



## Remarks to the Press at Roosevelt House

**R. Nicholas Burns, Under Secretary for Political Affairs**

New Delhi, India

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**UNDER SECRETARY BURNS:** Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. It is a great pleasure to be here in Delhi. I want to first thank Ambassador David Mulford and his staff for hosting me. We have an outstanding American Ambassador here who we think has done a marvelous job in promoting a much better relationship, much closer in a strategic sense, between India and the United States. And I want to thank him for his hospitality and thank all the men and women of our Embassy.



I am here today having come from London where I was with Secretary Rice at the G-8 meetings, and I just finished three and a half hours of conversation with my counterpart, the [Foreign] Secretary Shyam Saran. We had an excellent meeting where we reviewed the full breadth of the current cooperation between the United States and India. I must say I am encouraged leaving that meeting as we look ahead to the Prime Minister's visit to our capital, to Washington, on July 18<sup>th</sup> and beyond that to further high-level meetings.

We believe that the United States' relationship with India is not only heading in the right direction, it is of increased strategic importance to my country, and we are achieving a partnership between our two countries which is truly historic. I think all of you know that the United States places great priority on our relations with all the countries of this region. There is no question that South Asia is a region of increasing importance to the United States.

There is also no question that developing a strategic partnership between the United States and India is one of the highest priorities for our President and for Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as they begin the President's second term in office. We see India as a rising power in the world, as a democratic power and as a friendly country and a partner country to the United States. And as we develop this relationship, we are certainly at a key stage as we think about the Prime Minister's visit in July.

And so the basis for our three and half hour conversations today was to think through and to review together all the elements in this very wide relationship, all the elements that the two leaders will be discussing and all the agreements and initiatives that we should be undertaking together, both of us as countries who have a lot in common, countries that share the same values -- democratic values -- countries that both want to see stability and security and peace in the world, countries that want to see some of the conflicts around the world resolved. And both of us can cooperate together in this region and beyond this region because both of us have a global perspective in order to do that.

I must also tell you that America's view of our relationship with India is that it stands on its own. This is a relationship -- as our Secretary of State has said, I think when she was here in Delhi -- that does not have any hyphens attached to it. As two great countries, the United States and India are now developing their own relationship, and that relationship is unlike any other, of course, that we have in this region. And I believe it is a relationship that will have very great promise for the years to come.

Now, in the conversations today, we focused on a wide range of issues. We certainly focused on deepening our bilateral ties, on finding ways to be advocates of democratization around the world together and we discussed some specific initiatives that our two leaders might possibly agree to when they get together in Washington, D.C., on promoting democracy. We discussed our great interest in cooperating together on HIV/AIDS prevention and programs. This, of course, is a major issue for my country. We have so many people in our own country afflicted with HIV/AIDS. And we feel a responsibility as a country on the leading edge of the science, of the remedies of HIV/AIDS, to work in Africa and Latin America as we have done. And we want to work in partnership with India to have an effect on the rest of the world together.

We talked about agricultural cooperation. It is interesting to note that at a different time in our relationship, just after India's independence, in the 1950's there was significant university research and agricultural cooperation between our two countries. We still are both major agricultural countries in terms of the high degree of research and development undertaken in both countries. We'd like to get back to that bilateral cooperation in agriculture.

We talked about our interest in working together on environmental, conservation and wildlife cooperation. You know that the Defense [Minister] is on his way to meet our Secretary of Defense in Washington and that the defense and military and security relationship between our two countries has reached a level that has never been seen before, and we expect a very successful visit by Minister Mukherjee to the United States. We are looking at the possibility of cooperation in advanced weaponry, on missile defense, on bilateral security cooperation that would extend the type of good work that we did together, that we have done together, in recent years. We ought to extend and expand that.

We talked today about the possibility doing more together to combine the resources of India and the United States in disaster relief in other parts of the world. We were so effective in working together in responding to the tsunami disaster. And I must say, as Americans, we were so impressed by the decisiveness of India and the Indian government, by the speed by which India reached out to help other countries in this region. And you saw that same commitment from my country in Indonesia.

We talked about science and technology and space cooperation today. And last of all we talked about the very important issue civil nuclear energy cooperation. As all of you know, when Secretary Rice was here a couple of months ago she began a new discussion with the Indian government on this issue. This is obviously of major importance to both countries. Our country is a major producer of energy and also a consumer of energy and energy is one of the most important issues that we face and we Americans look towards our future. We know that's true of India and we think there is a lot of good work that we can do in this particular area. Of course, it is difficult because we need to overcome a legacy of the work that we haven't done together over several decades. But we have confidence that we can move forward and our President and the Indian Prime Minister will be able to have a fruitful discussion of this when they meet in July.

And last we talked about our common interest, as leading members of the United Nations, for both of us to be supporters of reform of the United Nations. And I explained to [Foreign] Secretary Saran that the United States values the United Nations. After all, we are one of the founding countries. We are the host country, and we are a permanent member of the Security Council. We have great respect for Secretary General Kofi Annan and he has initiated a process of widespread reform of the United Nations. And I recounted for the [Foreign] Secretary today that it's a very strong wish of the United States that all of us work together for reform of the UN so that it looks and acts more like an institution befitting the world as it is in 2005, than the world as it was at the very beginning -- 60 years ago -- of the UN in 1945.

And so the United States has put forward a number of ideas in recent weeks to support Secretary General Kofi Annan. For instance, we support his view that there should be broad-scale reorganization of the Secretariat, of the management and administration so it is a more efficient organization. We certainly believe that the United Nations should be dedicated to human rights, and so we agree with Secretary General Kofi Annan that the Human Rights Commission in Geneva should be replaced by a smaller and more effective Human Rights Council. We talked today about our common interest in supporting Secretary General Annan in creating a peace-building commission, so that the United Nations can be more effective in helping countries that have gone through civil wars or that are emerging from wars, so that we can better reconstruct and give humanitarian assistance to those countries. We talked about our common support for the UN Fund for Democracy so that the world's largest democracy, India, and one of the world's oldest democracies, the United States, these two great democracies, both of them, can support this fund and both of us can represent democratic values in the United Nations system. We talked about moving forward on the Convention on Terrorism, which has been languishing far too long in

New York itself.

So there is a lot we can do, India and the United States, as we look toward the high level summit that will take place and that our leaders will attend together in September in New York to make sure we are strengthening the United Nations for the challenges in the future. We know that India has always been attached to the United Nations and a leading country in the United Nations. And that also true of my country.

And finally we talked about UN Security Council reform. And here, as you know, we very much respect the view of India that it and its other partners are putting forward this G-4 initiative. On the part of the United States, I explained that we are very much open to modernization and expansion of the Security Council. We believe it is right that other regions of the world that are not represented on the Council be represented as both permanent members and non-permanent members in the future. And I put forward the view that our Secretary Rice and I articulated in Washington last week, and that is that we would favor perhaps a modest, and what we would think a pragmatic expansion of the Council to include perhaps two or so permanent members of the Council and perhaps two or three, perhaps more, non-permanent members of the Council. We think that there has to be room for the developing world on the Security Council, room that has been denied them for 60 years. And so for the non-permanent seats we would suggest they be allocated on a regional basis and for renewable terms of perhaps five years or so. This would be a big departure from the way the Security Council is now structured where there is not that kind of access over a five-year renewable term to anyone outside the permanent members of the Security Council.

And I also said that the United States also continues to support Japan for a seat in the Council and that we'll also be looking at the continuing debate in New York at the question of the candidacy of other members. Now, our president has not made a decision on any other country. But as I said to you before, we are open to the possibility of two or so permanent members of the Council, and we will just have to see how the debate unfolds in New York over the coming months. There is a very active debate in New York. We, the United States government, are very much a part of that and we look forward to continued close consultations with the Indian government as we move forward.

So, all in all, it's been a very good day. I'll have further discussions tonight with the Indian government and throughout the day tomorrow and then going to Bangladesh, on Sunday to Dhaka. I am very excited to go there, but I am very enthusiastic, hopeful, as a result of the last few months -- and with the leadership that Ambassador Mulford has given to this relationship on the American side with the contributions that our Secretary of State made both in Washington when she met the foreign minister, and also when she was here -- that we are on the verge of creating a new strategic partnership with India, that the United States recognizes India's global importance and that we feel shared values and frankly we feel shared interests on many, many issues around the world that should make the next few years of this relationship fundamentally different than the last 58 years. And this is very good news indeed for the people of both of our countries. So with that, I am happy to take any questions that you might have.

**QUESTION:** Ranjit Kumar from *Navbharat Times*. I would like to know if NSSP-2 has been finalized and would be announced during the Prime Minister's visit to Washington?

**UNDER SECRETARY BURNS:** Thank you very much. Yes. We had a full discussion, a long discussion about Next Steps in the Strategic Partnership. As you know it was Secretary Rice's idea that we should quicken the pace of our work. And that we should expand the work, but also quicken the pace, move faster and try to make much more progress than had been originally envisioned. I believe we had a very good review of all the issues that come under that very large mandate today. We are moving forward in a great number of areas. There are still, of course, remaining issues that need to be decided. There are some remaining differences, as you would expect between two countries like India and the United States. But we are making good progress and we are hopeful that we can fulfill the ambitions that both sides have about the NSSP.

**QUESTION:** Saurabh Shukla from *India Today*. Mr. Burns, you talked about G-4 and the UNSC expansion. Is U.S. in a position to say today what specific criteria should be there for the expansion of the UN Security Council? You talked about regional criteria, but in a way that disqualifies India because you supported Japan from Asia. And, it is unlikely that you will be in a position to support a developing country from Asia again. So, are you suggesting that India should, in fact, bid for a non-permanent seat rather than going for a permanent one?

**UNDER SECRETARY BURNS:** Not at all. Not at all. So I am glad you asked the question. Now, what we did last week was we introduced a new element into the debate in New York, and that was to suggest that in addition to the conversations that have taken place for the better part of the last decade, where countries have put themselves forward, where regional groups have put, have discussed the under-representation of certain areas of the world -- we feel those are important factors and there is no question that certain regions of the world have been either under-represented or not represented, and certainly Asia is an area that has not been, a region that has not been over-represented, because only one member, permanent member, of the Security Council comes from the Asian region; but we feel that it is important too that any new permanent member of the Council be supremely well qualified. And so, last week we indicated that there are a number of criteria that we felt that any such country should meet. And I listed those criteria in a press conference last week.

You probably have them, but we feel that countries should be large countries with significant populations, countries that are democratic, countries that give substantial resources back to the UN system, countries that adhere to non-proliferation and counter-terrorism international standards. We think that the issue of regional representation is important. We wouldn't want to see a region over-represented or under-represented. And so, if you look at that, you will see that this is probably, in our view, the most important new element in the debate in New York. And that is that we have to make sure that countries being entertained for a permanent membership, and every country has a right to apply, that those countries meet the test of being supremely well qualified.

Now, of course, Secretary Rice has said on a number of occasions, and she also said here in Delhi when she was asked by the press, that we recognize that India is playing an increasingly important role globally. And that it is incumbent upon international institutions to accommodate themselves to the stature that India has and of the role that India is playing. And that is a factor, that's part of the reality of how I think all of us look at the debate in New York on the future of the Security Council. So, India has, of course, a perfect right to put its candidacy forward for a permanent membership in the Security Council. That's what it has done with the G-4 proposal.

I just want to be clear about the position of my country. To date, we have supported Japan. We have supported Japan for a very long time. Japan, next to the United States, is the leading contributor of financial resources to the United Nations system. And so we reaffirmed last week our support for Japan. And we said that we would support, perhaps, two or so countries for permanent membership in the Council. But our President has not made the decision at this point to support anyone else. And, of course, this debate will be evolutionary. It will ensue for the next several months and maybe even the next year, and we will have to see where that debate takes us. But we have had a full discussion with the Indian Government on the G-4 initiative. I explained from our side our own proposal. And I think it was a good discussion and we will continue to stay in close contact with the Indian Government.

**QUESTION:** Amit Baruah from *The Hindu*. Mr. Burns, when you say two or so as far as the expansion is concerned, is this a kind of a move to divide the G-4, because two or so is reasonably vague. And is this an effort to ensure, because you don't like the G-4 resolution -- you said it very politely but nicely that you don't like the G-4 resolution -- so is this a move to divide the G-4? And, when you use the word strategic partnership repeatedly with India, you already supported Japan's candidature. So do we have like first-class strategic partnerships where you publicly indicate which country you prefer, and second-class strategic partnerships, like with India, where you don't come out with a name and say we support Japan but not you guys?

**UNDER SECRETARY BURNS:** Interesting question. (Laughter) First of all, first of all, as you know very well there is a lot more to a full-blown and broad and deep strategic partnership than just one issue. And when we talk about a strategic partnership between the United States and India, that is serious business. The relationship that is emerging between our two countries is now among the most important relationships that the United States has with any country in the world. And I think you hear the messages Secretary Rice brought to Delhi a couple of months ago. We are determined to elevate this relationship because it is in our interest to do so. And because we recognize India's growing global prominence and the active role that India is playing in a number of areas. So I wouldn't, and I don't think you would either, if I understand why you asked your question, I wouldn't want to reduce that important vital strategic relationship to one issue because it is much more important than that.

Now, on the issue of UN Security Council reform, we are not trying to divide the G-4, and you have never heard from Secretary Rice or myself any negative words about

the G-4 itself. All of these countries in the G-4 are very close friends of the United States, including India. And so we have respect for their proposal, they have a right to put forward their proposal. We just have a different view of the Security Council. I'll tell you what it is. We are a permanent member and have been for 60 years. The Security Council is the key body of the United Nations system. If it is working well, then the United Nations can be a force for good, and for peace, and for stability, and for development, and for humanitarian assistance around the world. If it is not working well -- and you saw during the Cold War when the United States and Soviet Union, United States and China in decades past couldn't agree on anything -- the Security Council becomes a very weak institution. Our primary interest in looking at the issue of expansion of the Council is to ensure the continued effectiveness of the Council. And, we believe that a proposal that would bring in six permanent members on one day, in one fell swoop, it might lead to depreciating the value of the Council. It might diminish the effectiveness of the Council. And so, what we put forward last week was admittedly a more modest proposal, but one that we think would have a greater possibility of ensuring the effectiveness of the Security Council. And by conveying an interest in two or so permanent members, additional members in the Council, we are obviously putting forth a flexible position that will be informed by the debate that is to continue.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Burns, this is Parul Malhotra from CNBC TV 18. Did the proposed Iran-India pipeline come up at all and what is the US position on that?

**UNDER SECRETARY BURNS:** We didn't have a long conversation about it at all. In fact, I am trying to think if it even came up. Actually, it did not come up. Perhaps it will, tonight or tomorrow. I think you know what our Secretary of State has said on this issue before. We have a very respectful, very constructive dialogue with the government of India. Our problem is not with the government of India. As you know, our problem in other realms is with the government of Iran. As you know we have been supporting the three European Union countries -- France, Germany and Britain -- in their attempts to find a negotiated peaceful settlement of all of our disputes with Iran, and that is that none of us around the world want to see Iran acquire the capability to produce fissile material or to produce a nuclear weapon. We also believe that Iran, as a state funder and director of terrorist groups, has been exceedingly unhelpful in the Middle East in general. So our problem is with Iran on those issues. And on the other issue that you mentioned -- it didn't come up today. Maybe it will come up tomorrow, but we have had a very constructive and respectful dialogue with the government of India.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Burns, Deepak Arora with *The National Herald*. You have mentioned that you have discussed terrorism with Indian officials and India has been saying very lately that Pakistan has not yet stopped cross-border terrorism. There have been reports from an Indian separatist leader who went to Pakistan that the Pakistan Information Minister was part of terror camps, which was confirmed by the Pakistan Army chief. And there have been reports about Nawaz Sharif having a meeting with Osama bin Laden in Saudi Arabia, which all proves what has been saying all these years that Pakistan has been part of this terror network. Do you have any comments on this new information, which we read now?

**UNDER SECRETARY BURNS:** Well, I am not familiar with some of the information that you cited, some of the press reports that you cited. So it wouldn't be wise of me to comment on press reports I haven't seen. I should also tell you we have just begun our conversations here. I am here for two full days. We have just had three and a half hours. We'll have many more hours of conversation. We haven't yet had a discussion, but we will, about the broader situation in South Asia. Certainly we want to discuss Afghanistan. Certainly we want to discuss the situation on the Afghan-Pakistan border and of course we want to discuss the other issues that have concerned both Pakistan and India. But because we haven't discussed them yet it would be unfair for me probably to respond to the quite specific question that you have asked.

**QUESTION:** Shobori Ganguli from *The Pioneer*. Mr. Burns, just one clarification. When you say there ought to be room for the developing world in an expanded Security Council, do you mean in the permanent or non-permanent category -- representation in which category?

**UNDER SECRETARY BURNS:** Oh, in both. I mean we have an open and flexible position as we look at the Security Council. As I said before, and as our Secretary of State has said, we fully recognize the ambitions of the developing world, that they have a voice in the United Nations system. We fully agree that 60 years after the founding of the Council, the Council needs to represent the world as it is in our time, in 2005, rather than the world that was in the months following the end of the Second World War. And so we would never exclude the possibility of a developing country becoming a permanent member.

So there are opportunities for developing countries to compete and put themselves forward for permanent seats. There are opportunities for developing countries and developed countries to put themselves forward for non-permanent seats. The Council has a tradition of both permanent and non-permanent. The various proposals before the UN right now would allocate a certain number of expanded seats on the permanent side, a certain number by the non-permanent side. We are open to looking at both possibilities, and if you will, the debate in the UN has been between the G-4 proposal and the competing proposal. The United States put forward ideas last week, which we believe in essence try to unite these two proposals, are a bridge between the two proposals and try to take something from both proposals that we believe might have a more realistic chance of success.

This is a very complicated venture. You know, in order for any proposal to achieve initial success, it has to receive 128 votes in the General Assembly. There are then two additional hurdles, and the final one is the ratification by three quarters of the parliaments or national legislatures of each country to ratify the amended UN charter. This is a very long and complicated process and so we just felt it was important today in coming to Delhi to have a full conversation with the Indian government and I think we had a good conversation today.

**QUESTION:** Indrani Bagchi from *The Times of India*. Mr. Burns, the Prime Minister goes to the U.S. in July. What should we expect from the visit, what kind of agreements, what are the deliverables from the visit that we should be looking at?

**UNDER SECRETARY BURNS:** Well, first I should tell you that President Bush is very much looking forward to hosting the Prime Minister in the middle part of July. He's going to be a guest of our government. He's going to be treated in a way that we would want to treat our most honored guests. We expect this to be one of the most consequential US-India summits in the history of our relationship, going back to the independence of your country. There is more on the agenda, I can tell you, having reviewed it for three and a half hours today in exquisite detail. There is more on the agenda right now than there has ever been before and the relationship is qualitatively different; qualitatively different because we not only have the fact that the United States -- the leading trade partner, the leading investor in India -- has a very active commercial relationship that Ambassador Mulford has worked so hard to advance. We have a defense relationship of the type we have never had before. We have a political engagement in this region where, of course, we talk to India about all of the problems of this region and have good cooperation with India. But what's changed, in addition to all the other factors that have changed, is that we now have a global sense of our cooperation from the fact that we believe in and promote democracy, both of us together, to the fact that we are both responsible around the world for security or for peace. This relationship has now reached a level that has not been seen before. The summit meeting on July 18<sup>th</sup> will reflect that. We believe that there will be concrete achievements from it, but I would not be a very good diplomat if I announce those achievements before July 18<sup>th</sup>. So I think the Prime Minister and the President should be given the privilege and the opportunity to announce those results and its up to the [Foreign] Secretary and Ambassador Mulford and myself just to make sure that we are doing our best to prepare a good summit meeting for them.

Thank you very much.

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