

India - US Relations: A Vision for the 21st Century

At the dawn of a new century, Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton resolve to create a closer and qualitatively new relationship between India and the United States.

We are two of the world's largest democracies. We are nations forged from many traditions and faiths, proving year after year that diversity is our strength. From vastly different origins and experiences, we have come to the same conclusions: that freedom and democracy are the strongest bases for both peace and prosperity, and that they are universal aspirations, constrained neither by culture nor levels of economic development.

There have been times in the past when our relationship drifted without a steady course. As we now look towards the future, we are convinced that it is time to chart a new and purposeful direction in our relationship.

Globalisation is erasing boundaries and building networks between nations and peoples, economies and cultures. The world is increasingly coming together around the democratic ideals India and the United States have long championed and lived by.

Together, we represent a fifth of the world's people, more than a quarter of the world's economy. We have built creative, entrepreneurial societies. We are leaders in the information age. The currents of commerce and culture that link our societies run strong and deep. In many ways, the character of the 21st century world will depend on the success of our co-operation for peace, prosperity, democracy and freedom.

That presents us with an opportunity, but also a profound responsibility to work together. Our partnership of shared ideals leads us to seek a natural partnership of shared endeavours.

In the new century, India and the United States will be partners in peace, with a common interest in and complementary responsibility for ensuring regional and international security. We will engage in regular consultations on, and work together and with others for, strategic stability in Asia and beyond. We will bolster joint efforts to counter terrorism and meet other challenges to regional peace. We will strengthen the international security system, including in the United Nations and support the United Nations in its peacekeeping efforts. We acknowledge that tensions in South Asia can only be resolved by the nations of South Asia. India is committed to enhancing cooperation, peace and stability in the region.

India and the United States share a commitment to reducing and ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons, but we have not always agreed on how to reach this common goal. The United States believes India should forgo nuclear weapons. India believes that it needs to maintain a credible minimum nuclear deterrent in keeping with its own assessment of its security needs. Nonetheless, India and the US are prepared to work together to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. To this end, we will persist with and build upon the productive bilateral dialogue already underway.

We reaffirm our respective voluntary commitment to forgo further nuclear explosive tests. We will work together and with others for an early commencement of negotiations on a treaty to end the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. We have both shown strong commitment to export controls, and will continue to strengthen them. We will work together to prevent the spread of dangerous technologies. We are committed to build confidence and reduce the chances of miscalculation. We will pursue our security needs in a restrained and responsible manner and will not engage in nuclear and missile arms races. We will seek to narrow our differences and increase

mutual understanding on non-proliferation and security issues. This will help us to realise the full potential of Indo-US relations and contribute significantly to regional and global security.

The true measure of our strength lies in the ability of our people to shape their destiny and to realise their aspirations for a better life. That is why the United States and India are and will be allies in the cause of democracy. We will share our experience in nurturing and strengthening democratic institutions the world over and fighting the challenge to democratic order from forces such as terrorism. We will co-operate with others to launch an international Community of Democracies this year.

The United States applauds India's success in opening its economy, its achievements in science and technology, its commitment to a new wave of economic expansion and reform, and its determination to bring the benefits of economic growth to all its people. Our nations pledge to reduce impediments to bilateral trade and investment and to expand commerce between us, especially in the emerging knowledge-based industries and high-technology areas.

We will work together to preserve stability and growth in the global economy as well. And we will join in an unrelenting battle against poverty in the world, so that the promise of a new economy is felt everywhere and no nation is left behind. That is among the fundamental challenges of our time. Opening trade and resisting protectionism are the best means for meeting it. We support an open, equitable and transparent rule-based multilateral trading system, and we will work together to strengthen it. We agree that developed countries should embrace policies that offer developing countries the opportunities to grow, because growth is the key to rising incomes and rising standards. At the same time, we share the conviction that human development also requires empowerment of people and availability of basic freedoms.

As leaders in the forefront of the new high-technology economy, we recognise that countries can achieve robust economic growth while protecting the environment and

taking action to combat climate change. We will do our part to meet the global environmental challenges, including climate change and the impacts of air and water pollution on human health.

We also pledge a common effort to battle the infectious diseases that kill people and retard progress in so many countries. India is at the forefront of the global effort that has brought us to the threshold of the eradication of polio. With leadership, joint research and application of modern science, we can and will do the same for the leading killers of our time, including AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

We are proud of the co-operation between Indians and Americans in advancing frontiers of knowledge. But even as we unravel the mysteries of time and space, we must continue to apply our knowledge to older challenges: eradicating human suffering, disease and poverty. In the past, our co-operation helped ease mass hunger in the world. In the future, it will focus as well on the development of clean energy, health and education.

Our partnership is not an end in itself, but a means to all these ends. And it is reinforced by the ties of scholarship, commerce, and increasingly of kinship among our people. The industry, enterprise and cultural contributions of Americans of Indian heritage have enriched and enlivened both our societies.

Today, we pledge to deepen the Indian-American partnership in tangible ways, always seeking to reconcile our differences through dialogue and engagement, always seizing opportunities to advance the countless interests we have in common. As a first step, President Clinton has invited Prime Minister Vajpayee to visit Washington at a mutually convenient opportunity, and the Prime Minister has accepted that invitation. Henceforth, the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of India should meet regularly to institutionalise our dialogue. We have also agreed on and separately outlined an architecture of additional high-level consultations, and of joint working

groups, across the broad spectrum of areas in which we are determined to institutionalise our enhanced cooperation. And we will encourage even stronger people-to-people ties.

For India and the United States, this is a day of new beginnings. We have before us for the first time in 50 years the possibility to realise the full potential of our relationship. We will work to seize that chance, for our benefit and for all those with whom we share this increasingly interdependent world.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee

Atal Bihari Vajpayee
Prime Minister of India

William J. Clinton

William Jefferson Clinton
President of the United States of America

Done on March 21, 2000 at New Delhi

Institutional Dialogue Between India and the United States

1. During the visit of President Clinton to Delhi in March 2000, Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton agreed as part of their vision for the future relationship that a regular, wide-ranging dialogue is important for achieving the goal of establishing closer and multifaceted relations between India and the United States and for the two countries to work jointly for promotion of peace and prosperity in the 21st century. The two leaders agreed on a number of steps to intensify and institutionalise the dialogue between India and the United States.
2. The Prime Minister of India and the President of the United States will hold regular **bilateral 'Summits'** in alternating capitals or elsewhere, including on the occasions of multilateral meetings, to review the bilateral relations and consult on international developments and issues. They will remain in frequent contact on telephone and through letters.
3. The two countries will also hold an **Annual Foreign Policy Dialogue** at the level of the External Affairs Minister of India and the Secretary of State of the United States. This dialogue will be broad-based and touch upon all aspects of India-US relations, including considering the work of other groups as appropriate.
4. The two countries also consider the ongoing **Dialogue on Security and Non-proliferation** between the External Affairs Minister of India and the Deputy Secretary of State of the United States important for improving mutual understanding on bilateral, regional and international security matters. They agreed that this dialogue should continue and take place semi-annually or as often as considered desirable by both sides. The Principals of this dialogue will establish Expert Groups on specific issues as considered desirable and appropriate.

5. **Foreign Office Consultations** between the Foreign Secretary of India and the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs of the United States and will continue. The two leaders believe that close co-operation between the two countries is a factor of stability in the politically and culturally diverse and rapidly transforming Asia. A **Dialogue on Asian Security** will also be conducted as part of the Foreign Office Consultations. The two sides will also stay in close touch and consult on international democracy initiatives.

6. The two leaders consider combating international terrorism as one of the most important global challenges. They expressed satisfaction at the establishment of the **Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism** and its productive first meeting in February 2000. They agree that the Joint Working Group should continue to meet regularly and become an effective mechanism for the two countries to share information and intensify their co-operation in combating terrorism.

7. The two leaders see an enormous potential for enhancement of economic and business relations between the two countries in the Knowledge Age. They decided to **institutionalise bilateral economic dialogue**. They will keep themselves informed and follow developments in the bilateral economic dialogue closely through a high-level co-ordinating group. The co-ordinating group will be led on the Indian side by Prime Minister's Office with the support of Ministry of External Affairs, and on the US side by the White House with the support of the State Department.

- ◆ The **Co-ordinating Group** will develop a common economic agenda for and undertake preparations for the Heads of Government meetings. With broad inter-agency and inter-ministerial representations at senior official level, it would convene regularly to facilitate close co-ordination on the various issues raised in the ministerial dialogues and ensure that discussions therein complement and reinforce broad economic and foreign policy objectives, including the deepening of bilateral co-operation on high technology and information technology issues.

- ◆ **Indo-US Financial and Economic Forum:** The Indian Minister of Finance and the US Secretary of the Treasury will host a forum on finance and investment issues, macroeconomic policy and international economic developments at regular intervals. Their meetings at ministerial level would be supplemented by sub-Cabinet meetings and involve, as appropriate, the participation of Securities and Exchange Commission, Federal Reserve, Council of Economic Advisors, and other officials of the US Government and the Securities and Exchange Board of India, Reserve Bank of India and other officials of Government of India.
- ◆ **Indo-US Commercial Dialogue:** The Minister of Commerce and Industry of India and the US Secretary of Commerce will lead a dialogue to deepen ties between the Indian and American business communities. The dialogue will encompass regular government-to-government meetings to be held in conjunction with private sector meetings. Its aim will be to (a) facilitate trade (b) maximise investment opportunities across a broad range of economic sectors, including information technology, infrastructure, biotechnology, and services. Participation will include, as appropriate, representatives of other Cabinet agencies and Ministries on both sides. Close contact will be maintained with business associations, and activities will be planned with the benefit of such private sector input, including the establishment of subcommittees to pursue specific projects or sectoral issues of mutual interest.
- ◆ **Indo-US Working Group on Trade:** The Ministry of Commerce and other concerned Ministries/Departments of the Government of India and the United States Trade Representative will engage in regular discussion to enhance cooperation on trade policy. As appropriate, individual trade issues could be examined in greater depth with the participation of other agencies with corresponding responsibilities and through creation of sub-groups. The Group will serve as a locus of consultation on a broad range of trade-related issues, including those pertaining to the World Trade Organisation. The Group will receive inputs from the private sector (including trade policy issues identified in the Indo-US Commercial Dialogue) as appropriate.

8. The two leaders consider co-operation between the two countries in energy and environment an important part of their vision for the future. They have agreed to set up a

Joint Consultative Group on Clean Energy and Environment. The Group will hold periodic ministerial/high level meetings as desirable and appropriate and will lay emphases on collaborative projects, developing and deploying clean energy technologies, public and private sector investment and co-operation, and climate change and other environmental issues. The Co-conveners of the Group will be the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Department of State of the United States.

9. The two leaders believe that the strong scientific resources of the two countries provide excellent opportunities for scientific collaboration between them. They agree to set up an **India-US Science and Technology Forum.** The Forum shall promote research and development, the transfer of technology, the creation of a comprehensive electronic reference source for Indo-US science and technology cooperation, and the electronic exchange and dissemination of information on Indo-US science and technology cooperation, and other programmes consistent with the previous practice of the US-India Foundation.
10. Institutional dialogue in other areas will be considered as mutually agreed.