



Press Statement
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Washington, DC
July 18, 2002

U.S.-India Counterterrorism Joint Working Group

Following is the text of a Joint Statement issued following the fifth U.S.-India Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism.

The fifth meeting of the U.S.-India Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism was held on July 11-12, 2002. Coordinator for Counterterrorism Francis X. Taylor hosted the meeting at the Department of State. Joint Secretary Jayant Prasad of the Ministry of External Affairs headed the Indian delegation. Both delegations included officials and experts from throughout their respective governments in line with the multi-disciplinary approach needed to successfully fight terrorism. The U.S.-India Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism was established in January 2000.

The Joint Working Group has met three times in the past twelve months, reflecting the importance that the two sides attach to international cooperation in combating terrorism. The past year has been a watershed for the two democracies in confronting the challenge of terrorism. During this period, the United States and India have accomplished much in their counterterrorism cooperation. They have, inter alia:

- Broadened their exchange of information and assessments on the international and regional terrorist situation;
- Strengthened intelligence and investigative cooperation;
- Qualitatively upgraded and expanded anti-terrorism training programs for Indian law enforcement officials;
- Signed a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty;
- Launched a bilateral Cyber Security Forum, with a wide-ranging program of action to address challenges of cyberterrorism and information security;
- Introduced military-to-military cooperation on counterterrorism to supplement the initiatives of the U.S.-India Defense Policy Group in this area;
- Worked together closely on multilateral initiatives on terrorism, including on the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1373;
- Initiated dialogue and cooperation in homeland/internal security, terrorist financing, forensic science, transportation security and border management; and
- Taken concrete steps to detect and counter the activities of individual terrorists and terrorist organizations of concern to the two countries.

The two delegations reviewed the international terrorist situation, including in South Asia, Central Asia and Southeast Asia. They shared their assessment of the impact of the military, law enforcement, financial and other measures taken against terrorists and their networks over the last six months. They expressed satisfaction at the progress made in the campaign against al-Qaida, but also recognized that the efforts of al-Qaida cadres and associates to regroup in other countries and to form coalitions within other groups continue to pose a serious threat. The two sides agreed to further intensify intelligence sharing and coordinate action in pursuit of the remaining members of al-Qaida and associated terrorist groups. The delegations also discussed the nexus between weapons of mass destruction proliferation and terrorism.

The delegations reviewed their cooperation in the areas of anti-terrorism assistance and capacity building programs conducted by the United States, border monitoring, military-to-military cooperation, law enforcement exchanges and legal assistance, internal/homeland security, counterterrorism finance and money laundering cooperation, transportation and aviation security and cyberterrorism.

The delegations expressed their strong support for the full and effective implementation of UNSC Resolution 1373 and the work of the UN Security Council's Counterterrorism Committee. UNSCR 1373 provides a comprehensive and mandatory framework for sustained global action against terrorism. In addition, both sides consulted on the possibility of an early finalization of an effective Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

The two delegations reviewed cooperation in the areas of extradition and mutual legal assistance with a view to deepening and broadening that cooperation. Both sides agreed to continue full cooperation in the investigation of the hijacking of India Airlines flight 814.

Recognizing the importance of equipment and technology in strengthening counterterrorism capability, the U.S. Technology Support Working group will meet with its Indian counterpart before the next JWG. Discussions on counterterrorism equipment between the U.S. Department of Defense and India's Ministry of Defense will continue under the aegis of the Defense Policy Group. Both sides also agreed to continue their dialogue on technology tools for enhancing border management.

The United States and India unequivocally condemned all acts of terrorism, whatever the supposed justification, and reaffirmed their nations' commitments to cooperate in preventing acts of terrorism and neutralizing terrorist organizations, which are a threat to international peace and security.

The resolve of the United States and India to fight terrorism has never been stronger, and their commitment to intensify bilateral cooperation in this endeavor is deeper than ever before. Nowhere is this more evident than in the mutual support rendered in response to terrorist attacks in the two countries.

The Joint Working Group agreed to hold its sixth meeting in New Delhi at the beginning of 2003.

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