



Media Note  
Office of the Spokesman  
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November 30, 2006

## United States - Pakistan Joint Statement: Enhancing and Strengthening Strategic Partnership in the Education Sector

Following is the text of a Joint Statement issued by the United States and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on November 29, 2006.

The inaugural session of the U.S.-Pakistan Education Dialogue was held on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006 in Washington, D.C., with the U.S. and Pakistani sides led respectively by Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings and Minister of Education Lt. General (Ret.) Javed Ashraf. Established under the U.S. -Pakistan Strategic Partnership affirmed by President Bush and President Musharraf during the March 2006 visit of President Bush to Pakistan, the Education Dialogue was established to enhance and strengthen bilateral cooperation in the education sector at all levels.

Both the U.S. and Pakistan reaffirmed their commitment to support the educational objectives of Pakistan as part of our substantial and growing bilateral relationship, and engaged in wide-ranging and productive discussions regarding:

- teacher training programs;
- promotion of teacher, student, and faculty exchanges;
- improvement of secondary-level science and math studies;
- administrative capacity-building, including school infrastructure;
- vocational/workforce education and training to meet Pakistan's labor needs;
- public/private sector partnerships; and
- the establishment of linkages between the higher-education academic and research institutions of our two countries, and training of Pakistani academics in U.S. institutions.

Through the expansion of U.S.-Pakistani cooperation in areas such as these - together with over \$200 million disbursed in U.S. educational assistance since 2002 and an additional \$100 million for FY07, we hope together to expand educational opportunities for the people of Pakistan, and create new prospects for economic growth and development in accordance with the mutual commitment undertaken by Presidents Bush and Musharraf.

During the discussions today, programs for future cooperation in the education sector were also discussed. As a result of these discussions, both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation and interaction in the educational field and to intensify and expand areas for cooperative activities. The U.S. and Pakistan have agreed to:

- Collaborate closely regarding an education exchange for workforce development, relying on a partnership supported by the Department of State, the Pakistan Ministry of Education, Pakistan's Higher Education Commission, and the non-governmental sector. Towards this objective, a delegation of Pakistani education officials, including representatives of Pakistan's provinces, will visit the United States in January 2007 to observe innovative and entrepreneurial community college programs in Florida, followed by the visit to Pakistan of a well-respected U.S. community college leader for consultations with Pakistan's higher education sector. The new initiative will be supported by the Community College Program created by Under Secretary Karen Hughes to build capacity in the community college sector in Pakistan and other pivotal nations in Asia, Latin American, Europe, and Africa.
- Continue to promote student exchanges between our two countries as a means of fostering greater opportunity and understanding between the young peoples of our two countries.
- Continue and maintain this important area of cooperation through the continuation of the bilateral Education Dialogue through the visit of senior U.S. officials to Pakistan in 2007.

We look forward to ongoing discussion of the proposals and initiatives raised in today's session, continued cooperation on Pakistan's national educational strategy, and the conduct of future Bilateral Education Dialogues both here and in Pakistan.

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