

Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Chairman Richard G. Lugar
Opening Statement for Hearing on
U.S.-India Civilian Nuclear Agreement
April 5, 2006

The Foreign Relations Committee meets today to examine the U.S.-India Civilian Nuclear Agreement. The India nuclear deal is one of the most ambitious foreign policy initiatives to come before Congress in many years. In view of the importance of the Committee's work on this agreement, we are especially pleased to welcome Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. We look forward to this public opportunity to explore in depth the agreement and its implications.

Last Wednesday, the Committee met in closed session with Under Secretary Nick Burns and Under Secretary Bob Joseph to hear the Bush Administration's views with regard to the India nuclear deal. The briefing was well attended, and members listened carefully to the presentation. The briefing encompassed a broad range of topics, but I believe that we have only scratched the surface of this intricate agreement and the national security questions it has raised.

Indeed, some months ago, I submitted to the State Department 82 questions related to the agreement as an initial step toward establishing a dialogue that would help Congress make an informed decision. The State Department has provided answers to those 82 questions. A copy of this lengthy exchange has been provided to all members of the Committee, and it can be accessed on my office website.

I expect, however, that this hearing will generate many additional questions from members. Given the complexity and importance of the issue, the Administration must continue to be responsive to this Committee and to the entire Congress.

The Committee is cognizant of how valuable a closer relationship with India could be for the United States. I believe that we will find little argument in Congress with the general premise that the national security and economic future of the United States would be enhanced by a strong and enduring partnership with India. Our nations share common democratic values and the potential of our economic engagement is limitless. The progress made by India in the last decade is one of the world's major success stories. With a well-educated middle class that is larger than the entire U.S. population, India can be an anchor of stability in Asia and an engine of global economic growth.

Despite this success, the Indian government recognizes that much of its growing population still lives in poverty. To overcome these conditions, it will need more trade, more scientific and technical cooperation, and most of all, more energy.

India's energy needs are expected to double by 2025. The United States has an interest in expanding energy cooperation with India to develop new technologies, cushion supply disruptions, cut green house gas emissions, and prepare for declining global fossil fuel reserves. The United States' own energy problems will be exacerbated if we do not forge energy partnerships with India, China, and other nations experiencing rapid economic growth. That is why I have introduced S. 2435, the Energy Diplomacy and Security Act, which would encourage international energy dialogues and advance a broad range of energy diplomacy goals.

But in pursuing a nuclear relationship with India, we must deal with some fundamental facts. India has not signed the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty; it has built and tested nuclear weapons; and it has declared its intention to continue its nuclear weapons programs and the production of fissile material. Although the U.S.-India Civilian Nuclear Agreement would move India into a closer relationship with the International Atomic

Energy Agency and would put more Indian reactors under safeguards, it would not prevent India from expanding its nuclear arsenal. If Congress approves this agreement, we will be establishing a new course after decades of declining any cooperation with India's nuclear program.

It was apparent from our earlier briefing that the Bush Administration considered the implications of this agreement on our international non-proliferation posture. After weighing many factors, the President and his team came down on the side of concluding this agreement with the Indian government. They judged that the deal could be implemented without undercutting our non-proliferation advocacy and that its benefits included stronger Indian cooperation with international non-proliferation efforts.

Now Congress must undertake its own exhaustive deliberations on this matter, and we must reach our own conclusions. No one should suggest that the answers to our questions are either easy or obvious. What is required is a thorough, bipartisan review of this agreement in the context of non-proliferation goals, global energy requirements, environmental concerns, and our geo-strategic relationship with India.

We thank Secretary Rice for joining us today and for the opportunity to engage her on this important agreement.

###