



## Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Indian Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee At the Signing of the U.S.-India Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement

**Secretary Condoleezza Rice**  
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**MODERATOR:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Raymond Martinez. I am the U.S. Deputy Chief of Protocol. The United States Secretary of State and the External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India will be signing the Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of India Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, also known as the 123 Agreement between the United States and India.

This document, the product of over a year of intense negotiations, is the capstone of an eight-year-long effort to take the bilateral relationship between the United States and India to a higher level. We welcome all of you to witness this historic event; in particular, our distinguished guests representing the Government of India.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome now the Secretary of State.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you very much. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, this is truly an historic occasion, and I want to thank all of you for joining us here. But most of all, I want to thank my friend and colleague, Foreign Minister Mukherjee, who flew all the way here from New Delhi to do this signing. Thank you very, very much.

I also want to thank the members of the Indian delegation for traveling for this special day. I want to thank, obviously, the negotiators, the teams that have put this together, and our two very fine ambassadors. Thank you.

On behalf of President Bush and all of us here at the State Department, welcome to Washington, because without your personal dedication and relentless hard work, we would not be here today.

Many thought this day would never come, but doubts have been silenced now. The agreement we are about to sign is unprecedented and it demonstrates the vast potential partnership between India and the United States, a potential that, frankly, has gone unfulfilled for too many decades of mistrust, and now potential that can be fully realized. The world's largest democracy and the world's oldest democracy, drawn together by our shared values and, increasingly, by our many shared interests, now stand as equals, closer together than ever before.

That we do so now is due to one factor and one factor alone: statesmanship; the courage in democratic statesmanship, both in New Delhi and in Washington. Prime Minister Singh literally risked his political future for this agreement, and then remade his government to gain the support that he needed. And President Bush first saw the potential and the need for transforming the U.S.-India partnership all the way back in 1999 when he was still the Governor of Texas, and he's made it one of his highest priorities.

That is what democratic leaders do. They deal with the world as it is, but they lay out a vision of the world as it could be, a vision of a new, better reality; and they lead their nations to expand the scope of the possible. I know I speak for my friend, Foreign Minister Mukherjee, when I say how honored we are to serve such leaders and to play the roles that we have in helping to shape this diplomatic triumph for both our nations.

Let no one assume, though, that our work is now finished. Indeed, what is most valuable about this agreement is how it unlocks a new and far broader world of potential for our strategic partnership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, not just on nuclear cooperation but on every area of national endeavor.

And so today, we look to the future, a shared future in which both our nations together rise to our global responsibilities and our global challenges as partners. Let us use this partnership to shape an international order in which all states can exercise their sovereignty securely, responsibly, and in peace. Let us use this partnership to tackle the great global challenges of our time: energy security and climate change, terrorism and violent extremism, transnational crime and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Let us use this partnership to protect and promote our common values: human rights and human dignity, democracy, liberty, and the rule of law for people who are diverse in background but joined together in spirit and aspirations. And let us use our partnership to drive a new social justice agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> century by promoting good and uncorrupt governance, by expanding free and fair global trade, by advancing health and education, and supporting the millions and millions of people who are striving to lift themselves out of poverty.

India and the United States can do all of this and more together. There is so much that our two great nations will achieve in this new century. And with the conclusion of this civil nuclear agreement, our partnership will be limited only by our will and our imagination. India and the United States have taken on an extremely difficult challenge. We've met it. We've succeeded together. Now, I believe there is nothing that we cannot do together.

Thank you. (Applause.)

**MODERATOR:** Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India. (Applause.)

**MINISTER MUKHERJEE:** Your Excellency, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State of the United States of America, honorable members of the U.S. Congress, distinguished secretaries of the U.S. Administration, excellencies, friends of India who have joined us today. I thank the Secretary of State Dr.

Condoleezza Rice for her gracious remarks.

Today is an important day for the India-U.S. relations, for global united security, and for our common endeavor to promote sustainable development while addressing environmental challenges. In signing the agreement between India and the United States of America for cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy, we have brought to fruition three years of extraordinary effort by both our governments. This agreement is one more visible sign of the transformed relationship and partnership that our two countries are building together. In doing so, we implement a vision and understandings reached in July 2005, March 2006, by President George Bush and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.

Both India and the United States have now completed all of our internal procedures to be able to sign this path-breaking agreement. We have particularly noted and welcome the strong bipartisan support which with the U.S. Congress endorsed the agreement. We see this bipartisan support as a vote for stronger India-U.S. cooperation to the mutual benefit of our people.

The signing of this agreement has also been preceded by the unanimous approval by the IAEA Board of Governors of the related safeguards arrangement and by the consensus decision of the 45-member Nuclear Suppliers Group to enable cooperation by its members in peaceful uses of nuclear energy with India.

The significance of the agreement is that it is the first step to civil nuclear cooperation and trade between India and the U.S. This is an agreement about civil nuclear cooperation, and reflects a careful balance of rights and obligations. The agreement has been passed by the U.S. Congress without any amendments. Its provisions are now legally binding on both sides once the agreement enters into force. We look forward to working with the U.S. companies on the commercial steps that will follow to implement this landmark agreement.

It is also the first step to India's cooperation with the rest of the world in civil nuclear energy. By reinforcing and increasing the nuclear element in our country's energy needs, which is so vital to sustainable growth rate. Nuclear power will directly boost industrial growth, rural development, and help us to expand every vital sector of our economy.

It is also (inaudible) India to respond with her global partners to the challenges of climate and global warming by strengthening her economic growth and sustainable development. The wide-ranging initiatives announced by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the U.S. president in July 2005 and March 2006 have led to a transformed relationship between our two countries.

Our engagement and productive bilateral dialogue include clean and efficient energy, high technology, defense, space, education, agriculture, science and technology, civil aviation, infrastructure development, and information technology, to name just a few. These will, I am sure, again gain momentum with the signing of this agreement. We look forward to working with the U.S. in promoting nonproliferation, containing and fighting pandemic, climate change, ensuring food security, cooperating in disaster relief management, and other regional and global initiatives.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to each and every person who has made this day a reality. To the President George Bush of the United States of America, who steadfastly believed in this outcome and actually made it happen, to his Secretary of State Madama Condoleezza Rice who has spared no effort in working with my government on challenging details and who was instrumental in the positive income of the negotiations and the finalization of the text of the agreement – (applause) – and to the U.S. Congress, who gave this agreement with India their strong bipartisan support. The enthusiasm and support of the Indian-American community sustained us through this process and theirs was an invaluable cooperation.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. (Applause.)

**MODERATOR:** Ladies and gentlemen, the Secretary and the Minister will now sign the agreement.

(The agreement was signed.)



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