



U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

Press Statement

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U.S. Officials Meet with Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran

On December 21 and 22, U.S. officials in Washington met with visiting Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran for comprehensive discussions covering the range of bilateral interests, including advancing democratization and security in South Asia, reducing barriers to trade and investment, and UN reform.

Foreign Secretary Saran met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley. The Foreign Secretary and Under Secretary for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns held the third meeting of the Indo-U.S. Working Group on Civil Nuclear Energy Cooperation, which produced positive forward movement on a range of issues. Both sides exchanged views on the implementation of their respective commitments under the July 18 Joint Statement. The two sides also shared ideas about the processes that flow from these commitments in their own countries and with relation to their international partners. Significant progress was achieved in developing a mutual understanding of the steps needed to advance the early implementation of the agreement. The working group expects to hold its next meeting in January 2006 in New Delhi.

Foreign Secretary Saran and Under Secretary Burns also held discussions on the broad range of bilateral initiatives designed to build a new strategic partnership between the two countries. These initiatives, agreed by President Bush and Prime Minister Singh in July 2005, include revitalized dialogue and cooperation on economics and trade, environment, energy, agriculture, space cooperation, disaster response, HIV/AIDS and aiding developing democracies.

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