



Remarks With Indian Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Hyderabad House
New Delhi, India
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MINISTER MUKHERJEE: Good evening, friends in the media, Her Excellency Dr. Condoleezza Rice, who is Secretary of State. This evening, I have just concluded discussions with Her Excellency Dr. Condoleezza Rice, who is Secretary of State. She has especially come to express the solidarity of the United States of America with India in the wake of the heinous attacks by terrorists who struck in several locations in Mumbai last week. We deeply appreciate this visit, Madame Secretary, and I welcome you.

I informed Dr. Rice that there is no doubt that the terrorist attack in Mumbai was perpetrated by individuals who came from Pakistan and whose controllers are in Pakistan. This is an assessment that is widely shared by the international community. I briefed Dr. Rice on the discussions we have had with the Government of Pakistan following the Mumbai terrorist attack and our expectations of cooperation from them to ensure that the terrorists and organizations who participated these attacks are arrested and brought to justice. We expect all friendly governments in the international community to ensure that this happens.

I have also conveyed to Secretary Rice the feeling of anger and deep outrage in India for (inaudible) terrorist attacks in Mumbai which were preceded by similar terrorist attacks in other major cities of India earlier this year in Jaipur, Bandu, Ahmedabad, Delhi, and now in Mumbai. Almost 350 innocent lives have been lost in these attacks and more than 733 people injured (inaudible) – these six incidents. Government of India (inaudible) needs to act defensively to protect India's territory and integrity, and the right of our citizens to a peaceful life with all the means at our disposal. We look forward to the international community's cooperation in our longstanding struggle against terrorism.

I would now like to invite Secretary Rice to make (inaudible). Thank you.

SECRETARY RICE: Thank you very much, and thank you, Minister. I had not expected to return to India as Secretary of State following my visit here just a couple of months ago, but I come because the President of the United States, the American people want India to know that the United States stands in solidarity with the people of India. I come with condolences for those who have lost their lives, those who have been maimed, for their families, for the people of Mumbai, for the ordeal through which they've just been, and for the people of India.

I think that Americans, perhaps as well as any understand what -- the feelings that run so deep at a time like this, having experienced the attacks of September 11th. We certainly understand too that there is a strong demand for bringing the perpetrators of such a crime to justice, and a deep desire to prevent any further attacks from taking place.

And Minister, I came also to pledge the cooperation of the United States in both those tasks. We are going to work very closely with you in any way that we can to try and get to the bottom of what happened, and then to help you to act on that, but also recognizing that in matters of terrorism, it is not just a matter of the punishment of the crime that has taken place. It is also a matter of preventing these terrorists who continue to plot and plan from perpetrating further crimes and further attacks.

I know too how difficult it is to take information and to make it into knowledge and then to be able to act on it. And I have said that the United States also has a good deal of experience in the counterterrorism fight and how one has to organize differently for that counterterrorism fight. I know, Minister, and have spoken with the Home Minister, that you are looking at reforms here in India as well. And I applaud, for instance, the Prime Minister's emphasis on terrorist financing and other ways to track these killers.

I also want to note that the United States believes strongly that having lost our own citizens in this attack, this is a matter of concern not just because of our relationship with India, but because American lives were also lost. So it's a matter of deep concern. And in that regard, we have made very clear that we expect all responsible nations to participate and cooperate in bringing these perpetrators to justice, and that Pakistan has a special responsibility to do so, and to do so transparently, fully, urgently. And that is a message that we have delivered. I have noted that President Zardari has pledged the cooperation of the Pakistani Government. It is a new civilian government. And we fully expect that those pledges of cooperation are going to be carried out and carried out fully.

And so, Minister, I know that this is a very difficult time for the people of India, for the people of Mumbai. But I hope that it is a time also when you can feel the sense of solidarity and support that is there in the international community from your friends. I was just in Great Britain. I know that the British are helping too. And I hope that you know more than anything that you are not alone in this fight. There are many of us who experience -- who've experienced this terror, and we stand united in our determination to defeat. Thank you.

MODERATOR: Thank you, Madame Secretary. Two questions will be taken from each side. Kindly introduce yourself and your organization and indicate to whom the question is addressed to. First from the Indian side, (inaudible).

QUESTION: Good evening, (inaudible), CNN (inaudible). I have a question to each of the ministers.

To Minister Mukherjee first. Sir, your government has made it very clear, as -- in fact, one Pakistan -- of the clause in the bilateral relationship, if Pakistan does not deliver on your demands. Now today, we've heard President Zardari actually rule out the (inaudible) of 20 or 21 most wanted Indians and Pakistanis. How do you respond to that? Do you actually take action after this matter?

And to Ms. Rice, do you see the statement from the President as evidence of cooperation? And there are two parts to this question. My second question would be you say there have been steps to offer solidarity to the Indian Government. Would your government be willing to support any (inaudible) military strikes into Pakistan (inaudible)?

MR. MUKHERJEE: So far, Government of India is concerned, more action will be taken by the government -- will depend on the response which we have from the Pakistan authorities. We have given (inaudible) and expecting the response. After obtaining the response (inaudible), the government will consider it necessary to protect its territorial integrity, sovereignty and security of the -- of its civilians, government (inaudible). Thank you.

SECRETARY RICE: The response of the Pakistani Government should be one of cooperation and that -- and that is what we expect, and we have been sending that message. In all responses, whether they are responses of governments around the world or the response of the Indian Government, the goal should be to make certain that the investigation gets to the bottom of what happened, that the perpetrators are brought to justice, and that there is enough information and a depth of understanding so that an effort can be made to prevent further attacks.

The hard thing about terrorism is that it's not (inaudible) law enforcement-- it's not a matter of waiting until a crime is committed and then you punish the perpetrators. The long pole in the tent, the effort, has to be to prevent. And that is what we are going to help India, and others are going to help India, and we believe Pakistan has an essential role to play in this to make certain that these terrorists cannot continue to operate and operate in this fashion.

Any response needs to be judged by its effectiveness in prevention, and also by not creating other unintended consequences or difficulties, that we are going to work very closely over this time. And as I said, we're focused with India on both bringing the perpetrators to justice and on preventing further attacks. And I just want to underscore again, Americans were killed in this attack as well, so it's especially concerning the United States.

MODERATOR: I solicit your cooperation. Kindly restrict yourself to one question.

MR. MCCORMACK: Next question, Anne Gearan with Associated Press.

QUESTION: Anne Gearan, AP, a question to each of you. Madame Secretary, can you be more specific when you say that this attack was different and you're asking for a different kind of response from India and Pakistan, what specifically about it tells you that it's distinct from previous terror attacks? And do you see the hand of al-Qaida anywhere in it?

And to Mr. Minister, I understand that just today a -- some explosives were found in a train station in Mumbai that apparently had been there for a week. What confidence can the Indian people have that you've found all that there is to find and that they are safe?

SECRETARY RICE: Anne, I did not mean to suggest that there haven't been other attacks. There have been. My point was concerning the sophistication of this attack, the way in which it was carried out, the targets that were obviously simultaneously attacked. And that, in itself, I think is somewhat different than attacks that have been seen in the past. But the response has to be the same, which is that the perpetrators have to be caught, they have to be brought to justice and they -- and there has to be a maximal effort on preventing further attacks.

As to al-Qaida, let me be very clear. I -- we are not saying that al-Qaida is the perpetrator here, and I want that to be very much understood. There are elements of this, the sophistication of it, which remind us that these extremists -- and there are no good terrorists, they're all extremists and they all have to be dealt with -- that they are perhaps learning from each other. They move in the same circles. But clearly, the sophistication of the attack was really what I was addressing.

QUESTION: The closest (inaudible)?

MINISTER MUKHERJEE: In fact, we had a full (inaudible) city, and rapidly, there is a (inaudible). But essentially, the (inaudible) measure of the series of attacks which India received just this year -- I mentioned in my statement that (inaudible) when the attacks have taken place, and I believe that that is right. (Inaudible) of the attacks are (inaudible) important to reach centers like (inaudible) national capital Delhi, and national capital Mumbai. Capital -- if not capital, but very important place from (inaudible) science, technology, (inaudible). Therefore, (inaudible) is trying to (inaudible) at the development of scientific and economic ability of the country. And we have just lost forever our (inaudible). Thank you.

MODERATOR: Munish.

QUESTION: Munish, (inaudible) news service. Especially addressed to Madame Secretary of State, what (inaudible). Pakistan -- Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari has made non-state actors for various activities with the region. And we (inaudible) of these elements that usually are patronized by sections of the Pakistani establishment and could be responsible for the (inaudible). Now in certain situation, what -- how should India and the United States cooperate (inaudible) with Pakistan? And also, they decide presence of governments, so that government's view linking Pakistan-based elements (inaudible)? Thank you.

SECRETARY RICE: Well, I'm not going to speculate on what might be found when investigations are complete. I do know that the Pakistani Government, under President Zardari, has pledged its complete cooperation, and that it needs to be transparent in that cooperation. The fact is that non-state actors sometimes operate within the confines of a state, on the territory of a state. And when that is the case, then there has to be very direct and tough action against them.

And so that is really the issue here. I think we need to let the facts lead where they may. The investigation is still underway. It can be done with as much forensic help as is needed from international parties. I know that Britain has expressed a desire to help. We have expressed a desire to help. But what we really need to do is to let the leads go where they may without premature speculation of how this might have actually taken place. But non-state actors -- that's still a matter of responsibility if, in fact, it somehow relates to your territory.

MR. MCCORMACK: The final question to Sylvie Lanteaume from AFP.

QUESTION: Sylvie Lanteaume, Agence France Press. Madame Secretary, how are you going to improve the intelligence sharing between India and Pakistan? Do you have any special step in mind or regional mechanism?

And Mr. Minister, what would you think about such a mechanism with the U.S. as a partner?

SECRETARY RICE: Well, I think the key here, Sylvie, is to worry less about what mechanisms there may be and more about just getting the job done. I think that there is a lot of information that various parties have concerning what happened on this attack. The -- as the forensics go forward to look at what happened in the actual attack on the scene and as people are interviewed, more information will become available. And I don't think we need to worry so much about a specific mechanism. I do think we need to make certain that there is proper coordination, and this can be done through regular channels of the various parties. So I do think the United States and others have a lot to add.

Let me just make a point. Everybody needs help. The United States has needed help in intelligence sharing, in cooperation. This isn't a matter that any country handles on its own. The very nature of this terrorist threat is that it crosses borders. The very nature of this terrorist threat is that it locates different elements in different parts of the world. And so when we talk about cooperation, we are talking about something that is inherent in the nature of dealing with a terrorist threat that is global, not confined to a particular area. And so there isn't really anything new in that sense. India and the United States have been cooperating. We have been cooperating with Great Britain when there have been threats that – against Britain or against the United States or against neighbors of the world. It sometimes requires cooperation with India.

So we have developed contacts for doing this, but we're going to do it in a more intensive and urgent manner, because again, I want to emphasize that, yes, it is extremely important to bring these people to justice, but it is really important that we remember that when you're dealing with terrorists, your goal is to also have prevention very much in mind.

MINISTER MUKHERJEE: We have a mechanism in which we share intelligence with USA and also with other countries. The importance of sharing this mechanism is more now if terrorism is to be stopped collectively by the international community. It is not confined to one country. Terrorism has no limit, either political or otherwise. They are the biggest menace to the world peace and tranquility in the post-Cold War era. They are (inaudible) by the entire international community. And for that, intelligence sharing is an important (inaudible). Thank you.

MODERATOR: Thank you. This brings the evening to a close. Thank you for coming.

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