-Governmental Commission for trade, economic, scientific, technological, industrial and cultural cooperation took place in Kyiv. Ukraine is India’s second largest trade partner in the CIS region. The bilateral trade figures between the two countries for 2002-2003 (April to November) are nearly Rs. 850 crores. The second session of the Joint Business Council was held in July and we also have cooperation in various fields including science and technology, industry particularly metallurgy and culture.”
INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003

Section - XI

INDIA AND THE UNITED NATIONS


Please see Document No. 448

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441. Keynote address by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal while inaugurating a Seminar on “Complex Peace Operations: Traditional Premises and New Realities” at the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping.

New Delhi, August 21, 2003.

1. General Nambiar, Director of the United Service Institution of India, distinguished participants and guests,

2. It gives me great pleasure to be amidst you today in the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK), at the inaugural session of the National Seminar. This is my first visit to this institution. In the short span of three years since its inception, the Centre has attained stature and has evolved into a well recognized institution. I congratulate Gen. Satish Nambiar, under whose able leadership the CUNPK has grown, for the meticulous planning and dynamism that he has imparted to the institution.

3. The Centre has been set up as a joint endeavour of the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces. I am particularly happy to see this vibrant example of active cooperation and to see that such concepts can be concretized. We all know that collective pooling of our experiences and expertise, a sharing of our perceptions and perspectives in the different wings of the Government, is a sine qua non for the successful management of critical issues of national interest, especially issues of war and peace. This Centre is an example of how such cooperation and synergy can be achieved. I have been told about what the CUNPK has done so far – visits including by the UNSG, an impressive list of
seminars – national and international, training capsules and a building of data and case studies. I am told that in October this year, CUNPK is gearing up to co-host along with the U.N., a training capsule for emerging Troop Contributing Countries. This event, the first of this kind, is yet another step. May I use this opportunity, to express my Ministry’s continued commitment to make CUNPK a Centre of excellence on Peacekeeping issues.

4. It is necessary for India to have such a Centre. India is among the longest serving and the largest troop contributors to UN peacekeeping activities. Our credentials in this regard are second to none. We have a formidable track record of having more than 67,000 personnel who have participated in 37 out of the 56 U.N. peacekeeping missions established so far. We have emerged as one of the most dependable and sought-after Troop Contributing Countries in the world. What is more, we have taken up difficult challenges. Starting with Korea in 1950, we have been participating in difficult missions such as in Cambodia, Angola, Rwanda, Somalia etc and now, once again the IAF is in Congo. None of this is without risks. Only two weeks ago, Shri Satish Menon, the Deputy Commandant in the BSF tragically laid down his life while serving in the U.N. Mission in Kosovo. We solemnly salute this brave officer and also 108 others before him who have made this supreme sacrifice under the U.N. flag.

5. Apart from being a leading troop contributor, we have also been an energetic and influential participant in the U.N. debates on peacekeeping, and have helped in shaping current thinking on many conceptual issues. India has played an important role in the deliberations in the UN on the recommendations of the Brahimi Report, and supported efforts to make the UN more efficient and effective in its peacekeeping functions. It is eminently appropriate therefore that this National Seminar has as its theme the contemporary issue under the title “Complex Peace Operations – Traditional Premises and New Realities”. Let me express some thoughts on the theme, in the light of our recent preoccupations and experiences.

6. I would like to emphasize that this is no longer an innocuous, theoretical debate, confined to academic circles. It is a timely issue for discussion also in the public domain. This became abundantly clear during the extensive and animated national debate that took place recently on the question of deploying our troops in Iraq. The
debate involved practically all sections of people: parliamentarians, policy makers, analysts, defence forces and the general public. While the advantages and disadvantages of sending our troops to Iraq as a part of the stabilization force were hotly debated, there were some who sought to see the whole issue only in terms of so-called "U.S. pressure" on India. There has been no US pressure on India. US would, of course, like India to contribute to the stabilization force but to say that a request amounts to pressure would be a reflection of an undue sense of vulnerability. We value our relations with the US and whenever possible we should explore issues on which we can work together. I would like to emphasize, however, that to see India as bending to pressure is not to do justice to ourselves. The strength and stature of our country has been demonstrated time and again in the independent stance we have adopted on important global issues and the independent decisions we have taken in matters that concern us. We cannot be pushed into taking any decision that is not of our own making. Our decisions will always be arrived at after careful consideration of all relevant aspects of issues under examination, and will be guided, in the final analysis, solely by our national interests. So was it in this case.

7. Let me share some reflections on the broader theme: “traditional premises and new realities”. Our standard approach to ‘peacekeeping’ is well known to most of you and can be summarized briefly. We believe that the UN has a major responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and that peacekeeping continues to be one of the key tools or instruments available to the UN. We view peacekeeping in the traditional sense of the term as an effort to assist in ‘keeping peace’ and facilitating a return to normalcy, preferably within a finite, well defined timeframe. We have believed that peacekeeping follows a ‘peace accord’ between parties to a conflict and a commitment by them for a peaceful settlement. Peacekeeping operations should strictly adhere to the principles of the UN Charter, in particular, the principles of full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-intervention in their internal affairs. We have also insisted that peacekeeping operations should be considered only at the request of the Member States involved, and should be under the command and control of the UN. It is also our belief that Chapter VI operations, based on consent of the parties are more likely to succeed and Chapter VII operations which are in the nature of an enforcement operation should be viewed as exceptions.
8. While the above has constituted our approach to peacekeeping, we are nevertheless fully alive and sensitive to the reality of the changing nature of peacekeeping, and the growing complexity and scale of these operations. In the last ten years the principles and practices in peacekeeping have undergone something of a revolution.

9. These changes have been described and commented upon variously. Let me merely identify a few elements:

- Peace keeping, an operation relevant to keeping peace between two or more states has also moved to keeping peace within a state. There is involvement of the UN not only in situations of inter-state conflict but also in the intra-State conflicts.

- The objectives pursued in operations have enlarged from assisting in the maintenance of ceasefire to the increasingly detailed stabilization, humanitarian, and civilian police components. UN operations have widened and peace keeping is seen as one element in a larger process of managing a ‘post-conflict’ situation. Examples: East Timor or Afghanistan. The nature of ‘Peace operations’, itself a new term instead of the conventional ‘Peacekeeping Operations’ has therefore changed from being uni-dimensional to multi-dimensional involving a wide spectrum of activities – humanitarian assistance, refugee returns, provision of interim State services, establishment of rule of law, assistance to international criminal tribunals, facilitation of political process, monitoring of elections, and even establishment of transitional governments, etc.

- The use of civil police and other civilians is increasing in these operations. We ourselves are getting more and more requests for policemen and have had police contingents in Bosnia and Kosovo.

- There are also varying mandates under the UN: from classical UN peacekeeping operations, to UN-authorised multinational operations as in the case of Afghanistan and operations outside the ambit of the UN such as the coalition forces in Iraq.

- Another significant evolution is the UN’s reliance on regional and sub-regional organizations to support and even carry out missions on its behalf. The recent example is of ECOWAS in Liberia.
This is not an exhaustive but an indicative listing of some of the changes that we see around us today. It is clear that there are new realities. Indeed it is bound to be so since the structure and features of international relations have undeniably changed since the 1990s. India recognizes the changes and the new realities. The question then is how do we respond to them?

For a country like India – with its size, population, resources, a rich and successful experience of handling internal dissensions and problems, well established institutions, a proud record of independence of judgment and action - some of these precepts and practices amounting to erosion of sovereignty and dependence on others for even the essential tasks of governance cannot be but a matter of concern. Our basic approach has been to uphold the principle of sovereignty and of supporting assistance from outside, including the UN, only at the explicit request and consent of the State. Having said this, nevertheless we cannot shut our eyes to the reality around us and of the needs, the vulnerabilities and even the demands of weaker or smaller states which may seek international involvement in the resolution of their conflicts or in the protection of civilian populations. In some cases the Government is simply not functional, in others the institutions have collapsed or are non-existent: in other words the sovereignty cannot be exercised effectively at all. I would not name examples, but these should be clear to you. It is in such cases and only in such cases that we can countenance the question of the role of the international community including the UN, in peace operations in its larger sense as a component of nation-building.

In recent months we have pondered on some of these issues as we have looked at the situations in Afghanistan, in Congo, in Liberia and in Iraq. All these are different situations and let me say that India’s interests are also different. Let me identify a few points, which in our view are relevant in determining India’s response for requests for assistance.

- To start, India’s policy on involvement in peace keeping operations continues to be shaped by a commitment to UN, its objectives and a commitment to Peace. The involvement of the UN implies a certain legitimacy, an international recognition and acceptability. In saying this, I am not implying that all decisions of the Security Council are necessarily objective or wise or fair. In the real world we are well aware that the decisions of the Security Council could also be a product of the power politics. Nevertheless, they do confer a certain international legitimacy as distinct form adhoc or unilateral decisions.
We also are influenced by both the goodwill of the countries served by our peacekeepers and by the prospect of minimizing the civilian suffering which is a concomitant to peace.

We should however be failing in recognizing the realities that I described, if each and every of our decisions on peacekeeping is an automatic response to a UN request (and only to a U.N. request). There are too many conflict situations, too many requests and too few resources for India to so respond. Therefore, the bilateral relations and the regional equations and an assessment of India’s interests broadly defined have to be a part in determining our response.

The perception about India’s involvement in a country or in a region where our troops might go, the public sentiments about the role that India would play and the national sentiment in India about such involvement are also undoubtedly factors which would influence a decision.

Operational questions such as the issue of command and control, the resources for meeting the costs, the nature of the risk and the functions that the peacekeepers are expected to carry out are all relevant factors.

The professionalism of our armed forces, the international exposure and experience that they would get by successfully carrying out a peacekeeping assignment in different parts of the world is no doubt also an input in the Government’s decision making.

Therefore, an assessment of India’s overall national interests in a given situation has to be undoubtedly the major determinant in deciding on our response.

10. I see from the programme that there are a number of eminently qualified experts who would debate and deliberate on these important issues at greater length. I congratulate the Centre on organizing this seminar on an eminently topical and useful theme. I wish your deliberations all success.
442. Media briefing by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal on Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s visit to New York to attend United Nations General Assembly.

New Delhi, September 15, 2003.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: The Prime Minister, as you know, is departing tomorrow. He is going to Turkey. He will be in Ankara on 16th and 17th September; and in Istanbul on 18th and 19th September. The previous visit by the Indian Prime Minister was that of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi as far back as in 1988. The former Turkish Prime Minister … visited India in 2000. [further details of briefing on Turkey see footnote to Document No. 432]

Thereafter he goes to New York to attend the 58th General Assembly Session of the United Nations, which will begin from September 23. Prime Minister will be addressing the UNGA in the morning of September 25.

Just to give you a little backdrop of this particular UNGA Session, it is being convened in a certain ambience. In 2001, the issue was September 11. In fact, the UNGA session itself was postponed because of it. In 2002, it was what US intended to do on Iraq, which was the focal point of interest. In the end the US decided to go to the UN and eventually got through a resolution - Security Council Resolution 1441.

This year, the major theme is the very role and relevance of UN following the Iraq crisis. Another major theme which is related to this, of course, is the old theme of multilateralism vs. unilateralism, respect of UN Charter and international law, and the very relevance and efficacy of the UN itself. Iraq, of course, will be a major theme though this issue is being dealt with in the Security Council rather than in the UNGA. One point of interest is whether the UN Security Council Resolution which the United States would be interested in seeing through, will come about before September 23 or later.

You would have also noticed that the UN Secretary-General himself has come out with the reports stressing the issue of the need for UN reforms. He has mentioned the need for expansion of the UN Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories. We have, of course, always stressed the need for this. We continue to believe that the UN should be reformed and UN Security Council expansion has to be an essential element of this reform as that alone would enable the UN to effectively answer global challenges. It seems that the UN Secretary-
General himself, in his recent speech, has underlined the need for this. So, this too is likely to be a major issue of discussions. Other important political themes which will dominate discussions are: terrorism, the Middle-East peace process, and Afghanistan.

Development Agenda and the economic issues are equally important. We have just heard about the setback at Cancun. So, the lessons of the Cancun meeting will be duly reflected upon. The other issue is the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and these no doubt will be discussed. Needless to remind you that the UNGA has a long and substantive agenda and many issues of political, economic, social and legal which will be taken up in the Committees which will begin their work from October 6 onwards.

Prime Minister, in addition to his speech, will be meeting other world leaders. He will be meeting President Bush. We are also awaiting confirmation of the meeting with President Putin. Incidentally, the External Affairs Minister will also have a number of meetings with his counterparts. As has been the practice, we will have a number of other meetings on the margins of the UNGA. It is a very good occasion for the world leaders to meet with each other. An example of the meeting at External Affairs Ministers’ level is the one between Russia, China and India. This will be the second such meeting. The last one was also held in New York during the UNGA session. A new thing this time would be a trilateral meeting between South Africa, Brazil and India - the IPSA initiative.

There will be a meeting of the Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers, of the G-77, of the Community of Democracies, of the Commonwealth. A new thing this year would be a dialogue between India and GCC. There will be a meeting with the Rio Group but this has taken place earlier too.

This is by and large what I had to say about Prime Minister’s visit to Turkey and New York for the UNGA. If you have any question to ask I will, of course, be happy answer.

**QUESTION:** Would you just give a brief run down on the meetings which the Prime Minister is going to have on the margins of UNGA?....

**Foreign Secretary:** ... About the meetings the Prime Minister is going to have, I have already said that he will be meeting the US President, and very probably also the Russian President. In addition, there would be an informal meeting between the three Heads of Government of IBSA countries - South Africa, Brazil and India. The substantive meeting, of
course, will be held at the External Affairs Ministers’ level. The other meetings will be finalized. All these things are fluid because everybody’s programme is very busy and you have to match the available slots. This is an exercise which our Permanent Mission in involved in doing. What seems to be likely is Nigeria, Afghanistan, Mauritius, and Sri Lanka besides US and Russia which I have mentioned to you.

There are other requests that are coming in. We have to see how we can slot these meetings.

**QUESTION:** What are our expectations on UN Security Council Resolution on Iraq?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** We are not members of the Security Council. We are not engaged in discussions or negotiations. We are watching and we can be kept informed, if others want to inform us of the developments. But, basically it is something that the permanent members to begin with have to sort out and then the E-10 have to have their say. You know that there has been a meeting of the P-5 in Geneva on this issue. We have not yet heard any reports that there has been a breakthrough. So, this exercise of trying to find a consensus will be pursued no doubt in New York. President Bush is addressing the UN General Assembly on September 23. The US would, I think, only from the viewpoint of diplomatic preferences, wish to perhaps have a resolution ready by then. But, at this point in time, at least we do not have any information to suggest whether this will or will not happen.

**QUESTION:** Is there any possibility of a meeting, at any level, with Pakistan on the sidelines of UNGA?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** No.

**QUESTION:** My second question also relates to Pakistan. Khurshid Kasuri, the Pakistani Foreign Minister has been to Dhaka and Sri Lanka to invite their Heads of Government for the SAARC Summit. I just want to know if he has any plans to visit New Delhi. Is there a final decision on whether or not our Prime Minister will travel in January to Islamabad to attend the Summit?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** Insofar as the first question, we have seen press reports to the effect that he is traveling to various countries to extend invitations to the Summit. All I can say is that when the Standing Committee of the Foreign Secretaries met in Kathmandu some weeks ago we had
finalized the dates. So, the dates are known. It is not as if under the Charter or on the basis of established practice, a personal handing over of invitations is required. It is a different matter that ‘x’, ‘y’, or ‘z’ may choose to do so. But this is not a requirement. So, the Summit dates are there; the invitation, if you like to attend the Summit, is there. There is no need to reinforce the invitation by any personal visits. But we have seen that he is visiting some capitals. We have not had any official intimation to the effect that he is desirous of visiting New Delhi.

**QUESTION:** Is there any decision on the Prime Minister’s travel plans?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** What you should ask is whether there is any decision not to go. We have said repeatedly that the dates had been fixed and we are working according to those dates. All that we have said is, in order to make the Summit meaningful it is necessary that there is a forward movement on the economic agenda because SAARC does not have any meaning without a robust economic agenda. So, if all concerned have made up their mind to push the economic agenda forward, that will create the necessary impetus and the necessary reason to go in full knowledge that what lies ahead is a successful summit. For that, the Standing Committee had agreed on certain steps that are required to be taken. Those are: the finalisation of the SAFTA framework agreement, and from our point of view forward movement on the SAPTA discussions between India and Pakistan. We have suggested on the margins of the Kathmandu Summit that the fourth round of SAPTA discussions which could not take place between India and Pakistan because of this issue of notification or denotification of items, removal of these items from the negative list, that could be completed on the margins of the SAFTA meeting in September.

**QUESTION:** Has any date been fixed for Mr. Vajpayee’s meeting with President Bush?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** Yes, it has been fixed.

**QUESTION:** When will it take place?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** When he is in New York.

**QUESTION:** Over the last two days Pakistan has been reacting to Israel Prime Minister’s visit here and in particular to the sale of arms. Yesterday, Foreign Minister Kasuri spoke in Sri Lanka, and a short while ago their Foreign Ministry’s spokesman has issued a statement. Both of them are
loaded with nuclear content. Do you have a reaction to that?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I have seen the statement, I did not quite see the nuclear dimension in what he had said. If you detect that there is anything of that kind…

QUESTION: Let me just read out what their Foreign Ministry spokesman has said a short while ago. He said, ‘We react at two levels. One is at the nuclear level where we will continue to maintain our credible nuclear deterrent against India, and we will…’

FOREIGN SECRETARY: But this is absurd if he has said for the simple reason that there is nothing nuclear in our cooperation with Israel at all. So, I cannot understand why if we are going to have some cooperation in some areas with Israel, Pakistan has to start talking about nuclear matters. If he has said something of this kind, then it is more an instance of totally irresponsible statements made by Pakistan on nuclear matters. They should be careful when they speak about these things. There is no point in trying to extract propaganda mileage from our relations with Israel in this manner.

QUESTION: In Turkey, will the Prime Minister be talking about Turkey’s reaction in the eventuality of Indian troops going there? Or has that already taken place?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I think this is not an issue on our agenda with Turkey at all.

QUESTION: In the 165-point Provisional Agenda released by the UN, there is no formal mention of recent Iraq war. Do you think this will be an impediment towards the formal deliberations at the UNGA session?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I cannot see how! This issue may not be formally on the agenda but I can imagine that every single person who is going to speak, in one way or the other, is going to touch upon Iraq whether it is on the agenda or not. It is an issue of priority interest. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, it also fits into the larger themes which the UN Secretary-General himself is now highlighting, viz., the efficacy of the UN, UN reform, making it more credible, representative, so that its decision have acceptance by the international community. I think everybody feels concerned about the failure of the United Nations to collectively deal with the Iraq issue. As you know, even in discussions relating to the UN Resolution, the core issue is what role to give to the UN, whether it is vital
role as the US Resolution says, or the central role as the French and others would want.

QUESTION: World trade talks at Cancun have collapsed. What is India’s reaction on that?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: This is not a subject we deal with directly. For that reason, it is not for me to give you the definitive Indian response to the collapse of the WTO talks at Cancun. All I can say is that no one should be happy with this setback because everybody has and ought to have a stake in the international trading system. Nobody has deliberately and willfully worked for the collapse of these talks. If they have collapsed, it is because of, from our point of view, lack of sufficient flexibility and a desire for compromise on the part of developed countries who have insisted on pressing their agenda on both the agricultural issues and Singapore issues, on which the developing countries as a whole have resisted. In our case, I think one important thing that should be underlined is that we had succeeded in building up coalitions and those coalitions have endured. So, if there has been a setback, it is as a result of a wider feeling across a cross section of important developing countries that the manner in which the Cancun agenda was being shaped and pressed was not in conformity with the interests of the developing countries.

QUESTION: You just said that the issue of sending Indian troops to Iraq may not come up and that it is not on the agenda. But a task was taken up by the Government of India to consult the neighbouring countries.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: On that you are behind time. This was said at that point in time. We are not consulting anybody.

QUESTION: The last time when Bhutan’s Foreign Minister visited India, they had given a commitment that by the end of 2002, all the militants camps operating in Bhutan will be demolished. But now the King comes here and says the National Assembly of Bhutan has invited the leaders of ULFA, NDFB and other terrorist organizations to Thimpu for talks. Is it not a change of the stand of the Bhutan Government?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: They have always said that their preference is to hold discussions with certain groups and ask them to leave Bhutanese territory peacefully, and that if they do not do so, then there could be recourse to military action. So, what His Majesty the King of Bhutan has said is entirely in accordance with what we know is their position.

QUESTION: But then they had given a commitment that by the end of
December, 2002, all the militant camps operating on their soil would be
demolished. Now they are inviting the representatives of these
organizations for talks to Thimpu. Is it not a change of stand?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: We do not have any such information that he
gave such commitment. Who did he give this commitment to? To us?

QUESTION: Yes.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No, that is not true.

QUESTION: Is there any statement on the Prime Minister’s, or
Government’s discussions with the King of Bhutan?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: The discussions are not yet over. As you know,
he has had talks with the Prime Minister; our External Affairs Minister
called on him this morning; the Vice-President would be calling on him
shortly; then he will be meeting the President; and the Deputy Prime
Minister would be calling on him tomorrow. So, there are a lot of
engagements that still remain. At the end of it we will say something. At
this stage it will be premature except to say that it is essentially a goodwill
visit because relations between India and Bhutan are almost exemplary.
We have the closest of relationship with Bhutan. Our mutual cooperation
has been mutually beneficial. Barring this irritation of the Indian insurgent
groups operating from the Bhutan soil, there are no complicated issues
in our relationship with Bhutan. Last time, His Majesty visited India in
1999. We are very happy that he is visiting India this year. If you ask me,
I would say that such visits should be held more frequently so that there
is more frequent dialogue at the highest level. But then, we interact with
each other at so many levels all the time that there is no gap in our
relationship in any way.

QUESTION: You have ruled out the possibility of a meeting between
Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Musharraf on the margins of
UNGA. You also said that requests were coming in. Was there a request
from Pakistan?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No.

QUESTION: Would there be any meeting at the External Affairs Ministers’
level?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: No.

QUESTION: Going back to the Bhutanese issue, did you get a deadline
on closing down the insurgent camps on Bhutan’s territory? Coming to 
the change of stand of Bhutanese Government, what my colleague has 
just mentioned about the deadline of December, 2002 was given wide 
publicity then.

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** They have been there for twelve years. It started 
with one insurgent group and now there are three insurgent groups. So, 
the problem is growing. His Majesty is himself conscious of the problem 
and the threat that these insurgent groups pose and could eventually 
pose even more seriously to peace and stability in Bhutan itself. Any 
groups which operate in an environment of lawlessness and terrorism 
are a threat to the society in which they operate. Now the thing is that this 
is a complex issue and these groups get safe havens not only in Bhutan 
but elsewhere too. We naturally are deeply interested because in making 
sure that this kind of insurgency is dealt with definitively because of the 
havoc it causes on our territory. So, we have a cumulative interest with 
Bhutan in dealing with this problem. But, as I said, since this is a twelve 
year old problem it is futile to think in terms of deadlines. I think far more 
important is the clarity of political will to deal with this issue rather than 
anything else. Just as in the case of Pakistan, what is important is the 
clarity of political will on the part of Pakistan to deal with the issue of 
terrorism rather than laying down any artificial deadlines.

**QUESTION:** Has any timeframe been given to the militant outfits to 
respond?

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** I think these are the questions you should pose 
to His Majesty the King of Bhutan, if and when he meets you.

**QUESTION:** On the question of terrorism, we every time say that cross 
border terrorism is coming from Pakistan, and we have an exemplary 
relationship with Bhutan. Have you seen any perceptible action from the 
side of Bhutan to curb this terrorism? I say this because that terrorism is 
also of the same nature.

**FOREIGN SECRETARY:** There is a vast difference between the two. In 
one case it is promoted by the agencies of the country and the Government
itself, and is used as an instrument of State policy vis-à-vis India. In this case, the Government of Bhutan has no complicity in this, not at all. It is a very friendly Government. They understand the problem and they do want to deal with the problem. So, it is a different nature of the problem altogether.

QUESTION: I will ask you a question about this Pakistani woman who has been swept into India and says she is an Indian citizen.

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I have not followed this. How was swept into India, by the tide?

QUESTION: She was swept into India through the Chenab. This is defying solution at the legal level. Is there any thought about resolving this at a humanitarian level?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I am not aware of this problem. So, I cannot really answer it. I will inform myself about it. Next time if you ask me, if by then it is not solved, I will let you know it can be solved.

QUESTION: Going back to Iraq issue, Americans say that they want a larger role to the UN as they have envisaged earlier; the French say that they want a Central role for UN. They also say that the administration should go back to Iraqis as soon as possible. We are not members of the Security Council and we are not sending our troops to Iraq. What kind of a role do we want UN to play in Iraq?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: Clearly we have been saying for the last several months that UN must play the key role in Iraq. Even now we have said and our External Affairs Minister in an interview this morning itself has reiterated the fact that we expect the UN to play the key role. So, if there can be a consensus around that on the political side, on the security side and on the economic side, if the UN can play the role it should play, we will be happy.

QUESTION: Is it that we want a greater role on the security side?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: There is a huge sense of insecurity. The UN personnel itself are feeling very insecure. The UN Secretary-General has voiced those concerns. So, if the UN personnel on the ground are to be given that sense of security clearly, how will that come? It has to come as a result of a greater role of the UN itself in this. All these issues are interlinked. The political, the security and the economic issues are really
interlinked. Ultimately those who want a greater UN role also want the Iraqis to begin to run Iraq as quickly as possible. So, it is a question of restoration of the sovereignty of Iraq to the Iraqi people. That the mediation of this should be done through the United Nations, this is the kind of demands that are coming from those countries who want the UN to play a central role.

QUESTION: Does it not mean that they are looking at a roll back of Resolution 1483?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: I think what they are looking for is not a roll back but forward movement from 1483 basically.

QUESTION: By key role, do you mean that political and military control should be with the United Nations?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: We have always said that and rightly so. The international community generally supports the idea of the international community itself playing the critical role in Iraq and when you say the international community clearly it means the United Nations. But, for this to happen there has to be a consensus between the Permanent-5. We all know that they are divided, they were divided before the US went into Iraq, and they have remained divided since. Resolution 1483 was a step forward. It was welcomed in many quarters as giving the United Nations a more permanent role. But, after that we have seen that the security situation on the ground has deteriorated instead of having improved. So, clearly whatever the modalities that were set up under 1483 have not met the requirements of the situation. Hence, there is a need to not roll back, but go forward. How much forward? It differs. Germans and Russians would want certain number of steps to be taken. Some others may want fewer steps to be taken. That is where the issue is. With regard to the question on Pakistani woman Shehnaz, we intend to give Consular access to Pakistani High Commission to her.

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FS : Well there isn’t anything all that much to report really because you know things are off to a relatively slow start. They start picking up from tomorrow onwards when the Prime Minister (PM) will have a lot many more bilaterals, as well as the External Affairs Minister (EAM), but today the important meetings were that of the PM with the President of Nigeria, EAM’s meeting with the Foreign Minister (FM) of Israel and his meeting with the FM of Myanmar. In so far as PM’s program is concerned, in addition to his meeting with President Obasanjo he also met Governor Pataki, had a meeting with the American Association of Indian Physicians, and delivered a speech at the Asia Society on Indo-US relations at which some of you were present. With regard to PM’s meeting with Nigeria, the principal issues discussed were Cancun and the forthcoming CHOGM meeting which as you know will be held in Abuja.

With regard to Cancun there was an exchange of views on the reasons for Cancun’s failure. And of course, the observation that it was good for the developing countries to be united in the negotiations, and that it was necessary to take stock of the situation post Cancun and to maintain the united front of the developing countries, and also have a dialogue with the G-8 before the next round of negotiations take place. As you know PM will be going for the Abuja CHOGM. There was, as you can imagine, also some discussion on CMAG and the situation with regard to Zimbabwe and Pakistan, with regard to their readmission to the councils of the Commonwealth, or rather the ending of the suspension from the councils of the Commonwealth.

With regard to EAM’s meeting with the FM of Israel, it was more in terms of stock taking after PM Sharon’s visit to India and reiteration of the desire of both countries to continue to build on the momentum imparted to the relationship after the visit of PM Sharon. And the Israeli side, it won’t surprise you, were focused on efforts in the current UNGA to target them. They did express their concern about the continuing attacks on Israel within the forum of the UN.

With regard to the meeting with the FM of Myanmar, there was a discussion of our bilateral relations, especially the forthcoming visit of our Vice President to Myanmar in November. You know we have this trilateral...
highway project between Myanmar, Thailand and India, and Myanmar proposed a trilateral meeting with Thailand on the sidelines of the Bali Summit. This is a project to which all three countries attach considerable importance, and it is a key project in so far as developing transportation links between India - especially our North East and with South East Asia is concerned. To that extent, it is vital to our “look east” policy. The question of Aung Sang Su Kyi’s detention came up, and according to the Myanmar FM, she was well after her recent surgery.

EAM also met the FM of the Philippines (Mr Oakley) and apart from a general review of bilateral relations, which is normal, there was also an exchange of views on the issue of terrorism, specially the need to coordinate our respective views and actions on the subject in the context of Philippines joining the UN Security Council next year. EAM will have important meetings tomorrow - with Sudan, with the member of the Iraqi Governing Council in charge of foreign affairs, with the FM’s of Bangladesh and Romania. PM would have meetings with the PM’s of Sri Lanka and Portugal, the President of Afghanistan - apart from the call on PM by the US-India Political Action Committee and his meeting with the Indo-Caribbean group. Well, this is by and large what I might say at the moment and leave it to you to extract more information from me if you can.

Question : (Asia Haniffa - India Abroad) There was an international conference on terrorism today, it was not a UN sponsored conference but there were about 20 world leaders who attended including the UNSG and many others. Why did India stay out of that; why didn’t India have some sort of representation at this conference?

FS : Well it is not necessary for us to be present at every conference that is held anywhere in the world on the issue of terrorism. And we also have to look at what company we keep. But since you raised the subject, I did see the speech made by General Musharraf at this forum. And he made some references to the legitimate freedom struggle in Kashmir, and repression in Kashmir, and violent suppression of the people who have been denied their legitimate rights - and also made a comparison between Kashmir and East Timor. Our PM had taken this initiative to try and at least improve the atmosphere of our relationship, by taking some concrete steps towards normalization irrespective of Pakistan’s lack of performance with regard to its commitments on terrorism. Now that kind of atmosphere which could be conducive to a dialogue needs nurturing and that cannot be done, if I might refer to it as the annual Kashmir itch that Pakistan suffers from, and it might be useful, before this annual UN pilgrimage, if
the Pakistani leadership were to do some fasting when it comes to pronouncements on Kashmir.

**Question**: (Chidhanand Rajghatta, *Times of India*) I wanted to draw attention to Aziz’s ambush of George Bush in Florida, and the US President said that he understands the sort of electoral compulsions in India, and the PM’s compulsions in not sending Indian troops to Iraq. But he says that it’s still on the table and he is going to raise it. I’m wondering if he understands, why is it still on the table? And two, what are the conditions under which India would send troops to Iraq- the PR addressed this?

**FS**: See it’s like this, Iraq is a very important international issue. The entire international community is following closely what is happening on the ground there and what is happening at the UN after the US took the initiative to try and move another resolution. And therefore, it would be surprising if in PM’s conversations with the other world leaders and with President Bush, the subject of Iraq did not come up. It will certainly interest our PM to hear what perspectives the US has in regard to the situation in Iraq. It doesn’t necessarily have to be in the context of India’s contribution or anybody else’s contribution. I think irrespective of that, it would be of great interest to us to hear from president Bush what exactly the US perspectives are.

**Question**: (Geeta Bajaj Eye on Asia TV) Did the issue of the Palestinian people come up either in today’s discussions or is it expected to come up perhaps tomorrow in any dialogue between the FM of Israel or the PM? And secondly, we have been hearing reports about escalation in the security crackdown on militants in Kashmir, and we’ve heard of many arrests of top guerilla leaders, and we’ve also heard of death threats on politicians. What’s going on in Kashmir? Is this an escalation of a different kind or is this part of the same process, well it seems to be an escalation in terms of the security crackdown and the additional number of arrests?

**FS**: Well in so far as Palestine is concerned, the issue did come up in a general way in the conversation between the FM of Israel and EAM but was more in the context of what Israel feels is the victimization of Israel in the UN - specially the recent vote when only 4 countries voted against the resolution - the remaining either voted for or abstained. Israel felt that this kind of attitude was all right 10 or 15 or 20 years ago but it is no longer commensurate with existing realities and all the progress that has otherwise taken place or the change that has otherwise taken place in the international system as a whole. The plea was in favor of a review of
the position by those countries who have traditionally voted always against Israel. But over and beyond that as you know, we are not members of the quartet, we are not even members of the Security Council. So we have no direct role to play in this and our position generally speaking is this - there is nothing much more that’s likely to be on our plate in this regard, except that when the NAM FM’s meet, its possible that, its likely indeed that the subject will come up. Our effort will be a) To maintain our traditional position of support for the Palestinian cause, and b) To keep in mind that we have a new and developing relationship with Israel. And for us to play a more effective role, and indeed a moderating role, it is necessary that we maintain a certain balance between our principled position for the Palestinian cause and our interest in developing a productive relationship with Israel. We cannot define our relations with Palestine or with Israel solely on the basis of the issue of terrorism. There are other dimensions to this relationship with both sides.

In so far as the situation in J&K is concerned and the terrorist attacks, this is a continuation of the situation as has existed since 1990, the continuing support for terrorism in J&K from Pakistan, and there has been no let up there. And the position Pakistan has been taking is neither credible nor acceptable. In this context I read the interview General Musharraf gave to the New York Times, in which he made the astonishing comment that there had been zero return. He said : “Unfortunately there has been zero return, I repeat zero return from the Indian side.” This flies in the face of actual facts. Post PM’s initiative in April in favor of normalization of relations, we’ve taken concrete steps: PM for the third time took the initiative to open the doors for a dialogue with Pakistan. Bus service has been resumed at our initiative; we were willing to resume Civil Aviation links if Pakistan can give up its insistence on guarantees with regard to over-flights. People to people contacts are being encouraged; we have now cleared sporting contacts between the two sides. And on the economic side there is some major initiative that has been taken with support by the Indian business community, the CII, to start a CEO’s forum and to have a “Made in Pakistan” exhibition in India at the initiative of the CII. Now these are very important returns. If General Musharraf feels there have been zero returns, it is because there has been zero investment on his side. In fact Pakistan has exhausted all its capital in promoting terrorism, so actually they should be getting negative returns. But if they were to invest in peace by abjuring terrorism they will get the return they expect by way of a dialogue.

**Question**: (K.P Nayar *Telegraph*) A quick follow up to what you said
about Israel. Having voted in favor of the states resolution in the UNGA, did India as a good friend of Israel, an emerging friend of Israel, have any advice for the FM on the current situation in Palestine?

**FS**: The discussion didn’t develop along the lines where either they sought our advice or we gave them any advice. It is a fact that both countries face certain challenges but the methods adopted by both countries in facing the challenges are different. So clearly, the scope for giving advice, one way or the other, is limited.

**Question**: (Rohit Vyas TV Asia) Following up on your observation of Mr Musharraf’s comments to the New York Times. Yesterday Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry issued what amounted to a threat or an ultimatum to India, saying very bluntly, that Pakistan intends to, if it sees no progress in ties between the two countries; Pakistan says it intends to take up the issue of Kashmir with the UN; it intends to involve directly the US, it intends to involve other countries?

**FS**: Pakistan neither controls the United Nations nor the United States. So I don’t know what that threat means.

**Question**: (T.V. Parasuram PTI) One of the doctrines which President Bush has enunciated after 9/11 is that any country which aids terrorists, hosts them or helps them in any way is also a terrorist. What is your reaction to the fact that somehow Musharraf escapes this definition?

**FS**: If you ask me this question 50 times, I’ll reply to you 50 times and give you the same reply and that won’t change anything. So what’s the point in asking the same question for a 51st time? This is a question that has been posed time and time again, and time and time again we have answered it. But it has not led to any clarity in so far as attitudes and issues are concerned. So what’s the point in going over the same ground again. I think it is a sterile exercise.

**Question**: (Seema Sirohi Outlook and Amand Bazaar Patrika) What’s on the bilateral agenda between India and the US? Can you tell us something about this?

**FS**: First of all, PM’s speech today at the Asia Society gives a good overview of our relationship with the US and our perspectives on the relationship; and the important bilateral dimensions of that relationship. So I would invite you to look at that speech carefully. So far as this visit is concerned, you are aware that we’ve been discussing with the US the so-
called trinity issues which have been expanded to what is known as a quartet. These are important issues because forward movement on these issues would be entirely consistent with the objective of transforming our relationship. Now how do you transform the relationship between the two countries without overcoming the obstacles that have existed in that relationship - and these are key obstacles which have prevented the development of a strategic relationship whether it is in space or high technology or civil nuclear cooperation etc. These three topics per se have dimensions which cover vast areas of bilateral interaction with the US. These are the key issues which are on the agenda and shall continue to be the subject matter of interaction in the weeks and months ahead. Apart from this you are aware that we have a High technology Cooperation Group - the next meeting of which will be held in November when Undersecretary Kenneth Juster will come to India. You are aware that defence cooperation is proceeding well between the two countries and our trade is also expanding steadily.

Question : (name not given) Can you tell us something more about the meeting with New York Governor Pataki and AAPI?

FS : It was essentially a courtesy call. And two-three things that came out were the stated intention of Governor Pataki to visit India. He was explaining why he had not been able to visit India and what should be an inducement for him to go to India. He would like a business delegation to go specially in the areas of nano-technology and bio-informatics. In these two areas the New York State is very strong and these two subjects actually from an important part of what we have agreed to do in the High Technology Cooperation Group. We encouraged him to think along these lines and take a delegation. As regards AAPI, each of them, 10 or so people that were present basically spoke about what they were doing, some ideas about how the AAPI could support India on the medical side. So it was a good reassuring kind of meeting where they laid out their ideas and plans with regard to the medical sector.

Question : (No name given) There is a mention about the non-proliferation regime in PM’s speech at Asia Society. What exactly do we want with reference to the non-proliferation regime?

FS : What do we want? No, he did not mention the non-proliferation regime in the context of what we want or don’t want. He simply referred to differences between India and the US in the past; in fact these continue to exist even now but to a lesser degree. And one of the areas of difference
has been the non-proliferation issue. He simply stated that as a fact but nothing beyond that.

**Question**: (No name given) PM said that we should not be drawn into the grey zone of conflicting policy objectives which condones ambiguous positions on terrorism. Now the core broad element of the overall strategy of the PM appears to be supporting the global fight against terror. Is this the issue which will also figure when he meet?

**FS**: Of course not.

**Question**: (Kulkarni) In today’s speech PM has mentioned that we have to win the war of ideas - to win the war over terrorism. Can you elaborate?

**FS**: Now lets talk about things I can talk about. I mean there is no point in my trying to interpret for you what PM meant by a phrase of this nature.

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444. **Speech of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.**

*New York, September 25, 2003.*

Mr. President,

We congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the 58th session of the UN General Assembly. We wish you every success in our shared endeavours. You will have our fullest co-operation in your efforts.

As we gather here, in the wake of many momentous events over the past year, it is inevitable that we ponder on some fundamental questions about the role and the relevance of the United Nations.

The United Nations was charged by its Charter ‘to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’. The Charter also speaks of our collective determination ‘to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security’. There was an implicit conviction that the UN would be stronger than the sum of its constituent member-states. Its unique legitimacy flows from a universal perception that it pursues a larger purpose than the interests of one country or a small group of countries.
This vision of an enlightened multilateralism has not materialised. There have been difficulties and deficiencies in ensuring a world free from strife, a world without war. The United Nations has not always been successful in preventing conflicts or in resolving them.

During the past year, the United Nations encountered further new challenges. We saw the extraordinary inability of the five permanent members of the Security Council to agree on action in respect of Iraq, in spite of complete agreement on basic objectives. Most recently, the brutal terrorist attack on the UN Office in Baghdad struck a body blow at the UN’s humanitarian efforts there.

Looking back at events over recent years, we can analyse the successes and failures of the UN in this or that crisis. But it would be more purposeful to reflect on our own commitment to multilateralism, the extent of its applicability in the real world of today, and the manner in which it can be exercised through the UN. The reality is that international institutions like the UN can only be as effective as its members allow it to be.

Our reflections on the UN should focus on three key aspects:

- First, we need to introspect on some of the assumptions that have been made over the years on the will and reach of the United Nations. In the euphoria after the Cold War, there was a misplaced notion that the UN could solve every problem anywhere. Its enthusiasm and proactive stance on many issues reflected laudable intentions. But we soon realised that the UN does not possess magical powers to solve every crisis in all parts of the globe, or to change overnight the motivation of leaders and communities around the world. We need to clearly recognise, with a sense of realism, the limits to what the UN can achieve, and the changes of form and function required for it to play an optimal role in today’s world.

- Second, the Iraq issue has inevitably generated a debate on the functioning and the efficacy of the Security Council and of the UN itself. Over the decades, the UN membership has grown enormously. The scope of its activities has expanded greatly, with new specialised agencies and new programmes. But in the political and security dimensions of its activities, the United Nations has not kept pace with the changes in the world. For the Security Council to represent genuine multilateralism in its
decisions and actions, its membership must reflect current world realities. Most UN members today recognise the need for an enlarged and restructured Security Council, with more developing countries as permanent and non-permanent members. The permanent members guard their exclusivity. Some states with weak claims want to ensure that others do not enter the Council as permanent members. This combination of complacency and negativism has to be countered with a strong political will. The recent crises warn us that until the UN Security Council is reformed and restructured, its decisions cannot reflect truly the collective will of the community of nations.

- Third, even after such reform, the Security Council would have to evolve suitable decision-making mechanisms, which ensure better representation of the collective will of the international community. How can multilateralism be genuinely implemented? A single veto is an anachronism in today’s world. On the other hand, the requirement of unanimity can sabotage imperative actions. A simple majority vote may not be sufficiently representative for major issues of gravity. Should we aim for the highest common factor, or should we settle for the lowest common denominator? National experiences in democratic countries provide usable models of mechanisms, which could specify the extent of support required, depending on the impact of action to be taken. The Secretary General has rightly emphasised the urgency for reform of the institutions and processes of the United Nations. We encourage his efforts in this direction. We should seek to implement these reforms within a specified time frame.

Mr President,

The Iraq issue continues to present a major challenge to the United Nations. At this point in time, it is not very productive to linger on the past. Our thoughts and concerns should be about the suffering of the people of Iraq. It is imperative that the people of Iraq should be empowered to determine their own future, to rebuild their nation.

The immediate priorities are ensuring security and stability, restoration of basic facilities and infrastructure, and a roadmap of political processes for a representative Iraqi government. It is clear that the UN has a crucial role to play in this process of political and economic reconstruction of that country. This has been acknowledged both by those
who had opposed military action and by those who did not seek specific UN endorsement for it.

Mr President,

One issue on which the UN showed remarkable unanimity after 9/11 was global terrorism. Security Council Resolutions 1373 and 1456 were unequivocal in condemning all forms of terrorism and in calling for united action against support, shelter, sponsorship, arming, training and financing for terrorism or terrorists.

Unfortunately, the solidarity in words has not translated into coherent and effective action. Terrorist acts continue to shatter our peace: from Mombasa to Moscow; from Baghdad to Bali. India has had more than its share in various parts of the country. The global coalition against terrorism has registered successes in Afghanistan, but has not been able to extend this elsewhere. Some of its members are themselves part of the problem. We are sometimes led into semantics about the definition of terrorism. The search for “root causes” or imaginary “freedom struggles” provides alibis for the killing of innocent men, women and children.

There is a lot that the UN can do to carry forward the war against international terrorism. Its Counter Terrorism Committee should develop measures to ensure compliance by member-states of their obligations under UNSCR 1373 and 1456. We should have credible multilateral instruments to identify states that contravene these Resolutions. Multilateral mechanisms must be created to detect and choke off international financial flows to terrorists and terrorist organisations.

A much better international system of information exchange and intelligence sharing needs to be devised to prevent terrorists from evading capture, simply by crossing national borders. No state should be allowed to profess partnership with the global coalition against terror, while continuing to aid, abet and sponsor terrorism. To condone such double standards is to contribute to multiplying terrorism.

Yesterday, the President of Pakistan chose this august assembly to make a public admission for the first time that Pakistan is sponsoring terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir. After claiming that there is an indigenous struggle in Kashmir, he has offered to encourage a general cessation of violence within Kashmir, in return for “reciprocal obligations and restraints”.

We totally refuse to let terrorism become a tool of blackmail. Just as the world did not negotiate with Al-Qaida or the Taliban, we shall not negotiate with terrorism.
If we do so, we would be betraying the people of Jammu & Kashmir, who defied a most ferocious campaign of violence and intimidation sponsored from across our borders, and participated in an election, which has been universally hailed as free and fair. This was an unequivocal expression of both determination and self-determination.

When the cross-border terrorism stops - or when we eradicate it - we can have a dialogue with Pakistan on the other issues between us.

While on this subject, I would also like to point out to the President of Pakistan that he should not confuse the legitimate aspiration for equality of nations with outmoded concepts of military parity.

Mr President,

We should be particularly concerned at the various recent revelations about clandestine transfers of weapons of mass destruction and their technologies. We face the frightening prospect of these weapons and technologies falling into the hands of terrorists. Surely something needs to be done about the helplessness of international regimes in preventing such transactions, which clearly threaten international security. The same regimes expend considerable energy in imposing a variety of discriminatory technology-denial restrictions on responsible states.

Mr President,

Our preoccupation with terrorism should not dilute our commitment to tackle the non-military threats to human and international security. We have to sustain the fight against trafficking in narcotic drugs, human beings and small arms; the pandemic of HIV/AIDS; diseases like malaria and tuberculosis that grip developing countries and the degradation of our common environment. Food security, energy security and health security are important goals.

The countries of the North and of the South - the developed, developing, and transition economies - must resume their dialogue to build a better world for the present and future generations. For the agenda of globalization, Cancun was a disappointment. Significant progress was made at Johannesburg towards realisation of sustainable development, but the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol on climate change remains stalled. The Bio-diversity Convention has not yielded any tangible benefits to the world’s poor.

International economic relations continue to be characterised by inequities and inequalities. Globalisation has helped sections of the
international economy, including some developing countries. However, large communities have been left outside its pale. It has engendered economic crises and instability in several developing countries, which have sharply increased poverty.

Poverty is multidimensional. It extends beyond money incomes to education, health care, skills enhancement, political participation at all levels from the local to the global, access to natural resources, clean water and air, and advancement of one's own culture and social organisation.

Poverty alleviation requires resources on a far greater scale than now available. Globalization itself constrains developing country governments in raising public resources for poverty alleviation. The promise of the climate change and biodiversity treaties to raise significant resources for investment and technology transfer is yet unrealised. The resources of multilateral and bilateral development agencies are limited by the failure of industrialised countries to enhance development budgets.

Therefore, if the current regimes of globalization and sustainable development are to be expanded - or even to survive - they must be directly harnessed to provide the necessary resources for poverty alleviation. In fact, all international agreements and initiatives affecting developing countries have to be evaluated by their impact on poverty.

Developing countries need to coordinate their positions in international negotiations to promote the adoption of regimes, which would help poverty alleviation. The India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum, which was established earlier this year, is an effort in this direction.

Mr President,

We in the developing countries do not have the luxury of time. Political compulsions force us to meet the aspirations of our people quickly even as we subject ourselves to newer and more rigid international standards and norms. We owe it to our future generations to make strong efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. There is a mutuality of interest in this between the developed and the developing countries. Global interdependence today means that economic disasters in developing countries could create a backlash on developed countries. We hope the world will act in this spirit of enlightened self-interest.

Thank you.
445. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on the conclusion of his visit to Turkey and New York.


1. Today, I conclude my visit to Turkey and to New York for the UNGA.

2. In Turkey, I sought to establish contact with the new leadership and to renew our age-old historical links with that country. During my discussions with the Turkish leadership, we agreed that the enormous potential for cooperation needs to be tapped for mutual benefit. We agreed to set up a Bilateral Working Group of Economic Ministries to identify new opportunities. Trade should be expanded and there should be increased contact between Indian and Turkish business and industry. Agreements were signed on setting up a Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism, Science and Technology, as well as a Protocol on Information Technology. To increase the frequency of our contacts, I invited Prime Minister Erdogan to visit India at an early date. Other Indian and Turkish Ministers will also be in touch with their counterparts on a regular basis.

3. During my visit to New York, besides my statement to the United Nations General Assembly yesterday, I met the Presidents of Russia, USA, Afghanistan, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, and the Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Portugal. Apart from these bilateral meetings, I had an informal trilateral dinner meeting with the Presidents of Brazil and South Africa as part of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum.

4. With President Bush, I discussed ways of carrying forward the new transformation in India-US relations. Naturally, we also discussed regional and international issues.

5. I welcomed the opportunity to carry forward my dialogue with President Putin of Russia. We discussed the extensive range of our bilateral cooperation, as well as our shared perspectives on international matters. I am looking forward to meeting President Putin in Moscow this November.

6. President Karzai was appreciative of India’s assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. I conveyed our fullest support to him and our willingness to extend further assistance to the government.
of Afghanistan. He briefed me on the situation in Afghanistan, including on the security problems and on economic reconstruction.

7. With the President of Nigeria, we discussed bilateral relations and issues relating to the forthcoming Commonwealth Summit and CMAG. In the context of the impasse at the Cancun Ministerial meeting, we agreed that it is important for developing countries to remain focussed on the issues of concern to them.

8. My meeting with the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka was part of our frequent and wide-ranging dialogue. We spoke about the future prospects of the peace process in that country. I reiterated that we welcome the process of dialogue which the Sri Lankan Government is pursuing, and hope it will lead to peace between the various communities in that country. I will meet the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka again in Delhi in October.

9. The meeting with the Prime Minister of Mauritius maintained the tradition of regular and close contact between the leaderships of our two countries. We look forward to receiving the new Prime Minister of Mauritius in India this November.

10. In my meeting with the Prime Minister of Portugal, we agreed to find ways of expanding our bilateral economic cooperation, to realize the existing potential. We agreed that we will work towards an early conclusion of an Extradition Treaty.

11. I have just met the President of Zimbabwe, who briefed me on developments in that country and in Southern Africa.

12. During this visit to New York, I outlined our assessment of the present status and prospects for India-US relations at the Asia Society. At Columbia University, I dwelt on the achievements of the Indian economy and our vision for the future.

13. An important part of my visit to New York this year, as before, was the extensive interaction I have enjoyed with the Indian American community at a public meeting, a reception and in meetings with several representative groups of the community. The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan’s effort to organize a Conference of Indian Literature here is a laudable initiative, and I was happy to inaugurate the Conference yesterday.

14. It was evident from my interactions here, as well as those of members of my delegation, that there is widespread concern about
the role and efficacy of the United Nations in the wake of recent world developments. The need for reform and restructuring of its institutions is being emphasized. Iraq remains a test case for the international community’s ability to work together to resolve a difficult issue of far-reaching impact. Another recurrent theme was the need for salvaging the dialogue between the developing and the developed countries on realization of the Millennium Development Goals. This was also discussed at the IBSA Dialogue Forum.

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446. Statement by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN in the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly on Agenda Item 56: Question of Equitable Representation on the increase in the membership of the Security Council.


Please see Document No. 471

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447. Statement by Ambassador V.K. Nambair, Permanent Representative at the UN in the 58th Session of the General Assembly on Agenda Item 55: Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly; Agenda Item 57: UN Reforms: Measures and Proposals; Agenda Item 58: Restructuring and Revitalization of the UN in the Economic, Social and related fields; and Agenda Item 59: Strengthening of the UN System.


Please see Document No. 484

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INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003
Section - XII
INDIA AT THE UNITED NATIONS
Mr. President,

We are happy to see you preside over the meeting of this important Group, the first of four working sessions this year.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Ambassador Kasemsarn of Thailand who has been appointed as co-Vice Chair of the Working Group, while also congratulating Ambassador Ingolfson of Iceland on his re-appointment as the other Vice-Chair. We remain confident, Mr. President, that under your guidance, we will be able to move forward.

Mr. President,

This Working Group has been meeting for nine years and we are entering its 10th year. During the course of these meetings, national positions have been stated and re-stated. We have made progress to a certain degree, but on important issues a consensus continues to elude us and there is sometimes a sense of fatigue with the Group, that is perceived often as a consequence of repetitive and inconclusive discussion.

On one aspect, however, there is agreement. The Security Council, as it is configured today, is unrepresentative and anachronistic and does not reflect present-day realities. Almost without exception, every problem now on the agenda of the Council pertains to the developing world. That this grouping of nations - the majority of the general membership of the United Nations - finds only one place in the category of permanent members and is inadequately represented in the non-permanent category, serves only to highlight the unrepresentative and unbalanced nature of a body that, by its very definition, is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, but which, in practical fact, is ill-equipped to do so to the satisfaction of the majority of the members of the Organisation. The Council’s action, Mr. President, cannot be seen to be commanding a legitimacy which its own composition does not possess.

The issue under discussion, therefore is Reform: reform that imparts balance, representativeness and legitimacy to the Council and which
reflects contemporary reality; reform that is not piecemeal or partial which would only serve to perpetuate the unrepresentative character of the Council and erode its credibility even further; reform that is not discriminatory, seeking to “export” regional models from one continent to the other; but reform that is comprehensive and which includes expansion of the Council’s membership in both the permanent and non-permanent categories; improvement in its working methods and reform of its decision-making processes.

Perhaps the most ringing endorsement of reform as a comprehensive package and from which my delegation draws renewed inspiration was the Millennium Declaration, under which there was overwhelming consensus that the Security Council must be urgently and comprehensively reformed. From what we heard then and from what we continue to hear now, we believe that there is widespread support for the proposition that the Security Council should be expanded simultaneously with new permanent and non-permanent members, that developing countries must be made permanent members of a Council that acts mostly on situations in the developing world, that a larger Council would better represent the larger membership of the United Nations, that the Council’s working methods should be improved and that there should be changes in the ways it takes decisions. The temptation to resort to piecemeal and partial solutions must, therefore, be eschewed as indeed the tendency to impose artificial time-frames citing the relevance of the time-factor. After toiling for nine years, if we were to agree to an expansion of the Security Council in the non-permanent category alone, or if we were to make cosmetic changes in its working methods, we would be doing a major disservice not only to ourselves but also to the Organisation as a whole and to future generations. Expansion is needed in both categories of Council membership and if an attempt to do so otherwise is made, we would not only be shying away from the main issues that confront us but also perpetuating an international system characterized by inequity.

We have had occasion in the past to state our country’s position on Security Council restructuring and I shall refrain from doing so now. Suffice, however, to state that the core elements of a comprehensive reform package have to include an expansion of the Council’s membership in both its categories, inclusion of developing countries in the permanent members’ category, improvement in its working methods and changes in the process of decision-making to equip it to effectively face the challenges of the 21st century.
Mr. President,

It is true that the process of reform of the Security Council has been under way for nine years now. The effort expended on this necessary venture, however, has not been without success. We feel that some progress has been made and we should continue to assiduously advance it. The way forward is to address the issues in a comprehensive manner and evolve the broadest possible agreement on any package, which we believe, is possible. It is in this spirit that my delegation hopes to participate in this and other forthcoming sessions of the Group this year.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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449. Statement by Ambassador V.K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on the Situation between Iraq and Kuwait at the Security Council.


Mr. President,

Since this is the first time we are making a statement in the Security Council in the month of February, please allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency. I would also like to thank you for providing the general membership an opportunity to express themselves on this important issue. Your stewardship of the Security Council comes at a time when the Council is required to consider some of the most critical and complex issues arising before it in recent years. We wish you the very best in coping with the challenging tasks that lie ahead of you.

Mr. President,

India had participated in the last open debate of the Security Council on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait held on October 17, 2002. Matters have evolved considerably since that time. The landmark resolution UNSCR 1441 was adopted unanimously by the Council on 8 November, 2002. The resolution facilitated the resumption of UN inspections in Iraq after a gap of 4 years. It is now almost 3 months since the re-commencement of inspections.
The heads of UNMOVIC and IAEA have briefed the Council with regular periodicity on the progress of inspections since their recommencement. We have all had the benefit of listening to the carefully worded, concise and thorough briefings by them on 27 January and 14 February. Their reports constitute the essential basis on which the Council would require to take decisions on a matter of international peace and security. We wish to convey our appreciation for the work by these two agencies and their heads.

Resolution 1441 is the latest in a series of Security Council resolutions on the disarmament of Iraq and related subjects. Resolution 1441 provides a stringent regime of inspections designed to accomplish that very task. We call upon Iraq to cooperate actively with the inspections process and comply fully with all relevant Security Council resolutions.

As many of us understood it, the gist of UNMOVIC Executive Chairman Mr. Hans Blix’s message at the briefing of 14 February was that Iraq had been cooperating on process but had not done as much on substance as it was required to do under resolution 1441. While there is a widespread feeling that inspections have to be given a chance, there is also a feeling that the Council cannot be expected to wait indefinitely to secure “immediate, active and unconditional cooperation”. The recent deliberations in the Security Council over how to deal with the Iraq issue reflect serious differences in approach within the Council itself on the subject. The Council now needs to move forward with unity of purpose.

Mr. President,

India has consistently stood for a peaceful resolution of the Iraq issue. We believe that the objective of the international community is to facilitate the disarmament of Iraq, and that it is necessary to pursue all available options provided for under UNSCR 1441. Force should be resorted to only as a last, unavoidable, option.

India has also maintained the primacy of the multilateral route in addressing the issue of Iraq. The Prime Minister of India, in his address to the 57th United Nations General Assembly last year, stated the following and I quote: “A common destiny is at stake. The world needs collective multilateralism. It needs the United Nations – the coming together and working together of all its nations in the development of a common and collective perspective”. This is why we applauded the announcement by President Bush at that very forum to “work with the UN Security Council to meet our common challenge”. We continue to believe that the resolution
of this issue is best achieved through the collective forum of States represented by the United Nations.

India is concerned about the difficult humanitarian situation in Iraq. The Iraqi people have suffered severe shortages and privations for over a decade. Sixty percent of the Iraqi population currently rely on the UN’s “Oil-for-Food Programme”. The programme, which has been run in an exemplary manner by the UN, could be jeopardized by military action in Iraq leading to a humanitarian situation that could render, by some accounts, as many as 10 million people dependent on the outside world for food assistance. It is important that the Council consider the alleviation of the situation that the Iraqi people find themselves in, while considering the larger picture.

India is vitally interested in the peace and prosperity of the Gulf region with which we have had profound political, cultural, economic and religious ties spread over centuries. Our special concerns about the current crisis arise from the presence of millions of our expatriates that live and work in the Gulf region, from threats to the security of oil supplies and volatility of oil prices that could follow military action and from the buildup of public sentiments in the region.

In a related context, we note that at the end of the last year Iraq returned the first batch of documents belonging to the Kuwaiti archives and at the beginning of this year Iraq also handed over some separate items of Kuwaiti properties. Most important is the humanitarian issue involving the search for missing Kuwaitis and other, third country, nationals. We are happy to note that it has been agreed to start discussions on this issue under the auspices of the ICRC and within the context of the Tripartite Commission. We understand that the second meeting of the newly established technical sub-committee has just taken place in Amman and congratulate Ambassador Vorontsov for his efforts in this direction and would like to see him continue the good work. At the same time, we would also like to see implementation of provisions relating to the repatriation of all Kuwaiti and third country nations and the return of all Kuwaiti property as stipulated under resolutions 686, 687 and Section B of the resolution 1284. We hope that Iraq will act in good faith.

Mr. President,

We sense, and the world senses, that the Security Council is coming close to making a decision between war and peace. However, before it makes a final determination on the question, we would urge the Council
to seriously consider the numerous complex ramifications that surround any step taken by it. These include issues such as the dangers posed by the development of weapons of mass destruction and risks of their diversion to non-state actors; the credibility of enforcement action under Chapter VII of the Charter and the question of compliance; the rationale and effectiveness of weapons inspections; and the continuing pressure of sanctions. Apart from the immediate consequences of military action in a region that is already volatile, the Council will need to take into account the impact of the possible break up of the concerned State on neighbouring states, and its larger implications for peace, stability and security in the region, as well as the dangers of radicalization of public opinion around the world. Yet another set of issues of a different order of magnitude concern the potential massive internal displacement of people and possible refugee flows, the disruption of oil supplies and other such immediate economic and social repercussions of a possible outbreak of conflict.

We do not, as yet, have clear answers to the above questions. These are questions that do not have simple answers but they are questions that cannot be evaded. As the multilateral organ of the United Nations charged with the safeguarding of international peace and security, the Security Council must give careful thought to these questions and issues before it makes an irrevocable move.
Mr. Chairman,

Let me at the outset offer my felicitations to you and to the other members of the Bureau on your re-election.

I would like to compliment Under Secretary General Guehenno on his clear and concise presentation yesterday. This has set the tone for the present discussions.

I wish to align the position of my delegation with the statement delivered yesterday by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Jordan on behalf of the Non-aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of India concurs with the assessment of the Secretary General regarding “significant and positive developments in United Nations peacekeeping operations in 2002”. Two missions have completed their mandates; some are drawing down; some are getting less complex, even as others are entering a new and more challenging phase. Progress has been recorded in the UN Stand-by Arrangements System [UNSAS], the on-call lists, the UN Logistics Base [UNLB], enhancing cooperation with troop contributing countries [TCCs] and training and education for more enhanced and effective peacekeeping. Much of this has been made possible by the additional resources authorized for the DPKO. Much of this is ongoing. We appreciate the lead taken by the Secretariat and look forward to working more closely during 2003 with other Member States and with the Secretariat on these and other priority issues.

We thank the Secretary General for his report (Document A/57/711) on the “Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on peacekeeping operations”. We agree largely with the conclusions of the Secretariat in its listing of the priority areas that require concerted action and the cooperation of member states. We shall now turn to a discussion of some of the issues that we feel warrant particular attention.
Enhancing the capacity of UN peacekeeping

The General Assembly has allocated substantial resources for financing UN Peacekeeping Operations. Two missions (UNMIBH and UNMOP) completed their mandates in 2002 and draw downs are expected in UNMIK, UNOMIG, UNMSET, UNIFIL, UNAMSIL and UMMEE, resulting thereby in a reduction in the number of deployed troops, Military Observers, civilian monitors and civilian staff in missions. We feel the workload and resources released as a result of these draw-downs should facilitate DPKO to pursue more actively the following activities on a priority basis:

- While robust rules of engagement have been pursued in the post-Brahimi phase, we feel it would be extremely useful to undertake similar ‘rules of disengagement’ so as to complete tasks in a time-bound fashion. In this connection, expeditious liquidation of missions is of paramount importance. Liquidation involves not only withdrawal of troops and the civilian component from the mission area, but also speedy processing of claims, payment to TCCs and an eventual closing of the books of account.

- We expect greater coordination with funds and programmes, specialised agencies of the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions during peacekeeping and the post-conflict peace-building phase. This coordination should facilitate a smoother transition of functions performed by DPKO to these specialized bodies. We recognise that a hasty retreat could jeopardise the gains achieved by the peacekeeping operation in question. Nevertheless, proper planning for phased withdrawal should form an integral part of peacekeeping planning.

- On budgetary issues, DPKO has been fortunate so far in that, by and large, budgetary limitations have not constrained fulfillment of mandates. This situation, however, is not likely to last forever and, therefore, efforts should be made to accomplish more from what is already available on the table. At any rate, additional resources are not a panacea for all ills and not necessarily a “fix” for the endemic problems that plague UN peacekeeping.

Strengthening Cooperation with TCCs

We welcome the enhanced frequency of briefings with troop contributing countries and in this context, to place on record our appreciation for the issue-specific workshops conducted over the last
one year. The course for Military Advisers and diplomats dealing with peacekeeping operations in Permanent Missions of TCCs in New York conducted in January was particularly useful and, in our opinion, should be institutionalized on an annual basis. We would also urge the Secretariat to distribute copies of notes of briefings after these have been held, in order to make them more comprehensively available. In the critical area of cooperation between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop contributing countries, we would reiterate the need for sustained, regular and timely interaction for it to be meaningful. Resolution 1353 of June 2001 and Note dated January 14, 2002 by the Security Council President are milestones; however, a lot still needs to be done in order to ensure their effective implementation. In our opinion, timing and frequency are the key – meetings with TCCs must be held much before the Council mandates or renews an operation, when views of the TCCs can contribute to the decision-making process, and on a regular and periodic basis with a view to making the relationship more genuine and meaningful.

Recruitment

We welcome the emphasis placed by the Secretariat on the need to recruit the highest quality staff to fill key vacancies at senior levels and to effect this in as transparent a manner as possible. We shall monitor the Secretariat’s expectation to bring down this recruitment period to 120 days or less, within the context of streamlining and further enhancing the efficacy of the system. We see no effort, however, to redress the imbalance in senior level field appointments. These continue to show a heavy weightage in favour of the developed countries despite their relative lack of participation in peacekeeping operations. We would urge, in this regard, that the Secretariat adopt a more rational and practical approach. Why should those who risk the lives of their soldiers have to perennially satisfy themselves with secondary positions while those who do not, walk away with the honours? We would ask the Secretariat to pay urgent attention to this “problem”, in order to ensure maximally that appointments of senior military and police personnel take into account the size of troop contributions.

Best practices and lessons learned

We note the emphasis placed by the Secretariat on the staffing of the peacekeeping Best Practices Unit. We also note that the recruitment process for this unit is fast nearing completion. We agree fully that the unit should serve as a nerve center within the DPKO for research and evaluation of peacekeeping issues and for the development of improved
procedures and practices based on those studies. Unfortunately, we have not seen evidence so far of any sharing of information on lessons learned from a peacekeeping mission with either the TCCs or with other ongoing peacekeeping missions, when, in fact, this is claimed to be the raison d’être of its existence! We hope the Secretariat is more forthcoming in this regard and look forward to hearing from them on lessons learned and best practices being followed, in the coming months.

**Mission Planning**

It is heartening to note that the Integrated Mission Task Force (MTF) established for the planning of UNAMA has performed well. We understand the Secretariat will take stock in 2003 of best practices and lessons learned from these planning activities. Para 22 of the Secretary General’s report speaks of an internal working group having completed an initial mapping of the full planning process while examining the strengths and weaknesses at every stage of the process. If this is, indeed, the case, we would request the Secretariat to share with TCCs full details of the working group’s findings.

**Rule of Law**

We agree with the emphasis placed by the Secretariat upon more close consultation with local actors in the country concerned with a view to engaging them in a more meaningful way in the devising and undertaking of rule of law initiatives in peacekeeping operations so as not to be seen as imposing a rule of law strategy on them. Particularly welcome, in this context, is the report that has been prepared by the Task Force for the development of Comprehensive Rule of Law Strategies that was distributed to member states in November last year. Para 28 of the Secretary General’s report mentions that the Secretariat would welcome the opportunity for further discussions with member states on the Task Force’s proposals. We would, in this regard, like to request the Secretariat to convene an early meeting for substantive discussions with member states on the subject during the course of this year.

**Rapid Deployment**

The progress achieved by the Secretariat in the past one year in this very critical area of UN peacekeeping deserves to be commended. It must be remembered, however, that rapid deployment cannot take place, even when units are ready to go at short notice, in the absence of a strategic air/sea lift capability. We urge member states, which have these capabilities to pledge them to the UN Standby Arrangements System
This is the least that can be expected of member states who have this specialized enabling support and who are otherwise not willing to contribute troops to peacekeeping operations when others, mostly among the non-aligned, are doing so, in pursuit of their commitment to the ideal of UN peacekeeping. We rue this deficit in commitment on the part of the developed countries since it undermines both the universal nature of UN peacekeeping as well as its efficiency and capability. The Secretary General in Para 31 of his report has himself drawn attention to this “problem”.

We also note the progress on the on-call lists and look forward to further discussions with the Secretariat after member states have nominated officers/expertise. The proper maintenance of these lists would help reduce the lead time for deploying core mission personnel to future operations.

Civilian Police are now an important element of UN Peacekeeping operations: we are happy to note that the Secretariat is giving special attention to its role. We also welcome efforts to develop an on-call list for civilian police personnel that should supplement efforts on the military side.

The issue of material readiness is closely linked to the concept of rapid deployment. The procurement of strategic deployment stocks is understood to be underway with the first shipment having been delivered to UNLB. It is heartening to note that the system will be fully functional by July 1, 2003 and should go a long way in benefiting a large number of TCCs who are unable to deploy fully equipped and self-sustained contingents. While India is able to do so consistently, there are many others who need such assistance. These are all steps in the right direction that should enable us to build further on the concept of rapid deployment to better serve the cause of UN peacekeeping.

Training

We take note of the progress achieved by the Secretariat this past year in the area of training, particularly in the development of the Standardised Generic Training Module (SGTM) project. Training and education are influenced by many factors, with content, approaches and standards varying from country to country. The challenge is to develop global norms for peace operations. Such norms should be acceptable and achievable by all member states and international organizations and not reflect the norms of any particular group of countries or organizations.
The UN is best placed to develop these norms in consultation with member states, even as the primary responsibility for training and education lies with the member states. While acknowledging the progress achieved by the UN thus far, the focus, we feel, should now be on imparting new and improved skills to peacekeepers and not just basic training, as an added investment in more effective peacekeeping operations.

**Disciplinary Issues**

We share the concern expressed by the Secretariat on acts of omission and commission committed by United Nations peacekeepers. Objectionable behaviour, even by a few bad elements, is not acceptable since it tarnishes the otherwise impeccable image of United Nations peacekeepers. My delegation fully agrees that a single standard of behaviour must apply to all personnel serving in peacekeeping missions, be they military, civilian police or civilians, even if disciplinary procedures themselves may differ according to categories of personnel. We are ready to consider, in this context, the Secretariat’s proposal to convene a meeting on the subject to enable us to examine the various complex issues involved in this delicate matter. We agree this would be in the interest of all concerned.

**Public Information**

While we encourage the inter-departmental cooperation envisaged between the DPKO and the DPI in Para 65 of the Secretary General’s report, we find that there is a system-wide failure in most cases. We would, in this regard, urge the Secretariat to give priority attention to further improve inter-departmental consultation and coordination in order to achieve desired results.

Regional Cooperation including enhanced regional peacekeeping capacities particularly in Africa

Paras 79 to 84 of the Secretary General’s report focus on the need to enhance regional peacekeeping capacities, particularly in Africa. There is need for the UN to focus more on the requirements of the African continent instead of seeking to disengage from the continent by subcontracting peacekeeping to regional arrangements, whose role must be to reinforce rather than replace that of the UN. Again, it must be said that the developed countries need to shed their reluctance to participate in peacekeeping in Africa. Sufficient funds and resources need to be earmarked for such operations. In this context, the expansion and transition to Phase III of MONUC is particularly relevant. India is proud of its long-
standing commitment and contribution to peacekeeping operations in Africa. Starting with ONUC in 1960, we have participated in every single peacekeeping operation in Africa. We shall maintain this commitment bilaterally and through the UN to our friends in Africa. In this context, we welcome efforts to strengthen peacekeeping capacities in the region. The recent initiative of holding a conference in Sierra Leone, “Partners in Peacekeeping” is a particularly welcome step, providing an excellent opportunity for the sharing of experiences and for a better understanding and appreciation of the various facets of UN peacekeeping relevant to the countries of Africa. The outcome of the conference should be made available to member states. We look forward to more such initiatives and are willing to participate in every way to strengthen the hands of our African brothers.

Finance and Budgetary Issues

We wish to place on record our appreciation of the efforts made by the Secretariat this past one year to process COE claims and clearing of backlogs. The matter, however, is inextricably linked to payment by member states of their assessed contributions and we would, in this regard, urge them to do so in full, on time and without conditions. DPKO should not shy away from explicitly stating that PKOs cannot be run effectively in the face of non-receipt of contributions from member states. We shall not take up the valuable time of the Committee with details. We are confident that these matters will be analysed more comprehensively by our colleagues in the Fifth Committee and the experts of ACABQ.

Mr. Chairman,

India has been a proud participant in UN peacekeeping operations since their inception. For much of this time, we have headed the list of countries contributing troops. Whenever the UN has approached us for troops and equipment, we have invariably responded to that call. This commitment to peacekeeping is unswerving and unconditional. It is in this spirit today, as always, that our observations are being made to forge better and refine further the instrument of UN peacekeeping to serve better the cause of international peace and humanity. My delegation looks forward to working with other delegations and the Secretariat during the course of 2003 in our relentless pursuit of this ideal.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.


Mr. President,

We congratulate you on your assumption to the Presidency of the Council for the month of March and express our appreciation to you for convening this open debate on an issue that has continued to engage the anxious attention of the Council as it has of the entire world community.

My delegation has addressed this issue a fortnight ago in the Council. Therefore, I shall be brief today.

We are grateful to the Heads of the UNMOVIC and IAEA for the briefings given by them on March 7 on the progress of inspections since their last report to the Council. The reports do indicate progress in cooperation extended by Iraq to UNMOVIC and IAEA. We recognise the growing atmosphere of foreboding tension within the Council as it gets to grips with how to proceed with the matter into the immediate future. As the discussions enter a critical phase, it is important to underline that our focus should be on the need to secure the disarmament of Iraq without resorting to armed force as far as possible. That this requires full, active and immediate compliance by Iraq of resolution 1441 and earlier resolutions is obvious. But it also requires a strong unity of purpose on the part of the Security Council so that the credibility of the United Nations is not weakened.

We believe that the universe of discourse should remain the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Council. Iraq must cooperate actively with the inspection process and comply fully with these Resolutions. The international community has, of course, to strike a balance between the objective of achieving Iraq’s full compliance with UN resolutions and the means adopted to reach its goal. This balance can best be achieved through a collective decision of the international community through the United Nations. There is need to persevere in this direction by establishing clear thresholds if necessary. If giving some more time and the laying down of clearer criteria were to help the process of UN-based decision making, these should be given a chance.
Mr. President,

India has consistently advocated a peaceful resolution of the Iraq issue. We are as conscious as any other delegation of the incalculable costs in human and material terms that a war would unleash on the region and beyond. We maintain that force should be resorted to only as the very last, unavoidable option and only as authorised by the Security Council. We have also called for steps to ensure that any measures taken by the Council should not adversely impact on the humanitarian situation which is already extremely difficult. Thirdly, the Council should bear in mind the alleviation of the situation of the Iraqi people. Fourthly, the measures taken by the Security Council should ensure the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

Mr. President,

As we had stated on October 17 2002, what the Council does at this juncture could well represent a defining moment in the way the relations among States are ordered. We had then called for the active exploration under UN auspices of possible alternatives to avoid recourse to use of force and military action. We had stressed the need to safeguard the interests of the countries of the region as well as those who have vital stakes in the region. These considerations remain as valid today since very little has changed in the situation. If the actions of the Council are to be seen to possess legitimacy, they must issue from a body which is united and acts responsibly towards ensuring compliance by the regime in Iraq, ensures stability in the immediate neighbourhood and safeguards international peace and security in the region as a whole.
Mr. President,

This meeting will represent the first open debate in the Security Council on Iraq since the outbreak of hostilities on 20 March 2003. We thank you for having provided the general membership of the United Nations an opportunity to communicate their views on this most critical issue involving international peace and security.

The situation relating to Iraq has evolved rapidly over the past few weeks. India’s position advocating a peaceful resolution of this issue has been consistent and well known. The peace and prosperity of this region is as vital for India as for any other country given our long-standing political, cultural and economic ties with the countries of the region.

Mr. President,

India recognized the validity of the unanimous decision of the UN Security Council in its resolution 1441, which provided for the disarmament of Iraq. The resolution also reaffirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, Kuwait and the neighboring States. Resolution 1441 provided a stringent regime of inspections designed to meet the international community’s desire to disarm Iraq of its Weapons of Mass Destruction.

We believe that securing Iraq’s cooperation with the inspections process and compliance with all relevant Security Council resolutions should have been the main focus of the Council’s efforts. That, unfortunately, did not happen. As it is, we are now presented with a situation where some members have decided to proceed unilaterally.

Mr. President,

My country received reports of the commencement of military action in Iraq with the deepest of anguish. In the circumstances, we sincerely hope that the military campaign, which was unjustified and avoidable, would be short lived. We strongly urge that all possible efforts be made to bring hostilities to an early end. We also call upon all parties involved in the war to meet their obligations towards civilians under international
humanitarian law. We are concerned about the human lives involved – Iraqi and others. We are also concerned about refugee flows. The international community should ensure that the sovereignty and integrity of Iraq are fully preserved as also its secular traditions. Sectarian and ethnic conflict should not be allowed to divide the country. The right of the people of Iraq to determine their political future and exercise control over their natural resources should also be fully respected.

The Secretary General has already drawn attention to the increasingly difficult plight of the 1.7 million residents of the city of Basra. We wish to support any efforts designed to provide relief to the civilian population of this city and other parts of the country in need of urgent assistance. We also support the decision of the Secretary General to hold a meeting of UN relief agencies today to coordinate humanitarian relief efforts in Iraq.

We have tried to follow deliberations in the Council over the Secretary General’s proposal to provide humanitarian assistance to Iraq by adjusting the mechanism of the Oil-for-Food Programme. We believe that approved contracts for supplies to Iraq under the Oil-for-Food Programme would be the logical priority for delivering immediate assistance to the Iraqi people. The international community must quickly get involved in restoring peace in Iraq in the eventual reconstruction of the country and in alleviating the plight of its long suffering people. We urge the Council to display the required unity and collective will to be able to assist the Iraqi people in this endeavour.

India has already announced its willingness to fully participate in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Iraq and its people, which would be inevitably required as a result of the current conflict. Our long-standing friendship with the people of Iraq would demand nothing less of us; we would be happy to discharge our duty to share this burden.

Mr. President,

One can have differences over the necessity of war, but one cannot have differences about the urgent need for restoring peace. War is sometimes waged unilaterally, but peace has to be built together. We call upon all members of the Security Council and indeed all members of the United Nations to remain resolute in their efforts to secure a lasting peace and a stable future for the people of Iraq.

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453. Statement by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN in the ad hoc Committee established by General Assembly Resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996 (Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism) at the sixth Committee of the UNGA.


Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your re-election. We are happy to see you once again presiding over our deliberations. We wish you every success and assure you of our fullest co-operation. We extend felicitations to the other members of the Bureau. We would like to place on record the valuable contribution made by Amb. Richard Rowe, as a co-coordinator, towards the work of the Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches the highest importance to the work of the Adhoc committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 1996, which has been dealing with the elaboration of a draft international Convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, formulation of a joint organised response of the international community to terrorism and elaboration of a draft comprehensive Convention on international terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

Having been exposed to depredation of terrorism for decades, India has always taken a strong stand on countering international terrorism. Our experience shows that terrorists aim at the destruction of the peaceful life of the people. They attack innocent civilians, places of worship, parliamentary institutions, government establishments, modes of transport, voters and candidates engaged in peaceful democratic electoral processes, places of business and places of recreation. We have witnessed several such instances in recent months, in places ranging from Indonesia to Kenya and the Russian Federation. India has been the victim of state-sponsored terrorism for almost two decades. Our experience is that some terrorists’ attacks have been genocidal in nature, like the killing of 24 members of Kashmiri Pandit families in Nandimarg village in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir a few days ago.
We believe that terrorism is a common enemy of all peoples, all beliefs and religions and of peace and democracy. It violates the most fundamental of all human rights, namely the right to life. Terrorism can only be defined with reference to the act and its consequences, not by a description of the perpetrators of the act and ascribing labels to them. Terrorists are criminals and therefore, alibis or rationalisations advanced by the advocates of the “root causes” of terrorism cannot absolve terrorists from their culpability.

Mr. Chairman,

The international community has recognised the need for cooperation among all States in the efforts to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. Toward this end, member states under the aegis of the UN have so far successfully developed a legal framework of twelve international Conventions to address specific aspects of international terrorism. India is a party to all these Conventions. The Government of India has also decided very recently to ratify the International Convention for suppression of the Financing of terrorism.

The Indian proposal for the early conclusion of a comprehensive Convention against international terrorism has been under the active consideration of this Committee. My delegation sincerely thanks all the delegations for their support and active participation in the consideration of the draft comprehensive Convention. During the General debate in the 57th session of the General Assembly, a number of States reiterated their support for the successful completion of the comprehensive Convention on international terrorism. The Commonwealth Law Ministers’ meeting and the recent NAM Summit reiterated the need for the early conclusion of the comprehensive Convention on terrorism and called upon all states to co-operate in resolving the outstanding issues.

Mr. Chairman,

The Ad-hoc Committee has been successful in reaching agreement on most of the provisions of the text of the draft Convention. Yet, some important provisions, namely Article 2 on definitions, Article 2 bis on the scope of the Convention and Article 18 on exclusion of security forces are still outstanding. A review of the outstanding issues done in the last Adhoc Committee session was very helpful in identifying issues that require compromises.

Mr. Chairman,

On the question of relationship with earlier Conventions there
appears to be a general agreement that the comprehensive Convention should not supersede or override, but should add value to and supplement the sectoral Conventions. We are supportive of this approach.

In a situation where acts of terrorism continue to occur worldwide in different forms and manifestations, the early conclusion of negotiations and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention would send a strong signal that the international community is united in purpose and determined to work together towards the eradication of this phenomenon from its roots. We urge all delegations to work together in a spirit of cooperation and accommodation toward achieving this objective by successfully carrying out the mandate of completing the legal framework of Conventions which are being considered in this Committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Mr. President,

Please allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council. We have no doubt that your Presidency would allow a careful and responsible consideration of the important issues on the agenda of the Council. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Mamady Traoré of Guinea for his adroit stewardship of the Council during a crucial period in the Council’s history.

Mr. President,

Let me start by felicitating you on your decision to include an open debate on the critical subject of “threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts” on the Council’s work schedule. My country, like most others, continues to believe that the main threats to international peace and security today emanate from the uncontrolled ravages of
terrorism. It is sufficient to refer to the Council’s Presidential Statements issued in recent months in response to terrorist incidents in Bali, Moscow, Mombassa and Bogotá to be able to reinforce this point.

The instruments crafted by the Security Council in the form of Counter-Terrorism and the Taliban/Al Qaeda Committees are critical in so far as they represent among the most serious multilaterally defined and accepted efforts to collectively tackle a growing menace that respects no national boundaries, region or religion.

I wish to take the opportunity here to join other delegations in congratulating Ambassador Sir Jeremy Greenstock for his wholly dedicated and selfless involvement in the task of taking the Counter-Terrorism Committee from a fledgling idea to a recognised landmark in the international fight against terrorism. The Security Council, the United Nations and the membership it represents, owe a great deal to the structures and solid institutional foundations that Sir Jeremy has laid down in the form of the CTC. We are confident that Ambassador Arias, with his proven competence, will take the Committee to ever greater heights of achievement and effectiveness that the second and subsequent stages of the CTC’s functioning call for.

Mr. President,

My delegation has consistently and unequivocally supported a strong international stance against terrorism. My country believes that terrorism is a common foe to all peoples, beliefs and religions as also of democracy, pluralistic societies and peace. But this view is not confined to India alone. The countries that participated at the second Ministerial Meeting of the Community of Democracies in Seoul in November 2002 agreed that “terrorism constituted a threat to international peace and security as well as to humanity in general and indeed the very foundation on which democratic societies are built”. They also underscored that “terrorism could not be justified by any cause or under any circumstances”. Similar language undergirds Security Council resolution 1456 adopted earlier this year.

India’s experience of being at the receiving end of externally-sponsored terrorism has demonstrated to us the unalloyed terrorist goal of disrupting normal peaceful functioning of societies as a cynical tactic for the achievement of their political objectives. They therefore choose to launch their attacks upon places of worship, parliamentary institutions
and public transportation and to target voters and candidates engaged in
democratic electoral processes, as well as isolated and vulnerable minority communities, women and children. In the past two decades India has lost 60,000 of its citizens to cross-border terrorism in the Punjab, in Jammu & Kashmir and other parts of the country.

Only a few days ago, 24 members of a village in the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir, 11 men, 11 women and 2 infants, were ordered out of their homes and massacred by terrorists in full view of the entire village. Their sole qualification for being targeted for this extraordinary fate was that they were Kashmiri pandits professing the ancient faith of their land. The objective of the exercise was a selective “cleansing” through mass murder which has been the objective of these terrorist groups and their sponsors all along: to attack the basis of a secular state; to attack the fabric of a society that has lived peacefully together for centuries in inter-communal harmony. Laced with the potent stimulant of fundamentalism and religious extremism, this is the hallmark of the terror being unleashed on India. What other rationale can explain the attempt to replace the prevalent peaceful “sufi” religious beliefs traditionally practised in many parts of Jammu & Kashmir by the fanatical and uncompromising dictates of a purported orthodoxy that requires an enforced adherence to repressive social restrictions and vile impositions against women and society?

This incident has been noticed, indeed condemned around the world. What has gone unnoticed, however, is the tremendous restraint and composure displayed by the Government of India and indeed the various communities in India in not being provoked to reacting disproportionately to this event as, all too often, can happen in situation like this one that inflames religious and communal passions around the country. By behaving maturely, our common people have responded wisely to this latest terrorist outrage. I wish to assure you, Mr. President, that much as we condemn the evil of terrorism, we are conscious in this context as much of Nietzsche as indeed of the Buddha and of Mahatma Gandhi. We are confident that our democracy offers systemic safeguards that would prevent us from becoming mirror images of the “monster” we oppose.

Unfortunately, despite assurances purveyed at the highest levels, the one country, that has today emerged as “the epicenter of terrorism” and is responsible for this situation, this one country remains unprepared to live up to its public pronouncements and commitments made to the international community and to the Counter Terrorism Committee.
Mr. President,

My Government has consistently pointed out that the purpose of establishing credible multilateral instruments to counter terrorism is not only to equip States to fight terrorism effectively but also to identify those states that contravene the provisions of Security Council resolutions in their sponsorship, support and encouragement to terrorism. India finds it difficult to accept a situation in which a country professes to be part of the global coalition against terror on the one hand, while continuing to aid, abet and sponsor terrorism on the other. The global fight against terrorism, spurred in large part due to the horrors of the attacks of September 11, no longer leaves any space for ambiguity in a state’s record on terrorism. The time for double standards is over!

India has held the view that the Counter-Terrorism Committee needs to move beyond the stage of reporting on to the stage of identifying, if not enforcing, violations of resolutions 1373, 1456 and other relevant Security Council resolutions. Sub-paragraphs 2(b), (d) and (e) and 3(a) of resolution 1373 make specific references to cross-border or transnational terrorism. These provisions of resolution 1373 oblige Member States to take action to prevent facilitation of terrorism against other States. We have noted that facile and mendacious assertions of the fulfillment of obligations under 1373 form an integral part of the report of at least one respondent that has done nothing to fulfill its commitments, both stated and statutory. This has not gone unnoticed by the international community.

Mr. President,

India attaches the highest priority to the functioning of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. It is in this spirit that we wish to make a few comments and pose a few questions, the responses to which, we hope, should contribute towards the Committee's functioning. Our questions are the following:

(i) While there is universal appreciation of the work of the CTC in seeking to have the proper legislative framework in place to implement resolution 1373, has the CTC considered the question of how to deal with a situation where a Member State is not enforcing effective compliance by concrete actions even while professing to do so in its responses to the Committee?

(ii) While proceeding to Stage-B of its implementation of 1373, how would the CTC ensure that it would receive relevant information
and assistance from Member States while at the same time avoiding an intrusiveness that could impinge on the secrecy of information and procedures followed in counter-terrorism measures by the States concerned?

(iii) While following international standards, such as those of FATF, can the CTC take into account the need for internationally negotiated and agreed arrangements acceptable to all Member States?

(iv) While the CTC’s meeting of the international and regional organisations was a successful venture in securing the participation of the invitees involved, could the CTC, in future, consider a more representative regional balance? At the same time, must the Committee not also note that not all regional organisations have the mandate of the countries they represent to engage in any discussions on the subject of terrorism?

(v) While it is understood that the CTC does not need to move at the speed of the slowest Member, it would need to consider whether it is desirable to move at the speed of the fastest either. Shouldn’t the Committee be seeking to avoid a situation where the overwhelming majority of States having fulfilled their obligations under Stage-A belong predominantly to the more developed regions of the world while those striving to comply with the requirements represent the developing world?

(vi) While the CTC’s matrix of assistance does provide a useful assessment of assistance on offer, shouldn’t the Committee be examining whether bilateral assistance offered by one or two countries are truly representative of the entire gamut of assistance in this area offered at a bilateral level?

Mr. President,

India has made considerable efforts to work with the international community in its fight against terrorism. India is a party to all 12 international conventions on terrorism. The Government of India has decided very recently to ratify the International Convention for Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. India’s proposal for the early conclusion of a Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism has been under active consideration of the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly. The recent Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth Law Ministers’ meeting reiterated the need for the early
conclusion of the Convention and called upon all States to cooperate in resolving the outstanding issues. We are confident that the mutual interest of Member States will enable the Convention to be approved as a useful and effective multilateral instrument in the near future.

Mr. President,

Let me once again reiterate our warmest appreciation for the work of Sir Jeremy in the Counter Terrorism Committee. We wish him all success and have no doubt that he will apply his boundless energy, valuable experience and the rare qualities of an outstanding diplomat to whichever pursuit he chooses to engage in after July this year. We also wish to warmly welcome Ambassador Arias to the Chair of this prestigious and critical Committee and wish him the very best in his endeavor. I assure him that my delegation will be prepared to offer him whatever assistance he may require of us in the effective fulfillment of his high function.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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Mr. President,

1. Let me begin by congratulating Pakistan on its assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of May 2003. I heartily join others in welcoming you in our midst today, Sir, at this session of the Council dedicated specifically to a subject of your choice. I also take this opportunity to felicitate Mexico for its handling of the Presidency of the Council last month.

2. The subject for consideration by the Council today is the peaceful settlement of disputes. The faith of nations in this world body is embedded in the collective commitment of its members to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The
maintenance of international peace and security is a principal purpose of the Charter and involves the prevention and removal of threats to the peace as well as the suppression of acts of aggression. Equally, the emphasis upon bringing about the adjustment or settlement, by pacific means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, of international disputes or situations that might lead to the breach of peace is no less prominent a purpose. Indeed, together they constitute the very first purpose of the United Nations under Article 1 (1) of the Charter. More than fifty years ago, speaking before the United Nations, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru declared and I quote:

“This Assembly took shape after two mighty wars and as a consequence of those wars. What has been the lesson of those wars? Surely the lesson of those wars has been that out of hatred and violence you will not build peace. It is a contradiction in terms. The lesson of history, the long course of history, and more especially the lesson of the last great wars which have devastated humanity, has been that out of hatred and violence only hatred and violence will come. We have got into a cycle of hatred and violence, and not the most brilliant debate will set us out of it, unless we look some other way and find some other means. It is obvious that if we continue in this cycle and have wars which this Assembly was especially meant to avoid and prevent, the result will not only be tremendous devastation allover the world, but non-achievement by any individual power or group of its objective.”

3. Every nation, big or small strives for a basic modicum of stability in its domestic and international environment in order to enable it to pursue its own national objectives. Every nation thus has a legitimate interest in matters of peace and war, and must shoulder its responsibility to ensure this end. Where disputes arise between states or situations between them that might endanger international peace and security, it is incumbent upon them to settle these by peaceful means. Article 2 (3) of the Charter specifically enjoins this upon all Member States. Where the United Nations has a role and relevance, its efforts should be welcomed. A basic premise of the pacific settlement of disputes relates to the provision under the Charter calling on member States to first resort to peaceful means in settling disputes that threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. The opening Article of Chapter VI, Article 33 (1) makes it clear that the parties to any dispute likely to endanger
the maintenance of international peace and security, “shall first of all seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangement, or other peaceful means of their choice.” The Charter sets no hierarchy between the various means enumerated therein.

4. A cursory look at Chapter VI shows that it concerns only those disputes that endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. Not all disputes that affect states or between them are covered. While it needs to be recognized that the Security Council or the General Assembly have in the normal course rarely refused to admit a question for failing to fulfill the clause “likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security” and has chosen to interpret this Article liberally, it has generally adopted a flexible and pragmatic approach and one that has been grounded on a recognition of the political realities on the ground rather than on purely legalistic approaches.

5. Evidently, the means provided for in Article 33 are not intended to be exhaustive. The reference to “other peaceful means of their choice” was clearly added to provide the parties greater freedom of choice. The 2 drafters desired action by the Organisation only in the last resort with the onus left upon the parties to settle disputes peacefully among themselves either directly, through the means listed in the Article, or through resort to regional organizations, if need be.

6. The idea that local disputes should be solved locally seems to have been favored by the drafters. Even where the Council or the Assembly has taken consideration of a situation or question, the primary responsibility for settlement remains with the parties themselves. Article 36(2) requires the Council to take into consideration the existence of agreements between the parties for the pacific settlement of disputes and the procedures adopted by the parties prior to requesting the Council to take up the issue. Given this primary responsibility resting with the parties to settle their differences or disputes between themselves, the competence of the UN organs is only subsidiary. Likewise, the measures outlined in Chapter VI are non-coercive and possess no legally-binding character beyond what has been accepted by parties and in terms of their own understanding of such acceptance of commitment.

7. How far does the power of the Security Council under Chapter VI
extend? It is pertinent to note that Article 33 requires the Council, when it deems necessary, to call upon the parties to settle their disputes by peaceful methods but the choice of means of settlement by parties, strictly construed, would entail that the parties are bound no further than to engage their best efforts to find a peaceful solution. The requirements of specific results are not indicated.

8. The Council's power to investigate in order to decide whether a dispute or situation requires its attention or whether it constitutes an independent basis of action is derived from Article 34. While invocation of this Article has, in specific instances, constituted the pre-conditions calling upon the parties under Article 33 (2) or for making recommendations under Article 36 or Article 37 (2), this Article has also been used to determine whether or not a dispute or situation actually does endanger international peace and security.

9. Article 36 gives the Council power to recommend appropriate procedures or methods of adjustments for situations brought before it. The procedure recommended in Article 36 should take into consideration any procedure for the settlement of the disputes, which have already been adopted by the parties. But in the choice of procedures under this Article, the Council is not bound by the list included in article 33 (1). The Council may devise new methods or suggest a combination of existing procedures, coupled with its recommendations for a particular procedure with advice that the 3 parties should consider other suitable methods. The distinction between the 'appropriate procedures' or 'methods of adjustments' which can be recommended by the Council under Article 36, paragraph 1 and "terms of settlement" which can be recommended by the Council under Article 37, paragraph 2 (in addition to its right to call upon the parties to settle the dispute by peaceful means under Article 33) is not always clear.

10. On its part, the General Assembly has over the years attempted to enhance the effectiveness of peaceful settlement of disputes between States through its own resolutions and Declarations. The 'Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes' (A/RES/37/10) of 15 November 1982 and 'Declaration on the Prevention of Removal of Disputes and Situations which may threaten international peace and security and on the Role of the United Nations in this field.' (A/RES/43/51) of 5 December 1988, are important in this respect. An examination of these resolutions
and Declarations indicates that these resolutions and Declarations relate to settlement of all disputes and are not confined only to the disputes referred to in Chapter VI of the Charter. These resolutions and Declarations, furthermore, reiterate the right of all States to resort to peaceful means of their own choice for the prevention and removal of disputes or situations which is central to the pacific settlement of disputes in the following manner:

- In seeking peaceful settlement ‘the party shall agree on such peaceful means as may be appropriate to the circumstances of the states and the nature of the dispute’.

- In the event of failure of the parties to reach an early solution by means specified in the Charter, the parties should continue to seek peaceful solution and consult forthwith on mutually agreed means to settle the dispute peacefully.

11. A further important element insisted upon in these Declarations is that States should, in accordance with international law, implement in good faith all the provisions and agreements concluded by them for the settlement of disputes affecting them. Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in this regard may suggest the use of various means at its disposal. Where cases arise of the Secretary General making use of fact-finding capabilities relating to a dispute or a situation, these are pursued only with the express consent of the State or States concerned.

12. The path of negotiation is seen by many distinguished jurists as the most preferable method of settlement of disputes. Firstly, since the resolution of the dispute is by mutual consent, often arrived at after a kind of bargaining that may involve elements of give and take, there is a greater probability of the parties carrying our the agreement faithfully. Secondly, if government by consent expresses the spirit of democracy, then the diplomacy of bilateral negotiations is nearest to that spirit. Thirdly, arbitration and judicial settlement are, essentially, zero-sum games. By contrast, in bilateral diplomacy each party seeks to get something it desires with the total pay-off becoming a variable sum that provides each side scope for maximizing this sum. In other words, the process of bilateral negotiation would be more likely to lead to a ‘win-win’ situation for both the parties. And fourthly, an Imposed solution to a dispute is likely to be reopened by the party that feels aggrieved or compelled
at the time of settlement, thus proving to be no real settlement at all.

13. A decade ago, the report of the Secretary General entitled “An Agenda for Peace” had stated that if conflicts had gone unresolved in the past, this was not because techniques for peaceful settlement were unknown or inadequate. The fault lay first in the lack of political will of parties to seek a solution to their differences through such means as are suggested in Chapter VI of the Charter, and second, in the lack of leverage at the disposal of a third party if this was the procedure chosen. Each party tends to seek a better solution than what it had been called upon to accept. A third party might not find a reason to use the leverage it has for the settlement of the particular dispute. Where it has, the development of a different order of vested interests cannot be ruled out. Given the specific character and complexity of some disputes, they may not be amenable to resolution according to any pre-set time schedule. It is true that, apart from the danger of eruption of violence because of an unresolved dispute, an unresolved conflict relating to resources might stand in the way of exploitation of the resources for the benefit of the community; or if the dispute related to a territory under colonial occupation or alien domination, non-resolution of the dispute would place the people in a condition of uncertainty or prolong their travails or sufferings. However its indiscriminate applicability to situations of irredentist, secessionist or other political movements within independent states with composite populations of different ethnic and religious persuasions can be extremely risky, even destabilising. This could be even more serious when externally inspired or assisted. In a world where the indispensability of the sovereign State as the fundamental political unit of the international community is still vigorously reaffirmed, the perceptions by states of their territorial integrity and the essential values undergirding their respective political structures are bound to rank as the utmost priority. This will admit little compromise.

14. Against this background, we would commend the emphasis placed by the Manila declaration on the obligation of states to settle international disputes “on the basis of the sovereign equality of States and in accordance with the principle of free choice of means” (Section I, para 3), thus incorporating one of the basic principles of the Declaration on Principles of International Law
concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In particular, the Declaration on Friendly Relations states that any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of a State or country or at its political independence is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

15. No State can permit aggression against its own territory. Nothing in the Charter can impair the inherent right of each member state to take all necessary measures for its self-defence if an armed attack occurs against it. This is equally true if it is subjected to continuous low-intensity proxy war through infiltration, cross-border terrorism or other means using force. Where member states have agreed to implement resolutions of the United Nations, they are justified in expecting such implementation to be complete and in the sequence agreed to without emasculation, revision or re-interpretation. Where attempts are made to apply such resolutions selectively or in a partial, self-serving manner, they have obviously not worked but have only served to subvert their original spirit. In some cases, over time, their subtext has changed and they have proved obsolete, defunct and overtaken by events on the ground.

16. India’s experience with the working of the United Nations has been sufficiently long and educative for us to remain vigilant of the threats, pressures and blandishments that have been exerted upon us during various periods of our history in the guise of furthering the pacific settlement of disputes affecting us. Our stance has been consistent and principled. We have not been deterred by the temporary approbation or opprobrium of the members of this body or other bodies of this Organisation despite our abiding respect for it. We remain confident that we retain the understanding, sympathy and support of its broader membership in our overall stance. For the rest, we are fully conscious of being able to summon the firmness and resilience needed to safeguard our national interests. We are also aware that more than anything we need to remain continuously responsive and reflective of the needs and aspirations of our peoples as expressed through our own democratic institutions.

17. It is our view that the democratic norm provides the best possible means to address discontent within societies and disputes between them. Respect for pluralism and diversity is fundamental to this approach. A society that promotes democratic norms and respect
for tolerance is better placed than one that lacks these values in addressing disputes. Democratic societies are far less prone to extremist ideologies based on conflict, violence and militarism. They are also less inclined toward waging wars. Periodic elections that make political leaders accountable to Parliament and to voters act as a regular check against any predisposition to policies of military adventurism. As Prime Minister Vajpayee said recently and I quote:

“… If the 20th century saw the global growth of democracy, the new century should see its further expansion and enrichment. Especially, we should develop democracy as an effective instrument for fulfilling people’s aspirations and resolving conflicts and contentious issues. History has proved time and again that free and democratic societies are the ones that are creative, self-corrective and self-regenerative.”

Unquote.

18. I wish to conclude by reverting to the speech I referred to in the beginning where the Prime Minister of India declared that he had no fear of the future. He went on to say and I quote:

“… if we banish this fear, if we have confidence, even though we may take risks of trust rather than risk violent language, violent actions and in the end war, I think those risks are worth taking.”

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Mr. President,

We extend our warm felicitations to you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. The Security Council and the general membership of the United Nations will benefit greatly from your adroit stewardship of the Council at a time when complex and sensitive issues remain on the Council’s agenda.

Most appropriately, you have chosen to hold a public debate on the situation in Afghanistan as the highlight of your Presidency. Despite the scale and complexity of diverse problems it faces, Afghanistan under the leadership of President Hamid Karzai, has made impressive progress in addressing the tasks of nation building, political reconciliation and reconstruction of the economy. It is, however, critical that the United Nations remain fully engaged in monitoring and supporting developments in this vital part of the world.

We understand that while the focus of deliberations is on the problem of drugs in Afghanistan, the debate has been left open to a consideration of some of the other pressing issues involving the country.

Let me first address the issue of drugs in Afghanistan. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) has, in its report of February 2003 entitled “The opium economy in Afghanistan – an international problem”, drawn attention to the serious situation that has been brought about by a rampant increase in drug cultivation and the threat it represents to Afghanistan and the international community. Years of instability, internal strife, mismanagement by the Taliban and complicity within certain quarters of the country and outside have contributed to the current situation whereby Afghanistan has emerged as the world’s largest producer of illicit opium, accounting for almost three quarters of global opium production. The report highlights that over the last two decades, Afghanistan’s opium production has increased more than 15-fold, with production in 2002 at 3400 tonnes.

As the report indicates, Afghanistan’s opium economy is not a country-wide phenomenon but is limited to a few provinces that have
continued to defy the opium ban issued by President Karzai in January 2002. Almost 80% of all opium production in Afghanistan is confined to provinces along the southern and south-eastern borders of Afghanistan. This small area is the origin of almost three-quarters of the heroin sold in Europe and virtually all of the heroin in Russia.

Drugs account for as much as 18% of Afghanistan’s GDP. As the UNODC report has sought to emphasise, the problem of drugs in Afghanistan can be traced to its socio-economic roots. The phenomenon requires to be tackled at a multifaceted level involving a comprehensive action plan providing for accelerated development in the provinces concerned, increasing literacy and employment opportunities and alternative crop cultivation options for opium farms. However, none of these medium to long term solutions can be achieved without facilitating a basic environment of security and stability.

Discussions at the Paris Conference on “Drug Routes : from Central Asia to Europe”, on 21-23 May 2003, highlighted the nexus between drug trafficking and financing of terrorism, and reinforced the requirement for an urgent, swift and coordinated response to the problem. That this form of “narco-terrorism” has often been State-sponsored or assisted by unrestrained agents of State authority have not made it any easier to control.

Mr. President,

India welcomes the efforts made by President Hamid Karzai and the Afghan Transitional Administration to implement the decrees prohibiting the cultivation, production and processing of opium, including illicit drug-trafficking and abuse. This is a qualitative step forward from the Taliban regime that banned production with the intention of inflating prices. To this end, the Taliban not only failed to eliminate the large accumulated stockpiles of opium and heroin under its control but also allowed de facto trade in narcotics to continue. President Karzai has indicated his Government’s seriousness in addressing this issue. His decision has to be supported through the will of the international community.

India welcomes the significant contribution by UNODC and the United Nations Drug Control Programme as well as individual States to counter the threat of drugs in Afghanistan. The Joint Statement issued at the conclusion of the 6th Meeting of India-Russia Joint Working Group on Afghanistan on 28 March 2003, expressed concern over the increased production of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan and their illegal trafficking,
and emphasised the need for the development of a comprehensive strategy, with an appropriate key UN role in the process. India recognises that most of these projects are long-term but vital in the elimination of drugs on a sustainable basis.

In the statement made in the UN General Assembly on December 6, 2002 on Afghanistan, India had expressed deep concern over reports of an increase in poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and the fact that the momentum for putting in place an anti-narcotics strategy had faltered. We had emphasised the role of the international community in supporting Afghanistan in its drive to combat drug cultivation and trade, and the efforts required to extend development plans to different parts of the country.

In India’s view, given the seriousness of the situation, its dimensions and implications within and outside Afghanistan, there is a pressing need to tackle the issue on an immediate basis to supplement other long-term programmes under implementation or consideration. Some essential components in such a strategy could include the allocation of more resources for the affected parts of the country to bolster ongoing security efforts; enhancement of the capacity of the Afghan Government to enforce its ban on opium cultivation, production and trafficking; identification and elimination of the chain of trans-border criminals and their supporters involved in the supply and sale of drugs, drug-related money laundering, arms supply, terrorism and illegal immigration; greater cooperation among the countries concerned on information-sharing, legal and judicial matters including extradition of drug offenders wanted in other countries and interdiction efforts; and a strong crackdown on the warlords concerned and external actors involved in the facilitation of this illegal trade.

Mr. President,

India has fully supported international efforts aimed at the reconstruction and emergence of Afghanistan as a peaceful, strong, prosperous, united and independent nation. We have noted carefully the progress achieved in the implementation of the provisions of the Bonn Agreement, and coordination of various international efforts aimed at rehabilitation and reconstruction. The agreement reached in May 2003 to enable the Afghan Administration to centralise revenue collection is an important step towards the development of an independent resource base and should be adequately supported by the parties concerned. India fully supports the broad-based government led by President Hamid Karzai and appreciates his committed efforts at promoting national reconciliation.
It is towards this end that India has extended an assistance package amounting to over US $ 170 million to Afghanistan. This includes a recent commitment of $ 70 million for the up-gradation and reconstruction of a key arterial road linking Delaram in Afghanistan to port facilities in Iran. We have also trained about 500 Afghan nationals in various disciplines including policing, journalism, civil aviation, judiciary, diplomacy and agriculture. Unfortunately, transit-related difficulties prevented the supply of India’s gift of a million tones of wheat to Afghanistan. However, a portion of the wheat was converted into high protein biscuits for the children’s school feeding programme and is understood to be sufficient to meet the requirements of one million Afghan schoolchildren for a period of six months. We intend to build further on this.

Mr. President,

Security remains the most serious challenge to the process of peace and economic reconstruction in Afghanistan. Reports of increasing instability in Afghanistan due to the deteriorating security situation need to be addressed firmly and resolutely by the international community before matters go out of control. We extend our sincere condolences to the Government and people of Germany for the loss of 4 soldiers during the recent terrorist attack in Kabul. This incident, taken in conjunction with several other recent security-related developments such as the killing of the ICRC employee in March this year, highlights the increasing need for the international community to address the threats to regional peace and stability emanating from terrorist activity in the region.

The cause of this escalation can be directly attributed to the increasingly emboldened subversive and terrorist activity by elements hostile to the Afghan Government, including Taliban remnants, Al Qaeda and their accomplices, and their efforts to regroup with supporters from outside. Ambassador Brahimi, in his last briefing to the Council on May 6, expressed concern over reports of hostile elements crossing over into Afghanistan from its eastern and southern borders. More recent incidents have shown that infiltrations by terrorist and extremist groups from this part into Afghanistan have targeted international aid workers and coalition forces in a clear design to sabotage efforts aimed at national reconciliation through political and economic processes. Serious international efforts would need to be directed against this threat.

Mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan constitute crucial elements in the return of peace and stability to that country. It is therefore vital that signatory States adhere to their
commitments outlined under the Kabul Declaration on Good Neighbourly Relations signed on 22 December 2002. One way to ensure this would be to entrust the Secretary General with the role of monitoring adherence by concerned states to the Declaration. The Afghan Government could also provide valuable information towards any monitoring mechanism set up in this regard.

Another measure to facilitate a more secure environment in Afghanistan would be to proceed rapidly forward on the development of indigenous security structures as a guarantee towards the long term unity and stability of the country. This process requires to be carried out in a calibrated manner without weakening current resources and strength. At the same time, disarmament and demobilization processes should continue forward.

Mr. President,

We are at a delicate crossroads in the process of forming a stable and secure Afghanistan. It is, therefore, vital that the international community continue to engage with the same intensity, the task of rehabilitating Afghanistan from the dark ages under the Taliban yoke to the light of a new century under a stable, democratic order. Referring to the responsibilities of the international community with regard to Afghanistan, the Minister for External Affairs of India had stated recently, that, “the forces of terror, the forces of darkness, the forces of obscurantism and extremism will not be allowed to cast their long shadows over the future of the people” of Afghanistan. For this, the international community needs to persevere with commitment, solidarity and generosity.

Thank you, Mr. President.
Statement by Mrs. Deepa G. Wadwa, Joint Secretary Ministry of External Affairs for the Preparatory meeting for the First International Ministerial Conference on Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and the donor countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation held from June 23 to 27, 2003.


Mr. Chairman,

1. We congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election and are confident that under your leadership, we would be successful in our deliberations. We would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS as well the contributions of UNCTAD in preparing the draft outcome document. We would like to mention in particular our appreciation of the practical and balanced approach of the Deputy Secretary General of UNCTAD whom we have just heard.

Mr. Chairman,

2. My delegation is committed to working constructively to make the first International Ministerial Conference on Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and the Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation a success. We have a daunting task of finalizing an outcome document in a limited time ahead of us. We, however, have to conclude negotiations and we would need to adopt a pragmatic approach. The current draft before us is rather long, essentially because there are a number of paragraphs that are repetitive and contain descriptions, which are either too generalized or contain value judgments. We would need to propose amendments to the text and are somewhat concerned that the limitations of time may not allow us to engage in a process of word-by-word negotiations, which are essential, on this text. We are, therefore, willing to explore a practical way that would facilitate negotiations and ensure the adoption of a focused and action oriented outcome document.
3. We would like to highlight some points which in our view need to be borne in mind in our work ahead:-

- Firstly, our work on finalizing a Programme of Action should be guided by the mandate for the Conference as agreed to by the international community at the 56th UN General Assembly – that is to review the current situation of transit transport systems and to formulate appropriate policy measures and action-oriented programmes aimed at developing efficient transit transport systems. The outcome document should address the issue of transit transport cooperation, taking into account the interests and concerns of both landlocked and transit developing countries. We would expect title to accordingly reflect this mandate.

- Secondly, in addressing issues of transit transport, we would need to build on the work that has already been done and give a political momentum to the process. In the field of transit transport, there have been positive developments. There are a number of bilateral, sub regional and regional arrangements that exist and are operating through collaborative arrangements between landlocked and transit developing countries concerned. This fact was acknowledged during that 5th Meeting of Governmental Experts from Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and Financial and Development Institutions, but does not find mention in the draft text. Existing realities should be reflected.

- Thirdly, transit developing countries themselves face many challenges but take on the additional costs of providing transit transport facilities to landlocked countries even when areas in their own countries remain as remote from the sea as those of landlocked countries. The Transit Developing Countries do this in a spirit of co-operation and friendship, which forms the very basis of building efficient transit transport systems. This basic approach, including addressing the problems of land-locked regions within countries, need to be fortified in the draft text.

- Fourthly there are several references in the draft text to security concerns of transit developing countries being an impediment to or slowing down the movement of transit goods. All universally agreed principles, including Article 125 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea clearly state that the facilities provided for landlocked countries should in no way infringe the legitimate
interests of the transit countries. Security is a legitimate concern of any country. We, therefore, would seek to ensure that this is clearly reflected in the draft outcome.

Mr. Chairman,

4. India enjoys close and historical links with both its landlocked neighbours - Bhutan and Nepal. India accords the highest priority to enhancing its friendly and good neighbourly relations with them, including through the strengthening of trade relations and cooperation on transit transport issue. The result of the close ties is evident. As pointed in UNCTAD. Report TD/B/LDC/AC.1/19 the largest share of foreign investment is one of our land-locked neighbour is from India; and as pointed out in a 2001 report of UNCTAD, the transport cost for one of the landlocked neighbours are only 4.9% - about one third the average for landlocked countries and half of that for developing countries.

5. India’s resolve, at the highest political levels, to further building our relationship with our landlocked neighbours commits our delegation to work towards a fruitful outcome of the Conference.

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Mr. President,

At the outset, I should like to congratulate you on your successful stewardship of the Security Council in July when the Council has addressed some of the most pressing issues confronting us in Africa and the Middle-East, while also allowing for a detailed review of the performance of the Council’s Committees on Terrorism.

We thank you for including in your work programme, consideration of the 1267 (Al-Qaeda and Taliban) Committee and its Monitoring Group. A review of the work of this Committee is particularly timely and essential, given the propensity of organisations like Taliban and Al Qaeda to strike at will at different parts of the world, but equally owing to disturbing recent developments in Afghanistan’s southern and south-eastern borders, indicating the regrouping and increasingly damaging activism of the Al Qaeda and Taliban there. It is vital that all members of the international community are united in their preparedness and, more important, willingness to tackle this growing menace.

In its first report since the adoption of resolution 1455, the Monitoring Group has correctly concluded that despite some marked successes in the fight against terrorist groups, recent events have demonstrated that the Al-Qaeda and its associated groups still pose a significant threat to international peace and security. The fight against terrorism can be addressed truly and effectively only when all nations realise that terrorism is a malaise that can strike at will in any part of the world, including those societies that currently may see a vested interest in encouraging such tendencies.

Mr. President,

India has been at the forefront of the fight against terrorism for over two decades. Only last week, at least 14 persons were killed in the State of Jammu & Kashmir in India as a result of terrorist attacks against pilgrims and at an army camp. While there is no direct evidence of the
involvement of the Al-Qaeda or the Taliban in these attacks, the motivating factors and the sponsors of such operations are one and the same. Yesterday there was an additional bomb blast in the city of Mumbai.

I shall now briefly touch upon some aspects of the report of the Monitoring Group to which I append my delegation's comments. These are as follows:

(i) The Monitoring Group has concluded that the Committee’s list only includes a small sub-set of known Al-Qaeda operatives.

We understand that the Afghan government has, in a welcome development, recently proposed certain changes to the Taliban section of the Committee’s list. Resolutions 1390 and 1455 make it incumbent upon States to list any member of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda organisation, and any individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with the Taliban and the Al-Qaeda organisation. In our view, Member States should be proactive in proposing all names available with them for inclusion on the list, including those who had participated in training camps or other activities associated with the Taliban/Al-Qaeda. Without such an exhaustive listing, the Committee would be severely handicapped in the implementation of its mandate.

(ii) The Group has drawn attention to the possibility of Al-Qaeda’s access to nuclear and chemical weapons.

India has cautioned consistently against the potential dangers of terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction. We had piloted a consensus resolution on this issue in the 57th UN General Assembly. We urge the Committee to place emphasis on the study of possible proliferation of weapons of mass destruction among non-State actors such as the Taliban and Al-Qaeda.

(iii) The Group has commented adversely on the continued ability of the Al-Qaeda to finance its activities through charities and the drug trade. It has also commented on the ineffectiveness of the travel ban on members of the Al-Qaeda; continued use of small arms and light weapons and the possible flow of illegal weapons across States resulting in increased attacks on coalition forces in Afghanistan and the use of heavy calibre weapons in the Afghan region bordering Pakistan, raising questions as to how and by whom such weapons and ammunition were being supplied.
The nexus between drug smuggling and terrorism, the organised flow of arms across Afghanistan’s borders and the increasing attacks on coalition forces tell their own tale of complicity and deceit. All of the above conclusions of the Group indicate the limitations of the sanctions regime when applied to nebulous non-State grouping such as the Al-Qaeda and Taliban which transcend boundaries and utilise non-formal systems to attain their logistical objectives. In the light of these conclusions, it is perhaps necessary for a more in-depth expert examination of new tools that could be applied to make sanctions more focused and effective against such terrorist groups.

On the question of procedure, we note that in some instances, evaluation of proposals for listing of individuals tends to be coloured by extraneous considerations and political perspectives, thereby not only delaying but discouraging States from making genuine recommendations. While, to some extent, this may well be the objective of a jaundiced scrutiny by some, it is necessary for the Council to revise procedures that would make it necessary for States to communicate their approval for such listing within a very limited and defined period of time.

As of now, it appears that only 64 Member States have responded to the call in resolution 1455 to all States to submit an updated report to the Committee within 90 days of its adoption. In our collective effort to strengthen the fight against terrorism, the Committee should take measures to ensure that the tradition of prompt reporting is maintained, and is followed up thereafter by detailed analysis of the inputs provided by Member States.

We fully support the proposal to supplement the Monitoring Group with additional human resources who could assist in the analysis of reports of member States. Inputs received in the form of reports by Member States will form a valuable data-base for the Committee and it is for this reason that the Monitoring Group needs to be adequately equipped to present the best analysis of this resource to the Committee.

We also support the on-going efforts to secure the requisite coordination in the work of the 1267 and 1373 Committees of the Council. These could serve to avoid duplicating calls for information in areas where such inputs are already available with one of the two Committees.

While concluding, I wish to congratulate H.E. Mr. Heraldo Munoz, the Permanent Representative of Chile, for his assumption of the Chairmanship of the 1267 Committee. The Chair has already shown
considerable initiative in overseeing the implementation of the provisions of resolution 1455 and devotion to the international community’s fight against the threat posed by the Al-Qaeda and Taliban. We wish him and his able delegation the very best in this noble endeavour. We cannot help but agreeing with the conclusion that the Monitoring Group’s work can only be meaningful if all States take concrete measures against the individuals and entities on the Committee’s list. The will of the international community, to enforce the collective provisions enshrined in the Security Council’s landmark resolutions against terrorist organisations and their supporters can only be as strong as its weakest link will allow.

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459. Statement by Ambassador V.K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the United Nations on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestine Question at the Security Council.


Mr. President,

Please allow me to felicitate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of September. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Syria for its capable steering of the Council in August and the issues confronting it in a very difficult month.

Mr. President,

This open meeting of the Security Council has been convened at relatively short notice to deal with an increased spiral of violence in the Middle East and the decision of the Israeli authorities to initiate action that could lead to the possible expulsion of President Arafat.

India has consistently regarded President Arafat as the elected leader of the Palestinian people and symbol of their cause. His expulsion and removal from the scene would be indefensible in international law. It represents an affront to the Palestinian people as well as the international community at large and must attract the severest condemnation worldwide. Apart from serving no constructive purpose, it would negate all efforts towards reconciliation. More important, it is likely to lead to an
increased wave of anger and resultant violence in the region. Such a move is bound to exacerbate the situation and could prove politically counterproductive. It would definitely have a negative impact on the Middle East peace process.

Israel remains oblivious of the limitations of its uni-dimensional policy based on a military approach that relies on the might of the IDF, without recourse to a concomitant political approach. Its policy of military blockades, curfews and restrictions perpetuate continued dislocation of normal life, economic deprivation, and loss of freedom and further demoralization of the Palestinian people. This has led, inevitably, to continuing acts of violence and retribution against Israeli forces and civilians.

The humanitarian situation in the Occupied Territories that has already reached crisis proportion has placed the Palestinian economy in depression with mounting unemployment, deepening levels of poverty, huge income losses and stagnating levels of international assistance. Closures and blockades need to be lifted, unhindered access allowed to humanitarian supplies and the finances released to the Palestinian Authority for alleviating the grave situation and averting further crisis.

India has always maintained that the only answer to the ongoing violence would be for both sides to resolutely move forward on the path of dialogue and reconciliation. There must be no wavering in the face of the gravest provocations posed by extremist elements on both sides who seem to share a common goal namely that of denying peace to their peoples. We urge both sides to refuse to be provoked into responding to by abandoning the path to peace.

Mr. President,

The few months of relative calm after the launch of the Roadmap put forward by the Quartet offered hope to the peoples of the region and the world over of the prospect of peace. The dream of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side within secure and recognised borders, appeared within reach.

Unfortunately, the brutal reach of terror and the retribution has negated each budding move towards peace. Targeted assassinations, acts of unwarranted violence, indiscriminate killings and cycle of reprisals must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. They cannot contribute to a sense of security for any of the parties. The Occupied Territories continue to face the threat of economic collapse and social destitution. For the sake of the people of the region, it is critical that the
two sides, with the assistance of all other parties concerned, move resolutely forward in their search for a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Israel has an obligation to exercise self-restraint and patience. It has resorted increasingly to extreme measures such as extra-judicial killings and armed incursions in Palestinian areas. We are not unaware of the provocations Israel itself has been subjected to. But its decision to persevere with the construction of a wall that cuts across a wide swath of Palestinian land, annexes agricultural areas, destroys dwellings and separates families, is both unjust and illegal. Such actions can only increase the sense of despair and frustration among Palestinians and aggravate a situation already vitiated by the imposition of hardships and suffering imposed by a regime of blockades and roadblocks.

India has consistently supported the Palestinian cause. Apart from this having roots in our traditional ties with the Arab World, India’s commitment to peace and stability in the region is a cardinal element of its foreign policy. As part of a broader traditional engagement with Palestine, thousands of Palestinian students have studied in India. There are extensive people-to-people contacts between us and India has assisted the Palestinian National Authority in upgrading human resources and nation-building capacities. This will continue to expand.

**Mr. President,**

India joins the international community in urging Israel to exercise restraint in respect of any plan it may have that could adversely affect the safety of life and personal freedom of President Arafat or remove him forcibly from his present position.

At the same time, India strongly condemns all acts of terrorism and violence, and reiterates its position that there can be no justification whatsoever for attacks against unarmed civilians, women and children. Only a complete cessation of violence can provide the conducive environment for a continuation of dialogue.

We reiterate the need for both sides to fulfill their obligations under the Quartet Roadmap and strongly emphasise that every effort be made to ensure its implementation so that the vision of two States living side by side within secure and recognised borders can be realised and a just and durable peace is established in the region based on UN Security Council resolutions 242, 338 and 1397.
Mr. President,

1. I am happy to represent India in this meeting. It is appropriate that this high-level meeting of the Plenary at the beginning of the 58th session of the General Assembly should consider a subject which, quite justifiably, has become not only an overriding concern for the entire international community but also a serious humanitarian crisis.

Mr. President,

2. India strongly supports the “Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS” adopted at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly. We welcome the recent efforts of the G-8 to address effectively the urgency and gravity of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. At the same time, we would like to express grave concern over the fact that the HIV/AIDS epidemic remains a global emergency, undermining social and economic development throughout the world, particularly in developing countries.

3. The UNGA Special Session of 2001 set for the year of 2003 certain time-bound targets relating to the establishment of an enabling policy environment. Let me share with you some of the steps India has initiated with the aim of strengthening political advocacy and implementing a multi-pronged strategy for dealing with the problem of HIV/AIDS.

4. A year and a half ago, our Prime Minister launched a Parliamentary Forum cutting across political lines on HIV/AIDS prevention. A national convention of this Forum was convened earlier this year involving elected representatives from across the country with a view to translating the consensus at national level to action at the grassroots level. This convention was inaugurated by the Prime Minister. The Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS was endorsed by all major political parties. Such political commitment at the highest
levels alone can ensure the development of multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS strategies and their integration into mainstream development planning.

5. A comprehensive National Aids Control Programme is in place in India, covering the entire length and breadth of the country. This Programme seeks to put in place a wide range of preventive programmes as well as those on care, support and treatment; access to information, education and services; strengthened anti-discrimination units and human rights protection for HIV infected people.

6. Protection of the rights of the HIV/AIDS infected population is an important responsibility, which we acknowledge and seek to address. We are determined to protect the vulnerable, ensure non-discrimination, enhance provision of health care and secure access to socio-economic rights. The National Programme on AIDS includes campaigns to eliminate the stigma and discrimination faced by HIV positive people. Voluntary counselling and confidential testing centres have been established to provide social and psychological support to HIV patients. Our approach to counselling is non-coercive, cost-effective and inclusive. Special emphasis has been placed on the right to privacy of individuals vulnerable to HIV. The empowerment of women through sensitization and education is also seen as an essential part of reducing their vulnerability to HIV.

7. The agreement reached on public health related issues, in particular on access to affordable medicines to combat epidemics is a welcome and positive step. Such access for people in developing countries is amongst the most effective elements of public health policy aimed at reducing mortality and infection rates of scourges such as HIV/AIDS. We are, indeed, gratified that Indian pharmaceutical companies are producing anti-retroviral AIDS drugs at relatively affordable prices.

8. There is need for accelerated efforts to step up medical research in the field of HIV/AIDS. Governments should lead from the front in this regard and not leave the responsibility entirely to the private sector. The international community should also pool its technical expertise and resources for this purpose.

Mr. President,

9. It is evident that political intervention and the adoption of national
strategies, while essential, do not by themselves ensure the achievement of the impact targets which we have established for 2005 and 2010. While the primary responsibility for dealing with AIDS rests with national governments, we believe there is greater need for international solidarity and burden sharing. The Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the special session of the General Assembly represents a global compact bringing together all member states – the developing and the developed. The challenge of mobilizing resources is immense and increased national spending by developing countries should be accompanied by an augmentation of international assistance. We should also look at innovative mechanisms, such as the idea of the Tobin Tax. A tax on short term investments, with the aim of reigning it back would encourage more long term investments while also augmenting resources which could be used in areas such as the fight against disease.

Mr. President,

10. We believe that the creation of a Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) has been a significant development. India was a member of the Transitional Working Group, which led to the creation of the Fund. We hope to see increased commitment and resolve by the donor community so that the Fund can live up to its promise.

11. It would be worth recalling that the UNGA Special Session expressed the resolve to reach an overall target of annual expenditure of between US $ 7-10 billion in developing countries through national budgets and contributions from the donor community by the year 2005. While a wide array of strategies is required to forge a multi-sectoral response, the crux remains the need for implementation of commitments by both developed and developing countries. We hope that neither side will be found wanting.

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461. **Statement by Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal at the High Level ad-hoc meeting on Afghanistan.**

**New York, September 24, 2003.**

Mr. Chairman,

1. We welcome this opportunity to meet once again in this format, a year since we last met.

2. Our convening again today is a reiteration of the commitment the international community has, and must sustain, to put Afghanistan firmly on the path of stability, moderation and reconstruction.

3. Our convening is also testimony to the fact that there are increasing concerns as challenges are being mounted against the Government of Afghanistan, and subversion is being attempted against the process of stability and reconstruction, unfortunately with support and sponsorship from outside, not dissimilar to what had happened in the past.

4. I would like to congratulate President Karzai at the achievements of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan since we met last. The implementation of the Bonn Agreement of December 2001 has continued. Serious efforts have been made to consolidate authority of the Central Government, and to further enhance its inclusive character. We look forward to the constitution making process and the elections next year.

5. **Mr. Chairman,** my Government has continued with its efforts to contribute to economic reconstruction in Afghanistan. We are circulating at this meeting a compilation of the assistance provided so far. Despite our own constraints, our present commitments add up to US$ 270 million, including 1 million tons of wheat. We have undertaken projects, in partnership with the Afghan Government, in a variety of sectors, including road transportation, airlines, health, education, police, judiciary, agriculture, information technology, telecommunications, among others. We have also initiated work on some major infrastructure projects in power transmission, hydroelectricity, irrigation and road construction.

6. Our effort has also been to carry out these projects in different parts of the country with the approval of the Afghan Government and in coordination with it.
7. We have found that our effort and contribution, including through a physical presence, has been widely welcomed in different parts of the country. We believe that economic regeneration would be among the more critical factors in promoting stability in Afghanistan and moving away from the legacy of the past more than two decades of conflict.

8. It is time, Mr. Chairman, that Afghanistan takes ownership of its own developments efforts. External efforts should essentially remain supportive of internal Afghan decisions. Afghanistan should have normal, stable, friendly relations with all, including in particular its neighbours but no country can claim any special rights on the people and territory of Afghanistan.

9. It is also time, Mr. Chairman, that the Kabul Declaration on Good Neighbourly relations is implemented firmly.

10. **Mr. Chairman**, India would continue to make its efforts in support of the efforts of the Afghan Government and people to re-establish a strong, independent, sovereign and united Afghanistan. Our relations with Afghanistan are bilateral and direct. We do not see our relations with Afghanistan through the prism of any other country. Our aim is to strengthen the natural and historical processes and relationships in the region which contribute a stability and development.

**Fact sheet on Indian Assistance to Afghanistan-Financial Assistance**

India initially announced financial assistance of US$ 100 million for Afghanistan. Of this assistance, US$ 31.5 m has been operationalised (details below) during 2002-03 and the balance US$ 68.5 m will be utilised in project related assistance to Afghanistan during 2003-04 (US $ 38.5 m) and 2004-05 (US$ 30m). The Government of India further announced US$ 70 mn (over and above the earlier committed US$ 100 m) for upgradation/ re-construction of the road from Zaranj to Delaram in Afghanistan. India has also decided to contribute US $ 200,000 to the World Bank managed Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund.

In addition, India has announced food assistance of 1 mn tons of wheat to Afghanistan. A part of this assistance (85517 tons of wheat) has been converted into high protein biscuits and sent to Afghanistan for its school feeding programme. A decision has been taken for supply of the second tranche of high protein biscuits to Afghanistan against 76521 tons of wheat.
Assistance provided since November 2001

Aid to Afghan Budget

- US $10 mn approved as cash subsidy to the Afghan budget was transferred to the account of the Afghan Government in July 2002.

- USS 200,000 was paid to Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund in year 2002. USS 200,000 is being paid to the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund for the year 2003-04.

Humanitarian assistance

- Winter clothing was sent to provide immediate humanitarian relief in Nov-Dec 2001. Another consignment of around 25 tons of winter clothing was sent in February 2003.

- A consignment of 20,000 blankets was sent to Herat in February 2002.

- Earthquake relief consisting of 200 tents, 10000 blankets, and nearly 10 tons of medicines was delivered to Afghanistan in April 2002.

Health

- The External Affairs Minister, during his visit to Kabul in August 2002, announced the setting aside US$ 4 mn of assistance for the rehabilitation of the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child health (IGICH). An amount of US$ 100,000 was approved for immediate assistance. The work related to the repairs, reconstruction and completion of balance works at IGICH was awarded to Central Public Works Department of India in June 2003 and has commenced on September 1, 2003.

- A team of 13 Indian doctors and paramedics have been working at Kabul since November 2001. The team is attending to patients and disbursing medicines at the polyclinic of the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH).

- The Indian Medical team is also running an Operation Theatre at the Koh-e-Markaz Hospital in Kabul.

- A 6-member team of Indian doctors and paramedics is running an Operation Theatre at the Civil Hospital in Mazar-e-Sharif since April 2002.
A 4-member team of Indian doctors and paramedics has started its work in Herat since April 112, 2003.

A 4-member team of Indian doctors and paramedics has started its work in Shebargan since end-May, 2003.

A 4-member team of Indian doctors and paramedics has reached Kandahar and is expected to commence its work soon.

More than 175 tons of medicines, medical instruments and equipment have been sent to Afghanistan since November 2001.

An artificial limb Jaipur foot fitment camp was set up for Afghan amputees at Kabul military hospital in January 2002. Nearly 1000 artificial limbs were fitted during the camp. Another artificial limb fitment camp was set up from October 21- December 4, 2002 at Mazar-e-Sharif and Meymaneh for the fitting of 600 artificial limbs. During the camp, training was also provided to eight local artisans on artificial limb maintenance. On conclusion of the camp, the fitment centre along with tools, machinery and raw materials was handed over to the Afghan authorities. A large number of rehabilitation aids like wheel chairs, crutches, hearing aids, audiometers were also gifted. Two batches of six Afghan doctors and paramedics each from the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health attended training in areas of their specialisation at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences from August 19-November 18, 2002, and May 29-August 27, 2003 respectively.

Civil Aviation

The Indian Government has gifted three airbus aircrafts, along with essential spares including two engines as well as crew support to the Ariana Afghan Airlines. The first two aircraft were handed over in September and December 2002 and the third aircraft in March 2003. 51 Ariana Afghan Airlines officials have been trained by Air India. Training of 8 officials of Ariana Afghan Airlines on Flight Engineers Ground Basic Classroom Training has commenced at the Indian Airlines training Centre in Hyderabad on September 1, 2003 for a period of six weeks.

Transport

Government has gifted 274 buses to the Afghan Government for its public transport system. Of these, most are operating in Kabul.
city, 25 in Kandahar, and 25 in Herat. A small numbers of buses are also operating in other cities.

Food Aid

- 9526 tons of fortified biscuits have been supplied for the School Feeding Programme in Afghanistan from November 2002 to June 2003. Another tranche of high protein biscuits (7496 tons) will be supplied to Afghanistan.

Education

- The External Affairs Minister, during his visit to Kabul in Aug 2002, announced the setting aside of US$ 4 m of assistance for the reconstruction of Habibia School. An amount of US$ 100000, was approved for immediate assistance. The work of reconstruction of Habibia School was awarded to the Central Public Works Department of India in June 2003 and has commenced on September 1, 2003.

- Two English language Instructors have been teaching English at the Institute of Diplomacy since February 2002 to the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other Government Departments of Afghanistan.

- Two additional English language teachers have been deputed to Kabul since March 10, 2003 to teach English at the Ministries of Information & Culture and Labour & Social Welfare.

- 8646 educational kits were gifted to the students of Habibia School in Kabul in Aug-Sept 2002.

- The Government has decided to gift 20,000 desk-cum-benches for schools in Afghanistan. The supplies of the desk-cum-benches from India have commenced in end-July 2003.

- In-service training of seven Afghan teachers from the Ministry of Education has commenced at Delhi Public School, Mathura Road on September 4, 2003 for a period of six weeks.

- Fifty slots have been allocated to Afghanistan for training at various institutes in India under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation, Programme. 43 Afghan nationals have attended the training under the Programme during 2002-03 in the fields of Rural Industry Promotion, Training Methods & Skills for Managers, Small
Business Planning & Promotion, Urban Development Management, Audit of Receipts, Legislative Drafting, Development Journalism, Audit of Public Enterprises, Participatory Planning and Management of Watershed Projects, Micro Planning for Poverty Reduction & Sustainable Development, Sustainable Development in Agriculture & Rural Development, Educational Planning and Administration and Urban Infrastructure Planning & Management.

- 10 slots were allocated to Afghanistan under the General Cultural Scholarship Scheme of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations for higher studies in India in 2002-03, of which three have been utilised by Afghanistan. 4 slots have been allocated to Afghanistan under the scheme for 2003-04.

- 10 slots have been allocated to Afghanistan under the Cultural Exchange Programme Scholarship Scheme for 2003-04.

**Diplomacy**

- Two batches of 20 Afghan Diplomats each have been trained at the Foreign Service Institute in February-May and August-November 2002. The training of the third batch of Afghan Diplomats by FSI has commenced in July 2003.

- 15 officials from the Presidential Secretariat of Afghanistan were trained at the Foreign Service Institute from October 2002 -March 2003.

- Two Afghan diplomats attended a two-week module on Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats in January 2003.

**Culture, Heritage, Media & Sports**

- A team of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting visited Afghanistan in March 2002 to assess the requirements. Based on its recommendations, the Government of India has awarded the following works to Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Limited in September 2003:
  - Setting up of a modern offset Printing Machine along with DTP Facility.
  - Setting up of a new 100kw SW transmitter.
  - Setting up of TV Satellite Uplinking/Downlinking facility.
• A consignment of musical instruments was sent for the Afghan Radio and Television to Kabul on 10th February 2002. Another consignment of musical instruments has been gifted to Kabul University in April 2003. The Government has also gifted musical instruments to the Ceremonial Band of the Presidential Guard of Afghanistan in June 2003.

• US $ 20,000 were granted for the repair of Hazrat Ali Shrine in Mazar-e-Sharif in September 2002.

• Two batches of 15 Afghan journalists each and third batch of 19 Afghan journalists have been trained at Indian Institute of Mass Communication from August -October, 2002, January -March, 2003 and June- August. 2003 respectively.

• Two choreographers were sent from ICCR for a period of two weeks in April, 2003 , for assisting Afghan authorities in producing programme for national day celebrations on April 128, 2003.

• Indian Council of Cultural Relations has allocated two seats to Afghanistan for learning music in India during 2002-03.

Security and Rule of Law

Afghan National Army

• The Government has decided to gift 300 vehicles to the Afghan National Army. Of these, 115 vehicles are ready and are being despatched.

Police

• Training was imparted to 250 Afghan police officers and cadets in twelve different courses in India from July-September 2002.

Judiciary

• Eighteen Afghan judges and lawyers were trained at the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi from February-May, 2003.

Agriculture

• Nearly 67 tons of vegetable seeds have been supplied to the Ministry of Agriculture of Afghanistan in three Phases in Aug- Sept 2002, February 2003 and August 2003.
• 15 officials from the Ministry of Agriculture have attended a training course in the field of Cooperative Farming and Marketing at RICM, Bangalore from December 2002- March 2003.

• 16 officials from the Ministry of Agriculture have attended a training course on Operation & Maintenance of Agricultural machinery and equipment at CFMTTI, Bhopal from January -May, 2003.

• A sericulture expert was deputed to Afghanistan for a period of one week (July 14-20, 2003) to suggest possible areas of co-operation and assistance in the field of sericulture.

Information Technology

• An IT specialist has been deputed to the Afghan Government since June 20, 2003 for a period of one year.

• A LAN network with Internet access via VSAT was established along with supply of necessary equipment in the office of the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan. The LAN has been extended to additional twenty nodes along with supply of necessary equipment.

• A computer training center was set up in Kabul from July 2002- Jan 2003 for providing computer training to Afghan officials. The centre was handed over to the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs in January 2003.

• Two Computer Training Centres have been set up in Kandahar and Herat in August 2003. A decision has been taken for setting up another two Computer Training Centres at Pul-e-Khumri and Jalalabad.

Banking

• Three experts from RBI were deputed to assist the Da Afghanistan Bank in July 2002.

• Six experts from various banks in India have been deputed to the Da Afghanistan Bank in July-August 2003 for a period of six months to one year.

Commerce

• A Preferential Trade Agreement was signed between India and Afghanistan on March 6, 2003 and has come into effect since May 2003. The Agreement provides duty-free access to the import of
fig-dried, pistachio (open and closed shell), mulberries dried, pine nuts roasted, melon fresh, asafeotida, lapis lazuli, ruby, and emeralds from Afghanistan. A 50% concession has been extended on duty on green, black and red raisins, apricots dried, walnuts, plums dried, almonds, raisins golden, cherries sour dried, fresh grapes, apples, apricots, pomegranates, anise seeds, caraway seeds, linseeds, sesame seeds, liquorice roots, apricot nuts bitter, and alpha alpha seeds.

- A team of experts from Central Warehousing Corporation had visited Kandahar in November 2002 for carrying out a feasibility study of construction of cold storage in the city. Based on its recommendations the Government of India has awarded the work of construction of a cold storage of 5000 ton capacity in Kandahar to Central Warehousing Corporation. The work on the project will commence in the third week of September 2003.

Urban Development

- Civil engineering lab equipment and measuring instruments were gifted to the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing of Afghanistan in May 2003.

- The Government has decided to gift 76 utility vehicles/equipments (water tankers, rear drop tippers, dump trucks, bulldozers, motor graders and garbage tippers) to the Kabul Municipality from Eicher, Tata International Ltd., and BEML. 35 of these vehicles from Eicher International Limited have been already handed over to the Kabul Municipality.

Infrastructure Development

Road Construction

- Feasibility study and detailed project assessment for upgradation of road stretch from Delaram to Zaranj in Afghanistan has been carried out by a team of experts. During the visit of President Karzai to India on March 5-8, 2003, Prime Minister has announced a financial assistance of US$ 70 m to reconstruction/upgradation of the road.

Water Resources

- WAPCOS has carried out detailed Project assessment on rehabilitation of Mini/Micro hydro projects, Khartabad Irrigation
Project, Quargha reservoir and Amir Ghazi Dam in Afghanistan.,

- WAPCOS has carried out the field survey and water analysis to identify location of 50 deep wells in Herat province of Afghanistan. Following the survey, the work of drilling of 24 deep, wells in Herat province has been awarded to WAPCOS and has commenced on September 3~ 2003.

- WAPCOS has conducted the Feasibility study and the detailed project assessment (March- August, 2003) for completion of Salma Dam Project in Herat Province.

Industry

- A team from Ministry of Small Scale Industries and NSIC has visited Afghanistan and carried out feasibility study for rehabilitation of the Industrial Park in Kabul.

Training

- Two batches of 20 Afghan Diplomats each have been trained at the Foreign Service Institute in February-May and August-November 2002. The training of the third batch of Afghan Diplomats by FSI has commenced on July 21, 2003.

- 15 officials from Presidential Secretariat of Afghanistan were trained at Foreign Service Institute from October 2002 -March 2003.

- Two Afghan diplomats attended two week module on Professional Course for Foreign diplomats in January 2003.

- Two batches of six Afghan doctors and paramedics each from Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health attended training in areas of their specialization at All India Institute of Medical Sciences from August 19-November 18, 2002, and May 29-August 27, 2003 respectively.

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• A computer-training centre was set up in Kabul from July 2002-Jan 2003 for providing computer training to Afghan officials. The centre was handed over to the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs in January 2003.

• Two Computer Training Centres have been set up in Kandahar and Herat in August 2003. Decision has been taken for setting up another two Computer Training Centres at Pul-e-Khumri and Jalalabad.

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Business Planning & Promotion, Urban Development Management, Audit of Receipts, Legislative Drafting, Development Journalism, Audit of Public Enterprises, Participatory Planning and Management of Watershed Projects, Micro Planning for Poverty Reduction & Sustainable Development, Sustainable Development in Agriculture & Rural Development, Educational Planning and Administration and Urban Infrastructure Planning & Management.

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462. Statement by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, at the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. President,

We congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the 58th session of the UN General Assembly. We wish you every success in our shared endeavours. You will have our fullest co-operation in your efforts.

As we gather here, in the wake of many momentous events over the past year, it is inevitable that we ponder on some fundamental questions about the role and the relevance of the United Nations.

The United Nations was charged by its Charter ‘to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’. The Charter also speaks of our collective determination ‘to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security’. There was an implicit conviction that the UN would be stronger than the sum of its constituent member-states. Its unique legitimacy flows from a universal perception that it pursues a larger purpose than the interests of one country or a small group of countries.
This vision of an enlightened multilateralism has not materialised. There have been difficulties and deficiencies in ensuring a world free from strife, a world without war. The United Nations has not always been successful in preventing conflicts or in resolving them.

During the past year, the United Nations encountered further new challenges. We saw the extraordinary inability of the five permanent members of the Security Council to agree on action in respect of Iraq, in spite of complete agreement on basic objectives. Most recently, the brutal terrorist attack on the UN Office in Baghdad struck a body blow at the UN’s humanitarian efforts there.

Looking back at events over recent years, we can analyse the successes and failures of the UN in this or that crisis. But it would be more purposeful to reflect on our own commitment to multilateralism, the extent of its applicability in the real world of today, and the manner in which it can be exercised through the UN. The reality is that international institutions like the UN can only be as effective as its members allow it to be.

Our reflections on the UN should focus on three key aspects:

First, we need to introspect on some of the assumptions that have been made over the years on the will and reach of the United Nations. In the euphoria after the Cold War, there was a misplaced notion that the UN could solve every problem anywhere. Its enthusiasm and proactive stance on many issues reflected laudable intentions. But we soon realised that the UN does not possess magical powers to solve every crisis in all parts of the globe, or to change overnight the motivation of leaders and communities around the world. We need to clearly recognise, with a sense of realism, the limits to what the UN can achieve, and the changes of form and function required for it to play an optimal role in today’s world.

Second, the Iraq issue has inevitably generated a debate on the functioning and the efficacy of the Security Council and of the UN itself. Over the decades, the UN membership has grown enormously. The scope of its activities has expanded greatly, with new specialised agencies and new programmes. But in the political and security dimensions of its activities, the United Nations has not kept pace with the changes in the world. For the Security Council to represent genuine multilateralism in its decisions and actions, its membership must reflect current world realities. Most UN members today recognise the need for an enlarged and restructured Security Council, with more developing countries as permanent and non-permanent members. The permanent members
guard their exclusivity. Some states with weak claims want to ensure that others do not enter the Council as permanent members. This combination of complacency and negativism has to be countered with a strong political will. The recent crises warn us that until the UN Security Council is reformed and restructured, its decisions cannot reflect truly the collective will of the community of nations.

Third, even after such reform, the Security Council would have to evolve suitable decision-making mechanisms, which ensure better representation of the collective will of the international community. How can multilateralism be genuinely implemented? A single veto is an anachronism in today’s world. On the other hand, the requirement of unanimity can sabotage imperative actions. A simple majority vote may not be sufficiently representative for major issues of gravity. Should we aim for the highest common factor, or should we settle for the lowest common denominator? National experiences in democratic countries provide usable models of mechanisms, which could specify the extent of support required, depending on the impact of action to be taken.

The Secretary General has rightly emphasised the urgency for reform of the institutions and processes of the United Nations. We encourage his efforts in this direction. We should seek to implement these reforms within a specified time frame.

Mr. President,

The Iraq issue continues to present a major challenge to the United Nations. At this point in time, it is not very productive to linger on the past. Our thoughts and concerns should be about the suffering of the people of Iraq. It is imperative that the people of Iraq should be empowered to determine their own future, to rebuild their nation.

The immediate priorities are ensuring security and stability, restoration of basic facilities and infrastructure, and a roadmap of political processes for a representative Iraqi government. It is clear that the UN has a crucial role to play in this process of political and economic reconstruction of that country. This has been acknowledged both by those who had opposed military action and by those who did not seek specific UN endorsement for it.

Mr. President,

One issue on which the UN showed remarkable unanimity after 9/11 was global terrorism. Security Council Resolutions 1373 and 1456 were
unequivocal in condemning all forms of terrorism and in calling for united action against support, shelter, sponsorship, arming, training and financing for terrorism or terrorists.

Unfortunately, the solidarity in words has not translated into coherent and effective action. Terrorist acts continue to shatter our peace: from Mombasa to Moscow; from Baghdad to Bali. India has had more than its share in various parts of the country. The global coalition against terrorism has registered successes in Afghanistan, but has not been able to extend this elsewhere. Some of its members are themselves part of the problem. We are sometimes led into semantics about the definition of terrorism. The search for “root causes” or imaginary “freedom struggles” provides alibis for the killing of innocent men, women and children.

There is a lot that the UN can do to carry forward the war against international terrorism. Its Counter Terrorism Committee should develop measures to ensure compliance by member-states of their obligations under UNSCR 1373 and 1456. We should have credible multilateral instruments to identify states that contravene these Resolutions. Multilateral mechanisms must be created to detect and choke off international financial flows to terrorists and terrorist organisations.

A much better international system of information exchange and intelligence sharing needs to be devised to prevent terrorists from evading capture, simply by crossing national borders. No state should be allowed to profess partnership with the global coalition against terror, while continuing to aid, abet and sponsor terrorism. To condone such double standards is to contribute to multiplying terrorism.

Yesterday, the President of Pakistan chose this august assembly to make a public admission for the first time that Pakistan is sponsoring terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir. After claiming that there is an indigenous struggle in Kashmir, he has offered to encourage a general cessation of violence within Kashmir, in return for “reciprocal obligations and restraints”.

We totally refuse to let terrorism become a tool of blackmail. Just as the world did not negotiate with Al-Qaida or the Taliban, we shall not negotiate with terrorism.

If we do so, we would be betraying the people of Jammu & Kashmir, who defied a most ferocious campaign of violence and intimidation sponsored from across our borders, and participated in an election, which has been universally hailed as free and fair. This was an unequivocal expression of both determination and self-determination.
When the cross-border terrorism stops – or when we eradicate it – we can have a dialogue with Pakistan on the other issues between us.

While on this subject, I would also like to point out to the President of Pakistan that he should not confuse the legitimate aspiration for equality of nations with outmoded concepts of military parity.

Mr. President,

We should be particularly concerned at the various recent revelations about clandestine transfers of weapons of mass destruction and their technologies. We face the frightening prospect of these weapons and technologies falling into the hands of terrorists. Surely something needs to be done about the helplessness of international regimes in preventing such transactions, which clearly threaten international security. The same regimes expend considerable energy in imposing a variety of discriminatory technology-denial restrictions on responsible states.

Mr. President,

Our preoccupation with terrorism should not dilute our commitment to tackle the non-military threats to human and international security. We have to sustain the fight against trafficking in narcotic drugs, human beings and small arms; the pandemic of HIV/AIDS; diseases like malaria and tuberculosis that grip developing countries and the degradation of our common environment. Food security, energy security and health security are important goals.

The countries of the North and of the South – the developed, developing, and transition economies – must resume their dialogue to build a better world for the present and future generations. For the agenda of globalization, Cancun was a disappointment. Significant progress was made at Johannesburg towards realisation of sustainable development, but the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol on climate change remains stalled. The Bio-diversity Convention has not yielded any tangible benefits to the world’s poor.

International economic relations continue to be characterised by inequities and inequalities. Globalisation has helped sections of the international economy, including some developing countries. However, large communities have been left outside its pale. It has engendered economic crises and instability in several developing countries, which have sharply increased poverty.
Poverty is multidimensional. It extends beyond money incomes to education, health care, skills enhancement, political participation at all levels from the local to the global, access to natural resources, clean water and air, and advancement of one’s own culture and social organisation.

Poverty alleviation requires resources on a far greater scale than now available. Globalization itself constrains developing country governments in raising public resources for poverty alleviation. The promise of the climate change and biodiversity treaties to raise significant resources for investment and technology transfer is yet unrealised. The resources of multilateral and bilateral development agencies are limited by the failure of industrialised countries to enhance development budgets.

Therefore, if the current regimes of globalization and sustainable development are to be expanded – or even to survive – they must be directly harnessed to provide the necessary resources for poverty alleviation. In fact, all international agreements and initiatives affecting developing countries have to be evaluated by their impact on poverty.

Developing countries need to coordinate their positions in international negotiations to promote the adoption of regimes, which would help poverty alleviation. The India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum, which was established earlier this year, is an effort in this direction.

Mr. President,

We in the developing countries do not have the luxury of time. Political compulsions force us to meet the aspirations of our people quickly even as we subject ourselves to newer and more rigid international standards and norms. We owe it to our future generations to make strong efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. There is a mutuality of interest in this between the developed and the developing countries. Global interdependence today means that economic disasters in developing countries could create a backlash on developed countries. We hope the world will act in this spirit of enlightened self-interest.

Thank you.
Mr. Chairman,

1. I would like to felicitate Morocco for the excellent leadership it has provided since January 2003. Morocco helped us focus on key issues of concern to developing countries and facilitated G-77 solidarity in action.

2. I also take this opportunity to welcome our incoming Chairman, Qatar. We wish Qatar a productive tenure and look forward to a constructive engagement with it in the pursuit of our common goals and objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The past year has witnessed several challenges for the developing countries. The world economy has not yet recovered from its slowdown registered in 2001. The heightened geopolitical uncertainties of late 2002 and early 2003 continue to pose a downside risk to global economic growth. Both world trade and FDI flows lack dynamism, reflecting and contributing to the overall weakness in the world economy. This has exacerbated the difficulties of the developing countries by limiting their capacity to meet the development challenges that confront them. Equally, the past two years have seen a forceful reassertion of the global economic interdependence and we need to ensure that the concerns of developing countries are fully taken into account by the international community. In this context, I would like to stress importance of achieving greater equity in international economic relations and greater voice for the developing countries in the decision-making structures in the international trade, monetary and financial institutions.

4. We are disappointed that the Fifth Ministerial meeting at Cancun failed to produce an agreement that would have addressed the interests and concerns of the developing countries. A rule-based multilateral trading regime is obviously best for all countries. But this should represent a fair balance of interests of all countries, not just a few. The solidarity, cohesion and determination shown by
the developing countries in defending their vital national interests was unprecedented. Of course, we need to be aware that there could be increased pressures on the developing countries to agree to further concessions. The developing countries need to be able to retain their unity of purpose and solidarity that we were able to demonstrate in Cancun, when faced with such pressures.

5. Against this background, we need to strengthen UNCTAD which is the focal point for consensus building and trade and development issues, and enhance its capacity to assist developing countries in respect of trade policies, diversification and national strategies and building up international competitiveness and to enable it to play an important role in integrating the development dimension into the international legal framework and rules on trade.

6. The challenges posed by globalisation demand a high degree of unity and solidarity among the developing countries. The Millennium Development Goals may not by themselves constitute a comprehensive development plan, they are a measurable set of benchmarks which could provide indications of whether the world is moving towards a more inclusive and equitable globalization called for in the Declaration. The challenge is to translate the commitments that have been undertaken into concrete actions so that the internationally agreed development goals are achieved. We also need to focus on the implementation of the outcomes for the Monterrey Conference and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. We hope that follow-up mechanisms put in place would afford us with an opportunity to comprehensively review the implementation of the outcomes. We need to focus on ensuring that the developed countries fulfill their commitments to make available financial and technological resources to the developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

7. At the Havana Summit, the developing countries had identified broad priorities to map out a better future for our countries. We welcome the progress made so far in the implementation of the Programme of Action. This agenda however needs to be pursued with greater vigour. The upcoming High-Level Conference on South South Cooperation to review the progress achieved is timely. This Conference should provide an opportunity for reaffirmation of our
priorities. We believe that there are a large number of areas in which developing countries can assist each other.

8. India remains fully committed to extending technical, economic and scientific assistance in substantial measure to developing countries. India’s various technical and economic cooperation programmes, including the ITEC Programme, cover 154 countries, and India spends about US $ 200 million annually on these activities. Over the past five decades, India has provided over US $ 3 billion worth of technical assistance to developing countries in four broad fields — civil and military training to promote capacity building and human resource development, deputation of experts to work with other governments, setting up of projects, organization of study tours by senior officials from abroad, and humanitarian and disaster relief, principally through supply of food grains and medicines. Over 6000 representatives of developing countries undergo training or study in over 250 Indian universities and institutions annually. The scope of the training programmes is very broad, covering subjects such as parliamentary studies, diplomacy, administration, accounting, audit and banking, mass communications, rural development. English language teaching and information technology, India stands ready to expand such programmes and share our experience with fellow-developing countries.

9. The Fortieth Anniversary of the establishment of the Group of 77, to be commemorated in June 2004, would be an important landmark. The G-77 has rendered valuable service to developing countries. We have to remain engaged in a continuous process to forge common positions and to push the concerns of the developing countries to the forefront of the international economic and trade agenda. I reiterate India’s full support and involvement in this effort.

Thank you.

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Mr. Chairman,

We are happy to see you presiding over this important meeting of the NAM Coordinating Bureau.

This meeting assumes importance for two reasons: it is on the margins of an unusually important UNGA in which a major theme has been the very role and relevance of United Nations system. We are reflecting on this theme in the General Assembly and in doing so the views of the Non Aligned Movement constituting the largest grouping of the UN membership will no doubt be important and influential. Second, this is the first Ministerial level meeting after our commitment in Kuala Lumpur to work towards the revitalization of the Movement.

Events since Kuala Lumpur have shown that some of our anxieties and concerns were fully warranted and our resolve to revitalize the Movement and find collective responses to global challenges, well justified. In the short time available, let me merely mention some crucial issues:

The unfolding crisis in Iraq shows that a collective approach through multilateral institutions are preferable to unilateral impulses. As members of NAM, we must strive now to see that full sovereignty is restored to the Iraqis as early as possible and that a credible, viable and widely accepted political roadmap is drawn and quickly implemented. In this, the UN must play a central and critical role.

We agree with the UN Secretary General that a thorough going reform and restructuring of the UN system including the Security Council is an urgent imperative. The NAM should lend its support to these efforts.

The menace of terrorism has spread and the terrorists have reached new targets. The terrorist incidents in Indonesia, in Saudi Arabia, in Morocco and in many other of our member countries show that no region and followers of no religion are immune. It reinforces the view that there is no connection between terrorism and any religion; that there can be no justification based on political, territorial or ideological arguments. NAM should express its unequivocal view that terrorism, understood as the
killing of the innocents, of the shedding of the blood of women and children is an evil to be condemned and combated by all of us.

The ongoing crisis in the Middle East is another important subject on the global agenda. Those who compare other issues with Palestine do great injustice to the Palestinian cause. India lends its full support to putting an end to the spiralling cycle of violence, to violent or precipitate action which can only further complicate the search for peace. We should lend our support to the Quartet to take the process forward.

On the economic agenda, we could draw some comfort from the unity and solidarity shown at Cancun by the developing countries, the majority of whom are also members of NAM. India on its part is prepared to work with our colleagues in NAM in any such serious and substantive endeavours.

Mr. Chairman,

This is not an occasion to cover the wide agenda that we have before us in the UN. Let me conclude by assuring you that India looks forward to the unity and purposiveness of NAM.

Thank you
Mr. President,

I would like to convey to you the appreciation of my delegation for the considerable efficiency with which you have been conducting the work of this session.

The Secretary General has presented a comprehensive report on the activities of the Organisation during the past year. He has also presented an important report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. During the general debate last week, many world leaders have emphasised that the events of the past few months especially in Iraq have shaken some of the fundamental assumptions governing the working of this organisation. Not only have some of these developments cast a shadow on the legitimacy of the world organisation as representing the aspirations and concerns of the world community at large rather than just a part of it but it has reopened the broader debate of the future path this organisation must tread. We agree with the Secretary-General that the present juncture represents both a challenge and an opportunity for the international community to address meaningfully the need for urgent reforms of the institutions and the processes of the UN.

We pay special tribute to the late Sergio Viera de Mello for his selfless and dedicated efforts on behalf of the UN to assist Iraq in its return to normalcy. Sergio de Mello and the colleagues who laid down their lives in Baghdad on August 19 2003 served in the finest traditions of the international civil service and their loss will be irreparable to the Organisation. We sincerely condole this loss even as we condemn the senseless terrorist attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad.

India endorses the Secretary General’s call for the early restoration of full sovereignty to the Iraqi people. We hope the requisite conditions, including appropriate security and political measures, for the active re-engagement of the United Nations in Iraq would be forthcoming. We
believe that the UN should play a crucial role in the process of political and economic reconstruction of Iraq.

Mr. President,

The Secretary General has, in his reports, correctly focused on the “hard” threats from terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. These threats are real, imminent and can not be ignored. The pro-active approach of the United Nations in combating the global threat of terrorism has been evident in the functioning of the 1373 (Counter-Terrorism) and 1267 (Taliban and Al-Qaeda) Committees of the Security Council. However, given the increasing reach and ability of terrorist networks to disrupt the orderly functioning of society and threaten the lives and livelihoods of large numbers of people worldwide, the international community needs to accelerate, through practical and realistic measures, the pace of its collective actions to meet the challenge posed by terrorists and their sponsors. The Secretary General has referred to new terrorist attacks in different parts of the world. These incidents only reinforce the view that no religion remains immune to such attacks. There can be no justification in connecting any particular religion with terrorism, nor can any political, territorial, religious or ideological rationalisation be used to justify the killing of innocent men, women and children in terrorist attacks.

In his two Reports, the Secretary General has stressed the need to combat terrorism while ensuring full compliance with established human rights and other international norms. We fully agree with this view. But, it is equally important to note that States are accountable for their actions through their international and domestic obligations, legal and otherwise. Every member state of the United Nations is fully aware of these obligations. Governments of member states that form part of democratic polities additionally find their policies subjected to the periodic scrutiny of their people, to whom they are ultimately accountable. On the other hand, a disproportionate emphasis upon this area of a member states’ actions could serve as an unintended handle for non-state actors who seek to evade responsibility for their own action. It does also, however unwittingly, seem to place rule-abiding member States and lawless terrorist outfits on the same plane. It must be remembered that these outfits and their adherents are accountable to none for their mindless terrorism and violate the most basic of human rights of their hapless victims, namely, their right to life. The Secretary General has pointed out that in the 25th anniversary of SSOD-I, there has been little forward movement on multilateral disarmament issues. India has consistently pursued the
objective of global disarmament based on the principles of universality, non-discrimination and effective compliance. We strongly emphasise that the Conference on Disarmament must be allowed to play its mandated role as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body. The increased peril of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists is also highlighted in the Secretary General’s report. Recognising this concern, last year India initiated a resolution entitled “Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction”, which was adopted by consensus. We propose to introduce an updated version of this resolution at the current session of the UNGA for adoption with the support of all concerned. In recent years, the Security Council has increasingly resorted to the use of sanctions as a tool for promoting and maintaining international peace and security. We fully concur with the Secretary General that while sanctions should maximise pressure on their intended targets, they should not adversely impact on innocent civilian populations or third countries. In this context, the work of the Interlaken, Bonn-Berlin and Stockholm processes have been invaluable in refining the instruments of international sanctions. It is our view that similar efforts need to be undertaken to further improve sanctions against terrorist groups and non-State actors.

Mr. President,

While presenting his report on the work of the Organisation at the beginning of the General Debate, the Secretary-General announced his intention to establish a high-level panel of eminent personalities, entrusted with the task of reviewing and making recommendations on strengthening the United Nations through reforming its institutions and processes. Almost every speaker in the General Debate has welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General. We reiterate our support to the Secretary-General for his efforts at initiating a process of far-reaching reforms of the Organisation, its institutions and processes. We stand ready to cooperate with other member States in carrying forward the efforts of the Secretary-General in this regard.

The Secretary General has pointed out that the Security Council must garner the widest possible support for its decisions and actions, and that this can only be achieved if it is perceived to be broadly representative of the international community and geopolitical realities of the contemporary world. He has also drawn attention to the fact that the enlargement of the Security Council has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for over a decade. For the decisions of the United Nations, in general, and the Security Council, in particular, to carry
international credibility and indeed, legitimacy, expansion of the Security Council is imperative. Expansion should take place both at permanent and non-permanent levels to include countries that represent significant sections of the world population, economic aspirations, political values and commitment to the United Nations system. We should take advantage of the opportunity afforded to us by the Secretary General’s proposals and the receptivity of a large number of Member States to this idea, to forge ahead in the interests of multilateralism and collective international decision-making. During the current session of the General Assembly, my delegation looks forward to advancing the agenda for further change in the Organisation. The General Assembly has called for reports on several of the proposals and we remain ready to consider them actively in the relevant intergovernmental forums.

Mr President

We would like to express satisfaction at the role played by the United Nations in the coordination of humanitarian assistance. The Consolidated Appeal Process is a useful tool and the on-going process of strengthening it further should, we feel, also lead to more adequate and equitable funding of humanitarian crises. At the same time, we are somewhat uneasy with the blurring of the mandate of the organisations of the development system which has taken place in recent years. The alleviation of human suffering is a moral imperative and UN agencies do possess certain comparative advantages for the implementation and delivery of humanitarian assistance. The use of these agencies should not, however, lead to a diversion of development assistance. This would be short-sighted and self-defeating. The organisations of the UN system themselves have a responsibility to ensure that this does not happen notwithstanding the current competitive aid environment.

Mr. President,

The Commission on Human Rights has, over the years, assumed increased significance as a focal point for addressing human rights issues. Improving the efficiency and methods of work of the Commission has, therefore, engaged the attention of member States in recent times, and will continue. The Secretary-General has on more than one occasion raised the issue of “membership” of the Commission, and the ‘responsibilities’ and ‘privileges’ that members of the Commission assume, and the need for a possible ‘code of conduct’ for members. We are not persuaded. In our view, such prescriptions strike at the very root of the
principle of sovereign equality of member States enshrined in the United Nations. Concern has also been expressed at the politicisation of the Commission on Human Rights. Selective criteria for membership will only serve to accentuate politicisation, not reduce it. And finally, violations and those responsible for violations of human rights can be addressed by engaging them and bringing them into the fold of the Commission, not by leaving them outside! We welcome the Secretary General’s observation that “poverty and grievance over injustices are only indirectly related to terrorism and cannot excuse it.” We also welcome the increase in the practice of Security Council requesting the assessment reports on the humanitarian implications of current and possible future sanction regimes.

We are happy to note that the negotiations between the UN and Cambodia had yielded a fruitful outcome of a Draft Agreement signed at Phnom Penh on 6 June 2003.

We note that the Ad Hoc Committee on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property has succeeded in resolving all of the outstanding issues regarding the draft articles on Jurisdictional Immunities and their Property that the International Law Commission had adopted in 1991. Considering the importance of these draft articles and their ability to contribute to the development of international law, we feel it more appropriate to adopt them as a binding legal instrument. Our concerns on the employment of terrorist methods across boundaries are well known. States which sponsor such international criminal activities are responsible under international law.

Mr. President,

I shall refer now briefly to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation and follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit. The report of the Secretary General states that the question – whether the world is managing to build the more inclusive and equitable globalization called for in the Millennium Declaration – remains open. It also affirms, correctly, that it would be no exaggeration to state that the success or failure of the Millennium Development Goals hinges on whether developed countries meet their commitments in the areas of trade, debt relief and aid. The Secretary General has reminded us that achieving the Millennium Development Goals would require a collective response to the challenges faced by the international community in the area of development. The challenge before us is to translate the commitments that have been undertaken into concrete actions so that the internationally
agreed development goals are achieved. A sustained and broad based annual per capita income increase of 3% is required to meet the goal of reducing by half, by the year 2015, the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day. It has been estimated that an addition of US$50 billion a year in ODA alone will be needed. Forward movement in the trade negotiations to address the key concerns of developing countries, in particular increased market access for products of export interest to the developing countries, and operationalizing the special and differential treatment for developing countries are urgently needed steps towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. We are disappointed that the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference at Cancun failed to produce an agreement that would have addressed the interests and concerns of the developing countries.

The Millennium Declaration is based on a vision of global solidarity. MDGs represent a global compact bringing together all member states, developed as well as developing. We note that the Secretariat has adopted a core strategy for supporting achievement of MDGs. One of the three elements of this strategy is the monitoring of progress at the national level. 37 national MDG reports have been prepared and another 60 are to be completed by the end of this year.

However, not one of these 97 reports covers a developed country. The question that arises inevitably is why this should be so. We note also that it is the Secretary General’s view that developed countries should be encouraged, working through the OECD or other forums, to agree upon time-bound deadlines for the pledges they have made on MDG 8, comparable to the 2015 target for the first seven Millennium Goals. The Millennium Declaration was adopted in a universal setting. If the Declaration and the time-bound commitments for the first seven MDGs were accepted by the United Nations and are subject to monitoring by it, why then should the 8th MDG not also be governed by the same time-bound commitment and subjected to similar monitoring by the UN? The Secretary General clearly states the view that the success or failure of MDGs is dependent on the fulfilment of commitment by developed countries. If the organisation is to meet the test of even-handedness and representativity in its functioning, we would urge that country-level reports be prepared for developed countries as well with regard to progress on the commitments made by them to developing countries for the achievement of MDGs.

These are some questions which arise on one of the main elements
of the core strategy of the UN Secretariat. The lack of a satisfactory response to these questions would no doubt detract from the credibility of any monitoring exercise.

Questions also arise on another element of the Secretariat strategy. The Secretary General launched, in October last year, the MDG campaign. This campaign seeks to build coalitions in developing countries which would encourage governments to implement pro-poor policies. Mr. President, I speak for a country, government and people who are united in one single coalition and with one primary mission. That mission is to eradicate poverty and to raise the standard of living of our people. For the democratically elected Government of India, there can be no higher aim, no nobler objective than the eradication of poverty. So, what is the coalition that the Secretariat would build? And what is the advocacy that they would engage in? Does the Secretariat wish to assume the role of score-keeper or conscience keeper? These, however, are not roles that member States have assigned to them. Nor has the Charter done so. As to seeking a wider advocacy role within the broader elements of civil society, it must be understood that these are, at best self-assumed roles that the UN bureaucracy may seek to influence without getting out of touch with its main constituency within member states.

Mr President,

During the current session we shall follow actively the reform of the planning and budgetary process. We are conscious of the importance of reform, not only in imparting efficiency and substance to the process itself, but also in improving mechanisms that ensure adequate budgetary provisions to meet the requirements of mandated programmes and activities. Considering its long-term implications for the Organisation, there is need for urgency in addressing this issue but we need also to avoid hasty or half-cooked conclusions.

In the area of on-going reforms, we appreciate the efforts to improve the servicing of the General Assembly, refocusing public information activities and the wide ranging reforms in human resources management that have been put in place. Considerable investment has been made in enhancing the information and communication technology base of the Organisation. While some results are already apparent, we look forward to returns that are commensurate with the volume of such investment.

The importance of the current session also lies in the fact that the
General Assembly will be considering the Regular Budget of the Organisation for the coming biennium. We welcome the presentation of the Regular Budget in a results-based budgeting framework. We hope that further development of RBB tools will help the Organisation to better justify the resources needed for its programmes and activities and improve accountability.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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466. Statement by Ambassador V.K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on Agenda Item 19: Implementation of the Declaration of the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples at the Special Political and Decolonisation Committee of the 58th Session of the UNGA.


Mr. Chairman,

May I begin by congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the Fourth Committee? We offer you and other members of the Bureau our congratulations and our fullest cooperation in carrying out the tasks before you. We are confident that you will discharge them effectively.

We compliment Mr. Graham Maitland of South Africa and other members of the outgoing Bureau for the exemplary manner in which they conducted the proceedings of the Committee during the 57th session.

In 1960, under Resolution 1514, the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and under Resolution 1541 (XV) further defined full self government as being one of three options: independence; free association with an independent state; or integration into an independent state. In 1961, the Special Committee of 24 on decolonisation was established to examine the application of the Declaration and to make recommendations on its implementation. The Special Committee was also empowered to recommend to the General Assembly the removal of those non-self
governing territories (NSGTs) from the UN's list which, had exercised the right to self-determination and achieved full self-government. The Committee has since come a long way. More than 80 million people living in 60 former territories have been decolonised and today there are only 16 territories on the UN list.

Decolonisation has been perhaps the greatest success story of the United Nations. The General Assembly mandated a second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2001-2010) at its 55th regular session in December 2000. The 16 NSGTs in the UN list serve as constant reminders to us that the "business" of decolonisation is not complete. We must now re-double our efforts in order to ensure that this chapter is finally relegated to the pages of history, to use the words of Secretary General Kofi Annan. In doing so, special attention must be paid to the following: first, the needs of the people of the Territories themselves. Many of the Territories have made considerable progress in their political, constitutional, economic and social development and have gone a long way towards self-government. The question is one of finding the appropriate format and timing for the completion of decolonisation in each Territory. The role of the Special Committee and indeed of the UN as a whole here is crucial as it is delicate: ascertaining the political aspirations of the people in each of these territories and, taking into account the stages of development and advancement of each territory, so that they are enabled to acquire for themselves political and socio-economic institutions and structures of their choice.

Second, the role of the administering powers. The importance of their participation in the work of the Special Committee can hardly be over-emphasised. We call upon them to approach the task at hand in a spirit of cooperation, understanding, political realism and flexibility. We are happy to note that this spirit has largely imbuited their actions in recent years. The visit of a UN Mission to Tokelau last year took place with the cooperation of the Government of New Zealand. Similarly, the support and cooperation of the UK in organizing the Caribbean Regional Seminar in Anguilla this year — the first in a NSGT — is another example of the kind of cooperation needed if we are to move ahead in the common quest to liquidate colonialism. Particularly noteworthy was the presence of a senior level representative from the UK during the course of the entire seminar. We encourage more visits of UN Missions to the Territories as a means of collecting adequate and first-hand information on conditions in the Territories and on the wishes and aspirations of the peoples concerning their future status. We look forward to more seminars being hosted in the
Territories within the context of assessing, receiving and disseminating information on the situation in the NSGTs. The lead taken by the UK should encourage some of the other powers to follow the same route. We hope that the spirit of cooperation that has imbued recent talks with administering powers will eventually lead to their formal participation in the work of the Special Committee.

Finally, the work of the Special Committee deserves mention in its efforts to complete the unfinished business of decolonisation. We shall continue to display solidarity with the people of the NSGTs and to cooperate with the Bureau of the Committee on the way forward.

As a founding member of the UN and the Special Committee, India has been in the vanguard of the struggle against colonialism. We are privileged to have been a co-sponsor of the Declaration on Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Today, we re-dedicate ourselves to the noble ideals enshrined in the Declaration while also re-affirming our commitment to achieve the goal of decolonisation to which we, as members of the UN family, have all subscribed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Mr. Chairman,

My delegation congratulates you and other members of the Bureau on your election. We are confident that under your able stewardship the work of the Committee will be productive. My delegation assures you of our full cooperation for the successful conclusion of the work of the Committee. We associate ourselves with the statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Morocco as Chairman of the Group of 77. We would like to welcome the new Under-Secretary General for economic and social affairs, Mr. Jose Antonio Ocampo, and express our deep appreciation for the statement made by him at the beginning of this debate.

Mr. Chairman,

The annual forecasts by the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund provide a useful backdrop for our discussion. All of them expect an economic recovery in the developed countries, in particular in the United States, over the next two year period. The positive effects that such recovery will have on the economies of the developing countries are, however, not clear. The recovery has remained weak and slow, owing to the persistence of structural imbalances, the slow growth in the developed economies and continuation of the acute problems faced by the developing countries in pursuing socioeconomic development. The heightened geo-political uncertainties of late 2002 and early 2003 continue to pose a downside risk to global economic growth. Global trade and flows of foreign direct investment (FDI) lack dynamism, reflecting and contributing to the overall weakness in the world economy. The growth of global trade by less than 2% in 2002 compares poorly with the average growth rate of almost 7% achieved in the 1990’s. FDI flows have contracted drastically by 50% in 2001 and by a further 25% in 2002 from the peak-level attained in 2000. The negative net transfer of resources in 2002 reached $ 192 billion, almost double the average annual levels of 1998-2000. The marginal increase in Official Development Assistance (ODA) from $ 52.3 billion in 2001 to $ 56.6 billion in 2002 does not raise
its level from around 0.22% of the GDP of the developed countries to anywhere near the internationally-agreed target of 0.7%. No durable solution has been found to the severe debt crisis faced by many developing countries. Increased protectionist measures against products of export interest to the developing countries continue to characterise international trade. The developing countries are thus limited severely in their capacity to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and their own national targets with regard to the alleviation of poverty.

Mr. Chairman,

Effective measures are needed to make trade work as an engine for growth and development. However, even before the fifth Ministerial conference of WTO in Cancun, the timelines set at Doha for resolving negotiations on outstanding implementation issues had been breached. These, it will be recalled, had been agreed to be an integral part of the work programme and were required to be addressed as a matter of priority. The Cancun meeting failed to produce an agreement that would have sought to address the interests and concerns of the developing countries. Moving the trade agenda forward and addressing the key concerns of the developing countries on enhanced market access for products and service sectors of export interest to the developing countries, particularly in agriculture, the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers and operationalising the special and differential treatment provisions are indispensable and urgently-needed steps towards a more equitable globalisation.

The high-level dialogue on financing for development to be held on October 29-30 will provide the 58th session of the UN General Assembly with an opportunity to follow up on the outcome of the Monterrey Conference. It will help us to assess the progress in implementation by member States and international institutions of the various elements of the outcome, and reflect on ways and means to carry the process forward. An area of particular interest to all developing countries is that of achieving greater equity in international economic relations and of giving a greater voice to the developing countries in decision-making structures and processes in the international trade, monetary and financial institutions. The World Summit on Sustainable Development adopted the Johannesburg plan of implementation for assisting all States in their pursuit of achieving Agenda 21. The developing countries can be expected to make achievements in this critical area at the national level only when the developed countries fulfil their commitments for making available the
means of implementation to them through provision of new and additional financial resources, transfer of technology on concessional, non-commercial and preferential terms, and capacity-building. The involvement of private sector and civil society through partnerships can only complement, but not substitute, commitments undertaken by Governments in Rio and in Johannesburg. We welcome participation of all non-Government stakeholders in the implementation process in accordance with the guidelines and the criteria adopted at the last session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Mr. Chairman,

The Second Committee has an important responsibility in the implementation of resolution 57/270B adopted by the General Assembly in June 2003 on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the UN major conferences and summits. The Committee is scheduled to re-examine its own programme of work with a view to improving it. However, such an exercise should be situated in the context of the efforts towards the overall reform of the institutions and processes of the UN. We stand ready to work actively with other delegations on this issue. The Second Committee will also have to play an important role in the preparations for the 2005 Conference for review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the progress towards the achievement of MDGs. At the Millennium Summit, our Heads of State and Government recognised the tremendous opportunities offered by Information and Communication technologies [ICT] and agreed to work together to ensure that the benefits of new technologies are available to all. We hope that the World Summit on Information Society, to be held in two phases in 2003 in Switzerland and in 2005 in Tunisia, will focus on how to achieve the objective of ICT for all and secure a commitment at the political level. It is also important to reach a consensus on how to adequately harness the potential of ICT for assisting the developing countries in their efforts to secure a better standard of living for their people. We support the comprehensive review of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the sustainable development for the Small Island Developing States in 2004. We hope that this would result in increased support and assistance for the implementation of the Programme of Action.

The first international Ministerial conference on transit –transport co-operation saw the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action establishing a global framework for action for developing efficient transit transport systems in land-locked and transit developing countries. The
implementation of the Programme of Action requires active co-operation among the landlocked countries, the transit developing countries and the developed country partners. We trust that the General Assembly will keep under review the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Mr. Chairman,

A World Bank study last year had estimated that an increase in ODA of the order of $ 50 billion per year is needed if the developing countries are to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Enhanced international cooperation is imperative if developing countries are to persevere in their struggle against poverty, disease and illiteracy. As the Secretary General has reminded us once again at the beginning of this session, achieving the MDGs would require a collective response by the international community to the challenges faced in the area of development.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

468. Statement by Dr. M. Gandhi, Counsellor and Legal Advisor, Permanent Mission at the UN on Agenda Item 155: Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organisation at sixth Committee of the 58th Session of the UNGA.

New York, October 9, 2003.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, we would like to congratulate Mr. Giuseppe Nesi, Vice Chairman of the Special Committee for his excellent presentation of the Report on the work of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the role of the Organisation at its last session held in April 2003. The Special Committee on Charter has been working for the last several years on the question of effective implementation of Article 50 relating to Assistance to Third States affected by the application of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, to which my delegation attaches the highest importance.
Economic embargoes and trade sanctions have caused great hardships to third States and their people, especially the developing countries. We believe that the Security Council has the primary responsibility in the imposition of sanctions. It should also be fair and equitable in its application of sanctions. We believe that the Security Council has the responsibility to assess the possible effects of sanctions prior to their imposition. The Security Council should apply a clear and coherent methodology for the imposition, application and lifting of sanctions. Sanctions should be clearly defined, targeted, imposed for a specific timeframe, subject to periodic review and lifted as soon as the reason for the imposition has ceased to exist. Sanction regimes should be subjected to constant review.

We believe that effective measures need to be taken to minimise the adverse effects of sanctions. Providing adequate and timely assistance on the basis of assessment of humanitarian conditions in the targeted and affected third States could be one such measure. The Council should consider establishing a Fund financed from assessed contributions based on the scale applicable to the peacekeeping operations as well as by voluntary contributions. My delegation reiterates our support for the establishment of a Working Group within the Sixth Committee to take up the matter of sanctions and their impact on third States.

Mr. Chairman,

On proposals made in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, we consider the revised proposal of the Russian Federation for a Declaration on the basic conditions and standard criteria as providing a useful basis for further consideration of the topic. However, the need for developing a universal consensus on the core issues addressed in the proposal cannot be over-emphasised. We have followed with great care and interest the discussions on the Libyan proposal on the strengthening of certain principles concerning the impact and application of sanctions. We believe that the Charter defines the precise manner and the circumstances in which sanctions or other coercive measures could be imposed.

With regard to the proposal to confer a right on the target State to seek and obtain just compensation for unlawful damage sustained by it owing to illegal or excessive sanctions, we would like to reiterate this delegation’s view that conferring any such right would raise issues concerning the very legality of the sanctions imposed.
On the Russian proposal on Peace-Keeping Operations under Chapter VI of the Charter, my delegation would like to state that the political and operational aspects of peace-keeping have to be dealt with by other specialised committees and this Committee could contribute only from the legal angle.

Mr. Chairman,

The Cuban proposal aimed at redefining the powers and functions of the General Assembly and its relationship with the Security Council has been under the consideration of the Special Committee on Charter for some time now. India attaches great importance to reform of the United Nations, including the restructuring of the Security Council. We reiterate India’s commitment to the strengthening of the United Nations and enhancing its effectiveness. We are willing to consider any forward-looking suggestions as long as they do not lead to duplication of work or involve a review of the basic structure of the Charter.

My delegation welcomes the adoption of General Assembly Resolution 57/26 of 19 November 2002 on the prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes based on the working paper sponsored by the delegations of Sierra Leone and the UK. We attach a high degree of importance to the principle of free choice of means in matters of dispute settlement. In our view, any recourse to a dispute settlement mechanism requires, first and foremost, consent of the parties to the dispute. We hope that the General Assembly Resolution 57/26 could be helpful for the prevention and the early settlement of disputes.

Turning to the proposal on the Trusteeship Council, India considers it improper to envisage a role for the Trusteeship Council, at this time, in dealing with the global commons or the common heritage of mankind. We believe that this area has been covered adequately in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Antarctic Treaty System as well as under several existing international treaties. While we do not see any value at this stage by getting up a global mechanism under the UN, we believe that consensus needs to be built up as to the manner by which the Trusteeship Council can be utilised.

Mr. Chairman,

We find ideas outlined in the Japanese-Korean proposal on the improvement of the working methods of the Committee to be useful. However, this delegation is not in favour of changing at the present time
certain well-established practices of this Committee, including its decision-making procedure.

With regard to the identification of new subjects, my delegation is of the view that the Committee should first deal with proposals before it, instead of searching for new areas of work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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469. Statement by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative at the United Nations on Agenda Item 11: Report of the Security Council (A/58/2) at the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. President,

I would like to convey my delegation’s appreciation to Ambassador John Negroponte, Permanent Representative of the United States and President of the Security Council, for his presentation to the General Assembly of the Report of the Council for the period from 1 August 2002 to 31 July 2003.

Before proceeding further, I wish to convey a sense of our disappointment over the discontinuance of the practice of convening an open meeting of the Security Council to consider its draft report to the General Assembly. As many of us will recall, the practice was instituted last year at the initiative of Singapore, unfortunately no longer in the Council, with the intention of improving the quality and consideration of the report within the Council before its presentation to the General Assembly. We would like to voice our apprehension that the worthy practice launched last year might end up as an isolated attempt. In our view, this would be a disservice to the general membership that stood to profit immensely from the views of members of the Council on how they themselves perceived and evaluated the work of the Council during the period under review. We would not like to infer that the discontinuation of this useful practice represents any weakening of the Council’s collective
resolve to continue with a “spirit of reform” and greater transparency in
the working of the Security Council.

We agree with the conclusion contained in the report that the last
12 months have represented a steady increase in the workload of the
Security Council. Admittedly, the Council has had to confront some of the
most difficult issues during this period.

It will be remiss on our part not to reiterate a sense of our deep
regret over the inability of the Council to reach satisfactory agreement on
the issue of war and peace involving Iraq in the first quarter of this year.
We can only attribute the inability of the Council to arrive at a collective
and unified decision on the major issues placed before it to the lack of
balanced representation in its current composition.

The Prime Minister of India did touch upon this imbalance when he
stated in his address to this session of the Assembly on September 24,
and I quote: “For the Security Council to represent genuine multilateralism
in its decisions and actions, its membership must reflect current world
realities” Unquote. Within the UN, there is ample recognition of the need
for the Organisation and its architecture for the maintenance of
international peace and security to adapt to the needs and realities of the
times. The Secretary General himself underscored this point when he
said that to regain the confidence of States, and of world opinion, the
Security Council must become and I quote: “more broadly representative
of the international community as a whole, as well as the geopolitical
realities of the contemporary world” unquote.

The Council’s preoccupation with Iraq did not afford it sufficient time,
despite the best intentions of its members, for a more serious examination
of other major issues on its agenda relating to the Middle East, Africa and
Afghanistan. In the area of counterterrorism, while every effort has been
made by the Council to maintain the momentum achieved, mechanisms
are yet to be put in place that would hold countries accountable for their
genuine commitment to and actions in the fight against terrorism from
territories under their control. The Council needs to move from the
inexhaustible stage of helping to establish legal and financial frameworks
to a more serious examination of the actual contributions or otherwise by
States to counter-terrorism efforts. Only by doing so would it have come
to grips with the real issues at hand.
Mr. President,

It is the non-permanent members of Security Council that have taken upon themselves the responsibility, based on their long-term interest, to pursue the agenda of greater transparency and reform in the working of the Security Council. Unfortunately, this has not always been the case. In the period under review, new and ingenious methods appear to have been invented - ones designed to confuse and often exclude the general membership from specific projects they have pursued in the Security Council.

We would like to comment on a few instances in the functioning of the Security Council which may be perceived as attempts to obfuscate or limit access of the general membership, by way of illustration:

i) Delayed decision-making on the format of discussions to be followed: In at least one instance, President of the Council delayed decision on the format of discussions to be followed on an important but controversial thematic topic until a very late stage when it was declared open to participation of the general membership. We are not in a position to fathom the reasons behind such actions. We can only hope that they were not intended to deny time for adequate preparations to delegations seeking to intervene on the given subject;

ii) Experimentation with different modes of participation under rule 37 of the Council’s procedures: The Council Presidency’s decision to restrict participation at a late stage to one or two candidates per region in an open debate on an issue of import, by its very selectivity, could have resulted in acts of omission or exclusion. Moreover, as is well known, some regional groups such as the Asian Group do not have the mandate to discuss and decide on issues other than elections. Such factors could well have added to the impracticability and undemocratic nature of the decision;

iii) Discrimination between members and non-members of the Council on time-limits for statements: In a recent incident, the President of the Council declared a time-limit for statements during an open debate on a subject of considerable importance. However, while members of the Council were allowed to give full reign to their views without observing any limit on the time, the general membership was subjected to the strictest implementation of a restrictive time limit. This incident was considered serious enough to attract
considerable adverse notice at meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Arab Group. The discriminatory treatment between members and non-members of the Council tends to be pronounced during the so-called Ministerial-level meetings of the Council which now are held increasingly in two segments, one for the members and the other for the less privileged. We would also like to state in this context that expecting non-members to be content with reading parts of their statements and circulating a longer text is unrealistic as long as the provisional verbatim records reflect only what is actually spoken in the formal meeting of the Council;

iv) Surprise scheduling of open debates with selective notification: In a recent instance, an open debate of the Security Council was scheduled in response to a serious incident over the weekend. Some non-members of the Council did learn of the meeting and were able to make statements under rule 37. Others were fortunate if they happened to learn of the event from television. The issue here continues to remain one of selectivity and arbitrariness.

Mr. President,

I must hasten to clarify that these issues are not being raised with the intention of castigating those involved, but with the desire to bring to the attention of the larger membership of this Assembly and the select membership of the Security Council the areas where greater transparency, predictability and some even-handedness would be welcome and could add to the Council’s effectiveness. In our view, if the Council followed some thumb rules in its practices, it would go a long way in assuring the general membership of its sincerity in attempting to take the larger membership along in its deliberations. We shall attempt to list a few suggestions:

(a) Unless an item is introduced in reaction to major events of the day, all open debates involving the participation of the general membership of the Organisation must be notified at the beginning of the month when the programme of work is presented. Surprise scheduling should be avoided wherever possible and, if absolutely unavoidable, measures to inform all members concerned by way of a circular mailer by fax/email or telephonic messaging with the relevant Missions would be desirable;

(b) All non-members of the Council desirous of participating under rule
37 of the Council, should be allowed the time they require to convey their views. If this is not possible due to the exigencies of the situation, and we believe this should be utilised exceptionally, a standard pre-announced time-limit should be imposed on all, members and non-members alike without any discrimination;

(c) The increasing resort to new and fanciful thematic issues as the crowning glory of non-Permanent member presidencies will need to be rationalised and restricted in the interest of time better spent on the consideration of pressing current issues on the maintenance of international peace and security;

(d) The idea of wrap-up sessions, conceived presumably to allow for stock-taking at the end of a month’s work, should not be utilised to advance controversial issues that selectively propel the national agendas of members concerned; and

(e) Briefing by Council Presidencies of non-members of the Council tend to be arbitrary and ad hoc in their regularity. Some Presidencies tend to attach due importance to this process while many have been indifferent to this requirement. It has been noticed that in several instances, despite scheduling of briefings to the general membership, these either do not take place or are perfunctorily carried out. In fact, briefings to the media are far more comprehensive and regular than those to nonmembers.

Briefings by Council Presidencies need to be regular, thorough and qualitative if the Council is to fulfill its commitment towards ensuring adequate transparency in its functioning among member states of the Organisation.

Mr. President,

In conclusion we would express the hope that the existing and putative nonpermanent members of the Council will take up, with renewed vigour, the process of improving the accountability and working methods of the Security Council in a manner that would bring it into a more harmonious functional relationship with the larger membership of the United Nations.

Thank you, Mr. President.
Mr. Chairman,

We have read with interest reports of the Secretary General submitted under agenda items 93 (b) and (c) on Sustainable Development and International Economic Cooperation under consideration today. We would like to associate ourselves with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr. Chairman,

Human Resources Development plays a critical role in enhancing the productive capacity of an economy, and thereby contributing to the development and growth of a country. The report of the Secretary General on Human Resources Development contains significant observations. We share the view that strategies for human resources development should include special programmes aimed at promoting access to education and health care for all. It has been estimated that additional external financing to the tune of $5 billion to over $10 billion annually would be required for universal primary education alone.

Further, in the health sector, as per WHO estimates, $66 billion is required to achieve the positive impact on the health of the poor in the developing countries. Enhanced international cooperation, particularly the flow of development financing, is imperative if developing countries are to achieve sustainable improvements in the development of human capacities. The levels of official development assistance still fall short of commitments made at the International conference on Financing for Development. According to OECD estimates, fulfilment of the commitments made by the developed countries would raise ODA in real terms by $16 billion by the year 2006, representing 0.26% of their gross national income, well below 0.33 % achieved in early 90s and nowhere near the internationally agreed levels of 0.7%. The developing countries can be expected to make achievements in this critical area only when the
developed countries fulfil their commitments for making available the means of implementation through provision of new and additional financial resources and capacity-building. Effective measures are also needed to move forward in the trade negotiations on enhanced market access for products and service sectors of export interest to the developing countries and operationalisation of special and differential treatment provisions in order to make trade work as an engine for growth and development.

Mr. Chairman,

Migration is an issue to which we attach importance. The Indian diaspora, consisting both of Indian citizens residing abroad and persons of Indian origin who have acquired the citizenship of another country, are estimated to be 20 million. The diaspora numbers more than a million in 11 countries and more than a hundred thousand in 22 others. The migration of people from India to the four corners of the globe has been a saga of courage, enterprise and character. These people have, through their hard work, contributed to the development of the countries in which they have settled and, over the past few decades, also to India’s development.

The process of globalisation has seen an increased linkage between immigration on the one hand and trade capacity, competitiveness and employment policy on the other. Immigration policy now needs to be seen as going beyond social policy. With global firms operating in an international context, the gap between migration policy and trade policy can manifest itself in immigration controls which act as non-tariff barriers.

It is our view that there can, in the context of the General Agreement on Trade and Services, be a win-win situation with labour shortage in developed countries being matched by labour availability in developing countries. There needs to be a greater level of receptivity among developed countries to the requests made to them for enhanced market access in Mode 4. For developing countries such as India, the balance of gains in the negotiations will lie in the extent to which our service providers are enabled to provide services in overseas markets, either from remote locations or through the temporary movement of service personnel.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Mr. President,

The Indian delegation welcomes this opportunity to comment on agenda item 56: “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council”.

Many delegations expressed during the General Debate held at the beginning of the 58th session a sense of deep regret over the inability of the Security Council to reach satisfactory agreement on the issue of war and peace involving Iraq in the first quarter of this year. Many attributed the inability of the Council to arrive at a collective and unified decision on the major issues placed before it to the lack of balanced representation in its current composition.

The Prime Minister of India did touch upon this imbalance when he stated in his address to this session of the Assembly on September 24, and I quote: “For the Security Council to represent genuine multilateralism in its decisions and actions, its membership must reflect current world realities. Most UN members today recognize the need for an enlarged and restructured Security Council, with more developing countries as permanent and non-permanent members. The permanent members guard their exclusivity. Some States with weak claims want to ensure that others do not enter the Council as permanent members. This combination of complacency and negativism has to be countered with a strong political will. The recent crises warn us that until the UN Security Council is reformed and restructured, its decisions cannot reflect truly the collective will of the community of nations.” Unquote.

Within the UN, there is ample recognition of the need for the Organisation and its architecture to deal with the maintenance of international peace and security to adapt to the needs and realities of the times. The Secretary General himself underscored this point on more than one occasion. In the report on the implementation of the UN Millennium Declaration presented to this session of the General Assembly,
he said and I quote: “Increasingly, however, the decisions of the Security Council lack legitimacy in the eyes of the developing world, which feels that its views and interests are insufficiently represented among the decision-makers. The composition of the Security Council – unchanged in its essentials since 1945 – seems at odds with the geopolitical realities of the 21st century.” Unquote. Introducing his report on the work of the Organisation at the beginning of the General Debate, the Secretary-General had said that to regain the confidence of States, and of world opinion, the Security Council must become and I quote: “more broadly representative of the international community as a whole, as well as the geo-political realities of the contemporary world” unquote.

India’s position on the reform and restructuring of the Security Council has been summed up in the words of Prime Minister Vajpayee quoted at the beginning and, therefore, I shall not go into details as they have spelt out on several occasions in the past. Suffice to say that we do not subscribe to partial and piecemeal solutions that bring no resolution to the core problem. Nor are we be intimidated by “relevance of the time factor” cited by some as a reason to “rush” into partial reform. A subject as complex and intricate as Council reform cannot have a time line or a quick fix imposed, even as we agree that Council reform is urgent and pressing and must be administered in a reasonable time frame.

I would be remiss if I did not register my delegation’s sincere appreciation for the lead taken by your predecessor and President of the 57th session, H.E. Jan Kavan, in the work programme of the Open-Ended Working Group for this year. Acting on a proposal made by some to streamline cluttered and unstructured documents, noteworthy progress was achieved in pruning down the document on Cluster II issues.

The “Questionnaire” circulated to member States in the month of May was a dynamic initiative in that it posed and brought to the fore some very pertinent issues, apart from defining where the mainstream lies. It demonstrated that the majority continues to favour a comprehensive approach on Council reform, that there must be a simultaneous reform in both the permanent and non permanent categories and that Cluster I & II issues must be dealt with in tandem. Broad agreement was also expressed on the issue that the time is now perhaps ripe to start considering concrete proposals for reform on Cluster I issues. Member states have also expressed a willingness to consider a change in the working methods of the Working Group, in order to inject some dynamism and achieve a breakthrough or register some progress in the proceedings. We need to
be cognisant of these facts, as we move forward.

**Mr. President,**

Finally, a word on the initiative of the Secretary General to set up a High-Level Panel of Eminent personalities to study the question of UN reform in a comprehensive way, of which Council reform will, no doubt, form an important part. We welcome the initiative and look forward to the Group’s report and Secretary-General’s recommendations thereon, expected sometime before the beginning of the 59th session.

We hope that the initiative will impart a fresh outlook and inject new momentum into a process that must now urgently move forward. We shall continue discussions in this spirit in the Open Ended Working Group next year. India, Mr. President, is wholly committed to working with other delegations in order to carry this process forward for achieving meaningful and productive outcomes.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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Mr. Chairman,

India has been co-sponsoring the United Nations General Assembly resolution on the work of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) over the past years. India is happy to co-sponsor the resolution sponsored by Brazil, this year too. We recognise the significance, importance and the scientific implications of the work of UNSCEAR whose critical and unbiased assessment of effects of radiation at various levels in different living systems, especially human beings, have guided the regulatory agencies in setting up safe limits of exposure for occupational workers and the general public.

The Scientific Committee has representatives from 21 member states of the UN. The work, however, is done on behalf of all the member states. The Committee has been meticulously collecting and evaluating information on the various sources of ionising radiation and radionuclides human population is exposed to, and their possible effects on human population and the environment. At its 51st session, in addition to the contributions made by representatives and delegates from member states, UNSCEAR also reflected upon the official collaboration established with scientists of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. This is a welcome development which will facilitate a scientifically correct and critical analysis of Chernobyl accident related data. It is also equally reassuring to note that the Scientific Committee has begun, in right earnest, its new programme of work as approved by the United Nations General Assembly.

This programme is based on the theme of “sources to effects” of atomic radiation. India is satisfied that this programme has some new and interesting topics of contemporary interest e.g. radioecology, epigenetic (due to non-mutational events/factors) effects of ionizing radiation and dose response of diseases other than cancer.

The Committee has also continued its discussions on the epidemiology of radiation and cancer. It is expected that new data will
become available in the near future on the atomic bomb survivors, Techa River and the Semipalatinsk region, nuclear workers and second malignancies in radiotherapy patients. In India, a study on the incidence of cancer in the high background radiation area of Kerala had been undertaken and its findings would interest the Committee when they are published in the near future.

Among the health effects of radiation, India’s programme in the High Background Radiation Area which focuses on congenital malformation would also prove to be useful to the Committee as it presents a different picture – lack of any significant deleterious effects – of chronic low level radiation exposure. India calls upon the Committee to take note of the data emerging therefrom.

Mr. Chairman,

The present budget of the Scientific Committee is just half of what it used to be in 1992-93 and 2/3rd of its 1994-95 quantum. Last year India had strongly advocated the need to enhance the Scientific Committee’s budget so as to facilitate holding its annual sessions and help it in preparation of its report with the services of highly professional and competent consultants. We hope that pursuant to UNGA resolution No.57/115 of December 11, 2002, the United Nations Environment Programme will make adequate provisions for UNSCEAR’s work for the biennium of 2004-2005 and subsequent biennia. Without this, we feel that the Committee’s work would remain incomplete.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
473. Statement by A.C. Jose, Member of Parliament and member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Agenda Item 39(A) & (B): New Partnership for Africa’s Development: “Progress in Implementation and International Support” joint debate at the 58th session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. President,

We thank the Secretary General for his first consolidated report on progress in the implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). We also thank him for the report on the implementation of his recommendations on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

We have perused both reports with interest.

Mr. President,

It has always been our conviction that Africa knows its own problems better than anybody else. It also knows the solutions for these problems. Africa’s understanding cannot, we believe, be substituted by that of others. Its ownership and leadership of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development is, for us, a sine qua non for the success of this framework.

Africa, however, does require support from outside for the solutions which it has identified. The international community promised this support, notably in the Declaration adopted at the Millennium Summit. It has also, in the UN and in other forums, endorsed NEPAD as the framework for an African-owned and African-led programme for the social and economic development of the Continent.

It is still early days to assess progress in the implementation of NEPAD. It is, nevertheless, important to bear in mind that a principal conclusion contained in the report of the Panel of Eminent Personalities for the Independent Evaluation of the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) was that commitments made by the international community had largely remained unfulfilled during the 1990s. ODA for Africa had been expected to increase at an annual rate of 4% during this period. Instead, it fell by 46% from 1990 to 2000.
NEPAD is based on the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership. Solidarity, this time, needs to be real. Another failure to show solidarity would be harmful for the credibility of the international community and injurious to the notion of partnership.

One of the first occasions to demonstrate solidarity was at Cancun. The result was disappointing. There seems to be some incipient realisation now that, tactically, the developed world should have offered more and earlier. From a strategic point of view, however, they should have, ab initio, proceeded from a spirit of partnership.

Mr. President,

There are some signs of progress, albeit modest, with regard to ODA for Africa. We note that the figure has increased from US$ 16.4 billion in 2000 to US$ 17.7 billion in 2001 and to US$ 18.6 billion in 2002. This trend needs to be built upon. It cannot, by itself, lead to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. A quantum increase is of primary importance as, given the situation with regard to trade and investment, there can be no substitute for ODA.

Mr. President,

India’s own relationship with Africa is built on strong historical and political foundations. We have been exploring ways by which we can provide support to NEPAD in the true spirit of South-South Cooperation. Our Ministry of Commerce has launched a ‘Focus Africa’ programme.

This seeks to build on the growth of approximately 300% which has been achieved in trade with sub Saharan Africa in the past 10 years. We have also decided to increase the availability of credit for trade and other commercial exchanges. All bilateral debt with HIPC countries has been cancelled. Africa is the principal focus of our technical and economic cooperation programme with developing countries. Our cooperation and solidarity with Africa is based on the firm belief that this partnership can be meaningful and mutually beneficial. While more remains to be accomplished, we are satisfied with the progress which is being made in the sharing of our experience of economic and social development with Africa.

Mr. President,

We endorse the recommendations made by the Secretary General and would particularly like to highlight those which pertain to Africa’s
development partners. The resources which have been pledged need to be disbursed quickly and without conditionalities. Coherence and complimentarity also need to be achieved in trade and aid policies.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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474. Statement by K. Kalavenkata Rao, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Agenda item 156 – Measures to eliminate International Terrorism at the Sixth Committee of the 58th Session of the UNGA.


Mr. Chairman,

The agenda item on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism has acquired a special significance in recent years owing to the recognition of the need for heightened international cooperation to combat terrorism. We note with satisfaction the report of the Secretary General on this item. We would like to thank Ambassador Rohan Perera of Sri Lanka for his excellent presentation of the report of the seventh session of the Ad Hoc Committee established under General Assembly resolution 51/210.

Mr. Chairman,

India has been at the forefront of the fight against terrorism for almost two decades. Most recently, the city of Mumbai was subjected to twin terrorist attacks in which 52 persons lost their lives. The people of India have continued to pay a heavy price in our fight against terrorism. Cross-border terrorist attacks represent a challenge to the established values of our society, to our democratic polity and to the law and order apparatus. India is determined to confront these challenges fully and to overcome them completely and decisively.

As the war on terrorism began to target the safe havens of terrorists, we have witnessed the spreading of the terrorist network cutting across the regions of the world with greater vigour and intensity. Terrorist acts continue to shatter our peace: from Mombassa to Moscow; from Mumbai to Bogotá; and from Baghdad to Bali. The terrorists attack innocent
civilians, places of worship, parliamentary institutions, government establishments, and modes of transport, voters, candidates and officials engaged in peaceful democratic processes, places of business and places of recreation. On August 19, the headquarters of the UN offices in Baghdad was subjected to a brutal terrorist attack that killed the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Mr. Sergio Viera de Mello and several of his colleagues working for the reconstruction and restoration of sovereignty of Iraq and for assisting the people of Iraq.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that terrorism is a common enemy of all peoples, all beliefs, and religions, and of peace and democracy. Terrorism undermines the very foundation of freedom and democracy, endangers the continued existence of open and democratic societies and constitutes a global threat; therefore, there cannot be any compromise in the war against terrorism.

The Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism adopted by the General Assembly resolution 49/60 of 1994 unequivocally condemns all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, whenever and by whomever committed. It obliges States to refrain from organising, instigating, assisting, or participating in the territories of other states, or from acquiescing in or encouraging, activities within their territories, directed towards the commission of such acts. The Declaration also makes clear that no considerations of olitical, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious, or any other nature could justify criminal acts intended or calculated to promote a state of terror in general public. States must ensure that their territories are not used for terrorist installations or training camps or for the preparation or organisation of terrorist attacks intended to be committed against other States or their citizens. Unfortunately, some States continue to flout the Declaration by providing moral, material, financial and logistical sponsorship and support as well as by providing arms to terrorists. We would call upon all States to implement the Declaration sincerely and to operationalise effectively the standards set by the Declaration.

Mr. Chairman,

The Secretary General's report rightly acknowledges the close link between the implementation of this Declaration and the Security Council resolutions 1373 and 1456 which were unequivocal in condemning all forms of terrorism, and in calling for united action against support, shelter, sponsorship, arming, training and financing for terrorism or terrorists.
Although the implementation of these resolutions has contributed to the promotion and enhancement of national legal frameworks to combat terrorism, these efforts need to be supplemented by international standard-setting processes. The development of 12 sectoral Conventions on terrorism has added a substantial body of legislation and standard-setting in this area. Negotiation and successful conclusion of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and elaboration of the draft International Convention for the suppression of acts of Nuclear Terrorism will be significant contributions by the international community in the fight against terrorism.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly Resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996, within the framework of the Working Group of the Sixth Committee, has been making sincere efforts to settle the outstanding issues on both the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and the draft International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. During the General Debate in the 58th session of the General Assembly, a number of States reiterated their support for the successful completion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. We believe that the conflicting views on Article 18 of the draft Convention which is central to the ongoing negotiations and other outstanding questions would be reconciled in a spirit of mutual accommodation.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The global coalition against terrorism has worked well in many cases, and it has failed to produce desired effects in some other cases. It worked well in Afghanistan, for example. It appears that in some cases, the members of the coalition are themselves part of the problem. In spite of Security Council resolutions calling for united action against support, shelter, sponsorship, arming, training, and financing for terrorism or terrorists, certain countries have not stopped from indulging in sponsoring cross-border terrorism. A clear case in point is the reference in paragraph 22 of the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/58/116 of July 2, 2003. Investigations by the Government of Austria into the possible involvement of an Austrian entity in providing hand-grenades used in the attack on the Parliament of India in New Delhi on December 13, 2001, led to the conclusion that the grenades used in this ghastly attack had been produced in Pakistan.
Mr. Chairman,

The developments outlined above indicate that lots more remains to be done to carry forward the war against international terrorism. We shall offer the following suggestions:

- The Counter Terrorism Committee should develop measure to ensure compliance by member-States of their obligations under UN Security Council Resolutions 1373 and 1456.
- Credible multilateral instruments have to be developed, identifying States that contravene these Resolutions.
- Multilateral mechanisms need to be created to detect and choke off international financial flows to terrorists and terrorist organisations.
- A better international system of information exchange and intelligence sharing needs to be devised to prevent terrorists from evading capture simply by crossing national borders.
- No State should be allowed to profess partnership with the global coalition against terror, while continuing to aid, abet and sponsor terrorism. To condone such double standards would only mean to multiply terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches the highest priority to the early conclusion of negotiations and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. We call for the continuation of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee within the framework of the Working Group of the Sixth Committee which provides the forum for making rapid progress and for achieving a productive outcome.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Mr. President,

We congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. This has been, and will undoubtedly be, a month of major activity for the Council. We are confident that the conclusion of your Presidency at the end of the month will record forward movement on many important issues currently under consideration.

Mr. President,

It has been almost 17 months since the establishment of UNMISET pursuant to resolution 1480 of the Security Council. It is a rare but happy occasion when we are able to review what the Secretary General has described as “significant progress” in the major milestones identified in the mandate of a Mission’s implementation plan. It is gratifying to learn that since its independence, Timor-Leste has made significant progress in promoting its social and economic development, and that its political institutions have continued to develop as have its relations with countries in and beyond the region.

I wish to briefly comment on the following highlights of the Secretary General’s report on developments in Timor-Leste;

• The successful phased withdrawal of UNMISET’s military component as per the revised downsizing schedule authorised in resolution 1473, with plans to bring down its numbers to 1,750 by the end of 2003. We note that this downsizing has gone hand-in-hand with the development of Timorese armed forces.

• Relative calm in the internal situation that has allowed 12 districts to be handed over by UMMISET to the National Police of Timor-Leste (PTNL), with the 13th district ready for handing over;

• The progress achieved by UNMISET in preparing Timor-Leste to gradually take over its civil administration. The Secretary General has acknowledged this by referring to Timor-Leste’s “remarkable
progress in laying the foundations for a functioning civil service and police force’;

• The success of the Government of Timor-Leste in generating revenues worth $44.1 million, including $26.7 million from Timor Sea revenues during the current year, as an indication of the increasing ability of the State to mobilise its own resources;

• The establishment of strong relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia by way of exchange of high-level visits and conclusion of a joint statement reaffirming the intention of the two countries to address together a number of important bilateral issues.

Mr. President,

The developments outlined above illustrate the progress achieved during the period of the Secretary General’s report. Recognising that nation-building is a long-term process, the Secretary General has highlighted the continued indispensability of international assistance. He has projected that Timor-Leste will continue to need international guidance and advice in the areas of civil administration, justice and policing, human rights training and, possibly, security.

We look forward to hearing further from the Secretary General on his recommendations in this regard. The progress achieved since the independence of the Timor-Leste has to be attributed to the country’s enlightened and forward looking leadership.

Special recognition has to be accorded here to Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Mari B. Alkatiri, who only recently addressed the United Nations General Assembly. The contributions of the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Mr. Kamalesh Sharma and the civilian, military and police components of UNMISET, including the United Nations Volunteers, in the successful evolution of Timorleste from a nascent State to a confident member of the United Nations fraternity, also deserve our recognition.

Thank you, Mr. President.
Statement by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts at the Security Council.


Mr. President,

We thank you for scheduling this public meeting of the Security Council on an issue of considerable importance and great concern to all members of the United Nations. We also congratulate Ambassador Arrias of Spain and his team for their capable stewardship of the Counter-Terrorism Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373.

Mr. President,

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon and, contrary to some popular misperceptions, the fight against terrorism was not born out of 9/11. India has been at the forefront of the fight against terrorism for almost two decades. During this period, over 60,000 Indians, mainly women and children, have lost their lives to terrorism. Most recently, in a major incident, 52 innocent bystanders were killed in the twin terrorist attacks in the city of Mumbai.

The scourge and reach of terrorism has indeed extended across the world. Globalisation cannot today be seen merely in the context of the success of free enterprise or the pervasiveness of television and other mass media. The very means that have facilitated the success of the global marketplace - improved communications, access to media, better transport links and faster and easier means of international travel - have contributed to the development of a global network of terrorism – a network that feeds on the common message of hatred and seeks to attain the common objective of carnage and indiscriminate destruction; to demoralise and thereby dominate civilised societies, particularly those based on pluralistic democracies.

Unfortunately, some States regard terrorism as a low-cost means of inflicting damage to the social, political and economic well-being of their supposed detractors, by pursuing a form of low-intensity warfare without its attendant risks. Despite the claim that they are part of the
global alliance against terror, they stand implicated by their past records and present inability to come clean.

Mr. President,

Contradictions persist but cannot persevere. In a recent newspaper article, a senior envoy of a permanent member of the Security Council has reportedly accused a Government, also a member of this Council and which professes to be a valued partner in the war against terrorism, of allowing renegade Taliban forces a safe haven from which to “regroup, recruit, cross into Afghanistan and cause mayhem” - a fact that Afghan leaders have sought consistently to underscore at the highest levels.

The Secretary General, in his report on “Measures to eliminate international terrorism” (Document A/58/116), mentions, and I quote, “it has to be assumed that the grenades used in this terrorist attack (on the Indian Parliament in New Delhi on 13 December 2001) were produced in Pakistan”. We in India did not require this corroboration of a fact that we had already deduced on the basis of solid and incontrovertible evidence gathered from the terrorists and their accomplices themselves.

But the fact that the Secretary General of the United Nations has brought this to light in a report that considers measures to eliminate international terrorism is in itself a telling story, as also indicative of the double standards that we sometimes seem to operate under.

An article published in yesterday’s New York Times refers to the US Treasury Department designating a charity, Al-Akhtar Trust International, as a financial sponsor of terrorism. This group is accused of financing Al Qaeda militants in Afghanistan, terrorist acts in Iraq, and of possible linkages to the murder of Wall Street reporter Daniel Pearl. Anyone looking for more material available in the free press on the existence of an epicentre of terrorism has only to read celebrated French author and philosopher Bernard Henri Levy’s recently released book, “Who killed Daniel Pearl?”

Mr. President,

The Counter-Terrorism Committee, for all its good work, will need to go beyond the stage of inexhaustible reporting to a more serious examination of the actual actions taken by States in their international counter-terrorism effort. The Committee would have to take advantage of the momentum achieved since its establishment to go beyond assisting
in the creation of legal and financial mechanisms to holding countries accountable for their genuine commitment to and actions in the fight against terrorism from territories under their control.

India was among the first countries to ratify all 12 Conventions on international terrorism. It has initiated the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, currently under consideration in the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly, and supports the adoption of the draft International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Cognisant of the possible threat to civilised and orderly societies by terrorists and non-State actors equipped with weapons of mass destruction, India piloted a resolution entitled “Linkages between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction,” which was adopted by the General Assembly by consensus last year.

A number of countries have responded quickly to the international call for the tightening of domestic legislative and financial frameworks designed to counter terrorist activities. Unfortunately, there is an increasing feeling among Member States that the more effective the response to the requirements and questions of the CTC, the more voluminous and intrusive the reporting process becomes. In our view, it is important to avoid conveying the impression, however erroneous, of an expanding bureaucracy represented by the CTC secretariat, indulging in an exercise of self-preservation and self-perpetuation.

**Mr. President,**

While we acknowledge fully that the development of effective legislative and financial mechanisms is the first step in enabling States to come to grips with the fight against terrorism, we are convinced that a system of endless reporting, without any effort to keep sight of the larger objective realities, can only disillusion States and ultimately impact adversely on the efforts of the Security Council to mobilise an effective international counter-terrorism effort.

It is critical that a system of effective interface between Council Members and the larger membership on the manner in which the CTC should operate is arranged on a periodic and institutional basis. Feedback from such exchanges needs to be monitored and absorbed by the CTC. What are required are clear and objective guidelines to govern the system of reporting that States are subject to. Most important, transparency and openness in the process will foster a greater willingness among respondents, i.e. the Member States, to cooperate.
The undue emphasis on cooperation with other international and regional organisations in the Committee’s work would also require to be considered carefully.

States are accountable for their actions but several partner organisations of the CTC that have been placed on an equal pedestal as Member States of this Organisation do not bear the same responsibility or accountability. Often, they even lack the mandate or competence to deal with the work of the CTC.

In our view, the primary point of contact for the CTC should be the Member States under whose mandate the Committee operates. Discussions with regional and international organisations should be secondary to discussions with States. All interfaces with partner organisations must be undertaken with the full knowledge and consent of the States involved in the organisation concerned. Also, regional imbalances in the number of partner organisations that the CTC works with would have to be taken into account.

Finally, issues such as the credibility and sources of information, the independence of experts working in the CTC are important, particularly if the views of States are not always taken into account.

Mr. President,

We have provided these illustrations in order to convey a candid feedback of the impressions and opinions of the larger membership. The ultimate aim is to enable the Council and the Chair of the CTC to take such opinions on board in the implementation of the Committee’s mandate.

The fight against terrorism is among the most important issues currently on the agenda of this Organisation. It is being pursued simultaneously in most, if not all, of the UN’s major organs, including the Security Council. My Government has been, and will continue to be, engaged fully in the fight against international terrorism. I would like to take this opportunity to once again express our deep appreciation to the Chair of the CTC for his efforts in leading this important Committee of the Security Council and to assure him of our fullest cooperation in the fulfillment of his noble mission.

Thank you, Mr. President.
Mr. Chairman,

The Indian delegation welcomes the opportunity to speak on Agenda Item 85: “Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects”.

We compliment Under-Secretary-General Guehenno for the detailed and thorough briefing to the Committee on Wednesday. The interactive session that followed was particularly helpful, allowing member states to raise specific issues of concern. We are cognisant of the efforts made by Mr. Guehenno and his team in managing the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in what has turned out to be another challenging year for United Nations in this area. We congratulate him for his endeavours and the dynamism that he has brought to the job on hand. We align ourselves with the statement delivered yesterday by South Africa on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

When the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations met in March this year, it met against the backdrop of “significant and positive developments in UN Peacekeeping Operations in 2002”. No less significant have been the developments since; there are new missions in Iraq, Cote d’Ivoire and Liberia, others such as MONUC and the NATO-led ISAF are expanding, while some others, we understand, are yet in the pipeline.

Equally relevant is the changing nature and the growing complexity and scope of these operations. In the last 10 years, the principles and practices of peacekeeping have undergone a dramatic transformation, even something of a revolution. This reflects the fact that conflicts today are increasingly intra-state. There has been a basic change in the structure of PKOs from being uni-dimensional military operations to multidimensional
ones involving a wide spectrum of activities. The use of civilian police is increasing in these operations and the mandates themselves vary from classical UN peacekeeping operations, to UN-authorised multi-national operations and even some operations which are outside the purview of the UN. A significant development is the UN’s reliance on regional and sub-regional organisations to support and carry out missions on its behalf to be eventually followed by a UN peacekeeping force as its successor, mostly under a Chapter VII mandate. We saw such a trend most recently in Liberia. In his latest report on the Implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/58/323) the Secretary General has raised some of these issues. He has exhorted member states to engage in a serious debate on “robust peacekeeping” and has linked this to the fundamental question of narrowing the commitment gap. We could not agree more. This, in fact, has been the refrain of a large section of the membership of this Assembly. For many years now, we have been stating unambiguously that the burden of peacekeeping should be shared equally between the North and the South. We are heartened to note that this sentiment finds a resonance in paragraph 36 of the report. This inherent dichotomy must be removed if we are to give meaning to the Secretary General’s call for “collective responses” in order to react to the new challenges in peacekeeping. We fully endorse the conclusion contained in paragraph 45 of the report that “cooperation across the globe is needed more than ever”.

The Secretary General has spoken about the experience acquired by the UN in assisting war-torn societies in their transition to peace. The goal is the establishment of new and durable state structures and the provision of external assistance in a way that allows local societies to move most rapidly and effectively towards attaining sustainable peace. The challenges are immense. The Secretary General has listed two prerequisites:

firstly, coordinated efforts by the State concerned and the international community in order to succeed and secondly, the fragile nature of post-conflict environments require the international community to stay the course during the post-conflict peacekeeping phase.

This view ties in largely with our own thinking on the subject. At the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations held in March this year, we had called for greater coordination among different parts of the UN Secretariat, peacekeeping missions, funds and programmes, the specialised agencies of the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions during the peacekeeping and the post-conflict building phase. The optimal,
timely and coordinated engagement of these actors, where appropriate, would contribute facilitating also a smoother transition to post-conflict developmental and political arrangements. And, much in line with what the Secretary General has said in paragraph 42 of his report, we had cautioned against a hasty retreat, which, we had felt, could jeopardise the gains achieved by the peacekeeping operation in question. Proper planning for phased withdrawal is a sine qua non and must form an integral part of peacekeeping planning. We reiterate that call, recognising in this context the valuable role of integrated mission task forces, such as the kind seen in UNAMA, ensuring coordination of all aspects and phases of mission planning between relevant actors. We should like to hear more from the Secretariat on progress made in strengthening the relationships among the Secretariat, other agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions.

Equally, Mr. Chairman, we share the emphasis being placed by the Secretariat on Rule of Law issues within the context of post-conflict peace building undertaken by UN peacekeeping. In line with the recommendations of the ECPS Task Force convened last year, we agree on the need to coordinate and consult with both internal and external partners to support Rule of Law aspects of peacekeeping operations. We understand that a strong Rule of Law component has been set up right from the outset in the case of Liberia, and we look forward to lessons learned and best practices being followed in future peacekeeping missions.

The Secretariat has set up a separate Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit (CLJAU) within the Civilian Police Division, creating posts of a Corrections and Judicial Officer each. This is both timely and appropriate and should allow for a more focussed approach to the issue.

Mr. Chairman,

On the triangular relationship among the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop contributing countries, Resolution 1353 and letter dated January 14, 2002 to the President of the Security Council were milestones. much, however, needs to be done in order to make these consultations both meaningful and real. This, to us, constitutes the core in terms of the success or failure of a peacekeeping operation and here, we would very much like to second the proposals contained in paragraph 52 of the Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (Document A/57/767 of March 2003).
On the strategic deployment stocks, we are heartened to note that the system is fully functional and that some equipment has already been transported to Liberia as part of mission start-up. We are, however, interested in hearing more from the Secretariat on the possibility of utilising a percentage of these stocks to assist troop contributing countries facing difficulties in the area of self-sustainment. We look forward to further discussions on the subject.

The issue of safety and security of UN personnel has come to the fore dramatically and so tragically, in Iraq, Congo and elsewhere. We deplore the killings of the two Military Observers in Congo in May this year, even as we express our deep sense of outrage and shock at the senseless terrorist attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad which killed 19 people. In August this year, a peacekeeper from India, Satish Chandra Menon, laid down his life while serving in the UN Mission in Kosovo. We solemnly salute this brave officer as also others before him who have made the supreme sacrifice under the UN flag.

We continue to see training as an important input in UN peacekeeping. We commend the Secretariat for the recent emphasis on pre-deployment or “just-in-time” training targeted at those who are about to deploy on mission. We would like to know whether the Secretariat would be formalising this arrangement and whether this is going to be a regular feature in future peacekeeping operations.

On new training skills, we place emphasis on training of Mission Senior Leadership and would like to hear more on this from the Secretariat in the coming months. This aspect is particularly relevant, given the increasing complexity of peacekeeping operations and the need for all, both at Headquarters and in the field, to respond to the new challenges.

And while on training I would be remiss if I did not make a mention of the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) at New Delhi. Since its inception some three years ago, the Centre has attained stature and has evolved into a well-recognised institution. It has hosted seminars – national and international –, held training capsules and provides research data and case studies on all facets of UN peacekeeping operations. The Centre is currently co-hosting, along with the UN, a training capsule for emerging troop contributing countries. It is registered as a member of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC) and is one amongst the 20 partners in the Standard Generic Training Module (SGTM) Project of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.
We wish to register our appreciation for recent efforts made by the Secretariat in terms of processing claims of troop contributing countries, both for troops supplied and contingent owned equipment; a backlog, however, still remains and we urge the Secretariat to process these expeditiously. In this context, we would draw the Secretariat’s attention to the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for 2003 (A/58/16) under which it has been stated that the objective should be to make reimbursements for troop costs and COE within four months from when they are due. We are hopeful that in future, we should be able to adhere to this time-line.

Mr. Chairman,

We have commented only on some of the issues that this complex subject encompasses. We shall continue this debate during the course of 2004, and I assure you of my delegation’s fullest cooperation in this regard. India is wholly committed to refining further and forging better the instrument of United Nations peacekeeping to serve better and more effectively the cause of international peace and humanity.

Thank you Mr. Chairman

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Mr. President,

We thank the Secretary General for the reports which have been prepared on “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”. We associate ourselves with the statement made by Morocco on behalf of the G-77 on this agenda item.

Mr. President,

Recent events have clearly demonstrated that the United Nations cannot fulfill the role expected of it in the field of humanitarian assistance if the safety and security of its personnel is not assured. Sergio Viera de Mello and his colleagues who laid down their lives in the terrorist attacks of the UN headquarters in Baghdad on August 19 served in the finest traditions of international civil service represented by the UN. The deliberate targeting of UN personnel involved in the pursuit of peace makes this incident all the more tragic.

Mr. President,

The report A/58/89 has particularly enhanced our understanding of key issues which merit consideration by the General Assembly, particularly those relating to humanitarian financing and the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. The report points out that there has been a doubling of overall levels of humanitarian aid since 1990. This is indeed most heartening. It is, however, a matter of concern that the growth in humanitarian assistance has been accompanied by an overall decline in the flows of ODA. The Secretary General has, in another report, referred to humanitarian assistance crowding out the resources required for development. The Economic and Social Council has, this year, reiterated that humanitarian assistance should be provided in a way that is not to the detriment of resources made available for development cooperation.
This is important to ensure as it is development assistance which, in the long term, reduces the need for emergency humanitarian assistance.

The Secretary General’s report draws attention to the fact that donor decisions to allocate resources are not driven primarily by objective needs but more by “domestic considerations, traditional patterns of expenditure and geo-political interests”. The largest shortfalls in the responses to the consolidated appeals process, ranging to over 70%, are faced by the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. This pattern goes against the basic tenets of humanitarian assistance contained in General Assembly Resolution 46/182. The Economic and Social Council has, in response to this trend, encouraged the donor community to provide humanitarian assistance in proportion to needs and on the basis of need assessments, with the view to ensuring a more equitable distribution of assistance across humanitarian emergencies, including those of a protracted nature. We do hope that this urging of ECOSOC will be heeded to.

The Secretary General’s report A/58/434, which focuses on natural disasters, has attempted, for the first time, to also provide information on the funding trends for natural disaster response. We commend the Secretariat for their efforts even though the information provided is somewhat sketchy. We understand that this is because of definitional problems and the lack of consistency with regard to the bases on which information is compiled. This needs to be addressed as the absence of comprehensive and precise information affects our understanding of an issue to which the international community attaches importance.

Mr. President,

We understand that the Secretariat had set up a Joint Working Group to review a range of UN responses in post-conflict transition situations. Our attention has been drawn to the recommendations of this Group, which are contained in the Secretary General’s Report on the reform of the Organisation. We note that the Working Group attached importance to the facilitation of links among the political, peacekeeping and operational wings of the UN and to addressing the variance in mandates for different UN Offices at a given location. This recommendation seems to be based on the premise that the UN response cannot be effective if it is fragmented and, therefore, those dealing with human rights, those dealing with security, those dealing with humanitarian assistance, and those dealing with development should deliver an integrated response. The recommendations of the Working Group also call for strengthening the
UN efforts in advocacy and negotiation.

We have always highlighted the risks associated with such an approach. The provision of life saving humanitarian assistance has to be on the basis of the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality. Such assistance should never be used as a bargaining tool by those dealing with political issues. The promotion and protection of human rights is, undoubtedly, important. However, if humanitarian workers were to do so, they would politicise their actions and also compromise their access to those in need.

Similarly, development assistance provided by the UN needs to respect the principles of neutrality and country-driven programming. In a post-conflict scenario, affected governments may not be best placed to assert their own priorities. The UN, therefore, needs to provide assistance for capacity-building. It should not attempt to take advantage of the situation by bypassing the national government. The mandate of peacekeeping operations also needs to be defined in a manner that does not result in their being seen as partial. The last regular session of ECOSOC has provided legislative guidance in this regard through its resolution which, inter alia, affirms the leading role of civilian organisations in implementing humanitarian assistance. It also affirms the need, in situations where military capacity and assets have to be used to support the implementation of humanitarian assistance, to ensure that such use is strictly in conformity with humanitarian principles.

Mr. President,

We note that transition situations particularly attract the attention of both the Secretariat and of the donor countries. To be concerned about bridging the gap between relief and development and to provide emergency assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and long-term development is laudable. The tendency to see transition situations as opportunities to fundamentally transform social mores, recast economic priorities and influence political dynamics is, however, most regrettable. The United Nations will, if it collaborates with such efforts, run the risk of jeopardising its status as a trusted partner of the developing countries. The arguments which we have outlined for clearly respecting the differences in the UN roles in peacekeeping, in the protection and promotion of human rights, in fostering economic and social development and in the coordination of humanitarian assistance also provide reason for approaching any integrated approach for the fulfillment of these
objectives, say through an Economic and Social Security Council, with caution and circumspection.

**Mr. President,**

The General Assembly has outlined the Guiding Principles of Humanitarian Assistance in the annex of its resolution 46/182. While coordinated and intrusive approaches may seem more attractive, the efforts of the Secretariat in the field of humanitarian assistance will be assessed by us in terms of the benchmarks provided by this resolution.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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479. Statement by Saleem Iqbal Shervani, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory at the Resumed Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly.


**Mr. President,**

I thank you for convening this Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly to consider an issue of importance and relevance to the membership of this Assembly.

It was less than four months ago that an agreement signed on 27 June, 2003 between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, on the withdrawal of Israeli forces from agreed positions in the Gaza Strip and Bethlehem, heralded hopes for the implementation of the Quartet Road Map, leading to a permanent settlement of the conflict based on Security Council resolutions 242, 338 and 1397. For a few weeks relative peace and calm did reign. Unfortunately, we now see a return to the familiar cycle of vengeful violence and retribution that all too often describes the landscape in this unfortunate region.
Mr. President,

Just last week three members of a diplomatic convoy of the United States of America lost their lives in a terrorist attack in Gaza. We condemn the attack and offer our condolences to the families of the victims and to the Government of the USA. We commend the Palestinian authorities for their swift action in attempting to bring the suspects to book and we are confident that such efforts would bear results all round.

Unfortunately, some recent acts of the Government of Israel have not assisted the cause of peace. The air strike on Syrian territory on 5 October fuelled tensions in an already volatile region. We strongly deplore this attack and violation of the sovereignty of Syria’s territorial integrity. Reacting to the attack, the Secretary General has said he is “especially concerned that this further escalation of an already tense and difficult situation has the potential to broaden the scope of current conflicts in the Middle East, further threatening regional peace and security”. The past few weeks have also witnessed an escalation in Israeli military activities in the occupied territories. The recent operations of the Israeli Defence Forces in Gaza have resulted in 14 Palestinians killed and 1,400 reportedly homeless.

Mr. President,

The issue at hand today is one relating to Israeli actions to construct a wall in the occupied territories. While we understand the legitimate rights of States to self-defence, Israel's unilateral decision to construct a security wall in occupied territories cannot be thus justified. More important, Israel's insistence in continuing with the construction of a security wall would be widely interpreted as an attempt to predetermine the outcome of any final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority on the basis of the principle of “land for peace” as called for by relevant Security Council resolutions.

Before proceeding any further with its plans, Israel must also consider the humanitarian consequences of its unilateral actions upon the affected Palestinians. Construction of the wall would transgress Palestinian lands, annex agricultural areas, destroy dwellings and separate families. Such actions only increase the sense of despair and frustration among Palestinians and aggravate a situation already vitiated by the hardships and sufferings imposed by a regime of blockades and roadblocks. We call upon Israel to cease any such construction on occupied Palestinian territories.
Mr. President,

The road to peace is often bumpy, but the ride must be endured for the interests of the peoples of the region and international peace and harmony. There must be no hiatus in the efforts of the international community to promote the peace process irrespective of the obstacles that come before it. As one reputed newspaper columnist recently wrote, and I quote, “If the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not getting better, then it will get progressively worse”.

It is the responsibility of all member states of this Assembly to assist in the task of carrying forward the gains made at Oslo and Madrid, and to push for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1397, which affirmed, for the first time, the vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognised borders.

India supports the Quartet Road Map as the only viable process that can promote a peaceful solution of the conflict. We are convince that the urgent need of the hour is for the parties concerned, the Quartet members and the international community to persevere forward. This is the most reasonable way out of the logjam.
Mr. President,

We thank the Secretary-General for his report on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields. My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Morocco in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77.

We welcome the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 57/270B which provides, in our view, a framework for the General Assembly to provide political oversight to the implementation of and follow-up to the major UN conferences over the past decade.

The objective of any exercise of follow-up should be to address the issue of implementation. The major UN conferences and summits have in their outcomes a set of well-defined targets and commitments for which all member States have accepted a shared responsibility. The implementation of outcomes would be a clear demonstration of the fulfilment of such shared responsibility and will contribute immensely to the strengthening of the United Nations.

For the developing countries, the implementation of outcomes of major UN conferences and summits presents an enormous challenge. They would not be in a position to fulfil all the commitments undertaken by them in the outcomes of such events, especially the Millennium Declaration, without further progress in international cooperation. In respect of developed countries, there are special obligations in the areas of Oversees Development Assistance (ODA), debt-relief and market access.
Mr. President,

Reviewing implementation of conference outcomes requires a two-pronged approach. Firstly, it needs an integrated and coordinated approach in respect of overarching goals common to all or many of the conferences. Secondly, it also requires a focussed review that seeks to retain the identity and integrity of every major conference and to stimulate progress in the implementation of the agreements in the specific area or sector covered by the conference. The Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions can play a major role in addressing this task.

The Council will pursue the establishment of a multi-year programme of work for the consideration of identified cross-sectoral thematic issues for this purpose. We welcome the opportunity to assess the functioning of the follow-up mechanisms established pursuant to the Monterrey consensus. We would like to see greater synergy between the annual meeting of the Economic & Social Council with the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organisation and the United Nations Conference on Trade & Development [UNCTAD] on the one hand and the biennialised high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the other. Apart from the high quality of the dialogue in terms of issues addressed and level of specificity, what we also require is an effective mechanism to assess the implementation of commitments and agreements reached in the Monterrey consensus.

The report of the Secretary-General speaks in paragraph 11 of the need for establishing a stronger link between policy-guidance and operational activities, as provided in resolution 57/270B. We would, however, like to sound a note of caution in this regard. The principal foundation for operational activities of the UN development system is country-driven programming or, in other words, the UN system responding to the needs and priorities of the recipient countries. We believe that nothing should be done to undermine this principle. The linkage provision should not be misused to thrust donor-driven or secretariat-driven agenda on the developing countries. The only possible link would be to ensure that the activities of the Funds and Programmes in recipient countries would advance the implementation of the conference outcomes.

On the question of the review of the programme of work of the Second Committee, my delegation would like to point out that the exercise must not be seen in isolation. This should be due as part of the efforts for the revitalisation of the General Assembly. Any decision that might be
taken in the limited context of the Second Committee should be subject to review in the light of decisions that are adopted in the overall process of revitalisation of the General Assembly and reform of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

The report presented by the Secretary-General this year on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration contains several useful suggestions. We agree with the proposal made by the Secretary-General for the holding of a major event in 2005. Such an event should provide an opportunity for a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in implementing all the commitments made in the Millennium Declaration.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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481. Statement by Minister of State Vinod Khanna at the International Donors’ Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq.


Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen,

May I, at the outset, thank the Government of Spain and the Core Group for hosting this Conference, particularly at a juncture when international solidarity to support the political and economic reconstruction of Iraq has become crucial for the peace, stability and security of not only the Middle East region but for the entire world.

The recent unanimous adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1511 provides a good beginning for international co-operation to ensure the earliest possible return of full sovereignty and effective control of the governance of Iraq to the Iraqi people. The speed of constitutional evolution following the 15th December deadline and the exercise of the role of the UN provided for under this resolution would be crucial in determining the pace of transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi people. India has very close and friendly relations with the people of Iraq. I would like to strongly
reiterate India’s continued commitment to assist the people of Iraq in their humanitarian and reconstruction efforts. India has necessary experience and capabilities to contribute significantly to this process. India is not a traditional donor of financial assistance. Nevertheless, I am very happy to announce India’s commitment to humanitarian assistance and reconstruction needs of Iraq of US$ 30 million. Earlier this year, in response to the UN Secretary General’s Flash Appeal, our Prime Minister had announced Government of India’s bilateral commitment of US$ 20 million. We expect to utilise US$ 10 million for refurbishing the maternity and pediatric hospital in Najaf, which we will undertake jointly with Jordan. It will also be used for technical assistance programmes in human resources development and other humanitarian needs. In addition, India is happy to announce a commitment to the World Bank/UN Trust Fund programmes bringing our total pledge for reconstruction of Iraq to US$ 30 million till the end of 2004.

We hope that early and effective action will result in overcoming the doubts on the security situation and aid absorption capacity in Iraq, so that planned programmes can be implemented with the full involvement of the Iraqi people. India has considerable experience and strengths in capacity and institution building in other countries through the Indian Technical Assistance Programme. India would be pleased to provide such assistance in the priority areas of power, transport and communications, pharmaceuticals, education (including technical institutions), water and sanitation, information technology and small & medium enterprise development.

India would also like to offer its support to the political process of the development of the constitution, voter registration, census and the electoral process itself. India would be willing to arrange for up-gradation of skills of administrative personnel in the Foreign Ministry, Police and Justice. Suitable projects would be identified in consultation with the Governing Council of Iraq.

India would be happy to be actively associated with the oversight and coordination committee and mechanisms to be set-up by this Conference.

A number of Indian companies were involved in executing large projects for infrastructure development in Iraq. Recently, a major delegation from the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry visited Iraq to explore various cooperation possibilities. They also
organised a seminar entitled “Focus Iraq” on 7th October 2003 in New Delhi, in which a number of senior government officials and businessmen from Iraq participated. This demonstrated the interest on the part of Indian private sector companies to participate in the reconstruction process of Iraq. There are substantial outstanding Iraqi debts to India. In the current exceptional situation, India is prepared to defer, for the time being, the arrangements for the repayment of these debts.

The strong response this Conference has evoked is testimony to the commitment of the international community to support the people of Iraq in the time of their need. Several decades ago, when Iraq became independent, India played a significant role in providing expertise and services towards nation building. Once again India is ready to involve itself in extending support to Iraq’s reconstruction effort.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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482. Statement by A.C. Jose Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation on Agenda Item 91: Macroeconomic policy questions, (b) Science and technology for development, (c) International financial system for development, and (d) external debt crisis and development at the Second Committee of the 58th session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary General for his reports on Macroeconomic policy questions under consideration today. My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77. The role of international community in providing support for capacity-building, making available financial resources and transferring technologies to developing countries is crucial for the developing countries to achieve higher growth rates. We collectively agreed to a framework of international cooperation for development at the Millennium Summit, the International
Conference for Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

It has been estimated that an additional amount of US$50 billion per year would be required for achieving the internationally agreed development goals. While a certain focus has been made on reaching a specific aid level by 2006, to the tune of $16 billion a year, predictability of aid flows afterwards is also required including up to the target year of 2015 and beyond. The net private financial flows to a significant number of developing countries have declined, reaching a low record level of US $192 billion in year 2002, almost half the average annual levels of 1998 - 2000.

Increased participation of developing countries in the international financial, monetary and trade institutions and giving the developing countries a greater voice in the decision-making and norm-setting processes in these institutions would go a long way in ensuring that their concerns are duly reflected. This would contribute towards creating an enabling environment for development. In our view, the United Nations system must be allowed to play a key role in collaboration with the Bretton Wood institutions and the WTO in the management of global economic integration. The annual meetings of the ECOSOC with the Bretton Wood institutions, the WTO and the UNCTAD should evolve as an effective mechanism to address the systemic issues.

Mr. Chairman,

The debt problems faced by many low and middle-income countries continue to act as severe constraints on their ability to accelerate economic development and the achievement of the Millennium development goals. Many bilateral official creditors have provided relief to low income countries, some even beyond the commitments made within the framework of the HIPC initiative. However, the relief provided in the case of a number of countries falls short of the level needed to achieve long-term debt sustainability and to reduce poverty significantly. Volatility of international capital flows and instability of the exchange rates of the major international currencies have continued to render the task of managing external debt a more challenging one.

Private capital flows were once expected to be a panacea for the developing countries to get out of the debt crisis. Trends of flows over the past decade have belied this claim. Recent studies by UNCTAD show that the surges in capital flows to the developing countries had in many cases
ended with financial crises, widespread debt-servicing difficulties and defaults. We should consolidate the agreements reached at the Millennium Summit and in the Monterrey consensus on external debt and build on them to achieve a durable solution to the debt crisis of the developing countries. Reducing debt-servicing obligations will indeed increase social spending, permit higher levels of investment in productive capacity and appropriate infrastructure. Without making progress in reducing the debt burden, there is little prospect of the developing countries moving towards poverty-reduction and redoubling their efforts for attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Chairman,

The agenda item on science and technology for development is of considerable interest to my delegation. The globalisation of the economy poses new challenges to developing countries to modernise and respond to the increasingly competitive environment. As rapid technological advancements and innovations have a significant impact on activities like agriculture, industry, environment and services, there is a growing need to evolve programmes that would aid in bringing the benefits of science and technology to social and economic development.

The Secretary General in his report has made many observations of particular relevance to the developing countries. The application of biotechnology through development of products, processes and technologies has the potential to achieve sustainable development. We share the view that biotechnology presents unique opportunity for both the developed and the developing countries and that the policies governing biotechnology should not disadvantage the developing countries. We need to move towards creating a win-win situation. In this context, we welcome the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, particularly the decision to negotiate an international regime to promote and safeguard the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources. We call for an early implementation of this decision.

The report of the Secretary General notes in paragraph 77 that the cost of leaving some countries behind may be higher then empowering them to become players in mastering benefiting from biotechnology. The Human Development Report 2003 also says that “Technology is a motor for human development. Each country, by hoping access to technology, can make a vital contribution to reaching the goals. Yet the opening has, if anything, been slow, especially in the industrial sector. In the long term,
this harms everyone”. The report highlights the need for the developing countries to expand access to technology by tackling the key obstacles, including the lack of finance for investment in research and development.

Harnessing biotechnological tools for generation of products, processes and technologies to enhance the efficiency in productivity as well as cost-effectiveness requires not only well directed efforts but also significant investment. The international community must also assist the developing countries in research and development activities, particularly in areas that have the potential of changing lives for the better. In this context, priority should be given to agriculture and health sectors. We also believe that the information and communication technologies offer immense potential for growth and development. We hope that the World Summit of Information Society to be held in Geneva and Tunis in 2003 and 2005 respectively will address the critical issue of digital divide and deliberate on the ways to harnessing the potential of ICT for assisting developing countries in the efforts to achieve social and economic development goals. India looks forward to participating at the Summit and its preparatory process and to engage constructively in the deliberations to address these issues of crucial importance to the developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Before concluding, I would like to refer to the first international Ministerial conference on transit-transport co-operation which saw the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action establishing a global framework for action for developing efficient transit transport systems in land-locked and transit developing countries. The implementation of the programme of action requires active co-operation among the land-locked countries, the transit developing countries and the developed country partners. We trust that the General Assembly will keep under review the implementation of the programme of action.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Mr. Chairman,

We congratulate Under-Secretary-General Shashi Tharoor for the excellent presentation made yesterday, highlighting major developments within the DPI in the past year and the priorities and challenges ahead. And, indeed, much has happened. A renewed DPI, with a new organisational structure, new priorities and new goals is in place. Reform is both complex and difficult and cannot be completed with a single step; yet, we remain confident that under the dynamic leadership of Mr. Tharoor, this ongoing process will see its logical culmination. We assure him and his team of our wholehearted support in these endeavours.

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Morocco yesterday in his capacity as Chairman of G-77.

Mr. Chairman,

Earlier this year at its annual session, the Committee on Information considered the various reports of the Secretary General contained in documents A/AC/198/2003/2-6 on the reform and revitalisation of the DPI, and broadly supported these (A/58/21). The section on Enhancing Public Information contained in the Secretary General’s report “Strengthening of the United Nations: An Agenda for Further Change” (A/58/351) gives an additional update on the ongoing reform process.

I should like to take this opportunity to reiterate my delegation’s whole-hearted support to the ongoing process of change. DPI is the “voice” of the United Nations, and in order to tell its story well, it must be vibrant, dynamic and constantly evolving. And never has this role been more important than today, when so many questions are being raised about the future of the Organisation. The Department should intensify its campaign to promote the purposes and principles of the United Nations and multilateralism, more relevant today than ever; a restructured,
revitalised and well-equipped DPI is more likely to do so, and, to borrow language from its new mission statement, to “the greatest public impact”.

We would like to highlight the following aspects on reform:

• Reorientation must meet the aspirations of the developing world and succeed in correcting the current bias against it in the field of information and technology. The need for information is most critically felt in the developing world which does not have a plethora of options at its disposal and the UN must make a special effort to reach out to target audiences here. This “digital divide” should not remain rhetorical or a cliché; it must be bridged.

• The focus should continue to be on the core social and economic developmental issues which remain areas of high priority for the developing countries which form the vast majority of the UN’s membership. We would encourage the DPI to do more in terms of highlighting the critical developmental issues, and the work of the Organisation in addressing them. In addition, at a more general level, we would like to add the following:

• The proposal to ensure a seamless transition from United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) at the national level to regional hubs, in particular in the high cost developed countries, is a worthy one, where these centers drain away a major chunk of the DPI’s resources. We are in agreement that resources thus released could be diverted to other areas identified as priorities.

• As regards application of the “hub approach” to other regions, we would continue to urge circumspection. The process must move ahead on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with the countries concerned. We look forward to the report of the Secretary General on implementation of the proposal in Western Europe and to further discussions on this in the Committee on Information next year, before the process is replicated in other regions.

• The decision to implement an Annual Programme Impact Review is a particularly useful one, making self-evaluation a part of the daily work of all programme managers, with a view to institutionalising performance management. Self-evaluation and performance management are integral to the success of the reform efforts of DPI. These techniques will enable DPI to adapt itself to
the constantly evolving new challenges, while also weeding out what is non-performing, outmoded and unnecessary. Cost-effectiveness of the resources required, however, must from a vital part of the proposal and should be borne in mind.

- Many developing countries lack the necessary resources and infrastructure to benefit from the rapid advances in information and communication technologies. Within this context, the radio remains one of the most cost effective and far-reaching traditional media available to the DPI and an important instrument in UN’s information activities, including on development and peacekeeping, with a view to achieving a broad client-base around the world. We would encourage the DPI to continue enhancing the UN’s capacities in this regard and towards this end, to continue building partnerships with local, national and regional broadcasters to extend the UN’s message to all corners of the world.

- We support reform aimed at integrating the management of UN libraries and to step up their modernisation. Particularly noteworthy in this regard is the decision to establish a multi-lingual UN libraries research gateway on the internet and the creation of a master list of core areas of specialization at United Nations libraries, which should go a long way towards achieving a more effective, efficient and accessible system within the United Nations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
484. Statement by Ambassador V.K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative at the UN on Agenda Item 55: Revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly; Agenda Item 57: UN reform: measures and proposals; Agenda Item 58: Restructuring and Revitalisation of the UN in the economic, social and related fields; and Agenda Item 59: Strengthening of the UN system at the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. President,

My delegation is pleased to participate in this debate. We thank the Secretary-General for the various reports presented under the respective agenda items. We also express our appreciation to Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Louise Frechette, for her introductory statement.

The broader issues outlining the Non-Aligned position have already been expressed by Algeria and have my delegation’s support.

We congratulate you, Mr. President, for your personal commitment to the process of revitalisation of the General Assembly. In the few weeks that you have presided over the General Assembly, you have demonstrated, by personal example, your determination to restore the prestige and authority of the General Assembly. We wish you every success in this endeavour and assure you of the fullest cooperation of the Indian delegation.

My delegation has maintained that in reform and revitalisation we cannot expect to achieve remarkable results overnight. There are no magic solutions. Where we are called upon to deal with sensitive political questions and issues perceived by member States as impinging on their core national interests, change will necessarily be slow and measured. We need to build on areas of agreement step by step, block by block. A useful beginning can be made by a quick review of the revitalisation exercise undertaken so far and the state of implementation or non-implementation of the resolutions already adopted.

Mr. President,

India’s broad political support to the reform process is premised on the object of enhancing the organisation’s effectiveness to make it more
responsive to the priorities of the member States, particularly for the developing countries that constitute the vast majority of its membership.

Our support to the Secretary-General’s initiative in setting up a high-level panel of eminent personalities to report on the threats and challenges faced by the UN and the changes necessary in its institutions and processes is also premised on the same objective. We hope the intergovernmental consideration of the report and its recommendations will provide us an opportunity to take a holistic view of the entire processes so that reforms in different parts of the UN system move in the same direction and prove enduring in the long run.

The litmus test of any reform exercise would be whether it increases the Organisation’s ability to assist the developing countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other targets agreed upon at the major UN conferences and summits. The UN will be strengthened if and when it contributes effectively to the efforts of the developing countries in the implementation of these outcomes. This must also involve monitoring the extent to which developed countries are demonstrating shared responsibility by fulfilling the commitments and obligations, especially in reaching the agreed target of official development assistance through provision of additional financial resources, transfer of technology, debt relief, market access and move towards greater voice for the developing countries in international, monetary and trade institutions. The other major test of the reform exercise will be greater effectiveness in the UN’s ability to deal with the ‘global bads’: international terrorism, weapons of mass destruction including nuclear disarmament, and trans-national organised crime including the trafficking in narcotic drugs, humans and arms.

Mr. President,

In attempting to revitalise the work of the General Assembly, we must underline first of all the question of its core competence. The General Assembly is meant to be the highest body in the organisation to deliberate and review policy. It is not expected to function as an executive or judiciary. As its presiding officer the President must be able to enhance the effective performance of this function in the interest of the broad membership of the Assembly. In this era of cross-cutting concerns we must guard against an overly zealous approach for this body to proceed intrusively into areas which are essentially the core competence of other bodies in the UN system even as we avoid a surrender of its remit to other bodies, including the Security Council or the Secretariat. In practical terms, while the interactions between the General Assembly and the Economic & Social
Council have given rise to few difficulties, the relationship between the Assembly and the Security Council does occasionally give rise to anomalies in terms of issues taken up for consideration and their treatment. Also the relative roles of the presiding officers of the two organs need clarification. We need to remember that the President of the General Assembly does not have authority to represent the collective opinion of the General Assembly except when he is explicitly authorised to do so by the General Assembly itself. The UN Charter does not confer any authority on the President in substantive matters.

While saying this there is no denying the need for the office of the President to be strengthened for the effective and orderly conduct of the Assembly’s business. Even without waiting for a lengthy and time-consuming exercise, we could move rapidly in several areas. For example, the office of the President could easily be strengthened with the provision of a small number of additional posts. The implementation of this measure should not depend on the relative alacritiy of the Secretariat’s response to this as compared to other more attractive demands upon it. Similarly, the Assembly needs to undertake a thorough review not only of the agenda and programme of work of the plenary and the Main Committees, but also look at methods of work of the plenary and the Main Committees with a view to improving them and enhancing their effectiveness. The General Committee or equivalent body could be entrusted with functions similar to those of the Bureau of a Main Committee.

If there is consensus on reforming the agenda, member States would be willing to explore ways in which discussions could be organised around particular themes and sub-themes in the work of the Main Committees. Similarly, member States would be open to the idea of designating a theme for the general debate in the plenary, as long as they are in a position to address issues of concern to them.

There has been some talk of rationalising the number, length and language of resolutions of the General Assembly. Both as the principal deliberative organ and in terms of its policy-making function, it is inevitable that some of the resolutions of the General Assembly will contain declaratory language. However, when it comes to resolutions concerning the implementation of programmes of action or operational activities, it should be possible, in our view, to rationalise the language of resolutions and to simplify them so that the focus would be on their operational content. This would also help in overseeing and reviewing implementation of the resolutions.
Another area that lends itself to early examination and agreement is that of the strict observance of the rules of procedure. The Main Committees seem to have developed work cultures of their own and often display scant respect for the established rules of procedure. This is not conscionable and it is important that this area is looked into more closely. At the same time, we need to be open to the idea of reviewing the rules of procedure and to adapt them to modern times. To illustrate this point, the General Assembly would save valuable time and resources if we were to decide that delegations would be free to circulate a longer version of their statement but read only, say, the executive summary as long as it is assured that the longer version will go into the records. However, as long as the provisional verbatim records of the General Assembly contain only what is actually spoken, this will not be possible.

There is often talk of the need to make the General Assembly proceedings more “interesting” and “attractive”. This is sought to be achieved by organising several high profile ‘parallel’ events such as interactive dialogues, panel discussions and seminars.

One of the stated objectives is to enhance interaction with the civil society, including non-governmental organisations, the academia and the private sector. While there is nothing intrinsically objectionable in this idea, we wish to underscore the intergovernmental character of the Organisation. Any efforts to enhance interaction with the civil society should be done in a manner that increases the quality of inter-governmental decision-making.

Mr. President,

The Secretariat deserves our praise for recommending elimination of several reports, meetings and other activities of marginal utility. Many of the reports for the 58th session were received well within the prescribed limit. We are grateful for this.

There are several other areas which need to be explored for reducing the number of meetings and reports, reducing the number of resolutions, and have sunset provisions for both new mandates and existing activities. Without doubt, these will require further discussions. We would only like to underline that reducing the volume of work and managing time and resources efficiently and effectively is not only a task for the Secretariat but also for member States. A degree of self-discipline has to be exercised by member States before rushing forth with new initiatives and resolutions every year.
Mr. President,

The Secretary-General has outlined some of the measures being undertaken in his report on status of implementation of actions in response to General Assembly resolution 57/300, in document A/58/351.

We trust that the consultations being held by the High Commissioner for Human Rights will encompass not only the members of the Commission on Human Rights but non-members of the Commission as well. We would emphasise the need for the process to be inclusive so that no impression is given of agreeing on matters in exclusive groupings. We hope the exercise will reduce the burden on reporting requirements, particularly on the developing countries. We would be open to consider guidelines for an ‘expanded core document’ as long as it is understood that such a document would reduce the reporting burden, address the issue of backlog, avoid the repetition of details and obviate the need for replicating the contents of the core document in individual reports to treaty bodies, or effectively expand the obligations of States Parties to the core covenants. We call for more consultations with member States in the matter. The information provided in the report of the Secretary-General on improving the system of special procedures raises several points of concern. We are not clear as to whether the consultations initiated by OHCHR on improving the special procedures mechanisms are inclusive and wide-ranging. We believe that emphasis should be on greater coordination, avoiding duplication and overlapping, and checking the tendency of special procedures to exceed their mandates, which seems to be happening rather too frequently. We do not favour the idea of joint initiatives, including joint urgent appeals, statements, press releases and communications, by special procedures. This is because, in our view, the mandates of the special procedures are different and distinct. We do not see the need for a feasibility study for enhancing the ‘dissemination’ of findings and recommendations of special procedures. We believe that such dissemination should be in the form of submission of the report to the Commission on Human Rights. After all the special procedures are appointees of the Commission. We also do not, for example, see any useful purpose served by interaction between special procedures mechanisms and the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council. We call on the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to implement fully the recommendations made by the Office of Internal Oversight services [OIOS] after the management review. These
recommendations, in our view, are comprehensive, focussed and merit full and effective implementation. Any expansion in the activities of OHCHR has to be commensurate with its budgetary resources, not on the basis extra-budgetary funding.

Mr. President,

We note the on-going work on simplification and harmonisation of programming tools and the strengthening of the Resident Coordinator system. These efforts will, we hope, result in a reduction of transaction costs for developing countries and also enhance country ownership. It is important that specific proposals developed consequent to the policy guidance contained in General Assembly resolution 57/300 are submitted for approval by the Executive Boards of the Funds and Programmes.

The report of the Secretary General has provided us with the recommendations of the Joint Working Group of the Secretariat on Transition Issues. This Group was to review a range of UN responses in post-conflict situations. The Group has recommended the facilitation of links among the political, peacekeeping and operational wings of the UN in order to address the variance in mandates for different UN offices at a given location. The underlying premise seems to be that the UN response cannot be effective if it is fragmented and that, therefore, those dealing with humanitarian assistance, those dealing with security, those dealing with human rights and those dealing with development should deliver an integrated response.

As we have reiterated on a number of occasions, there are several risks associated with such an approach. There is a predisposition in some quarters to see transition issues as opportunities to fundamentally transform the social mores, recast economic priorities and influence political dynamics of such post-conflict societies. We find it necessary to sound the caution that the United Nations, if it collaborates with such efforts, could jeopardise its status as a trusted partner of developing countries. It is most important for the United Nations to respect the differences in its roles in peacekeeping, in the protection and promotion of human rights, in fostering economic and social development, and in the coordination of humanitarian assistance. The delivery or coordination of assistance needs to be in a manner which clearly conforms to the principles of development assistance and humanitarian assistance which have been clearly established by the United Nations.
Mr. President,

The current session of the General Assembly will deliberate far-reaching reform of the planning and budgetary process. There is widespread recognition that these processes can be made more efficient and effective, with added value to both Member States and to the Secretariat. While it is important to retain the inter-governmental nature of these processes, we need, at the same time, to ensure that intergovernmental review is more effective and relevant and provides better guidance to the Secretariat. This is a matter of crucial importance. While there is need for urgency, however, given the long-term implications for the Organisation, we must also avoid hasty or half-cooked conclusions.

Mr. President,

These are some preliminary views of the Indian delegation on the cluster of issues under debate today. We look forward to working with other delegations in the upcoming discussions and consultations under these items.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. Chairman,

We are honoured to have His Excellency Mr. Donald Kaberuka, Minister of Finance of Rwanda and Ambassador Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, co-chairing this round table. Ambassador Ricupero has brought with him years of experience of the development agenda of the United Nations, which will be an asset in guiding the deliberations of this round table.

Mr. Chairman,

The global challenges are deeply interlinked and so are the solutions. Economic growth provides the resources for poverty alleviation, environmental preservation and for investment in environmentally sound technologies. Sustained and accelerated economic growth is imperative for the achievement of sustainable development in developing countries. The Rio Earth Summit had recognized the principles for common and differentiated responsibilities for meeting the priority needs of the developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth. The Millennium Development Goals set quantitative targets for reducing hunger, increasing primary education, improving health, promoting gender equity and ensuring employmental sustainability. The Millennium Declaration calls for a global partnership for development through increased development assistance and market access, and debt sustainability. The International Conference on Financing for Development reaffirmed the need for more aid, trade and sustainable debt financing.
and external debt relief, in tandem with domestic reforms in developing countries, to increase domestic resource mobilization and facilitate foreign direct investment. The ‘Financing for Development’ process is among one of the major initiatives taken by the United Nations for promoting international cooperation for development. The Monterrey Consensus that emerged from the Conference, however, represents a compilation of least common denominator positions. The final outcome fell far short of what was recommended by the Zedillo Panel of US$ 50 billion per annum additional resource requirement.

Mr. Chairman,

Developed countries should strengthen the ability of developing countries to pursue sustainable development by providing development assistance that supports the national priorities and policies of recipient countries and promote investments. One calculation puts the cost of meeting just non-environmental targets at $40 to $70 billion a year above the current level of ODA. Another estimate puts the cost of reaching the environmental goals over a longer period at $25 billion per year. The commitments made at Monterrey would increase ODA in real terms only by about US $16 billion a year by 2006, far below the internationally agreed target of 0.7% of the gross national income of developed countries. ODA continues to remain at a low level of 0.23% of the gross national income of OECD/DAC countries. The implementation of the commitments made at Monterrey as also new and additional commitments are essential if the developing countries are to achieve development goals. Moreover commitments should also be predictable and long term. The focus should be to cover the entire time span up to 2015, and beyond.

The debt relief provided in the case of number of countries falls short of the level needed to achieve long-term debt sustainability. Some HIPC’s face a continued challenge to reach the ‘decision point’. Reducing debt-servicing obligation will indeed increase social expending, and permit higher level of investment in productive capacity and appropriate infrastructure. There is a need to build on the agreements reached at the Millennium Summit and in the Monterrey consensus to achieve durable solutions to the debt crisis of the developing countries. By recently writing off the debt owed to it by seven highly indebted countries who have reached their ‘decision points’, India has demonstrated its commitment to helping LDCs in reducing their external debt burden. The Doha work programme had placed the interests and concerns of developing countries at the heart of trade negotiations. All the Doha deadlines were missed.
Even the decision on the implementation of paragraph 6 on TRIPS and Public Health was taken in August 2003 after protracted negotiations. The Cancun Ministerial Conference, which was meant to be a forum to review the progress of negotiations under the Doha Work Programme, provided ample opportunity to test the seriousness of developed countries with regard to the development dimension of the Doha Work Programme. WTO members, especially developing countries, have a lot at stake and the coming days are crucial in clearly defining the role of the multilateral trading system. India hopes to see all WTO Members play a positive role in moving ahead with the Doha Work Programme and ensuring a fair and balanced outcome of the negotiations taking into account the interests of all Members and retaining the development focus therein, as mandated at Doha. India would be ready to engage constructively in the process initiated by the Chairman of the General Council, and the Director General, WTO at Geneva in order to ensure progress on the Doha Work Programme post-Cancun. India supports the establishment of an effective mechanism to assess the implementation of commitments and agreements reached at the Monterrey Conference. The annual meetings of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with the Bretton Woods institutions, World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should evolve as an effective mechanism for high quality of the dialogue in terms of issues addressed as also level of specificity. There is a need for greater synergy between the annual meeting of the ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, the WTO and the UNCTAD on the one hand and biennialised high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the other. There should be a clear analysis of shortfalls for an effective follow up. In this context, we would like to mandate the Secretariat to conduct a detailed analysis of the implementation of the commitments made in order to assist us in assessing at the next High-level Dialogue the Progress achieved in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus over a three-year period.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
486. Statement by Saleem I. Shervani, Member of Parliament, and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Agenda item 73(w): Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.


Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to introduce the Resolution entitled “Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction” under Agenda item No.73(w) contained in document No. A/C.1/58.L35 and co-sponsored by Afghanistan, Bhutan, Colombia, Mauritius, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka and India.

India first introduced this resolution in the 57th General Assembly to give expression to the widely shared concern of the international community about the heightened dangers posed by the risk of terrorists getting access to weapons of mass destruction or related material and technology. In recognition of this threat, the Resolution aimed at underlining the urgent need to deal with it, at the national, regional and global levels.

The adoption of Resolution 57/83 without vote, was a measure of the wide spread support for this resolution, reflective of the shared concerns of the international community and the common determination to combat terrorism, in particular its linkages with WMD.

The Report of the Secretary General (A/58/208) as well as its addendum pursuant to resolution 57/83, includes views submitted by member states and the work undertaken by relevant international organizations.

Events since we met last year, have only underlined the growing concern of the international community over this threat. There is a growing recognition by the international community of the threat posed by terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction and the urgent need to prevent it.

These concerns have been reflected in the statements of the UNSG, the work of his Disarmament Advisory Board, the Kuala Lumpur NAM Summit Final Document and in the deliberations of Regional organizations and other groupings. The IAEA and the OPCW are among several international organizations which have focused on this threat.
Mr. Chairman, it cannot be ruled out that terrorists and other non-state actors, in networks that span the globe, may gain access to weapons of mass destruction, related materials and technologies. We cannot underestimate the threat nor can there be expectation of advance warning in all cases. Nor can we afford to wait for such a catastrophic incident to take place, or its horrific aftermath, to spur us into action. We have a collective responsibility as well as interest in prevention. Our collective position will in fact send a strong deterrent signal to those forces contemplating such threats.

This is not a problem that is country or region specific, but has global reach and implications. Therefore, it requires a collective effort, through a truly multilateral approach that would increase the chances of it being accepted and supported by the widest possible constituency, thereby also ensuring its effectiveness.

We believe that the threat of WMD-terrorism will require concerted action at multiple levels-increasing and strengthening national capacities, as well as new levels and forms of regional and international cooperation, only as part of a comprehensive global effort to prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD.

We hope that this Resolution will act as a platform for fostering greater understanding as well as impetus for joint action before this threat rears its ugly head.

Mr. Chairman, the Indian delegation, along with the co-sponsors, expresses it sincere hope that the draft resolution will receive the support of all the delegations and would be adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.
Mr. President,

I thank you for holding this Security Council open debate on Gender and Peacekeeping to mark the third anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. I also wish to thank the senior UN personnel who have provided us with valuable introductions to the topic at hand.

The critical importance of this issue stems from the fact that civilians are increasingly the victims, sometimes unintended and sometimes intended, of the violent conflicts that occur in different parts of the world today. It has been estimated that close to 90 percent of current war casualties are civilians, the majority of whom are women and children, compared to a century ago when 90 percent of those who lost their lives were military personnel. Although entire communities suffer the consequences of armed conflict, women and children are particularly affected because of their status in society and their gender. Despite this, women should not be viewed solely as victims of war. They assume the key role of ensuring family livelihoods in the midst of chaos and destruction, and are particularly active in the peace movements at the grassroots level and cultivating peace within their communities. However, the absence of women at the peace negotiating table is unconscionable.

My delegation had supported many of the recommendations made in the report of the Secretary General pursuant to resolution 1325. We welcome, in this context, the decision to appoint a Gender Advisor in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

Mr. President,

Armed and other types of conflicts and terrorism and hostage taking still persist in many parts of the world. My country has been the victim of a vicious campaign of cross-border terrorism for two decades resulting in the deaths of at least 63,000 persons, mainly civilians, women and children. On 27 October, the first day of Ramadan, 1 person was killed and 34 injured in the state of Jammu & Kashmir when a grenade was
indiscriminately lobbed into the public telecommunications centre where people were lined up to pay their bills.

The campaign of terrorism and intimidation sought to be enforced on an unwilling citizenry in the state of Jammu & Kashmir has been compounded by the misguided zealotry of the fundamentalists who have launched a terror campaign specifically targeting women for their so-called non-observance of strict moral codes.

In an area where society has traditionally placed no such restrictions on their women, and in which women have played an important role, the externally-foisted and forced imposition of such social codes can only impact adversely on society in general, and women in particular.

It is our experience that terrorists exploit the vulnerabilities of women in situations where violence prevails and normal life and livelihoods are disrupted on account of terrorist activities. Perhaps those that direct and sponsor terrorist activities are aware that women, as the most vested interests in favour of a stable and peaceful society, foster values that go against violence and terrorism.

Moreover, when provided the opportunity to mobilize themselves through democratic processes, women have been at the forefront of initiatives towards the consolidation of peace and security. One consistent factor in democratic elections in different parts of India has been the preponderance of women among voters. The success of elections in Jammu & Kashmir last year can be partly attributed to the high turnout of Kashmiri women desirous of utilizing this democratic exercise to empower themselves with the means to provide for a more secure and stable environment. It is implicit that their participation would also foster and strengthen activities that combat terrorism.

In Afghanistan, women are finding their rightful place in society. The violence of the gun has largely given way to a more peaceful and settled existence for a large part of the population. An entire generation of women who were denied their right to education and work by those represented by the Taliban are now pursuing educational and professional opportunities. Unfortunately, the same religious fundamentalists have now diverted their attention to other parts of the world, including the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir.

India recently undertook the largest democratic decentralization exercise when it provided grassroots level Panchayats (locally elected
self-governing bodies) across the country with decision-making powers. As at least one-third of all Panchayat members in India are women by statutory law, this decision has opened up the opportunity to Indian women to lead on peace and security issues from grassroot levels. Undoubtedly, the voice of women towards inculcating systems that foster peace and security in a country of a billion people, will impact far and wide.

Mr. President,

Women and children constitute some 80% of the world’s millions of refugees and other displaced persons. They are threatened by deprivation of property, goods and services and their right to return to their homes of origin as well as by violence and insecurity. We therefore support the Secretary General’s recommendation on the reintegration of women through disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes as integral parts of all future peacekeeping missions.

The debate today has provided valuable opportunity for the Council and the larger membership to be updated and further sensitized to the important role that women can and should play in securing peace and international security. It is incumbent upon the UN to play its role in supporting and furthering efforts in this direction. We support the implementation of the Secretary General’s recommendations, although as with all broad recommendations, these must be conditional upon circumstances and situations.

Mr. President,

The representative of Pakistan, in his statement, has chosen to make unwarranted and unsubstantiated comments on women in India. I have earlier drawn the attention of the Council to the invaluable role the political empowerment of women can play in inculcating values that serve as a deterrent to violence and terrorism. The stark contrast between Indian and Pakistani polities, seen in their historical and current contexts, can offer no better evidence of the differing politico-legal and social frameworks within which each country views its women as a resource in addressing the issue of peace and security.

In an open letter dated 10 October 2003 addressed to the President of Pakistan, the Executive Director of Human Rights Watch has devoted one entire section to legal discrimination against and mistreatment of women and religious minorities in that country. The letter also addresses, inter alia, the issues of torture and mistreatment of political opponents
and journalists, return to civilian rule and the Legal Framework Order and sectarian violence. The letter specifically records that inaction on the Hudood Laws persists despite the government-run National Commission for Status of Women calling for a repeal of the Hudood Ordinance on the grounds that it “makes a mockery of Islamic justice” and is “not based on Islamic injunctions”. This, despite the outcry over cases such as the tribal “Jirga”-ordered gang-rape of Mukhtaran Bibi in Punjab and the sentencing to death by stoning of Zafran Bibi on grounds of adultery. Human Rights Watch has monitored these and other cases involving abuse under the Hudood laws. Informed estimates suggest that over 210,000 cases under the Hudood laws are under process in Pakistan’s legal system.

Mr. President,

The above is just an illustration of the problems that women in Pakistan face. A State that is unable and unwilling to provide basic rights to its women is incapable of any sensitivity on the plight of women in other countries brought about by terrorist actions. Conversely, it reveals the ethos under which the sponsors of the regressive Taliban in Afghanistan have decided to use similar means to subdue a civilian population, particularly women and children, of another nation into succumbing to the threat of terror.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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488. Statement by Minister of State Vinod Khanna and Head of Delegation at the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development at the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. Chairman,

Over the last two days, we have listened with interest to the statements from various stake-holders on their perceptions of the follow-up to the Monterrey Conference and the implementation, or lack of it, of the Monterrey consensus.

Some broad trends could be discerned in these discussions. Many developed countries and international institutions were eager to demonstrate how they have stayed engaged in the Monterrey process. Some of our developed country partners have made efforts in increasing resource flows; this has resulted in a marginal increase in the flows of Official Development Assistance (ODA). However, most participants spoke of the huge gap in resources in relation to the requirements of the developing countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other commitments undertaken by them. The same sense of disappointment also permeated discussions on a long-term and durable solution to the external debt crisis, which continues to plague many developing countries. The sense of disappointment and frustration was even more in acknowledging the failure of the Cancun Ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization in squarely addressing the interests and concerns of the developing countries and producing an outcome that would have moved towards elimination of subsidies and distortions on the one hand and enhancement of market-access of products of export interest to the developing countries on the other.

The Monterrey consensus itself represented a “lowest common denominator” when compared to the recommendations of the Zedillo panel and the projections of resources requirements made by the World Bank and other international agencies in order to enable the developing countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. It was thus a beginning and not the final destination of the journey that we began collectively. Many elements of the consensus are yet to be implemented. For example, there has been little progress in implementing the agreement to enhance the participation of the developing countries in, and giving
them a greater voice in the decision-making processes of, international trade, financial and monetary institutions. It is extremely important, in our view, to address this question at a very early opportunity as it could have a direct and beneficial impact on the ability of the developing countries to influence the multilateral trading and financial systems which do not always take their interests into account. Without directly addressing the questions of enhanced resources flows, transfer of technology, capacity-building and equity in international economic relations, the developing countries are unlikely to succeed in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, notwithstanding their efforts at improving national governance and economic liberalisation. May be it is time to pause for a moment and reflect on how we should pursue the follow-up process of the Monterrey Conference. One of the ways would be to request the Secretary-General to provide us with an assessment on why, despite all the commitments and agreements reached at Monterrey, the net transfer of resources to the developing countries continues to be not only negative, but appears to be getting aggravated to an alarming extent. Have these negative trends been only because of the slow growth of the world economy? How far have trade and market access factors been critical to this? How far are they attributable to the continuing asymmetries and imbalances? The Secretary-General could draw upon the expertise of the international financial institutions, UNCTAD and WTO in preparing his report. Such a report with the assessment and analysis provided by the Secretary-General with the help of these institutions will assist us when we revisit this question in the 60th session of the General Assembly in 2005. It will also help us in considering course-corrections to the implementation of the Monterrey consensus and the process that we have agreed for undertaking its review.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
489. Statement by Minister of State Vinod Khanna on Agenda Item 42: Follow-up to the United Nations Year of Cultural Heritage at the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. President,

We thank the Director General of the United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization for the overview he has provided on activities undertaken during the past two years to protect cultural heritage. The declaration of 2002 as the UN Year for Cultural Heritage attests to the importance which the international community has attached to this matter. There is, in our view, a continuing need to give priority to programmes, activities and projects for the protection of cultural heritage.

Mr. President,

It has been said that cultural heritage represents the historical record and understanding of the entire spirit of a people in terms of its values, actions, works, institutions, monuments and sites. The record of our history shows that India has always been a meeting place of different cultures. The Indic civilization is a result of several cultural fusions. It encompasses the philosophic tenets of both idealism and materialism, of religion and secularism, of quest for its own identity and a search for integrative globalisation. Pluralism, tolerance and respect for all religious, linguistic and cultural manifestations define our values. The spirit of our people and their faith in the fundamental unity of all mankind is encapsulated in the Sanskrit phrase “Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam” which means the world is one family.

We share much of this cultural heritage with rest of the world. The values of liberal and participative democracy and of rule of law belong to all of us. The commonality in our values has allowed for the codification of international instruments on human rights. To protect our cultural heritage is to also protect our common values. We need to do so particularly from the threat posed by those who seek to impose political ideology by murdering and terrorising innocent civilians. The forces of terrorism deny the existence of a common thread of humanity and seek to destroy the cultural heritage of peaceful coexistence.

The preservation of our values also requires the preservation of the tangible forms of our cultural heritage. We are proud in India to be the
inheritors of monuments and sites which attest to the achievements of our forefathers since the early dawn of civilisation. There were, till last year, 23 Indian sites on the World Heritage List. We are happy that four months ago, another Indian site, the rock shelters of Bhimbetka, was added to this list.

These five clusters of natural rock shelters display paintings which date from the Mesolithic period right through to the Historical period. We are committed to the preservation of these expressions of our cultural heritage and continue to take new initiatives. In February this year, Prime Minister Vajpayee launched the National Mission for Manuscripts. It is estimated that there are over 50 million manuscripts in India. The objective of the Mission is to document and catalog Indian manuscripts, to facilitate their conservation and preservation and to also promote ready access to them through publication, both in book and electronic form. We also plan to build a National Manuscripts Library.

Mr. President,

A key reason for discussing tangible cultural heritage in a multilateral setting is the need for international cooperation to assist in efforts for its preservation. To value our common humanity is to value also the various tangible expressions of cultural achievement which exist in different parts of the world. This value is expressed through a willingness to assist developing countries to build their own capacities for safeguarding their cultural heritage.

Mr. President,

We are happy to have been able to share our know-how on conservation and preservation with others. We are proud of India’s role in the restoration of the Angkor Vat.

During the visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee to Cambodia last April, we also agreed to participate in the restoration of Ta Prom, another magnificent temple complex in the Angkor Park area. Through this participation, we recognise our common South Asian and South-East Asian cultural heritage.

Mr. President,

We also believe that multilateral cooperation is necessary to preserve the expression of cultural heritage which is found in traditional knowledge. A seminar on the protection of traditional knowledge was
held in New Delhi last year. The conclusions of this seminar underline the need to develop an internationally agreed instrument which recognises protection of traditional knowledge at the national level to prevent misappropriation and to ensure that national-level benefit sharing mechanisms and laws are respected world wide.

The conventional forms of Intellectual Property Rights are, in our view, inadequate and need to be developed further if we are to provide protection to these manifestations of cultural heritage. We have, along with some other developing countries, made a submission in this regard to the TRIPS Council.

Mr. President,

The consideration by the UN General Assembly of issues which come within the mandate of specialised agencies and other multilateral organisations is useful. It allows us, without getting into details, to come to a common and holistic understanding of the various aspects of such issues. This debate has also allowed us to recognise the important role which UNESCO plays in the preservation of cultural heritage and we would like to use this opportunity to further encourage them in their efforts.

Thank you, Mr. President.
Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary General for his reports on the agenda items 115 and 116 on the “Elimination of racism and racial discrimination” and “Right of peoples to self-determination” respectively. We also thank Mr. Doudou Diene, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the question of fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related tolerance, and the Special Rapporteur on the question of the use of mercenaries, Mr. Enrique Ballesteros, for their useful introductory statements.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Morocco in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77, under the agenda item 115.

Mr. Chairman,

Two years ago, at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance we agreed to ensure that there is no state-sponsored, institutionalised discrimination against any individual citizen or group of citizens; that States do not condone or encourage regressive social attitudes which promote the pernicious ills of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The battle against racism cannot be won by policing of behaviour and attitudes within member States by the United Nations. On the contrary, the battle has to be fought within societies in each nation to change thought-processes and attitudes. To this effect, action by States for the promulgation of stringent national laws, their strict implementation and the setting up of independent national institutions with powers to address manifestations of racism, needs heightened attention. We agree with the Secretary General when he speaks of the vision of a world created by globalisation as “a world characterised by the belief that diversity of human cultures is something to be celebrated, not feared.”
Mr. Chairman,

We have studied carefully the report prepared by the Special Rapporteur on the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. We appreciate the work done by the Special Rapporteur, and thank him for his report; but at the same time, are concerned at some of the ideas expressed in the report: In paragraph 12, reference is made to the Special Rapporteur’s concern “at the adoption by countries of legislation which violates human rights on the pretext of combating terrorism.” He also speaks in paragraph 8 of the promotion of a “culture of fear through language which focuses excessively on security and counter-terrorism”. Today we live in a world which is so globalised that each and every life lost through an unnatural cause is one too many, the pain of which is felt worldwide. Yet, there are countries where thousands of lives have been lost on account of terrorist attacks. In these countries, there is no “pretext of combating terrorism.” Combating terrorism is, unfortunately, not a pretext, but a reality of life in many countries today. It is a prerequisite necessary for protecting the human rights, principally the right to life, of its entire people. At a time when global technological advancements provide terrorists an edge, and the international nature of terrorism is amply evident, special care must be taken to ensure that the global efforts at combating terrorism are not undermined by those who seek to protect the human rights of only the terrorists, and not of the victims of their heinous acts.

The representative of Pakistan chose to use his statement under these agenda items to vilify and denigrate the institutions of democratic governance in India. Perhaps no different behaviour could have been expected from those whose experience and traditions are so alien to the democratic spirit, and who have been making every effort to disparage and defame democracy, democratic traditions and democratic institutions, particularly those of a successful democracy. After all, the genetic make-up of military regimes with its characteristic whimsicality and lack of accountability and bent on self-perpetuation would admit nothing better. Those who observe and study that society would have much to tell about sectarian violence and constitutional sanction for discrimination against minorities which even extend to many Muslim sects. Pakistan cannot hope to pursue a policy of any ‘enlightened moderation’ without first demonstrating that a polity where the armed forces control civilians rather than vice-versa as in any democracy, is capable of even ‘moderate enlightenment’ when dealing with serious social and human rights issues.
Mr. Chairman,

My delegation also thanks the Special Rapporteur on the question of the use of mercenaries for his report. As usual, the Special Rapporteur has presented a comprehensive and detailed report which looks at the issue at hand in an extremely objective manner, and provides in-depth information and analysis which will enable a better understanding of the complexities of the issue. The report highlights once again the universal and omnipresent nature of the mercenary menace. My delegation also the work of the Special Rapporteur on addressing the subject of the legal definition of a ‘mercenary’ to which member States will, no doubt, give careful consideration.

Mr. Chairman,

In his message of May 20 this year, the Secretary General noted that “Achieving self-government for the peoples of the world has been one of the cardinal goals of the United Nations since its inception. Under the Organization’s auspices, more than 80 million people have exercised their right of self-determination, and decolonisation can truly be considered a United Nations success story.” We fully subscribe to and appreciate these observations of the Secretary General. India has played a leading role in the historic struggle for decolonisation, and was at the forefront of the movement to secure the rights of peoples to self-determination so that those under alien subjugation, domination and exploitation could freely determine their own political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development. Self-determination has been recognised for long as the right of peoples of non-self governing colonies and trust territories to independence and self-government. Today, Palestine remains the unfinished task in the realisation of the right of peoples to self-determination.

India has maintained unwavering support and solidarity for the people of Palestine to attain their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination. My delegation has reiterated its full support for the Peace Process and the Quartet Roadmap which would realise the dream of the peoples of both Palestine and Israel to live in peace, side by side within recognised and secure borders, thus realising the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people. In this context, we would like to underline the need for the international community to exercise due vigilance in ensuring that the legitimate freedom struggle of the Palestinian people is not undermined by equating terrorist and insurgent activities
with the struggle of the people of Palestine. Once exercised, the right of self-determination enables a whole people to freely choose their own form of Government and for all segments of society to collectively participate in national decision-making through representative, democratic institutions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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491. Statement by Rajiv Ranjan Singh, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Agenda Item 152: Report of the International Law Commission on the Work of its Fifty-Fifth Session (Unilateral Acts of States, Reservations to Treaties, Shared Natural Resources and Fragmentation of International Law) at the Sixth Committee of the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Chairman of the International Law Commission, Mr. Enrique Candioti, for his lucid introduction of Chapters VII to X concerning “Unilateral Acts of States, Reservations to Treaties, Shared Natural Resources, and Fragmentation of International Law: difficulties arising from the diversification and expansion of international law”.

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to express our appreciation to Special Rapporteur Cedeno for his sixth report which focuses on recognition. The discussions on the topic of Unilateral Acts within the Commission covered several important issues, more particularly general characteristics of the unilateral act of recognition. We believe that recognition is an important unilateral act, although it is not a homogenous one. It could involve recognition of governments, states and other entities too. The act of according recognition is not regulated by any agreed legal rules or criteria. Once recognition is extended, the legal effects would follow. For these reasons,
we do not agree with the view that “acta sunt servanda” is the basis for the binding nature of a unilateral act. We would like to reiterate that acta sunt servanda cannot be a derivative of the customary rule: “Pacta sunt servanda”. My delegation is not agreeable to this logic.

Mr. Chairman,

The discussions in the Commission on many of the above points have been inconclusive. Questions continue to be raised regarding the feasibility of proceeding with the study. Doubts have also been expressed on the basic demarcation of the subject limiting it to the autonomous or non-dependent acts. The lack of sufficient state practice, absence of comments from most of the States and the difficulty of locating new sources of international law have been suggested as reasons for dispensing with the topic. However, we believe that continuation of discussion and further elaboration on this topic would be beneficial only if the focus is on specific issues of unilateral acts such as recognition, promise, waiver, notifications, protest, renunciation, acquiescence, and estoppel etc.

Mr. Chairman,

On reservation to treaties, my delegation commends the efforts of Prof. Allen Pellet, Special Rapporteur, for the progress achieved at this session. During the current session, the Commission considered the report of the drafting committee which adopted fifteen guidelines relating to withdrawal and modification of reservation of treaties. Some of the draft guidelines are accompanied by model clauses which might be useful for the State to invoke the applicable rules of procedure to suit the circumstances at hand.

On the mode of making and withdrawing reservation, we would like to reiterate that reservation should be made in writing and any communication relating to withdrawal of reservation must also be made in writing. In case of any exigencies, a communication relating to the withdrawal of reservation made by electronic mail or facsimile must later be confirmed either by a diplomatic note or by a depository notification. The guidelines adopted by the drafting committee more or less reflect the existing State practice on this subject. Therefore, in principle, we agree with these draft guidelines.

Mr. Chairman,

On Shared Natural Resources, we thank Prof. Chusei Yamada, special Rapporteur, for his first report which outlined the topic. The report
details all the earlier attempts involving the study of legal regime relating to “ground waters”. However, it must be borne in mind that none of them dealt with this topic with sufficient rigour, detail and precision. The first report which is very preliminary in character, made references to several terminologies on ground water such as, “unrelated confined ground waters”, “ground waters”, “confined trans-boundary ground waters” and so on. Further, the need for the formulation of a precise definition on the basis of a correct understanding of the Hydro-geological characteristics of ground water has also been contemplated. In our view, a deeper study on this matter is required before embarking on a workable definition. Mere assumption that “almost all principles embodied in the Convention and the law of non-navigable uses of international water-courses are also applicable to confined trans-boundary ground waters”, would be unhelpful in evolving a more acceptable regime.

We do not agree that the legal regime on non-navigable uses of water-courses is similar to the legal regime on ground water. While the former is woven around well established principles on sharing of water including the riparian rights, the latter either lacks state practice, or is unclear with regard to diverse practices, and not amenable to any generalisation. This question requires a thorough and careful study that should go well beyond the analogy of the legal regime concerning non-navigable uses of international watercourses.

Mr. Chairman,

On the fragmentation of international law, we would observe that fragmentation of law is one of the realities of present day international relations. The conflict that arises when a special law deviates from the general law and the conflicts between and within specialized fields of law have been the subject matter of this study. The phenomenon of fragmentation was clearly seen in the Tadic case where the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia gave a wide interpretation to the “test of effective control”, of insurgent action which was laid down by the International Court of Justice in the Nicaragua Case to mean “overall control”. Such an interpretation is seen to have effectively “broadened the range of circumstances in which State’s responsibility may be engaged on account of its action on foreign territory”. We feel that fragmentation can lead to overlapping jurisdiction and also ‘forum shopping’, which may come as stumbling blocks towards fairness and dispensation of impartial justice. Furthermore, we believe that this may lead to conflicting jurisprudence as international law lacks a pyramidal hierarchy of courts
normally found under domestic legal systems which resolve the conflicting interpretations.

In our view, the topic at hand is still at a formative stage and the identification of a non-exhaustive list of four broad areas where fragmentation occurs could be very useful. We are confident that further study in these matters would pave way for the reconciliation of conflicting rules.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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492. Statement by P.M. Tripathi, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Report of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions (Agenda Item 112) at the Third Committee of the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary General for his reports under this agenda item. We also thank the High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Ruud Lubbers, for his introductory statement to the Third Committee as well as his informative reports. We recall that during the 57th session of the General Assembly, the High Commissioner had presented several initiatives for enabling the organisation to deal with ongoing and new situations of refugees with innovative and more effective approaches. These included the 2004 Process, the 4-R’s approach, and the ‘Convention Plus’. In principle, we welcome efforts of the UNHCR to adapt itself to the changing demands of our times and to make a perceptible difference on the ground.

Last year, one of the new initiatives presented by the High Commissioner, the 4-R’s approach - of Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, was welcomed by my delegation since
it appeared to hold considerable promise. Pilot programmes had been initiated in four countries. My delegation would have liked to see an assessment of the pilot programmes and the feasibility of the 4-R’s approach in the report of the High Commissioner. We urge the High Commissioner to provide Member States with an evaluation of the results of the several new initiatives undertaken by him. This would enable Member States to respond more effectively to the challenges posed by the continuing situation with regard to the world’s refugees. The UNHCR reported last year that the number of persons of concern to the organisation had declined from 22 million to 20 million. This year, UNHCR’s estimates continue to be the same, which indicates that over the past year, little progress has been achieved in finding effective solutions in addressing the situation of the world’s refugees. This is a matter of some concern, with sizeable new outflows being reported in Africa by the UNHCR.

Mr. Chairman,

In his comment on ‘Responding to challenges of modernity’, the High Commissioner’s report states that while the primary role of his Office has not changed, new categories of persons of concern have been added to the responsibilities of his Office. We would like to urge caution while taking upon itself new tasks. In the face of competing demands and limited resources, prioritisation of UNHCR’s activities is a hard and inescapable reality. The UNHCR should maintain its focus on those persons of concern who have the first charge on its mandate and even more, on its limited resources - the refugees.

We have listened with interest to the High Commissioner’s remarks in the interactive dialogue in the Third Committee on the UNHCR’s role with regard to internally displaced persons. It is the view of my delegation that IDPs are first and foremost the responsibility of member States. UNHCR’s role in situations involving internally displaced persons should be on the basis of explicit requests by the Member State concerned. It is also necessary to ensure that there is no duplication in the responsibilities in this area between the different humanitarian pillars of the UN which should function within their existing mandates.

Mr. Chairman,

The fundamental characteristic in refugee movements today is that they occur primarily in the developing countries in different parts of the world. These are also the very countries that bear the maximum burden
of hosting and protecting refugees at great cost to their limited resources. Therefore, their concerns need to be recognised and addressed to a far greater degree than has been permitted by the existing structure.

The link between poverty and refugee flows is well recognised, and the search for durable solutions will remain elusive as long as the fundamental factors that give rise to refugee movements remain unaddressed by the international community. It is in this context that the realisation of the development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, assumes special importance. We, therefore, agree with the High Commissioner that the UNHCR’s mission must be based on the principles of solidarity, responsibility and burden-sharing.

Mr. Chairman,

The 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol do not cater to the phenomena of massive flows and mixed migration. In the absence of appropriate adjustments to match these realities, countries such as India will continue to find it difficult to accede to the present legal framework, their commitment to hosting refugees notwithstanding. We urge the High Commissioner to take this into account, particularly in the light of his stated “ambition to promote universal accession to these instruments.”

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the priority attached by the High Commissioner to enhancing the accountability and transparency of the UNHCR’s working methods. It is vital for the UNHCR to preserve impartiality in its operations, and its non-political character. This has become all the more necessary following the proposal to remove the time-limitation on the continuation of his Office.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, solutions cannot be foisted on countries, nor can they be applied in the abstract. UNHCR should carefully consider the consequences of a proactive role in a given situation and how such a role will impact on the ground. The success of UNHCR in achieving the goals of protection and solutions depends entirely on its ability to work in close cooperation with and the consent of the concerned States.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary General for the report on the agenda item globalisation and interdependence under consideration today. We associate ourselves with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Morocco on behalf the Group of '77 under this item.

Mr. Chairman,

The report of the Secretary-General on globalisation and interdependence focuses on the effect of increasing linkages among trade, finance, knowledge, technology, and investment on poverty eradication and sustainable development in the context of globalisation.

It was hoped that the era of globalisation would bring about sustained and equitable growth of all nations, as a natural consequence of free movement of capital, goods and services. The impact of the globalisation process has, however, been uneven. As the Secretary-General had observed in the report he presented to the Millennium Summit more than three years ago, the benefits of globalisation are not shared equitably whereas its costs are being borne disproportionately by the poor. Little progress has been made in reducing disparities in income and wealth between nations. Even in countries which have achieved significant growth, a disproportionate share of the gains has gone to upper echelons of the society, resulting in widening disparities in income and wealth within nations. The challenge before the international community is to maximise the benefits of globalisation while minimizing its negative impacts. The cornerstone of globalisation and liberalisation has been increased participation in international trade and investment. While some developing countries have been able to achieve high growth rates, a group of countries trade even less today than they did 20 years ago. The anxiety relates to unequal returns on globalisation and the challenge before us is to make it universally acceptable by making it universally beneficial.
We need to examine the challenges faced by the developing countries. Have the imbalances in the global economy and the asymmetries in the global trade exacerbated as a result of globalisation? Foreign direct investment which brings with it not only access to financial resources but also technology has come down drastically in the recent years. Is this downturn attributable to globalisation? A large number of developing countries which are experiencing low growth rates have been engaging in policy reforms. Can these reforms be made sustainable without increased external assistance? It is imperative to create an enabling international economic environment through concerted action on trade, debt and development assistance for the greater integration of developing countries into the world economy.

By way of illustration, export-oriented growth cannot be considered in isolation without aggressive programmes for poverty eradication, priority development of infrastructure including power and transport. These are not merely confined to the area of domestic resource mobilisation, but require planned development, knowledge of markets and international cooperation including financial assistance. India’s objective to achieve an annual rate of growth of 8 per cent by 2007 has been predicated on our ability to utilise the positive aspects of globalisation.

At the Millennium Summit, we resolved collectively to ensure that globalisation became a positive force for the development of world’s poor, particularly of the developing countries. At the fourth WTO Ministerial Conference at Doha, the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterey and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in the recent past, the international community agreed to a development-oriented framework for sustained economic growth and sustainable development for all. We must demonstrate the political will to translate these commitments into concrete actions through good governance at the national and international levels, transparent and effective fiscal discipline, management of expenditure and finance, non-inflationary price-control mechanisms, comprehensive programmes on disaster management, reproductive health sector and health, literacy and housing for enhancing the quality of life. Global interdependence would remain a utopian ideal unless resources, technology and fruits of scientific research are not shared on an equitable basis.

Mr. Chairman,

One of the important tools for the developing countries in their
coming to terms with globalisation and deriving benefits from it is access to technology. We feel that this area is as important as access to capital and other resources. Unfortunately, mechanisms have not yet been developed for sharing technology with the developing countries. Access to technology on concessional terms is crucial for the developing countries to enhance their competitiveness in the global market place.

An area of particular importance is of assistance to the developing countries in their efforts to make globalisation of production more sustainable. In this context it is imperative that all countries promote sustainable consumption and production patterns with the developed countries taking the lead, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. A review audit on performance in the post-globalisation era could be considered in order to evaluate the growth in the access of developing countries to the markets of the developed countries.

We share the views of the Secretary General that continued efforts should be made to facilitate the access of developing countries to new information and communication technologies. India’s national experience has demonstrated that information technology offers enormous potential for meeting the development challenges by adding value to nearly all sectors of national activity. This has been possible only because it reaches out to the masses with appropriate and usable local content. We, in India, have therefore set the target of IT for all by the year 2008. At the global level, the need of the hour is to address the problem of the ‘digital divide’. We hope that the forthcoming World Summit of Information Society will address this important issue and make concrete recommendations for promoting the use of ICT, in particular the issue of effective and affordable access by developing countries to information and communication technologies.

Mr. Chairman,

The process of globalisation has seen an increased linkage between migration on the one hand and trade capacity, competitiveness and employment policy on the other. Migration policy now needs to be seen as going beyond social policy. With global firms operating in an international context, the gap between migration policy and trade policy can manifest itself in immigration controls which act as non-tariff barriers.

It is our view that there can, in the context of the general agreement
on trade services be a win-win situation with labour shortage in developed
countries being matched by labour availability in developing countries. There needs to be a greater level of receptivity among developed countries
to the request made to them for enhanced market access in mode 4. For
developing countries such as India, the balance of gains in the negotiations
will lie in the extent to which our service providers are able to provide
services in overseas markets, either from remote locations or through
the temporary movement of service personnel. For globalisation to be
meaningful for the developing countries, the developed countries should
demonstrate far greater openness than hitherto in allowing movement of
natural persons across national frontiers; this would be in keeping with
their own insistence for such freedom of movement in respect of capital,
goods and services.

Employment generation is crucial to the efforts of the developing
countries to improve the quality of life. It is also an imperative to impart a
human face to the process of globalisation and minimise its negative
aspects. Developed countries should take steps to dismantle their subsidy
regimes in agriculture and ensure greater market access and level-playing
field for the developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, we would like to emphasise that the outcomes of the
major United Nations conferences and summits have already created a
significant shared vision towards globalisation and we need to build upon
it with collective political resolve. In this context, we take note of the
conclusion in the report of the Secretary-General that putting the
Millennium Development Goals and other development targets at the
centre of economic institutions and policies is a critical way to ‘confront
the centrifugal forces’ unleashed by globalisation. Globalisation with a
human face would be an effective tool for the developing countries in
their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Another
suggestion that the Assembly could consider usefully is that by the
Secretary-General for the Assembly to give guidance for continuing the
international debate on the governance of globalisation by identifying
specific aspects of globalisation for a more in-depth consideration. The
United Nations is thus uniquely placed to play an important role to deepen
the debate on globalisation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
494. Statement by P.M. Tripathi, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Agenda Item 117(b): Human Rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of Human Right and Fundamental Freedoms; (c) Human Rights situations and reports of special Rapporteurs and Representatives; and (e) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at Third Committee of the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.


Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary General for his reports, and the Special Rapporteurs for their reports and presentations under the agenda items.

My delegation condemns unequivocally the terrorist attack that killed Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in Baghdad on August 19 this year. We had heard Mr. de Mello in the Third Committee during the 57th General Assembly and had been encouraged by his vision of promoting respect for human rights through upholding the rule of law, fostering social justice and enhancing democracy, values that my delegation shares and will continue to promote. The greatest tribute we could pay to his memory is to live up to his vision.

We thank the Acting High Commissioner for Human Rights for his statement to the Third Committee and his report.

Mr. Chairman,

India won its independence at a time when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was taking shape. The framers of our Constitution were enlightened visionaries with a deep concern for human values. They were inspired by the post-war global reawakening, the realisation that the human being must at all times be at the centre of our concern. Our founding fathers were determined to establish a political framework in which the most basic aspiration of the people – the aspiration to live with freedom and dignity – would be secure, guaranteed to withstand any attempt at infringement. That guarantee has stood firm over fifty-five years. As a signatory to both the principal Covenants on Human Rights, and all other
major human rights instruments, India has consistently sought to promote both sets of rights as a composite whole. A democratic way of life is today an article of faith for over a billion Indians. The Constitution of India guarantees all its citizens the full enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms. Our democratic institutions have stood the test of time. An independent judiciary, a free press, and a pluralistic and vibrant civil society lie at the core of these institutions.

Mr. Chairman,

The direct relationship between development and enjoyment of human rights is undeniable, just as is the relationship between freedom and human rights. Dignity and human well-being cannot be protected in the face of grinding poverty. One of the reasons for the scepticism in developing countries about many international institutions and mechanism today is the absence of matching obligations on the part of the richer countries in areas where they have a responsibility. Without a favourable and conducive international economic and financial environment, and more importantly, the fulfilment of international obligations to promote the rights of people everywhere, the goal of achieving universal adherence to human rights standards will remain elusive.

It is for this reason that we have consistently argued that national capacity building should be at the centre of the international community’s efforts in the promotion of human rights. Where national capacities do not exist, these should be built. Where they require reinforcement, that should be our endeavour. At all times distinction must be made between a country that is responsive and has durable and functioning democratic institutions, and one which is inherently repressive and which is unable, or unwilling, to improve human rights standards.

We welcome the signing of the agreement between the Government of Cambodia and the United Nations with regard to the Khmer Rouge trials and look forward to its implementation with the necessary financial and other support by the international community to the Extraordinary Chambers. This will be a major contribution in capacity-building to the efforts being made by the Government of Cambodia in the area of human rights.

My delegation believes that the role that national human rights institutions can play in promoting and protecting human rights is of seminal significance. Their independence and autonomous nature with genuine powers of investigation is essential. My delegation thanks the Office of
the High Commissioner for its efforts in the development and strengthening of national human rights institutions around the world. India will present its biennial resolution on ‘National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights’ this year and we look forward to the support of all delegations to this initiative.

The growing intrusiveness in the functioning of the UN mechanisms in areas that fall within the purview of States is a matter of increasing concern to us. Such a trend cannot be justified on the logic of national capacity building. The threat to the edifice of the human rights structure comes as much from such intrusiveness, as it comes from unchecked proliferation, overlapping, and duplication of mandates. This is a matter which deserves our collective attention on a priority basis, and we therefore welcome the Secretary General’s reform agenda. My delegation will remain fully engaged in this process.

Mr. Chairman,

Terrorism has emerged as a truly global threat – one that no country should consider itself isolated from. No cause, no religion, no ideology, no so-called struggle justifies terrorism. Terrorists do not live by any universal norms prescribed in international human rights instruments. Terrorism not only “devastates the human rights of those it targets” as the report of the Secretary General states; it also violates the most fundamental of all human rights, namely the right to life, of the victims. Terrorists, by instilling fear and the tactics of intimidation, infringe several other basic rights of innocent citizens.

The notion that human rights can be violated only by States is not only erroneous and misleading, but could be dangerous. Article 30 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states clearly that “Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein”. Ensuring the security of its people is the first responsibility of a Government. This is not to claim that either States or terrorists can be exonerated for violating human rights. The challenge lies in striking the right balance between the imperative of dealing with, and putting an end to, terrorism on the one hand, and adhering to international law and human rights standards, on the other. Terrorism must be crushed if the concept of human rights is to retain any meaning for the common man. It should be our collective endeavour to ensure that the human rights debate is not misused for the
pursuit of narrow political agendas, or to fulfil territorial ambitions as part of States with destructive foreign policy objectives. It is tempting and easy to travel down this path, but this is a path which is without an end.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate India’s firm and unwavering commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. As the largest democracy, we are committed to honour, uphold and cherish human rights, human dignity and fundamental freedoms. We appreciate the work and the commitment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in promoting and protecting human rights worldwide. We look forward to engaging constructively with other delegations in working for the promotion and protection of human rights.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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495. Statement made by Mrs. Mukta Tomar, Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of India at the UN at the 58th session of the UN General Assembly while introducing the biennial resolution on “National Institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights”.


INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman,

It is my privilege and honour to introduce on behalf of the co-sponsors draft resolution contained in document A/C.3/58/L.55 entitled “National Institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights” under agenda item 117(b). Apart from the co-sponsors listed in the document, I have the pleasure in informing the Committee that the following member States have joined as co-sponsors:

1. Ecuador
2. France
3. Honduras
Mr Chairman,

National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights have emerged over the years as an important and effective instrument to promote and protect human rights in an increasing number of countries in all regions of the world. Convinced of the significant role that national institutions can and do play in the promotion and protection of human rights, the General Assembly in its 48th session, welcomed the Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions. These “Principles”, also called the “Paris Principles,” provide the framework for the establishment of national institutions. Plurality, independence, freedom of operation and a broad-based mandate and powers to effectively protect and promote human rights are envisaged in these principles. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has offered assistance in the establishment or strengthening of national human rights institutions in some 30 countries, according to information contained in report A/58/36.

The draft resolution being presented today is a biennial one. It welcomes the rapidly growing interest throughout the world in the creation and strengthening of independent, pluralistic national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights; recognises that the United Nations has an important role to play in assisting the development of national institutions, and that its activities and programmes should be reinforced to meet the requests for assistance from States. The resolution also notes the valuable role played and contributions made by national institutions and the importance of their continued appropriate participation in UN meetings dealing with human rights.

In operative paragraph 2 and operative paragraph 3, the continued importance of the development of effective, independent and pluralistic national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, in keeping with the Paris Principles is reaffirmed and the value of further strengthening their application, where appropriate, is recognized.

The resolution also reflects the welcome development of the establishment of a website for national institutions as an important vehicle for the delivery of information relating to national institutions and for sharing best practices, and expresses appreciation for the additional resources
contributed by Governments for the purpose of the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions.

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to thank all co-sponsors and interested delegations for their support and contributions in the drafting of this resolution. It is the hope of the cosponsors that as in the past, this draft resolution will be adopted by this Committee without a vote.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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496. Explanation of vote by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative in the Third Committee on the draft resolution on “Universal realisation of the right of peoples to self-determination”.


Mr. Chairman,

The Indian delegation has sought the floor to express its position why it will cast a negative vote on draft resolution contained in document A/C.3/58/L.31.

India has listened very carefully, as we had done last year, to the statement made by the main sponsor while introducing the draft resolution titled “Universal realisation of the right of peoples to self-determination”. Some of the references made by Pakistan, on behalf of the co-sponsors, in this statement challenge the unity and territorial integrity of India.

We have also listened very carefully to the formal statement made by Pakistan in the Third Committee under Agenda Item 116 on the same subject on October 31, 2003. The statement was devoted entirely to questioning India’s territorial integrity. It clearly established that for Pakistan, the universal realisation of the right of peoples to self-determination was no more than a cover to pursue its own narrow agenda.

These references and statements are totally unacceptable to India. We do not regard the subject or the content of the draft resolution, as
amplified and interpreted by Pakistan, to have any relevance to the lofty principle it seeks to promote.

We are surprised to note that the main sponsor has invoked the two principal Covenants in support of the principle of self-determination when it has not acceded to either of them.

Self-determination is a right applicable to the peoples emerging from colonial rule. It does not and cannot extend to component parts of independent sovereign states. The draft resolution is selective and unbalanced as it does not contain language found in several Declarations and resolutions of the United Nations which deal with the right to self-determination in its entirety. It has been recognised clearly that the right of self-determination shall not be construed as authorising or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States conducting themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and thus possessed of a Government representing the whole people belonging to the territory without discrimination of any kind. It has also been recognised that any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of a State or country or at its political independence is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. The principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples enjoins that every State shall refrain from any action aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of any other State or country. This is reaffirmed in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, annexed to General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970 and the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

In today’s world self-determination implies the right of participation in freely-held elections by all sections of society. It implies the ability of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities to preserve their distinct identity while participating fully in all walks of national life and decision making. Its essence is democracy, equality, secularism and the rule of law. For Pakistan to earn the right to talk about self-determination, it must first ensure that the right is available to its own people. They have been deprived of this inalienable right by military rulers for most of Pakistan’s history.

India is fully committed to the universal realisation of the right of peoples to self-determination as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the international Covenants on human rights, as well as in
the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 of 14 December 1960. However, India will oppose any attempt at misusing this principle for undermining India’s territorial integrity.

India is also fully committed to supporting the Palestinian cause and is a cosponsor of the resolution on the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people. We find it insulting to see that the lead sponsor constantly attempts to denigrate the Palestinian cause by mixing it with its own territorial ambitions. For the reasons spelt out above, the draft resolution is unacceptable to India. We reject the ulterior use sought to be made of its content for the narrow agenda of its main sponsor. India therefore calls for a vote on the draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.31 and will vote against the draft resolution.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Mr. President,

My delegation welcomes the opportunity to participate in the debate on this item. We thank the Secretary General for his reports on matters relating to the Law of the Sea and Ocean Affairs.

The 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried
out. My delegation attaches the highest importance to the strengthening and effective functioning of the institutions established under the Convention. Given the geography of India, with a coast line extending four thousand miles and with 1300 islands, we have a traditional and abiding interest in maritime and ocean affairs. The large population in our coastal areas and in the islands has always looked to the sea for sustenance.

Mr. President,

We are happy to note that the number of States Parties to the Convention has risen to 145, including the European Community. Over the years, the Convention has gained greater acceptance even from the non-Parties, advancing steadily towards its universal recognition and adhesion. We are happy to inform the General Assembly of India’s depositing the Instrument of Accession to the 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement on August 19 this year. We welcome the announcement of the European Community of its intention to deposit the Instrument of Accession soon.

Mr. President,

It is a matter of deep satisfaction that all the subsidiary institutions under the Convention, namely the International Sea-bed Authority, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the Commission for Limits of the Continental Shelf have made considerable progress in their respective fields of activity. We are working closely with all these institutions. We have invested heavily in the exploration of minerals in the deep sea bed. We continue to incur considerable expenditure for collection of data as a primary investor and now as a Contractor. The International Sea-bed Authority is considering the Annual Reports of Contractors, the development of a legal regime for prospecting and exploration of polymetallic sulphides and cobalt-rich crusts, the role of the Authority in the conservation of biodiversity in the Area, activities relating to marine scientific research and the central data repository of the Authority. The proposal of the Authority to establish a geological model for the nodule province of the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone is a welcome move. However, the need for preparation of similar models for other zones cannot be over-emphasised.

Mr. President,

We welcome the progress made by the Commission in the last session, especially its decision to include in its recommendations on a claim submitted by a State, an executive summary containing a general
description of the extended continental shelf as well as a set of coordinates and illustrative charts, as appropriate, to identify the line describing the outer limits recommended by the Commission. The executive summary would, in our view, provide useful information on the practical application of the Convention, assist other States in preparing their claims for submissions and would lead to a uniform application and interpretation of the relevant provisions of the Convention. We believe that capacity-building of developing States to assist them in acquiring knowledge and skills in regard to their preparation and submission on the outer limits of the continental shelf is vital to the effective implementation of the Convention. States which have expertise in the delineation of outer limits of continental shelf could extend cooperation in providing assistance to developing States which are in the process of preparing submissions to the Commission. India, has the requisite expertise on the assessment and mapping of the continental shelf, and is willing to extend cooperation in training developing countries for this purpose. We also welcome in this context the efforts of Division of the Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea in bringing out a training manual to assist States develop the requisite knowledge and skills in their preparation of submissions in respect of the outer limits of the continental shelf.

Mr. President,

Since the last report of the Secretary General on this agenda item, the international community has continued to focus on issues relating to navigation, conservation and management of living marine resources and coastal biodiversity, protection of marine environment and international coordination and cooperation. In the area of navigation, we would like to express our serious concern with the increase in the incidents of crimes at sea, more particularly the 37% increase in the number of reported incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships world-wide in the first six months of 2003 compared to the corresponding period in 2002. Rising incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea have been highlighted in the Secretary-General’s report. In this regard, regional co-operation to combat piracy becomes important. In the Asia Pacific region, India has been actively involved in the ongoing efforts initiated by Japan to establish a regional cooperation agreement on anti-piracy along with 15 other States of the region.

Mr. President,

We believe that Prevention and Suppression of acts of terrorism against shipping are very important aspects in dealing with crimes at sea.
We welcome the decision of the International Maritime Organisation to include new offences against security of navigation, in addition to the existing offences already covered under 1988 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Contention) and its Protocol. We also support in principle the inclusion of new interdictory measures which would authorise a State party other than the flag State to take enforcement action with respect to a vessel that it has reasonable grounds to suspect is involved in, or the target of, a commission of an offence under the SUA Convention.

Mr. President,

It is a matter of grave concern that in less than 50 years, industrial fishing fleets have managed to wipe out 9/10ths of the world’s biggest and most economically important species of fishes. The efforts that have taken to improve the conservation and management of world’s fisheries have been confronted by the increase in illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing activities (IUU fishing) on the high seas in contravention of all measures for conservation and management adopted by regional fishery organisations and arrangements, and in areas under national jurisdiction in violation of the sovereign rights of coastal States to conserve and manage their marine living resources. We believe that the effective implementation of the International Plan of Action of the Food and Agricultural Organisation to prevent, deter, and eliminate IUU fishing at the international level would help in reversing the trend in many areas and will guarantee the enforcement of the rights of developing coastal States. We fully endorse the approach approved by the World Summit on Sustainable Development which emphasised the need for enabling the developing countries to develop national, regional and sub-regional capacities for infrastructure and integrated management and the sustainable use of fisheries. We are also in full agreement that the displacement of fishing fleet from areas under the national jurisdiction of developed member States to fisheries located in developing countries gives rise to a significant problem that encourages the expansion of IUU fishing with negative implications for global fisheries. Enhanced cooperation among all concerned States for appropriate enforcement of agreed conservation measures, including cooperation through the regional agency of coastal States, in enforcing compliance against the vessels originating beyond the region would be more effective in eliminating the IUU fishing.
Mr. President,

The Secretary General’s report on the section dealing with the protection and preservation of marine environment has been fairly comprehensive. Marine environment today is increasingly degraded by pollution from sewage, persistent organic pollutants, radioactive substances, heavy metals, oils and litter. This has negative implications on human health, poverty alleviation, food security and safety. The problem is aggravated further by pollution from vessels and oil spills.

In this context, the fourth session of the informal consultative process was very useful in deepening the understanding on protection of vulnerable marine co-systems and the utility of hydrographic surveys and nautical charts facilitating the safety of navigation and life at sea and environmental protection, including vulnerable marine eco-systems.

Yet another area of focus in the consultative process was the biodiversity of open oceans beyond national jurisdiction. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice of the Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Legal and Technical Commission of International Seabed Authority have also examined this issue to the extent that it falls within their competence. However, we believe that any legal mechanism contemplated to counter the threats to biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction needs to be approached very cautiously so as not to upset the delicate balance of international rights and obligations in areas outside national jurisdiction.

Mr. President,

Coordination and cooperation at the international level remain critical prerequisites for effective governance of the world’s oceans and seas. Establishment of a regular process under the United Nations for global reporting and assessment of the state of marine environment is most significant in this regard. However, this process has to be built upon existing assessments, by avoiding duplication, as the funding requirements for the process could be quite considerable. My delegation looks forward to see that the process results in a regular and coherent overview of the marine environment, particularly in the areas where there is currently a lack of information.

Thank you, Mr. President.
498. Explanation of vote by A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative in the Third Committee on the draft resolution entitled ‘Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism’.


Mr. Chairman,

My delegation has sought the floor to explain our vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.3/58/L.71 as revised. At the outset, we would like to express our appreciation to the delegation of Mexico for taking the initiative again this year on the subject, and would like to recall the flexibility shown by them last year which had led to adoption of the resolution without a vote.

We find that the changes introduced in this year’s text seek to take it away from the consensus that we all subscribed to in the resolution adopted last year, thus making it difficult for us to go along with the text.

For example, we do not find an adequate reflection of the idea that terrorism in many cases poses a severe challenge to democracy, civil society and the rule of law. There is also no reference to the gross violations of human rights perpetrated by the terrorists and their actions, in particular the negation of the most fundamental of human rights, namely the right to life. In this connection, we recall Article 30 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein; in other words, terrorist groups could be held liable for gross violations of human rights. In this sense, the draft resolution is selective and incomplete.

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to reaffirm India’s commitment to fully respect human rights while combating terrorism. This has been reiterated at the highest levels of our government.

Mr. Chairman,

Turning now to the specific ideas contained in operative paragraphs 10 & 11, we find that operative paragraph 9 already mandates the UN
High Commissioner for Human Rights to examine the question of the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while counter terrorism, to make general recommendations concerning the obligations of States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms while taking actions to counter terrorism and to provide assistance and advice to States upon their request in this regard.

The High Commissioner is therefore already seized of the gravity of the matter, and we look forward to the continuing work of the High Commissioner in this direction. The above three functions of examination, recommending, and assisting are comprehensive and adequate. The call in OP 10 is subsumed in what the High Commissioner has been asked to do in OP 9. The mandate to him has to be general enough so as to give him the needed flexibility to use his resources optimally.

More notably, the High Commissioner was mandated to perform the above-mentioned tasks only in General Assembly Resolution 57/219. We do not see any indication in his first report to this General Assembly which leads the General Assembly in the direction of asking for yet another specific study so soon in OP 10. Furthermore, the High Commissioner’s study is yet to be considered in the Commission on Human Rights [CHR]. It is necessary for the CHR to first fully consider the entire issue. The General Assembly could thereafter look at it.

The resolution ignores the work being done already by the Special Rapporteur on Terrorism and Human Rights of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of human rights, and the decision in its resolution 2003/15 to further study the compatibility of counter-terrorism measures with international human rights standards. In the first instance, this study requires the support of the High Commissioner before he is mandated to undertake a new study in the same area. Second, the Sub-Commission study should be presented for consideration to States, at the CHR. If, based on this study, the need is felt for a further study, we have no doubt that states will respond appropriately.

Further, the financial implications of the proposed study have not been established, especially when the OHCHR is faced with serious resource constraints, and is heavily dependent on voluntary contributions, even for its core activities. In our view, the most important activity of the Office must be the provision of technical cooperation and advisory services to requesting States. Moreover, national capacity-building should be at the forefront of the OHCHR’s efforts, and nothing should be done which diverts its resources from what should be its highest priority.
With regard to OP 11, we have not been given any convincing reason or argument by the co-sponsors for an accelerated time-frame for consideration of the proposed study by the CHR at its 60th session, which is less than 4 months away. In our view, this is not practical or feasible. Moreover, the CHR is yet to receive the first report of the High Commissioner mandated by its resolution in the 59th session. OP 11 has the effect of marginalising and bypassing the CHR which should be the first body to which the High Commissioner should report, and creating new precedents on procedure which we cannot subscribe to.

Keeping in view the above-mentioned factors and the fact that the cosponsors have not been able to meet our concerns, and agree on a step-by-step way ahead which is line with existing UN practice and precedent, we are compelled to call for a vote on OP 10 and 11. India will vote against these paragraphs and abstain on the vote on the resolution as a whole.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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499. Statement by Aneil Mathrani, Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Agenda Item 38: Question of Palestine at the 58th Regular Session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. President,

As we honour the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, we would like to reiterate our traditional solidarity with the people of Palestine and express India’s principled and continuing support for their inalienable rights. India’s bond of friendship with the Palestinian people is resolute and unchangeable and based on a rich and diverse interaction spanning over decades.

Mr. President,

The situation regarding the question of Palestine, continues to remain a matter of abiding and profound concern for us and the international
community. Earlier this year, there was a possibility of a turning point with the launching of the Road Map. The agreement signed in June 2003 between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian National Authority on the withdrawal of Israeli forces from parts of the Gaza strip and Bethlehem and the declaration of a ceasefire by various Palestinian groups, raised expectations in this direction. The renewed upsurge of violence since August 2003 has, derailed this process. And, as such, the implementation of the Road Map is frozen and some steps have, in fact, reversed the political process.

We have had occasion to express our views in some detail in the Security Council in September this year and later on the occasion of the Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly in October. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to adding to our previous remarks.

We continue to be deeply dismayed and gravely concerned over the spiral of violence, revenge and escalation of tensions witnessed in the region. The number of casualties speaks for itself. Since September 2000, more than 2800 Palestinians and more than 800 Israelis have been killed. Thousands have been injured. Behind each and every one of these numbers are stories of human loss and suffering. Some of the recent actions by the Government of Israel – including military strikes using disproportionate force, targetted assassinations, the construction of a separation wall, demolition of homes and the expansion of settlements – have been particularly responsible for the grave situation. Bombs have been set off in cafes and restaurants and attacks have been carried out against public transport, including schools and buses, creating a climate of fear and constant watchfulness. The result is a peace process in shambles.

India strongly condemns all acts of terrorism and violence and reiterates its position that there can be no justification whatsoever for attacks against unarmed civilians, women and children. Only an immediate and complete cessation of violence, including all acts of terrorism, provocation, incitement and destruction, can provide the environment conducive to a continuation of a dialogue.

These setbacks in the quest for peace are not without their deleterious effect on the humanitarian conditions in the occupied territories. According to a World Bank report published in May 2003, 92,000 Palestinians have lost their job in Israel and the Israeli settlements while another 105,000 jobs have been lost in the occupied Palestinian territory.
The real per capita income fell by 46 per cent and total investment declined by approximately 90 per cent during the same period. As a result, 60 per cent of the Palestinian population is living below the poverty line.

It is unfortunate that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has become a victim or target of the continuing hostilities. Six UNRWA staff members were killed during the past year. The environment in which the Agency has to carry out its operations continues to affect negatively its ability to deliver services. Closures and blockades need to be lifted, unhindered access allowed to humanitarian supplies and finances released to the Palestinian authority for alleviating the grave situation and averting further crises.

Continued Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands including the construction of a wall serve to further exacerbate an already aggravated situation. The erection of the wall is a unilateral act not in keeping with the Road Map. Its building would involve the separation of Palestinians from their lands and from each other. Such action cannot be justified and must be halted. More important, Israel’s insistence in continuing with its construction would be widely interpreted as an attempt to pre-determine the outcome of any final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian authority on the basis of the principle of “land for peace” as called for by relevant Security Council resolutions.

Mr. President,

India is convinced that the key to achieving a lasting, just and peaceful settlement of the conflict and a comprehensive peace in the region lies in speedy implementation and in good faith by all sides, of the Quartet’s Road Map, which contains clear time-lines for the establishment of an independent and viable Palestinian state, living side by side with Israel within secure and recognized borders. We welcome the recent adoption of Security Council Resolution 1515 which contains a reiteration of those principles. We are also encouraged to read reports that renewed peace negotiations may be possible. With the requisite will and determination and strong commitment to establishing durable peace, we hope that diplomacy and statesmanship shall prevail.

Thank you, Mr. President.
Mr. President,

It has been over three years since the current phase of unrest and violence in the Middle East began. Since then, almost 4000 Israelis and Palestinians have lost their lives in the raging conflict to which most have not been party. Many others have been wounded or have lost their livelihoods and economic sustenance. The volatile situation has greatly exacerbated tensions in the region and elsewhere, contributing to a general sense of insecurity worldwide.

India has advocated, along with the rest of the international community, the need for both the Israeli and Palestinian sides to eschew violence and work towards a negotiated political settlement to the conflict. We have pointed out that the longer the conflict endures and the more intractable positions become, the harder it would be for the sides to reach a just, comprehensive and lasting solution.

The promises of a new start to a peace initiative launched at the Sharm-el-Sheikh Summit in June 2003 were all too quickly extinguished by the actions of vested interests against any move towards peace in the Middle East. As a result, since last August, the situation has been characterised by a dangerous spiral of violence and retribution.

In a recent briefing to the Security Council, Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs Mr. Kieran Prendergast pointed out that the peace process could not be allowed to remain stalled as in “such a dangerous environment, continued inertia could be deadly”. Indeed, the absence of any political dialogue or initiative by the international community to restore the two sides towards a political process has been a matter of considerable concern.

Fortunately, the relative calm in the region over the past month-and-a-half, as well as the prospects of a meeting between the Prime Ministers of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, have given rise to some optimism. The Secretary General, in his address on the International Day of Solidarity with Palestinians has referred to these positive indications as
“tender shoots” that “must be nourished”. However small the opening, the international community must urge the parties to exploit it for the sake of their peoples and for posterity.

The recent adoption of Security Council resolution 1515 endorsing the “Quartet Performance-based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict” is a step in the right direction. The Quartet must, with the backing of other concerned parties move quickly to capitalise on the positive dynamics created by this period of relative calm. We hope that it will be helped in this effort by the positive environment created by the election of the new Palestinian Prime Minister and the gathering momentum of public support for the resumption of a political process.

India supports the Quartet roadmap as the only viable process that can promote a peaceful solution of the conflict. We call upon the parties to fulfill their obligations under the Roadmap. The Palestinian Authority is required to give concrete content to its declared intent of establishing law and order, controlling violence and combating terrorism. Israel, on its part, should take immediate steps to build confidence by easing closures, removing settlement outposts, freezing settlement activity and halting the construction of the separation wall.

The Secretary General, in his report, has referred to the construction of this barrier on occupied Palestinian land as “a deeply counter-productive act”. He has drawn attention to the fact that in places the wall deviates more than 7.5 kilometers, and in its planned route by up to 22 kilometers, from the “green line” to incorporate Israeli settlements while encircling Palestinian areas.

India has stated before in this Assembly that while we fully understand the legitimate right of all States to exercise self-defence, Israel’s decision to construct such a wall in the occupied territories cannot be justified and must be reviewed. Not only would this cause “socio-economic harm” to the Palestinian people, but it is likely to “impair future negotiations”. The construction of the wall must not become an attempt to pre-determine the outcome of any final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. It must not impact adversely on the principle of “land for peace” called for in Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

While saying this, India strongly condemns all acts of terrorism and violence. There can be no justification whatsoever for terrorism. Where
these terrorist attacks are directed against unarmed civilians, women and children, what the Secretary General has referred to as acts of “wanton and deliberate terrorism”, they become all the more reprehensible and detract altogether from the cause they purport to serve.

Admittedly the situation is far from promising but we must not give in to despair or desperation. The need of the hour is for the international community to re-engage its attention upon the situation in the Middle East with the clear focus of implementing in the nearest future the vision of two States living side by side within secure and recognised borders as envisioned in resolution 1397.

Mr. President,

A comprehensive solution to the Middle East must necessarily include the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Unfortunately, reports of the situation along the “Blue Line” are not very encouraging. The UN’s last open briefing to the Security Council drew attention to the continuing tense situation marked by “events that raise serious concern”. Each side has continued to violate the Blue Line, whether by air or land. UNIFIL has played a sterling role in separating the parties. However, a lasting solution can only be the result of a consciously undertaken political process. We hope the overall situation will allow such an initiative to be taken soon.

Thank you, Mr. President.
501. Statement by Minister of State Digvijay Singh and member of the Indian delegation to the UN on Item 48: Fifty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Item 117 (d): Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action: Tenth Anniversary of the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action at the 58th session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. President,

My delegation is pleased to participate in the debate in plenary in observance of the 55th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. At the outset, we would like to pay our homage to the memory of the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the late Sergio Viera De Mello.

The Universal Declaration proclaims that human rights are rights inherent to man and are universal. Their universality presumes the universal brotherhood of humankind. The Declaration establishes a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations. It sets the highest standards by asserting that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

As a newly independent country, India was one of the few developing countries to participate actively in the drafting of the Universal Declaration. As India’s delegate, the social worker Dr. Hansa Mehta, a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, contributed substantially to the drafting of the Declaration, in particular in areas that deal with gender equality. The Universal Declaration served subsequently as a standard in the drafting of the chapters on fundamental rights in India’s Constitution.

Mr. President,

The present debate provides us an opportunity to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and in living up to the ideals contained in the Universal Declaration. The Universal Declaration has evolved into international law
through the elaboration of the two principal Covenants and the establishment of the human rights treaty bodies. The various Declarations and Conventions adopted over the past five decades have marked further normative elaborations of the specific elements of the Universal Declaration. The consensus at the conclusion of the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993 signalled the development of the Universal Declaration in a programmatic, action-oriented manner. In many respects, the Vienna Declaration and the Programme of Action marked the broadest political consensus achieved in the area of human rights by the international community after the adoption of the Universal Declaration.

The recognition in the Vienna Declaration that democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing values provides the foundation for a genuinely holistic conception of human rights. The purpose of all development is to promote individual human rights and social justice, or in the words of the Charter, “promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom”. Development without democracy, social justice and respect for human rights can be neither lasting nor sustainable.

Article 22 of the Universal Declaration speaks of “national effort and international cooperation” for everyone to enjoy “economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and free development of his personality”. We feel that this is the area where the Declaration has been the most wanting in implementation and where the greatest challenges lie. It would be useful perhaps to analyse why this is so. Prescriptiveness comes easier and is less expensive than engagement. Only a universalisation of basic economic dignity can provide the foundation for any shared vision of universal human rights. It would be difficult to achieve universal observance of human rights among societies differentiated by gradations of affluence and want, surplus and despair.

The advocacy of human rights has been based upon an exaggerated dependence on the aspects of promotion and protection rather than enjoyment of rights. There has been a tendency to insist that all that is needed is to set in place a framework of laws. At the international level, this has meant an ever-increasing body of conventions, protocols and other legal instruments. Unfortunately, this approach does not address the question of how individuals acquire and enjoy basic human rights. It also differentiates between the civil and political rights on the one hand
and economic, social and cultural rights on the other, placing the former on a higher pedestal than the latter.

Another challenge facing us today is the need to move away from selectivity, double-standards and partial approaches. We need to engage in an honest, self-critical appraisal of whether the international community has managed to effect genuine improvement in human rights through an approach characterised by the giving away of ‘report cards’ or by intrusive monitoring. Have countries been persuaded to improve their record of human rights simply because resolutions against them have been adopted year after year in Commission on Human Rights or in the General Assembly, often on political or non-human rights considerations? On the other hand, would not an approach based on dialogue, consultation and cooperation have a better chance of success, if success were to be judged by genuine improvement in the enjoyment of human rights by people of a country? We are convinced of the essential validity of the latter approach.

It is in this context that India stresses the importance that needs to be attached to national capacity-building in the area of human rights. The Office of the High Commissioner can play a highly supportive role in this regard. Technical cooperation programmes by that Office could cover a broad range of activities from assistance in acceding to international human rights instruments and amendment of national legislation and putting in place a framework of administrative regulations and machinery for the purpose. Assistance can also be rendered for the establishment of national human rights institutions. Member States that have established such national institutions in accordance with the Paris principles could render technical assistance to fellow developing countries desirous of setting up their own national institutions.

**Mr. President,**

The Vienna Declaration calls on the international community to take the necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy threatening territorial integrity, security of states and destabilising legitimately constituted governments. Unfortunately, an understanding of the linkage between countering terrorism and promoting human rights remains mired in suspicion and misunderstanding. Terrorism constitutes, at the very least, a violation of Articles 3, [on the right to life] 19, [on freedom of opinion and expression] and 29 & 30 [on the duties of individuals and the rights of others] of the Universal Declaration. It
challenges the principle of freedom from fear. As a violent expression of extremism, it represents a negation of every liberal value that sustains the concept of human rights. It is an invasion of the rights of others and denial of human rights to its victims. A selective response to terrorism is itself a challenge to the universality of human rights.

Mr. President,

At this meeting, we feel it is also important to underscore the role played by civil society, particularly non-governmental organisations, in the promotion and protection of human rights. National NGOs can play a crucial role in the protection and promotion of human rights within a country. Along with a vigilant media, they perform invaluable ‘watchdog’ functions.

Recognizably, the United Nations system occupies a significant place in the Vienna Programme of Action. Apart from the very useful role played by the Office of the High Commissioner, other component elements of the UN system can and should contribute to the practical enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights as well as the right to development. Once again we would stress that it is important to ensure that the UN is not perceived as promoting a partial conception of human rights, namely one modelled purely on civil and political rights.

Mr. President,

Let us re-dedicate ourselves on this occasion to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. Let us also renew our commitment to live up to the ideals of the Universal Declaration.

Thank you, Mr. President.
Mr. President

It is a great privilege to address this distinguished Assembly. On behalf of the Government of India, I compliment His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Benaissa, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for taking the initiative to organize this very important Conference. We had, in the Havana Summit, reaffirmed our commitment to address emerging challenges in the light of the rapidly changing world economic situation. This Conference provides us an opportune forum for discussing economic and technical cooperation among ourselves as well as our common agenda on North-South issues.

The thrust towards globalization and liberalization is one which we must necessarily contend with. We believe that globalization can, and must, benefit both developed and developing countries. So far, the processes of globalization have not been seen, at least by a large number of developing countries, as benefiting them. It has posed many challenges, but offered few opportunities for them. This has to change if the inevitability of globalization is to be accompanied by its widespread acceptability. Therefore, it must better reflect the interests of the South. Developing countries need to have their own agenda which they can carry into multilateral processes with a view to influencing negotiations and arriving at results which are beneficial for the South.

It is clear that developing countries can be the beneficiaries of an open and rule based trading system, if their interests are reflected in both the tempo and direction of trade liberalization. We recognize that there is no automatic convergence of interests of the South on all trading issues and at all times. It is, nevertheless, important for developing countries to reconcile conflicts of interests between themselves and to coordinate their positions so that they can present a united front.

India and other developing countries went to Cancun with a positive agenda, determined to ensure a positive outcome that would benefit all WTO members. We were disappointed when consensus could not be achieved. On the positive side, however, we note that Cancun
demonstrated not only our determination but also our ability to work together to pursue our common goals. We hope to continue working with other developing countries to obtain an outcome which would be acceptable to all WTO members.

The issue of agriculture is one which is important to all developing countries, because hundreds of millions of people in the developing world depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The economic, social and even political implications of the agricultural trading regime make this issue central for all of us.

We must also continue with our focus on enhancing trade and investment within the South itself. South-South trade has shown greater dynamism than the trade between the North and the South. Similarly, significant potential exists for enhanced investment from the South to the South. Those within the G-77 with more advanced financial, technical, and human resource capabilities should be willing to assist the other members of the Group. This would, we have no doubt, also be mutually beneficial.

The agenda of developing countries, forged in earlier years, had focused on the need for concessional capital flows from both bilateral and multilateral sources. There is now an attempt to focus on the role of private actors and on reliance on market forces. However, for many developing countries, particularly those at very low levels of development, the gap between investment required to accelerate development and resources generated internally is a crucial issue. Also, many developing countries, because of limits on credit worthiness and other factors, are often not in a position to access private capital markets. At the same time, investment must also meet the development priorities of recipient countries, instead of only focusing on the bottom-line of the investors. Thus, it is clear to us that ODA needs to retain its important place on the agenda of the South.

In our view, the relative efficacy of multilateral agencies in the development process is clear. Besides enhanced country ownership, development cooperation channelized through multilateral mechanisms results in more rational allocation of resources to priority sectors than any other form of development assistance. We have, over the last year, effected a change in our approach to ODA. We have benefited from ODA and appreciate the assistance of our partners. But our needs have changed. We now accept such assistance only from multilateral agencies
and a handful of bilateral sources. We hope that the resources so released would be redirected to countries with greater and more urgent need.

We have long recognized the need to end the marginalization of developing countries in the policy and decision making processes of multilateral financial institutions. This need acquires special importance and urgency in the globalizing world of growing linkages. Long term global economic stability can only be assured if all countries feel they have a voice and a stake in the system. It is our belief that the reform of the international financial architecture can only be achieved through structural change in the IFIs which is compatible with global economic changes and the increased role and importance of developing countries.

The future is widely, and rightly, portrayed as belonging to a ‘knowledge society’. This is a major new development of far-reaching importance which we need to take into account while further developing the agenda of the South. This is particularly so, given current and projected demographic trends which provide the South with a comparative advantage. Perhaps, this provides us with an opportunity to leapfrog over the various technological revolutions that have historically left us behind.

Knowledge, we know, can flow more easily from one developing country to another. This need not, however, be restricted to the so-called ‘appropriate technology’. It can also cover applications of cutting-edge technology to resolve stubborn problems and impediments to development. Our own experience embraces both possibilities.

One particular area of science and technology in which several developing countries have built up world class expertise is Information Technology. We are happy to share our knowledge and experience with other developing countries. We believe that by doing so, we reaffirm our solidarity with the South. As part of our cooperation programme, we have also set up a small number of Centres of Excellence for Information and Communication Technology in other countries. We remain committed to assisting with the human resource development of other developing countries in ICT and other fields.

Sharing with other developing countries our capabilities and cooperating with them in developing their own economies, has been an integral part of India’s foreign policy since its very inception. We have done so even before the concepts of South-South cooperation and TCDC became fashionable. It has, for us, always been a moral and political imperative.
We spend every year about US$ 200 million on technical and economic cooperation. Our programmes cover 154 countries. While the bulk of our resources are spent, naturally, on infrastructure development projects in immediate neighbouring countries like Bhutan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Myanmar and Bangladesh, increasing emphasis is being given to other countries in Asia, including, in particular, the economies of transition of Central Asia, and the CLMV group of countries in South-East Asia. This is in addition to the traditional cooperation that we have had with the countries of Africa and Latin America.

India also extends significant amounts of concessional loans and grants to other developing countries. Between 1998 and 2002, India extended lines of credit of over US$ 350 million to other developing countries. We have, at the same time, participated in the HIPC Initiative and cancelled all bilateral debt owed to us.

We are willing to do more. Our commitment to NEPAD, totaling US$ 200 million, bears this out. We have also, together with Brazil and South Africa, launched an initiative to replicate in other countries of the developing world our success stories in the areas of agriculture, education, health and sanitation.

The need for unity among developing countries is as strong now as it has ever been. The fact that our group is large and its members have differentiated interests should does not dilute the need for maintaining and advancing a common agenda. We look forward to working together with other developing countries for a shared future of enhanced prosperity and well-being.
Mr. President,

My delegation has sought the floor to make a general statement after the adoption of the resolution contained in document A/58/L.52 entitled “Promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and co-operation” under agenda item 44: Culture of peace.

My delegation has gone along with the adoption of the resolution without a vote in spite of the shortcomings and deficiencies perceived by us in the text. We would like to refer to them briefly.

When the idea was first proposed in the 57th session, we had been told that this was ‘as a first step’ in the collective fight of the international community against global terrorism. It is unfortunate that the sponsors refused to include in the text any reference to the global combat against terrorism.

The resolution does not lay adequate emphasis, in our view, on the need to promote actively ideas of tolerance, pluralism and respect for diversity.

The resolution falls seriously short in dealing with the question of promoting educational policies and programmes, teaching methods and curricula that discourage ideologies of extremism, intolerance and violence, and actively promote values of non-discrimination, diversity, tolerance, pluralism, understanding and respect for each other’s religion, faith and belief.

In India’s view, the resolution does not address itself adequately to the need for strengthening democracy and democratic institutions as one of the most effective means of promoting religious and cultural understanding. Effective democratic institutions which are fully participatory will help avoid marginalisation and exclusion of, and discrimination against, specific sections of society.

It is regrettable that the sponsors did not incorporate these issues
in the resolution, notwithstanding the fact that language from Declarations and resolutions in the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and UNESCO exists and was made available to them.

Thank you, Mr. President.
INDIA’S FOREIGN RELATIONS - 2003
Section - XIII
DISARMAMENT
Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of my delegation, allow me to congratulate you on your election to chair this Substantive Session of the UNDC in 2003. The experience and expertise that you bring to this forum would indeed be valuable for our deliberations. I assure you, and the Chairpersons of the two Working Groups the constructive cooperation of my delegation in seeking a fruitful outcome during this Session.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs, for the initiatives and energy that he brought to multilateral disarmament work over the past five years.

It is rather unfortunate that for reasons of logistics the UNDC was unable to hold a session during 2002 to conclude the three-year cycle of work commenced in 2000. We are thus meeting now, at a time when the international security environment is under greater strain due to recent developments. The ongoing war in Iraq has called into question many assumptions that the international community used to take for granted, challenging the very Charter and the will of the United Nations. In these troubled times, some would express doubts about what the UNDC can really achieve or contribute in terms of pursuing peace and undiminished security for all. To my delegation there is no doubt that UNDC has to demonstrate, particularly at this time, the pressing need for the world to act collectively and multilaterally, through a truly representative and universal forum to address issues of peace and security that concern us all. We need to look beyond the “coalitions of the willing” to address the problems that confront us, and re-establish the sanctity and credibility of norms that we can all collectively agree upon.

The subjects that we are dealing with: “Ways and Means to Achieve Nuclear Disarmament” and “Practical CBMs in the Field of Conventional Arms” take on a greater sense of urgency and relevance in the current situation. It is important therefore, that we are able to conclude our work at this session with a spirit of mutual accommodation and cooperation.
Ways and Means to Achieve Nuclear Disarmament

During the past sessions we have reiterated India’s resolve to remain committed to global nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified frame work of time.

The end of the Cold War had provided the opportunity to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons but we saw instead that most of the world acquiesced in the maneuvers to perpetuate for ever the right of a handful of nations to retain their arsenals. The so called “unequivocal undertakings” offered since then have proved to be part of an elaborate exercise in equivocation. The search for unilateral advantage has lead to measures that undermine the principle of irreversibility of committed reductions. There is no move towards collective renouncing of “first – use”. Instead there are prospects of advocacy of preemptive use and a move towards developing new types of arsenals justified by new rationales. One also discerns a tendency to go back on commitments given regarding negative security assurances. The discriminatory non-proliferation regime is displaying cracks caused by its inherent flaws and seems destined to be confronted with threats to its very existence. All these developments, combined with the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament do not bode well for the prospects of early nuclear disarmament. The UNDC cannot afford to allow the drift to continue and needs to lay down a road map that indicates clearly the direction that all of us should take to remain true to the objective of eventual nuclear disarmament.

At the 2001 Session, India presented a Working Paper contained in document A/CN.10/2001/WG.1/WP.3 which listed specific measures that will help us achieve our objective. We are glad to note that some of the elements contained in our Working Paper have been reflected in the revised paper presented by the Working Group Chairman for our consideration this year. While commending this effort, let me reiterate that UNDC should frame its recommendations and report in such a manner that the measures contained therein will be applicable universally and not merely to States parties to specific treaties or particular groups of some like minded countries. My delegation will be making appropriate suggestions in the coming days to ensure that a report of this forum truly reflects the universal character of the UNDC.

Practical CBMs in the Field of Conventional Arms

Mr. Chairman,

As an initiator of CBMs in our own neighbourhood, India recognizes
the usefulness of such measures in the field of conventional weapons for maintaining international peace and security. We also believe that it will be convenient to have a set of guidelines (which already exist) and examples in an easily available form, which can be drawn upon by interested parties, who do so voluntarily while adapting it to their particular set of circumstances, as appropriate.

There also exist significant multilateral arrangements in the field of conventional arms and promoting adherence to these is a CBM. India plays an active role in the CCW process, having ratified all its Protocols including the Amended Protocol II. We are also engaged in implementing the Programme of Action agreed upon at the International Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons, and look forward to the first biennial conference to be held in New York in July this year. Ratification of the CCW Protocols by more countries and effective implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons would improve trust and confidence.

While considering a list of possible ‘measures’, it is important not to loose sight of the fact that building confidence between countries is a process in which considerable time and effort has to be invested. The transparency and predictability inherent in specific measures need to be sustained over a considerable period in a manner that generates confidence in the sincerity of intentions of concerned parties. The effectiveness of unilateral, bilateral, regional or multilateral measures can eventually be measured only in terms of the sincerity of intentions that they collectively convey.

The revised paper presented by the Working Group Chairperson provides a sound basis for useful work to be concluded at this Session.

Mr. Chairman,

At a time when the very concept of multilateralism in the context of disarmament is under threat, UNDC will naturally be buffeted by pulls and pressures from different sides. However, this institution cannot afford to succumb to such attempts. Our efforts should be to conclude the work we have undertaken for the current three year-cycle, thus making an important contribution to international peace and security. You will not find my delegation lacking in the spirit of cooperation and accommodation required for completing our task.
Mr. Chairman,

1. Allow me to extend our congratulations on your election to the Chairmanship of the First Committee. The Indian delegation assures you of its full cooperation in the fulfillment of your responsibilities. I would also like to recall how ably Uganda chaired the deliberations of this Committee last year. We welcome the new under secretary general for disarmament, Ambassador Abe and wish him a successful term. May I take this opportunity to convey to the distinguished representative of China and through him to the people of China felicitations for their manned space-flight.

2. The present session of the First Committee is the occasion to reflect on serious challenges to international security and an abiding sense of crisis in the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. The manifestations of this crisis are numerous – a security anomic resulting from no viable paradigm replacing that of the cold war years; the threat posed by terrorism, assuming even more menacing dimensions including possible linkages with WMD; unviable or failed States emerging as havens of training and transit for international terror networks; renewed quest for new armaments; and a hardening pre-disposition to use force, alongside a heightened perception of threats faced by States to their security interests.

3. It is a commentary on our times that the feeling of insecurity has not spared the powerful; nor have the weak and vulnerable escaped its all-pervasive embrace. While in each case, the sources of insecurity may be different, the net result is what we are witnessing today- an international system ripe with suspicion and fear, not just of State versus State, but more ominously the threat posed by non-state actors having access to technologies, perhaps beyond the reach of many States themselves.

4. These factors have placed an enormous strain on existing multilateral structures and institutions. How tenable are the
templates of conduct of interstate relations without due regard to the principles of multilateralism as enshrined in the UN Charter? More importantly, the spirit of genuine multilateralism, which for the weak and the dispossessed could provide insurance and draw on their support for, and stakes in, a strengthened international order, has taken a beating. It is our earnest expectation that the behavior of States, when underpinned by respect for international law, will also provide the rationale and incentive for making forward movement on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

5. **Mr. Chairman**, it is relevant to recall in the context of First Committee’s work the only consensus document adopted by the international community as a whole, namely, the Final Document of SSODI on its 25th anniversary. Its Program of Action is of continuing validity, but has remained only partially implemented. In fact in the priority field of nuclear disarmament, progress has been limited, both in numbers and confined to the two biggest possessors of nuclear weapons.

6. Since the end of the cold war, military power, reinforced with nuclear weapons has remained a critical arbiter and shaper of global power equations - a fact-of-life that compelled us to exercise the nuclear weapons option so as to harmonise our security interests with the prevailing environment. In fashioning our nuclear doctrine, one of minimum credible deterrence, we have nonetheless demonstrated a defensive posture, restraint and responsibility. We have a declared policy of no-first use of nuclear weapons and a firm commitment to avoidance of the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states – except in the event of major WMD attack.

7. We note with mounting concern that the non-proliferation goals and framework today are beset with a crisis of identity, relevance and effectiveness. Their flawed foundations, albeit endowed with indefinite lifetime extension, have revealed internal fissures that seem to run deep. This does not in the least lessen, however, the obligations accepted by sovereign nations to implement in good faith the international instruments to which they are States Parties. The specter of ‘onward proliferation’, shadowy and inscrutable, and the manifest immunity of its provenance, compounds the problem.

8. India remains committed to its principled stand on global nuclear disarmament based on the firm conviction that progressively lower
levels of armaments globally and imaginative controls over them will guarantee undiminished security for all. So too will genuine and effective non-proliferation. At the same time, we recognize that the evolving nature of threats and their new manifestations require new and innovative methods to deal with them, consistent with the UN Charter and international law. We understand the urgency of exploring, in a constructive manner, how to cope with this problem and believe that through dialogue and consultation, agreement can be found on ways and means of achieving the desired ends, be that counter-proliferation of WMD & their means of delivery or end use based controls on related materials and technologies.

9. In recognition of the widely shared concern of the international community about the heightened dangers posed by the risk of terrorists getting access to weapons of mass destruction, India proposed Resolution 57/83, in the last General Assembly. Its adoption without vote, reflective of widespread support, is a measure of the shared concerns of the international community and the common determination to combat terrorism, in particular its linkages with WMD. The Report of the Secretary General — that includes views volunteered by member states and relevant international organizations — provides further basis for this Committee to revisit this critical issue. India, with the co-sponsorship of many states will bring before this Committee an updated Resolution, and hopes that it will receive the same unanimous support that it secured last year.

10. As in previous years, my delegation will table a resolution calling for a Convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances, as a first step towards reducing the salience of nuclear weapons. The Final Document of the Kuala Lumpur Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement supported the negotiation of such a Convention by the Conference of Disarmament.

11. So long as nuclear weapons remain, it is also necessary for all States with nuclear weapon to take steps to reduce the risk of their accidental or unauthorized use. Our resolution entitled ‘Reducing Nuclear Danger’ will be presented to this Committee with the expectation of receiving a wide measure of support. We believe that tangible steps to deal with the nuclear danger should be geared to multilateral process and verifiability, that would engender necessary confidence among States.
12. Conscious of responsibilities arising from possession of advanced capabilities and technologies; we have demonstrated in practical ways our role as a responsible and credible partner against proliferation. However, technology-denial to responsible States does not serve non-proliferation but only signals a punitive intent. It also weakens non-proliferation by diversion of international attention away from states of proliferation concern. There is a pressing need for an effective and transparent system of export controls that would conform to the objectives of non-proliferation without affecting the peaceful application of related technologies. On the flip side, long-term need is equally pertinent to check dragooning of advances in science and technology for military applications. We will also table, as before, a Resolution entitled ‘Role of Science and Technology in the Context of International Security and Disarmament’.

13. Mr. Chairman, India remains committed to making all possible efforts to realize the full potential of the Conference of Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body. During our presidency of the Conference, and thereafter, we have contributed actively to efforts within the Conference to break the current impasse, and to reach agreement on a Programme of work that is responsive to the widespread desire for launching negotiations for long awaited and future oriented agreements.

14. I would like to reiterate our commitment to participate constructively in the FMCT negotiations for a non-discriminatory and verifiable treaty to prohibit the future production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We also remain committed to join international efforts to prevent weaponization of outer space, and control its further militarization.

15. As an original State Party to the CWC, India is fully committed to ensuring that all the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention are implemented fully and effectively. The results of the first Review Conference of CWC are reassuring in terms of continuing undertaking by all of its parties to meet their respective obligations. On our part we have a record of verified compliance with our obligations to keep the timelines for destruction of these weapons transparently. At the same time, there is need to ensure that the actions of others do not impair the integrity of the CWC, and its objective of timely and global chemical disarmament.
16. **Mr. Chairman**, India is deeply concerned by the lack of substantive progress in meaningful multilateral efforts to strengthen the Biological weapons Convention, particularly at a time of heightened threat of BW proliferation and bio-terrorism. While every effort should be made in reviving this process without delay, we must uphold at all cost the un-eroded thirty-year norm against Biological Weapons.

17. India remains committed to constructive engagement for the timely implementation of the Programme of Action to address the illicit trade in Small arms and light Weapons. Ambassador Rakesh Sood of India chaired the Group of Governmental Experts, pursuant to Resolution 56/24V, which recommended a decision to negotiate under UN auspices, an international instrument to enable states to identify and trace, in a timely manner, small arms and light weapons. We hope that no effort will be spared in maintaining the momentum generated by the substantive consensus reflected in the work of this Group.

18. We attach particular importance to carrying forward the CCW process, which offers a unique forum for progressive controls over certain category of weapons through international consensus building and cooperation. It will be India’s privilege to chair the next annual meeting of states parties to be held in Geneva in December. India has also contributed to efforts to review the continuing operation and further development of the UN Register of Conventional Arms.

19. We find in our debate notions of cold war balance-of-power returning piggy back on military expenditures’ theme. Ground realities are that the post Cold War peace dividend which was witnessed in the West somehow escaped most of our region and Asia. While India reduced spending in early nineties, around us high levels of it persisted. Even now our spending as percentage of GDP is lowest among major countries and subject to transparent and watchful parliamentary processes. India has joined no arms race. Vast land and sea frontiers, diverse security threats —traditional and non-traditional- and inflationary pressures underlie our budget: averaging about 2.3% of GDP over past decade.

20. Mr. Chairman, despite the daunting challenges that confront us, our efforts must be imbied with a new and reinvigorated spirit of
multilateralism – of addressing these challenges collectively, on the basis of equitable and transparent approaches in an inclusive manner. Revitalization of the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda would be crucially dependent on the extent to which this Committee is able to contribute to this objective.

506. Statement by Mr. D.B. Venkatesh Varma, Director, Disarmament and International Security, Ministry of External Affairs, to introduce the draft resolution “Convention on the Prohibition of the use of Nuclear Weapons”.


Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to introduce the Resolution entitled “Convention on the Prohibition of Use of Nuclear Weapons” under Agenda item No.74(f) contained in document A/C.1/58/L.36 and co-sponsored by Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Egypt, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Namibia, Nepal, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Vietnam, Zambia and India.

Mr. Chairman, the draft Resolution being introduced today underlines the need to address the threats to humanity and to international peace and security posed by the threat or use of nuclear weapons, which will persist as long as certain states claim an exclusive right to possess nuclear weapons in perpetuity, claim justification of their use as a legitimate guarantee of their security and continue to develop, produce, stockpile and keep them ready to be used. The possibility of non-state actors also gaining access to nuclear weapons gives an added dimension of urgency.

This spectre of nuclear threats from nations and groups cannot be wished away as long as such weapons are eradicated completely. Only a total prohibition on development, production, stockpiling and use of such
weapons and their universal and complete eradication can provide the security that we and our future generations are entitled to.

This threat to humanity needs to be addressed at every possible level. At the political level, a commitment for reorientation of nuclear doctrines towards ‘no first use’ and ‘non-use against non-nuclear weapons’, backed by a legally binding agreement, would be an important and crucial step in de-legitimizing the role of nuclear weapons globally.

The International Court of Justice, in its historic advisory opinion in 1996, made international humanitarian law applicable to the use of nuclear weapons and provided a legal underpinning for prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. It stated that use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of International Law applicable to armed conflicts. It concluded that “there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

Mr. Chairman, the international community should actively participate in a step-by-step process towards concluding a legally-binding Convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. There should remain no scope for justification for the use of use nuclear weapons.

The draft resolution reiterates its request to the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations to reach agreement on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, as an important step in the process of nuclear disarmament. My delegation hopes that the key delegations to the Conference on Disarmament would show required flexibility to enable it to agree on a programme of work and commence negotiations on this issue.

India remains committed to the goal of global nuclear disarmament. It is in this context that my delegation been bringing before this Committee, since 1982, this resolution calling for a Convention to be negotiated for prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. As we mark the 25th anniversary of the First Special session of the General Assembly on Disarmament, and its consensus document on ‘Program of Action’, we recall, as a matter of deep concern, the lack of progress in terms of decisive steps towards ridding the world of nuclear weapons. These concerns were once again reiterated in the Final Document of the Kuala Lumpur Summit of the Non-aligned Movement in February this year.
Mr. Chairman, the Indian delegation, along with all the delegations that have co-sponsored this resolution, expresses its sincere hope that the resolution will receive the widest possible support in this Committee.

Thank you.

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507. Explanation of vote by D.B.V. Varma, Director, Ministry of External Affairs, on Agenda item: 73(b) Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes.


Mr. Chairman,

My delegation has requested the floor to state its position with regard to OP 8 of the resolution “Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes” contained in document A/C.1/58/L.12 after its adoption without a vote. India has been fully supportive of the central objective of this resolution and has therefore joined in the consensus. India was one among the few countries which have supported the retention of radiological weapons on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, as we believe that the international community must remain vigilant to the grave dangers posed by nuclear or radioactive waste and the possibility of their military use.

OP 8 of the resolution refers to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. As a developing country, India places high importance not only on the safety but also on the full utilization of all aspects of the fuel cycle, to derive maximum benefits. Therefore, spent fuel is not a waste but also a valuable resource, a position that India has been consistently supporting at the IAEA.

Thank you.

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to introduce the Resolution entitled “Reducing Nuclear Danger” under Agenda item No.74(x) contained in document No. A/C.158/L.34 and co-sponsored by Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cuba, Haiti, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Namibia, Naru, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Zambia and India.

Mr. Chairman,

The cold war ended more than a decade ago. With its passing we had hoped that nuclear doctrines, stressing hair-trigger alert of nuclear weapons and their associated nuclear postures would also pass into history. Unfortunately, that legacy and its consequent nuclear dangers are still with us today.

With the end of cold war there exists no justification for thousands of nuclear weapons to be maintained in a state of hair-trigger alert. The state of hair-trigger alert poses the risk of accidental and unintentional launch in response to a false warning or communication errors and the danger of their falling into the wrong hands. We have the responsibility to prevent disastrous and irreversible consequences of such a dangerous eventuality.

India first introduced the resolution ‘Reducing the nuclear danger’ in 1998. The resolution has received, every year, wide support of the General Assembly. It makes a modest and practical proposal for a review of nuclear doctrines and immediate steps to reduce the risk of unintentional or accidental use of Nuclear weapons.

In March 2000, the Secretary General, in his report to the Millennium Assembly, proposed the convening of a major international conference that would help to identify ways of eliminating nuclear danger in order to help focus attention on the risks posed by the hair-trigger alert of thousands of deployed nuclear weapons. The consensus declaration adopted at the UN Millennium Summit on September 8, 2000 had resolved
to convene an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers. The very real danger posed by recent developments and the increased threat of weapons, components etc. becoming accessible to non-state actors have made the current global security scenario even more precarious.

The Report of the Secretary General (A/58/162) submitted in July 2003 in pursuance of the Resolution 57/84 has noted that the Secretary General will continue to encourage Member States to endeavor to create conditions that would allow the emergence of an international consensus to hold an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear danger.

The 2001 Report of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (A/56/400) had made seven recommendations that would significantly reduce the risk of nuclear war. Mr. Chairman, in view of their importance, the recommendations bear reiteration.

a) Promotion of a wide-ranging international dialogue on cooperative security;

b) Preliminary political and technical measures in preparation for the possibility of convening, at the appropriate time, a major international conference that would help to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers;

c) De-alerting of nuclear weapons;

d) Review of nuclear doctrines;

e) Further reduction of tactical nuclear weapons as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process;

f) Enhancement of security at a global and a regional level by promoting increased transparency of all nuclear weapons programmes;

g) Creation of a climate for implementing nuclear disarmament measures. Programmes of education and training on the dangers of nuclear weapons to foster an informed world public opinion that would be able to exercise a positive influence on the political will to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Some nuclear weapon states have voiced apprehensions about the complicated nature of technicalities involved. However, India believes that these technical issues can be overcome if there is a political
commitment to take interim steps to reduce the danger that the state of hair trigger alert of nuclear weapons poses. This could be interim but important step in the process to negotiate a non-discriminatory and multilaterally verifiable treaty for complete elimination of nuclear weapons, which would, of course take a long time and involve difficult negotiations, taking into account the complex technical aspects involved. But that should not deter us from taking interim steps to reduce the danger that these nuclear weapons pose—especially now that the global security scenario includes the grave threat from terrorist organizations.

The recommendations contained in the Resolution are pragmatic and feasible. The Resolution aims to reaffirm the desire of the international community to ensure the safety and the security of the mankind from the dangers of accidental launch, false alarms and from deployment of nuclear weapons at hair-trigger alert. It is simple and unencumbered by any reference to issues that may be contentious.

**Mr. Chairman**, as has been stated before, support for reducing alert status have come from various distinguished quarters. In 1996, the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of nuclear weapons identified that the first step would be to take nuclear forces “off-alert”. A special statement was made by the Pugwash Foundation in this regard. Non-Governmental organisations, environmentalists, scientists, lawyers and physicians have joined in making a call for removing the hair trigger alert of nuclear forces. The Tokyo Forum Report of 1999 recognised the importance of moving in the direction of reducing the alert status of nuclear forces.

The Resolution, proposes to request the Secretary General to intensify efforts and support initiatives that would contribute towards the full implementation of these recommendations and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its 59th Session.

**Mr. Chairman**, Indian delegation, along with all the delegations that have co-sponsored this resolution, expresses its sincere hope that it will receive the widest possible support in this Committee. A positive vote for this Resolution will be a reaffirmation of the will and determination of the international community to take decisive steps towards reducing nuclear danger.

Thank you.
509. Explanation of Vote by D.B.V. Varma, Director, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, on Agenda item 73(s): Conventional arms control at the regional and sub-regional levels.


Mr. Chairman,

I take the floor to explain India’s vote on the resolution “Conventional arms control at the regional and sub-regional levels” as contained in document A/C/58/L.10. There exists since 1993, ‘guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security’, which were adopted by the UN Disarmament Commission on the basis of consensus. Therefore, the rationale or the need to consider formulation of principles for a framework for regional arrangements is not persuasive. India is not convinced of the productive value of calling on the Conference on Disarmament, a forum for negotiation of disarmament instruments of global application, to consider principles for a framework of regional arrangements on conventional arms control. Further, our security parameters cannot be confined to an artificially defined region. This being the case, the narrow definition of the resolution does not truly reflect the security concerns, and adopts an approach that is far too restrictive.

Thank you.


I have the honour to introduce the resolution “The Role of Science and Technology in the context of International Security and Disarmament” under Agenda item No. 74(f) as contained in document A/C.1/58/L33.
and co-sponsored by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Egypt, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Namibia, Nepal, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Vietnam, Zambia and India.

Mr. Chairman, since 1989, India has brought before this Committee the resolution entitled “Role of Science and Technology in the Context of International Security and Disarmament”.

Significant progress in science and technology, especially recent advances in information technology, advance materials, bio-technology and space applications, offer vast possibilities for socio-economic development. Access to these technologies for developmental purposes is undoubtedly a crucial pre-requisite for developing countries, including their participation in global trade. This fact has been recognized by various Conventions for arms control and disarmament.

The Chemical Weapons Convention, the first multilateral disarmament agreement of a universal character eliminating a complete class of weapons of mass destruction, offered an opportunity to put in place a multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory and legal mechanism that would address proliferation concerns about transfers while promoting the economic interest of States Parties. The CWC has placed an obligation on the States Parties to review their existing national regulations in the field of trade in chemicals in order to make them consistent with the Convention.

India has recognized that the ‘dual use’ character of many of the advances in science and technology and the potential for their use for both civilian and military applications is a legitimate cause of concern. However, discriminatory regimes, which limit the exchange of advanced technologies among exclusive groupings of states, deny access to these crucial technologies to the developing countries, even for peaceful developmental purposes, become non-economic barriers to normal exchange of technologies on a global basis and go counter to the spirit of global economic exchanges. We should also take into account the growing energy needs, particularly in the developing world, which must be met without adverse impact on the environment. Nuclear energy will play an important role in this regard.

It must be recognized that exclusive export control policies were
initiated at a time when there were no global agreements that comprehensively addressed proliferation concerns. Recent events question the effectiveness of such exclusive arrangements in achieving their stated purpose of strengthening effective non-proliferation, in particular, in preventing terrorists from acquiring the weapons of mass destruction, the means of their delivery and related materials and technologies, or addressing issues of true proliferation concern. It only underlines the need to evolve genuinely equitable, inclusive and universally acceptable arrangements regulating transfer of materials and technologies related to advance weapons systems including weapons of mass destruction and the means of their delivery.

India has consistently maintained that multilaterally negotiated and non-discriminatory agreements, which are transparent and open to universal participation, would be the best way to address proliferation concerns regarding materials and technologies, related to advance weapon systems, weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery. The reflection of this approach in multilateral disarmament agreements would ensure their effectiveness and improve the chances of their universality. The NAM Kuala Lumpur Summit Final Document, adopted in February this year, has also supported this approach.

Mr. Chairman, there is a need today, more than ever before, to agree on an effective and transparent system of export control over technologies and materials that would achieve the objectives of non-proliferation in all its aspects while ensuring access to these technologies for peaceful applications. This resolution hopes to encourage and support such a process.

Mr. Chairman, India, along with the co-sponsors, commends adoption of this resolution by this Committee and hopes that this resolution will receive wide support.

Thank you.
511. Explanation of Vote by D.B.V. Varma, Director, Ministry of External Affairs, on Agenda item 73: A path to the total elimination of nuclear Weapons.


Mr. Chairman,

India’s unwavering commitment to nuclear disarmament and the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons globally is well known. However, the instrument purported to have been intended to achieve these objectives, the NPT, does not seem to have been effective, as has already been pointed out in this forum on several occasions in this Session. India would like to reiterate that it is necessary to recognize this and, instead, take a path beyond the framework of the NPT towards equal and legitimate security for all through global disarmament.

Therefore, while we agree with the basic objective of the resolution, that is global elimination of nuclear weapons, we cannot support the resolution because it contains many elements that are based on a flawed approach, and, therefore, remain unacceptable to India.

India could not, therefore, support the resolution and cast a negative vote on the resolution.

Thank you.


Mr. Chairman,

India remains committed to the objective of a non-discriminatory, universal and global ban on anti-personnel landmines through a phased
process that addresses the legitimate defense requirements of States while ameliorating the critical humanitarian crisis that has resulted from an indiscriminate transfer and use of landmines.

India believes that the phased approach commends itself as a confidence building process, enabling states, especially with long borders, to safeguard their legitimate security needs.

The process of complete elimination of anti-personnel mines will be facilitated by addressing the legitimate defensive role of anti-personnel landmines for operational requirements under the defense doctrines of countries concerned, through the availability of appropriate militarily-effective and non-lethal alternative technologies that can perform, cost-effectively, the legitimate defensive role of anti-personnel landmines.

India would support negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for a ban on transfers of anti-personnel landmines on the basis of a mandate that reflects the interests of all the delegations. India has played active role in the CCW process and has ratified all its protocols including Amended protocol-II on landmines. India has discontinued since 1997 production of non-detectable anti-personnel landmines and has completed design development and trials of detectable anti-personnel landmines. India has, therefore, abstained on this resolution.

Thank you.

513. Explanation of vote by D.B.V. Varma, Director, Ministry of External Affairs on Agenda item 76: “The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East”.


Mr. Chairman,

“India has abstained on the resolution as a whole and cast a negative vote on PP6 as it makes a reference to the Final document of the NPT Review Conference held in 2000 on which India’s position is well known. Our position on PP5 should also be seen in this light, even though we have not asked for a separate vote on that preamble paragraph.”
We note the substantial contribution made by Egypt, the main sponsor of this resolution to global disarmament efforts which we respect.

Further, we believe that it is necessary to limit the focus of this resolution to the region that it intends to address.

India believes that the issues in this resolution have received widespread consideration in the international community and we hope that it will be possible to make progress on the issues involved in the coming years, through positive contributions by the concerned States of the region.

Thank you.

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514. Explanation of vote by D.B.V.Varma, Director, Ministry of External Affairs, on Agenda item : 73(t) Nuclear Disarmament.


Mr. Chairman,

India has abstained on the resolution “Nuclear Disarmament”, as contained in document A/C.1/58/L.47.

India has a long standing and unwavering commitment to nuclear disarmament and the global elimination of nuclear weapons. We had, in fact, supported the resolution till 2000.

However, the resolution now includes elements on the NPT on which India’s position is well known. Therefore, we abstained on this resolution. This vote, however, is not a reflection on our support for the long standing position of NAM and G-21 positions on nuclear disarmament, which we share with Myanmar and other sponsors of the resolution.

Thank you.

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515. Explanation of vote before the vote by D.B. Venkatesh Varma, Director, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi on Resolution entitled “Confidence Building Measures in the Regional and Sub-regional Contexts”.


Mr. Chairman,

The Indian delegation has sought the floor to express its position why it will cast a negative vote on the draft resolution “Confidence building measures in the regional and sub-regional contexts” as contained in document L 18 Rev. 1.

This draft resolution has gone through some revision. In informal consultations we had conveyed our multiple concerns. Though the sponsor of the resolution has gone through the motions of taking on board suggestions made by delegations, including ours, the core objective of the resolution remains unchanged i.e. using CBMs as a vehicle for introducing vague notions of ‘regions of tension’ and ‘military balance’; and for dragging the UN Secretary General into an ambiguous role under questionable motivations.

It is indeed a pity that very important subject of CBMs, which enjoys broad support including that of India, is being brought to the First Committee under dubious conditions of this resolution. There is a distortion of the meaning and accepted use of CBMs as commonly agreed in consensus documents of the UN Disarmament Commission. In fact, the resolution is silent on the invaluable contributions made by UN Disarmament Commission. It betrays a lack of understanding of all the systematic labour and sincerity of the real practitioners of CBMs that have made a difference. CBMs need sustained dialogue and application in order to be useful and productive. CBMs comprise a gradual process to create a positive atmosphere in difficult conditions. Engaging into CBMs presupposes the good faith of the parties concerned for increasing space for peace, which is inconceivable when dialogue and CBMs are treated as a cloak to cover the intent to change the status quo. Similarly, CBMs cannot be a subterfuge to get a whole host of non-parties to a dispute involved in the process. The draft resolution suffers from these drawbacks and effects only a travesty of CBMs. The draft tries to fuse selective quotes from the UN Charter with concepts and notions that have no bearing upon any consensus document.
An entirely artificial construct of “regions of tension” is advanced in Operative Paragraph 7 to assign a role to the Secretary General beyond what is prescribed in the Charter or by established practice. Moreover, involving non-parties in a dispute may be a recipe for wrecking rather than building confidence in particular situations. OP 7 would create a bad precedent in our deliberations, exacerbate contentious issues, and knock the bottom out of the CBMs option being implemented in practice. By prescribing ‘military balance’ between states in the ‘regions of tension’, the draft resolution imposes unrealistic demands on diverse states of different sizes and security requirements. Such ‘balance’ is intended to justify quest for the sterile concept of parity, derived from the cold war. In fact, the total absence of any reference to threats posed by international terrorism or by terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction typifies the anachronistic approach of this resolution.

This resolution is unacceptable to India, both in its objectives and content. We will, therefore, cast a negative vote to reject its premise as well as its outcome, and the use of its content, piecemeal or as a whole, in regard to other areas of interest to the First Committee.

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516. Explanation of vote by Mr. D.B.V. Varma, Director, Ministry of External Affairs, on Agenda item 73(d): Towards a nuclear weapon free world: a new agenda.


Mr. Chairman,

My delegation has requested the floor to explain its position on the draft resolution “Towards a nuclear weapon free world: a new agenda” as contained in document A/C.1/58/L.40/Rev.1. The only consensus document by the international community as a whole is the final document of the Tenth Special Session of the general assembly devoted to disarmament. It contains a programme of action which remains only partially implemented. India believes that any “agenda” for the future would have to take into account, as the starting premise, implementation of the programme of action contained in SSOD-I. It is evident that the international community has achieved a little progress on the most important element which is nuclear disarmament. This raises the question of whether there is a need for a “new agenda” at all when the most important element in the existing agenda remains valid but is yet to be accomplished.

The resolution, cast in NPT framework, includes extraneous elements and formulations that were adopted in other fora. We reject prescriptive approaches to security issues such as those contained in PP18, OP 20, OP 22, OP 23, as they are not relevant to the resolution and do not reflect ground reality. India has already exercised its nuclear option and is a nuclear weapon state with a minimum credible nuclear deterrent. It is not a conferment of status that we seek; nor is it a status for others to grant. This is a reality that cannot be denied - a reality that has to be factored into any agenda that seeks to be realistic.

The reference in OP 22 to a nuclear weapons free zone in South Asia not only borders on the unreal, but also calls into question one of the fundamental guiding principles for the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones, namely that arrangements for such zones should be freely arrived at among states of the region concerned. This principle was again endorsed by consensus in the UNDC Guidelines. As we have stated on other occasions, given current realities, the proposals for nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia is no more valid than Nuclear Weapon Free Zones in East Asia, Western Europe or North America.
My delegation’s views on NPT are well known. We sympathize with those State Parties that have been striving over the years in vain to get the five nuclear weapon States parties to the NPT to accept concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament and complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The resolution is silent on the multifarious sources of proliferation which the NPT has failed to stem.

We believe that all such efforts, however worthy and energetic, would be limited by the intrinsic inequality and discriminatory framework of obligations enshrined in the NPT. As we have maintained a ‘New Agenda’ cannot succeed in the ‘old’ framework of the NPT. There is a need to move beyond the old framework towards a durable system of international security, based on the principles on equal and legitimate security for all.

My delegation also shares the objectives of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the need to work for a nuclear weapon free world. However, we remain unconvinced about the utility of an exercise bound by flawed and discriminatory approaches of the NPT. We will, therefore cast a negative vote on the resolution as a whole.

Thank you.

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517. Statement by B. Mahtab, Member of Parliament and Member of the Indian Delegation to the UN on Agenda Item 14: Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency at the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly.


Mr. President,

The Indian delegation has taken note of the Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency, presented by the Agency’s Director General, Dr Mohamed El-Baradei.

Mr. President,

According to the 2003 World Development Report of the World Bank, the population of the world crossed the 6-billion mark in the year 1999.
Most current estimates suggest that around 2 billion people more will be added over the next 30 years, with another billion in the following 20 years. Virtually all the increase will be in the developing countries, with the bulk in urban areas. The core challenge for development would thus be to ensure availability of productive work opportunities and access to basic amenities for these people.

At present, however, there are wide disparities. The average income in the richest 20 countries is now 37 times that in the poorest 20 and this ratio has doubled in the past 40 years. Availability of energy within the reach of everyone could significantly correct this situation. Energy is the engine for empowerment and growth. It multiplies work done through human labour and increases productivity. Availability of energy thus leads to enhanced livelihood and access to better amenities. With the sustainability issues staring at us, this realisation is possible only if the energy supply becomes abundant and within the reach of all. Only the power of atom can make it happen.

As we commemorate the “Atoms for Peace” initiative launched fifty years ago and take stock of the achievements which are indeed very impressive, both in terms of the share of nuclear electricity in the total electricity production as well as in terms of other non-electricity applications, the barriers to growth of this important technology for the benefit of the larger part of humanity are yet to be addressed. This is better done before it is too late as otherwise the threat to global climate as well as the inequality tensions could assume unmanageable dimensions. Clear signals of these threats are already visible. Combating the dangers of malevolent use of nuclear and radioactive material by unscrupulous and terrorist elements has emerged as a new challenge. We are glad to see that this issue is receiving due attention in the Agency. We recently conducted in collaboration with the IAEA an international training course on Security for Nuclear Installations. The course was well received and the feedback is encouraging. It has been suggested that this course could serve as a ‘model course’ to be conducted on a regular basis.

We welcome the G-8 statement on the safety and security of radioactive sources. India has participated actively in discussions on evolving the IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. India has in place appropriate legislative and regulatory infrastructure to achieve the objectives of this Code of Conduct.
Mr. President,

India’s atomic energy programme, which is in its 50th year, has come a long way on its march to serve our people. Today we are on a fast-track growth, backed up by a strong research and development programme, industrial and safety infrastructure. In about four years from now, we would reach an installed generating capacity of around 4500 megawatts of electricity with pressurised heavy water reactors, the mainstay of the first stage of our indigenous nuclear power programme, and another 2320 megawatts with light water reactors, making a total of around 6800 megawatts as against the present capacity of 2720 megawatts. The Government of India has approved the construction of a 500 megawatts Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR). This indigenously-developed technology can enhance the installed power generation capacity to well above 300,000 megawatts even with our modest Uranium resources.

Nuclear electricity generation of 19,358 million units (M. Us) was realised during the year 2002-03 with the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) achieving annual overall capacity factor of 90%, which is among the highest in the world. The Kakrapar Atomic Power Station–1 was judged the best performing unit amongst PHWR category during the rolling 12-month period from October 1, 2001 to September 1, 2002. For the calendar year 2002, the three NPCIL PHWR units were judged amongst the five best PHWR units in the world. Besides, all the operating nuclear power stations are now ISO 14001 certified.

Mr. President,

Growth of nuclear energy in the developing countries, particularly in fast-growing economies with large populations, should be a matter of global interest in view of its potential to protect the earth from irreversible climate changes. Wherever there are no genuine concerns, barriers to deployment of nuclear energy technologies need to be examined and brought down through a pragmatic approach. We must move towards a more peaceful and prosperous world on the basis of plenty of energy available within the reach of all. Mindless controls without addressing the core issue of meeting development aspirations of the needy do not help the situation; rather, it makes matters worse. The International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) of the IAEA for the development of the next generation of nuclear reactor and fuel cycle technologies is important in this context. It has the potential of providing a technological solution to address the barriers to deployment of nuclear power worldwide. Development of Advanced Heavy Water Reactor
(DHWR) in India, which would more than meet the INPRO objectives in terms of sustainability, economy, safety and proliferation resistance, is progressing according to plans. In addition, this reactor system would enable us to get started with large scale energy production using Thorium.

Mr. President,

We are conscious of our responsibilities arising from the possession of advanced technologies in the nuclear field. We have a commitment and an interest in contributing as a partner against proliferation. Even as we move forward towards developing and using proliferation-resistant nuclear technologies, we must shed the baggage inherited from the past – which still restricts the flow of equipment and technologies related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Looking from the perspective of a large and growing economy like India, with its small hydrocarbon reserves and depleting coal reserves, the development of nuclear energy based on a closed cycle approach enabling fuller use of uranium and thorium is the only way to meet development aspirations of over a billion people. We are, therefore, pursuing a comprehensive R&D programme to explore newer technologies to widen the scope of nuclear energy use.

Mr. President,

The technical co-operation programme of the Agency has been playing a valuable role in developmental activities using nuclear techniques. We have a comprehensive domestic programme on applications in agriculture, health, water resources and industry. We have been and would continue to be active in sharing our experience with other countries. We would continue our strong support to IAEA activities. We have been consistently pledging and paying our contribution to the technical co-operation fund in full. We do so this year too.

The Agency’s programme on ‘managing and preserving the knowledge’ is timely and relevant to the nuclear industry. In India, we are in a fortunate position with respect to our very capable human resource available in large numbers. It may be also worthwhile at this stage to mention that Indian scientists have perhaps made the largest contributions to scientific publications on Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors.

Mr. President,

Looking at the present scenario in which nuclear technology finds
itself, we need a proactive two-pronged strategy which safeguards the developmental aspirations that can inevitably be met by nuclear technology and at the same time, prevents its malevolent use. This is an important challenge as ignoring either dimension could lead to disastrous consequences. With science and technology-based collective wisdom at its command, we feel that the United Nations in general, and the IAEA in particular, are in a unique position to find new paths that could significantly contribute to world peace and prosperity. We all need to work together in this important task. We owe it to humanity and the future generations.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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518. Explanation of Vote by D.B.V. Varma, Director, Ministry of External Affairs, on Agenda Item 73: Improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee.


Mr. Chairman,

We commend the sponsor of this important resolution and appreciate the constructive approach taken by the US delegation in conducting wide-ranging consultations at the drafting stage. India sees the text in the context of the common objective of the collective strengthening of multilateralism. We look forward to addressing the core issue of reform of the First Committee, essentially its working methods, and to actively work towards the objectives of the draft. India would support the resolution, as it provided a platform for a much needed discussion. Let us not hang all our problems, difficulties or frustrations on the belief that there is one magic solution to all issues. This resolution would create a platform for furthering the Committee’s work methods and would be an important contribution to a larger question of the revitalization of the General Assembly.

Thank you.

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