

Proceedings from the 2005 Conference on

# Strengthening International Security:

A Best Practices  
Exchange Between  
the U.S., India & Israel



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Proceedings from the 2005 Conference on

March 17, 2005

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# — TABLE OF CONTENTS —

## **Preface**

Jim Colbert—*Conference Director* 7

## **Introduction and Welcome**

Armeane Choksi—*President, U.S.-India Institute* 9

## **P1: Foreign Policy Priorities of the Three New Administrations**

### *Israel Speaker*

The Hon. Rafael Barak—*Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Israel* 13

### *U.S. Speaker*

Peter Brookes—*Senior Fellow for National Security Affairs, The Heritage Foundation* 19

### *India Speaker*

The Hon. Raminder Singh Jassal—*Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India* 23

## **Introduction to Panel Two**

Manish Thakur—*Executive Director, U.S.-India Institute* 31

## **P2: The Global War on Terror – Military Perspectives**

### *Israel Speaker*

Maj. Gen. Amos Yadlin—*Defense & Armed Forces Attache, Embassy of Israel* 33

### *India Speaker*

Air Chief Marshal S. Krishnaswamy—*India Air Force (ret.)* 37

### *U.S. Speaker*

Ambassador Harvey Feldman—*Former Alternate U.S. Representative to the UN* 43

## **Introduction to Panel Three**

Edward Weiss—*National Secretary, JINSA* 49

## **P3: Vision for the Future**

### *Israel Speaker*

Dr. Gal Luft—*Executive Director, Institute for the Analysis of Global Security* 51

### *India Speaker*

Lt. Col. Behram A. Sahukar—*Senior Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses* 55

### *U.S. Speaker*

Juli A. MacDonald—*Senior Associate, Booz Allen Hamilton* 61

## **Concluding Remarks**

Tom Neumann—*Executive Director, JINSA* 67

## — PREFACE —

*Jim Colbert*  
*Conference Director*

The United States, Israel and India have much in common. All three have great democratic traditions, and all three have been the targets of major terrorist attacks. Recognizing this commonality and acknowledging that the international terror network requires an *equally* international counter-terror network to defeat it, the leadership of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA) decided to bring together representatives from each of these three democracies. These experts were drawn from the intelligence, military and diplomatic fields of each country for the purpose of strengthening their already growing partnership and promoting concerted action against terrorism in its multiple forms.

In an effort to ensure that the relationships forged during the meetings would continue beyond the meetings' end, a series of trilateral conferences were planned. The inaugural event – held in February 2003 in New Delhi – underscored the importance of developing an on-going strategic interchange between the three nations. The subsequent discussion highlighted the centrality of common security concerns particularly in the field of counter-terrorism. At this meeting, representatives from the three countries gathered at the India International Centre in New Delhi under the auspices of India's Manipal Academy of Higher Education and under the direction of Professor Madhav Nalapat. Titled "The United States-India-Israel Trilateral Security Conference," the two-day event gathered security and counter-terrorism experts from the three democracies to discuss the importance of international security and to devise a common approach to international terrorism.

The three delegations concluded that broad programs of cooperation among their countries are essential to combat effectively the threat posed by terrorism. To that end, the delegations agreed to carry out a detailed action program that included a pledge to continue to conduct trilateral security conferences and to increase counter-terror cooperation among military and security related agencies in the three countries during the period of time between conferences. Representatives from the three also committed themselves to increasing cooperation in counter-terrorism research and in the development of enhanced counter-terrorism techniques.

The overwhelming success of the conference in India led directly to the second conference held in February 2004 at the Air Force Conference Center in Herzliya, Israel. This conference was coordinated by the International Policy Institute

for Counter Terrorism and the Harold Hartog School of Government and Policy of Tel Aviv University and under the direction of Professor Martin Sherman.

The event in Israel spurred the conference directors to further pursue the goals announced at the first event and to establish frameworks to encourage the monitoring of possible radical Wahabbi-Khomeinist infiltration into scientific organizations relating to weapons of mass destruction. The U.S., Indian, and Israeli delegations reiterated their basic conviction that terrorism, whether government-sponsored or carried out by non-state actors, is a first order security threat to all three countries and indeed to the entire international community.

It was with great anticipation as well as gratitude to conference host Patton Boggs, LLP, that the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs and its conference cosponsor, the U.S.-India Institute, held the third United States-India-Israel Trilateral Security Conference in Washington, D.C. in March 2005.

I am pleased to present to you the proceedings from this most recent meeting. It is our hope that they will prove to be of use to policymakers, scholars and all those interested in furthering close relations and cooperative enterprises between the United States, India and Israel to strengthen their collective and individual fight against global terrorism.

## — CONFERENCE INTRODUCTION —

*Armeane Choksi*  
*President, U.S.-India Institute*

Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to welcome all of you and I'd like to thank Patton Boggs for hosting this conference. I'd also like to thank JINSA for inviting the U.S.-India Institute to participate in this event – the third in our series of U.S.-India security conferences. The first was held in India; the second in Israel, and this is the first in the United States.

I think the timing of this conference is very appropriate, not least because Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is just now in India, but also because the world has changed quite dramatically over the last few years. The events of 9/11 have fundamentally changed the way we look at security. In addition, we have now seen the sort of slow disintegration of international security institutions like the United Nations. NATO is turning into an organization that is in search of a mission, and I think we've now got a situation where U.S. national security interests are shifting away from Europe towards the Middle East and the Far East. And in that context, the role of U.S., India, and Israel becomes quite critical. Clearly the relationships, both military and economic, have been increasing quite dramatically. Wisely started under the Reagan administration, they have accelerated phenomenally under the Bush administration. And as recently as 1992, India did not recognize the State of Israel. But today, the relationships between India and Israel have also increased phenomenally, and we have here today the key architect of that relationship, Ambassador Raminder Jassal.

So clearly, what we are now beginning to see is a kernel, I hope, of a new global security alliance; a global security alliance of democracies. We are now beginning to see the U.S., India, and Israel are now addressing security issues, albeit on a bilateral basis, but hopefully the relationships will get tighter and closer as time goes on, because we all have a common threat of global terrorism, Islamic terrorism facing us in Israel and the United States, as well as in India. And we also have to look at India and China, certainly; India and the United States, certainly, as to whether China threatens our interest in the Far East or not. So clearly, the focus of U.S. national security interests is shifting. It is converging with that of India and with Israel, and we hope that this conference will continue to push forward the notion of this tri-lateral relationship further. Thank you.

— **PANEL ONE** —

*Foreign Policy Priorities of the Three New Administrations*

*The Honorable Rafael Barak*  
*Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Israel*

Good morning and thank you very much JINSA for the invitation, and thank you for hosting us here. And in particular, I'm really pleased to share this first forum here with my colleague and friend, Raminder Jassal, who until a few weeks ago was the India Ambassador in Israel. And he made an outstanding job, and he's well appreciated by my Prime Minister, he was a really very excellent Ambassador, an outstanding Ambassador, so I'm really pleased to share the table with him today.

Let me try to go through the last five years that I think determine the main political aspects of our national strategy, the national security approach, and I will start in the Summer of 2000, when we were not far from here in Camp David with a different administration in my country, our labor administration headed by Ehud Barak, and I'm not related to him. And at that time, we thought that we were very, very close to signing an agreement with the Palestinians.

The Clinton administration made a big effort. We were very close, but finally we discovered that we don't have a partner. Arafat was not the man that would deliver the goods. We decided to move on, and we tried to see if we could develop another forum of negotiations. It failed, and then we were confronted by violence from the Palestinian side, that was well prepared in advance through some intelligence, and we knew that. And they start using

violence as a way to promote the means, and the intifada started and lasted for almost four and a half years.

So this basic change demonstrated to the Israeli government and the Israeli public opinions that we are not able to find a partner, so we have to confront this intifada and we have to defend ourselves. And this was almost four and a half years, and I would say that it still might continue from time to time. A difficult challenge for the Israeli public that will demonstrate the resolve despite injuries and almost daily bombings that you were following at that time.

The second item I think is really very important, and gives a framework to our national policy, what happened, unfortunately, on September 11th in this country, because this implicate a basic change in the American foreign policy.

For the first time, the Middle East becomes the first priority, the last one on the list becomes the first priority of the American foreign policy. We new that the Middle East is important, but before that the USSR was on the top of the list. After September 11th, due to the fact that the terrorists came from our region, and due to the fact that the elements that initiate this terror are part of this Islamic Fundamentalism are in our region. It changed the focus of the American administration, and brought together a different attention to our larger region. And this, for sure, was an im-

portant element in trying to accommodate our foreign policy.

The second element that is related to the September 11th is not only the geographical aspect, but also the focus on terror, on Islamic terror, particularly, and the interest of this administration to try to break down what is going on in some of the societies around my region.

If I have to describe this in the way with a colleague, an American diplomat explained this to me at the very beginning after September 11th – he said, “Rafi, we have been American diplomats keeping the basket full of eggs. And this basket full of eggs was our interests in the Middle East. We keep this basket for many years. We try to do everything remain in a very stable situation, nothing will happen to them. Now that this happened, September 11th happened, and we have now our policy, and we have our President, and we have an administration who is breaking all these eggs because the problem that we are facing starts on the element that are part of the text, and we are preparing a new omelet. So what this omelet will be, we still don’t know. But that means that for a very important policy that was basic stability for many years, this was the basic approach of the U.S. administration through the Middle East. Now we are in a new aspect with a new policy of not any more stability, but change. And this change brings for sure many dangers, but brings also, and we hope many good things, and I will comment on in a few minutes.

The conflict there with the Palestinians went on for almost four and a half years. As we say, a daily confrontation of this race of society. We produce terrible attacks. The necessary respond and the support that we got from the administration because we were also fighting terror.

I would like to underscore the endurance of the Israeli public opinion that support, despite the heavy casualties, more than 1,000 Israeli, mostly civilians, killed and 3,000 wounded. And we were trying to build something from nothing, because we didn’t have a partner. But

the chaos in foreign policy is not a good reason, so we tried to have with the administration and with others to build some kind of plans to get out from the situation we were in, and this was the road map that came up in 2003. And some kind of plan, steps that we have to implement in three stages in order to get out from this situation. We discovered that the plans are not enough, that we need political will, and we didn’t discover this political will.

The fourth element that I will mention for sure is the war in Iraq. The fact that American soldiers are in Iraq, very close to our borders. This signifies a very important change here in the dynamics in the region, and it demonstrates the will and the determination of the President and the administration. And I’m sure that some of the leaders in the neighbor countries ask themselves what this will imply for them.

One of them took a very bold position, and I’m referring to Qadhafi, that they change totally 180 percent his policy, and he started accommodating to the request of the administration. And the war in Iraq actually brought our countries in the region to the necessity to determine in which side they are; are they with the Americans on the western side, are they against it, or are they trying to see where the wind blows and try to accommodate in one way or the other. So think that under these parameters, you can discover the countries were really supportive to the countries, countries that were hesitating between the situation, and others, like Syria and Iran, were totally against.

The fifth element I think it’s important to underscore, and this happened almost in the last three months of the last year, were three important facts that happened, and I would like to elaborate a little bit.

The first one was the fact that George Bush was re-elected. This was a very, very, very strong message to the region. That means that the policy that started four years before will continue, or either will intensify, and will affect each one of the countries in the region. Each one of those countries knows now that

they have to address the policy that's coming from Washington. They have to prepare answers for that. I'm sure that every foreign Arab leader that is coming to this country or to this city has at least one item in his agenda meeting the President or other senior officials of the administration about how

I will explain what I'm doing in my country related to the American interest fighting terrorism, reforming, so on and so forth.

The second element that is really important, and demonstrates the importance of leaders in a positive and a negative way, is the fact that Arafat did pass away. This was a very significant change in the society due to the fact that those who came after him, particularly Abu Mazen, who is now leaving the PA after elections, was always keeping in mind that violence will not promote the Palestinians ends, and we need something different, we need some peaceful talks with the Israelis.

The third element was an element that was part of our national security, and this one we call defense. This is a security barrier that was constructed and built around almost a grid line by my government, and this changed the dynamics not only due to the infiltration of terrorists due to Israel, some part of Israel, particularly the big cities, but also because it demonstrates the resolve of my country, and the fact that some dreams of some Palestinians, that due to demographic hints, they can transform the reality in the ground was with this fence or this barrier that put them to an end. So these three elements changed the reality on the ground, and we went through elections on the Palestinian side. And these elections came on the framework of elections are going on also in the region. Elections are not by themselves proof of democracy, but it's always a good element. And the fact that Abu Mazen was elected is a good hint. And we are now, Israel and the Palestinians, I would say in this year, 2005, going on parallel roads.

Abu Mazen is a President that doesn't have a state. He has to build everything almost

from top to bottom. He doesn't have a structure, he doesn't have even I would say a staff, a spokesman, a chief of staff. He doesn't have institutions, so he has to reform, he has to build up a new bureaucracy. He has to transform the wills and wishes of people through democratic and bureaucratic ways. And for sure, he has also to deal with those of concerns for us, the violence from the different terrorist groups. So those are big challenges to Abu Mazen.

He is a good man. He is ready to dialogue, and we wish him the best. We have some doubts about the possibility to do that. It's a very difficult endeavor, but we will try to help him at our utmost in order to support his wish. So this is Abu Mazen's line. This is what he will have to do, to perform this year. He will have to be not only a President but have some kind of counting to this PA, Palestinian Authority, that will bring him at the end of the year maybe to a different situation.

Parallel to that, Israelis, we are now starting a process that we call the disengagement from Gaza. May I remind you that the disengagement was an idea introduced by my Prime Minister even before Arafat passed away. It was a universal position of the Israel government in order to try to improve the security situation of my country.

Events occurred and history developed, and we have now this plan that if at that time we planned to do it unilaterally. Now we changed our mind and we would like to make it coordinated with the Palestinians, so we would like to leave Gaza. We would like to leave the northern part of Samaria, and we will give the Palestinians contiguity, the ability in the northern part. And this is a first step according to what is established in the world there. So we are going through this disengagement.

Politically, domestically this is not an easy step. You may be acquainted if you're watching television. Prime Minister Sharon is trying to convince his party – if I said that Abu Mazen is a Prime Minister, a President without a country, I would say in a way that my Prime

Minister is a Prime Minister without a party. He has at least half of his supporters in Knesset in a parliament that they are not raising their hand. And this is a very difficult, substantial position for both members of the Likud, but in general for the Israeli population, taking these positions. And we will have before the end of this month, or even on March 31st, a vote for the budget. And if we will not succeed, we will have new elections. And this vote on the budget actually is a vote for the disengagement that will come out within the next few days.

So parallel ways, Abu Mazen reforming, stopping violence, we disengaging from Gaza, north in Samaria, and there will be some bridges between our sides. That is, there are no major substantial things that we have to dialogue with the Palestinians, or to decide with the Palestinians in the next year. Everything is clear for us, everything is clear for them. But in-between, we have to take care of the cities that we are transferring to the Palestinians. We have to take care of the prisoners that we are releasing. We have to care of the disengagement itself that we would like to make it coordinated. There are almost 8,000 settlers in Gaza, and north in Samaria. There are houses, industries that we would like to in a peaceful way transfer to the Palestinians, so there are a lot of things together, not conflictual things, but things that can bring us together more and more.

And the point that I will underscore is that maybe for both of us, Palestinians and Israelis succeeded, so we will find ourselves at the end of this year in a different situation, a situation in which both leaders will be more strong in their own constituencies, and maybe what is written in the road map will not be taken in account word by word, but maybe this can bring us to a different reality in 2006.

Let me shortly address three other issues that are very important to our political situation. I alluded to them before. First, is the risk of change in the region. Elections now will follow the Palestinian, Afghani elections, the Iraqi, will also add to crime. Some hints in

Syria, some changes in Egypt, we'll wait to see. But this means that we follow very closely the process that this administration is following, that is the new omelet is now in process, and things are moving.

There is more interest from the international community, and the business community to our region, that proportionally is the one that get fewer investments in the last six, seven years. And I feel that change is coming not because it's imposed from outside, but that it's bubbling from inside. And this, I think, is very important.

We have in our region, unfortunately, a culture of what I will define as victims, being victims of imperialism, victims of the Israelis – I don't know. This is the first moment in many years at least that we are identifying societies close to us, our neighbors, that they would like to take their destiny in their own hands. And this is a very important change, and we hope that this will increase, and will become more and more important. That fact that the administration has taken this as one of the most important items in their agenda is, for us, something that may give us satisfaction, and for sure supports also our needs.

Two other words, one for Syria in the northern border. Assad is, unfortunately, the man that is leading the country and is calling all the shots, and is taking the positions, and we will see what the future report brings about the killing of Hariri in Lebanon. It made many technical mistakes in the last few weeks, and he finds himself almost isolated. He's like in a balloon throwing away the weight in order to try to keep his head over the water, but our assessment is that at the end of the day, he will have to implement the UN Security Council Resolution 1559. And we draw from Lebanon, and we expect that also will bring Lebanon new elections. And this is again another example of things coming from inside, and not imposed from outside. And this is also an important development. Syria has tried in many ways, including offering us to reopen discus-

sions with Israel, and we were very tempted by that because politically for our Prime Minister of Israel here, we would like to dialogue with you to start these conversations. It's difficult from the point of view of the public opinion to say no, but we understood what it really means, and the motives are from Assad. And we'll see how things will bring us about in the next few months. And maybe then we'll start a political process with Syria.

We don't have any progress with Lebanon. I'm sure that Lebanon will become a really independent country, and peace will be signed between those countries very rapidly.

Last, a word to Iran. Iran, last but I would say this is most important. If I have to pinpoint one country that is a substantial threat to mine and to Israelis is Iran, definitely. It combines four elements that for us are very threatening. They are developing missile capabilities. They have a long arm of terror, any parts, particularly Lebanon, with Hizballah; but not only in Lebanon, my embassy was bombed in Buenos Aires, and other places in the world we saw the hands of Hizballah.

The third element is that they are developing nuclear capabilities, and we are very satisfied that the way that the world, this administration are confronting now Iraq, is taking this as an international problem, and international issue, not only an Israel-Iranian issue. Because really, all countries in the region are concerned about this nuclear capabilities of Iran.

And the fourth element is that it is the only country that actually mentions openly in their statements the fact that they wanted to destroy my country. I'm not aware about other countries that are calling for the destruction of other countries bluntly and openly as the Iranians are in making some of those things.

So let me close out by telling you that we are hoping for a new future in our region. We think that things are changing. There are dangers that we feel that the possibilities are increasingly better than the risk that we are taking. And we feel that we are on the opening of a

new millennium in the Middle East, the heavy support of this administration, and the fact that we are on the same page almost on any issue, give us also a very important standing. And we continue to work together with the American administration in order to develop our common targets and aims in this region and others. Thank you.

## Peter Brookes

*Senior Fellow for National Security Affairs, The Heritage Foundation*

**M**y task this morning is to talk about foreign policies of the priorities of the Bush administration. It's not really a "new" administration, although we are seeing some changes at senior levels within the national security apparatus of the government. Most recently, Paul Wolfowitz's impending departure for the World Bank, but as I was thinking about this a little bit, I was saying where do you start? There are so many American priorities, and my American colleagues here obviously know every morning when they open up the paper and read that probably two-thirds of the paper is on foreign policy issues, I mean it's almost striking considering what it probably was before, before 9/11. There are so many challenges out there for America, and obviously, most of them have to be addressed in parallel. They can't be addressed sequentially, because they're just all too very important. So I'm going to do a breezy tour of the horizon, my views on the priorities. I'll talk a little bit about South Asia and the Middle East, obviously, because that's of very high importance to these people, but there are also a lot of other very big issues out there, as well.

And, of course, I'm not going to do a whole terrorism shtick here, but the fact is that terrorism overlays all of these issues, and obviously Homeland Security, which is both a foreign policy and a domestic issue, are going to be threaded throughout them.

Let me just start in South Asia. As you know, Condi Rice is making a sweep through the region. She's on her way, I guess she'll be finishing with South Asia, and moving into East Asia any moment for South Korea, Japan, and China. But obviously with Afghanistan, the issue still is transitioning that country, its democratic transition, getting rid of the al Qaeda and Taliban remnants. Some people are very bullish on that. There's been some very favorable reporting coming from the region from senior officials, especially some of the military commanders about that situation. I think some people back here in Washington are a little bit more cautious about it, but things seem to be going in the right direction.

Obviously, training the Afghan National Army, which is not at the same level. There are about 20,000 right now that are supposedly trained, and turning over the security situation to them so that there could be a draw down of ISAF and American forces at some point in the future.

The other big problem that's looming now is opium production. This is not only essentially a problem for Russia and Europe, my understanding is that Afghan opium is not coming to the United States. It's making its way into Russia, and then into Europe. But the fact is that this seems to be also supporting terrorism in the Taliban, so opium production is something that's going to have to be dealt

with. I think 80 percent of the world's opium or heroin comes out of Afghanistan.

And there are questions, obviously, at the high policy levels as to how hard to squeeze the warlords over these issues because you also don't want to alienate them politically. But it is a growing problem that's going to have to be dealt with Afghanistan.

I'm not going to tell anybody in this room much about Pakistan and India, but from an American perspective, Pakistan is still very important to the war on terror. There's going to have to be a general prodding of Musharraf to move towards democracy, but right now he's a very key player in our desire to catch Osama bin Laden, deal with al Qaeda in Afghanistan, and along the Pakistan-Afghan border, as well as Taliban.

I think another priority, and I think that comes out from Secretary Rice's visit, is the idea of supporting Indian-Pakistani rapprochement. I mean, there have been some very favorable things recently, and hopefully this can continue.

The issues of contention, obviously, are going to be the F-16s that's been talked about. It wasn't talked about much publicly. We'll probably hear more about that in the future. The Pakistanis want new F-16s. We've been supplying parts to them for the last couple of years for their older F-16s.

Another priority for the Americans is going to be getting more about A.Q. Khan's network. We have to uproot this network. We have gotten some information. I don't think we've gotten everything we wanted, and there's a tremendous concern. I mean every other week there's something in the papers new about how prolific this network was around the world. And obviously, the greatest concern for all of us should be the hands of the weapon of mass destruction, especially a nuclear weapon in the hands of a terrorist, so that's going to be something.

The issue of Iran and the pipeline is very troubling to us. And this is something that

we're going to work out. I think there's a great appreciation for India's desire for energy security and its wishes, but we also, as you know, and I'll talk a little bit more about this, and I think our colleague from the Israeli Embassy has talked about it, is the issue of the Iranian nuclear program, and how to deal with Iran, and how to pressure Iran back from the nuclear abyss. So that's obviously going to be a thorn in the relationship, and I'm sure that Ms. Rice has had a number of conversations about that.

On the Middle East, obviously there's a whole host of issues. On the Middle East peace process, I couldn't speak any more eloquently than our friend here has about that issue. But obviously, supporting the efforts of the Israeli and Palestinians to make a permanent peace, I think there are some reasons to be optimistic. But obviously, there are peoples on both fringes who do not want to see this go forward. There's others in the region, such as Iran, who does not want to see it go forward, so we're going to have to keep our guards up. But I think this is, obviously, a very important priority for the United States.

The very important issue here is not only the Middle East peace process, important to the United States and many people around the table, but it also could have effect hopefully on terrorism. I mean, I just came back from Saudi Arabia. I was in Saudi Arabia last week, very interesting trip. And when you talk to Saudis, even some of the more progressive ones, people educated in the west, businessmen, the issue of Palestine is one of those issues. It's like talking to the Chinese about Taiwan. There's just very little movement on it, so I think that resolving this issue is very important beyond just the central Middle East there, but beyond that in the Muslim and Arab world, so it's obviously very important.

We can't get around Iraq. Obviously, that's a very important thing, and I don't think I need to say much to the people around the table here about it. You know what the issues are. The new government, we still don't have a

new government. Essentially, we swore in the parliament yesterday. Hopefully, they'll be able to come up with some sort of coalition government. As you know, there's a whole host of issues out there, especially on the Kurdish side, who did very well in the elections, but have some serious issues about Kirkuk autonomy, their own militia, the peshmurga, things along that line. And, obviously, we have al Qaeda in the insurgency there, so the security forces and the development of Iraqi security forces are going to be critically important.

In Iran, I mean, you all know the issues here. It's a nuclear issue, their support for terrorism. And the other thing that nobody is really talking about is the fact that my understanding is that there are up to 20 members of al Qaeda in Tehran, supposedly under house arrest, but they've never turned these people back over to their home states. Nobody is really talking about that. In fact, Saad bin Laden, the son of Osama bin Laden, is there, as well as a spokesman for al Qaeda, so there are things that Iran has to come around on besides Tomas, Hezbollah, and others.

Syria, Lebanon – we've already kind of talked about that. I mean there's not much. I guess the real issue there is how do we deal with Hezbollah. The Bush administration is obviously looking very closely at this, wants to get them out of the militia business, out of the terrorism business, and allow them potentially to play a role as a political party, a peaceful political party, but that's obviously really challenging considering even the American's own history with Hezbollah. And I think we all remember 1983 and what happened in Beirut when they killed 241 Americans at the Marine barracks there.

Saudi Arabia is another very important thing, not only for energy security, which we all know. I think my sense from being in Saudi Arabia is that they get it on counter-terrorism. I don't think we're going to see the reforms that everybody is hoping. I think the likelihood of a Saudi spring is very remote. I think we're going

to see some efforts. The elections were not what everybody had hoped they would be. I don't know if you looked closely at them, but they were municipal elections. Only half were actually elected, and the municipal councils don't have a lot of power, so we'll have to see where that goes, but I think pushing for reform.

Obviously, democracy throughout the Middle East is increasingly important, and we're obviously watching very closely what happens in Egypt and North Africa; well, Egypt in the upcoming elections, and obviously throughout North Africa.

I'll wrap it up here shortly, but there are other issues outside of these two areas. There's a lot going on just in South Asia and the Middle East, obviously, but I write a weekly column from the New York Post, and this week I talked about China.

I worked on the House International Relations Committee before serving in the Bush administration on Asian issues, and in the late 1990s, every day we were talking about China and North Korea, the Asian century and all this sort of stuff. And after 9/11, it all kind of forgot about China, but China is still a growing challenge for the United States. Today they're the second largest economy, the world's second largest defense budget, and a tremendous military build-up. They're involved with the Iranians. They're involved with, obviously, the issue of Taiwan, as well as North Korea. They play a key role there, so China is exceedingly important to the United States. And, in fact, China will probably define the security situation in this century.

They're not only a regional power, they're becoming a global power. We're finding they're everywhere. They're involved especially on energy security, they're running through Latin America, the Middle East, and other places trying to get as much access to energy as possible. And it's driving, I'm calling it an oil politique throughout the world, especially like with Iran. They said they won't support taking Iran to the UN Security Council over the nuclear

program, but they also don't mention that they just signed a hundred billion dollar gas oil deal with Iran for a 25-year gas oil deal with Iran, as well, so China is rising. In fact, I would even argue it's not a rising power, it's a risen power.

North Korea – obviously, you know this issue – proliferation issues, trying to get them back to the table. China plays a key role in this, as well.

The other thing is Russia. Russia is very important, the retrenchment of democracy there. The President, you saw, had a very important meeting with Putin in Bratislava, and we're also worried about Russia turning away from the west, and getting into other potential mischief around the world.

So I think I'll just stop there. Thank you.

*The Honorable Raminder Jassal*  
*Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India*

I want to thank everyone here for joining in this wonderful endeavor of people from India, Israel and the United States coming together to discuss important contemporary issues.

I've had the pleasure to be involved in the second of these encounters in Israel when I was there, and I found it to be extremely useful. And sometimes, a lot of the presentations that are made attempt to throw up new priorities and tend to sometimes focus on things that in the normal run-of-mill reporting and public consciousness simply do not exist sometimes.

I want to particularly thank JINSA for all the effort that they have put in. I'm very glad that Air Chief Marshal Krishnaswamy is here. He was until recently the Chief of the Indian Air Force, and I had the pleasure to welcome him in Israel, as well, when he came in his capacity as the Chief of the Indian Air Force.

One of the things I used to mention incessantly in Israel [ed. *Amb. Jassal was the Indian ambassador to Israel from 2001 to 2004*], and it used to have a telling effect, was to say that together India and Israel constitute more than one billion people, and I'm delighted now to be here to say that together India, Israel, and the United States constitute nearly one and a half billion people, and one and a half billion people living in vibrant democracies. Of course, different kinds perhaps, but one and a half billion people representing a modern, progressive, and a democratic alternative in

a world in which we have seen that precisely when these values have been challenged, and in many places even supported.

I'm going to try to divide my presentation into three small parts, and one is firstly, to just acquaint you with the overall broad perspective of the way we look at the world a little bit, from the perspective of the Indian Subcontinent, of which India is a part.

Secondly, to give you a brief presentation on the basis on which Indo-U.S. relations are founded at the moment. I think that we can take a lot of cues from the visit of Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, and the fact that President Bush has told our Prime Minister that he would like to visit India this year. And we look forward to his visit, and perhaps other important exchanges.

And finally, I would also like to go over a little bit about the fundamentals of India's relations with Israel, because I think all these three together constitute some very fundamental elements that are important as we go forward in trying to meet some of the challenges before the international community.

You will see a lot of commentaries in the U.S. press and written by people from think tanks who are looking at India in a kind of a sub-regional framework of what they call South Asia. Now what I mean by "sub-regional", and I use the word very deliberately, is because when you define the South Asia region, you really

don't know where to begin and where to end, because by itself, India has a very unique geography. It extends 3,200 miles north to south, nearly 3,000 kilometers east to west.

We have a coastline of nearly 7,500 kilometers. We have a nautical border. I mean, we have a maritime border with Indonesia because we are approximately 60 nautical miles from Indonesia. I mean, our island territories in Andaman and Nicobar islands.

We have a common border at the tip of the Wakhan corridor with Afghanistan. Tajikistan is approximately 35-40 kilometers from the tip of Jammu and Kashmir. And if you really want to look at the region as such, you cannot exclude China, because the way the geopolitics of the place is configured, if you look at China and you find the capital of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar, is 200 kilometers north of Lhasa. So it's a very, very difficult region to define in the sense that you can't use a template of just South Asia. The Indian Subcontinent if you look at it on the regional side, and a much more broader connectivity that holds India together as it protrudes in that peninsula part of it, and deeply into the Indian Ocean. So when Secretary Rice was talking of India and the U.S.A., and particularly in the context of the contemporary situation assuming regional and global responsibilities, she was very conscious of the fact of the geopolitics of India.

In India is rigid neighborhood, as well, when you look at countries – Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and others, and particularly countries that constitute the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, which is SAARC. The true political situation is that each of them has a border with India, but none has a border with each other. So, therefore, the only country they relate to would be India. And that is a very special kind of a situation, so it's not only Pakistan on our west, and Nepal, and Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, but the point of fact is that with all the countries of SAARC, they border, their prosperity, their security, their well-being is all linked up

with India. And that's a special responsibility that India has.

We have worked together with the United States in addressing some of the issues related to the larger region of India, and the Indian Ocean. If you notice recently from two particular events which are very telling, which was when the Tsunami waves hit and devastated the coastlines of a large number of countries, including India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand, the two countries that were able to put together assets for immediate aid assistance, relief, and such were the India Navy and the close coordination that was done with the U.S. Navy in trying to assist the stricken people from this terrible calamity. So when you look at India's foreign policy perspective, it rises and it flows very naturally from the geopolitics of India. That's number one.

The second important thing is that India today, in terms of Purchasing Power Parity, is the fourth largest economy in the world. It's a country that is growing at the rate of approximately 7 percent every year. It has grown at that rate over the last 10 years, and continues to do so.

About a week ago, the Indian finance minister presented the budget for the next fiscal year for the Indian Parliament, and he has reinforced the trend of modernization and liberalization of the Indian economy, and increasingly greater integration with the world economy. And it's only natural that the pace of development and growth in India is going to be sustained, if not even increased.

Current estimates are that our GDP growth of the last fiscal was about 6.9 percent. For the coming fiscal year it should be over 7 percent. And this is while keeping together a diverse economy and a diverse country together under a very vibrant democratic system.

The third element that we look at when you are seeing the role of India and India's perspective, and India's priorities is the fact that India is a democracy, and as a democracy somebody had once mentioned that democra-

cies don't wage wars against each other. And this particularly clear from India's track record of a country that has respected the first colonial frontiers that came about through a legal process. It's a country that covets no other neighbor's land. It's a country that has not attacked anyone else, and it is essentially what some people call in a very pithy manner a status profile.

There was once a very interesting little monograph written by George Tannen of the Rand Corporation. That was a few years ago, and it was one of the earlier reports of India's security perspectives. And one of the things that George Tannen emphasized, though he's not amongst us any more, he emphasized that India over the centuries has not had a tradition of sending out its armies beyond outside the Indian Subcontinent. The Indian history has been one where it has accepted and it has welcomed the influence from other parts of the world, including Judaism, Islam, Christianity, all that came to India many, many centuries ago. So our perspective of the world is, in a sense, therefore, defined by our geopolitics.

Number two, by India's growing economic strength, and India as an economic partner for those who are interested in joining the process that is going on in India.

And third, from India's democratic traditions and quality. These are the three elements I think from which flow India's worldview, and the way India looks at the world.

I want to basically just briefly touch upon Indo-U.S. relations in the sense that many a time you will find that it has been written that there's a lot of progress, and a lot of flourishing and development that is taking place in Indo-U.S. relations. And it is often projected as a kind of a reflexive result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the end of the Cold War. But I'm not sure that is strictly accurate. I mean, sure, that event changed the face of the world. And while it ended the two-bloc confrontation in the world, it also threw up new challenges that you and I are aware of. But Indo-U.S. relations that I was

personally involved for now a couple of decades, Indo-U.S. relations saw the turning around in the latest case was in early 1980s.

I mention that because I think the turning point was the visit of Indira Gandhi to United States in 1983, when and President Reagan charted the new stage and the new face of Indo-U.S. relations. They set up a Blue Ribbon Panel of scientists. In 1984, Indo-U.S. signed the MOU on Technology Transfer, which gave India access to control technologies in the United States.

In 1985, Rajiv Gandhi visited the United States and our relationship in the defense side and the security side started at that point of time. With the visit of Admiral Watkins also in 1985, we started cooperation with the Pacific Command. There was the release of the General Electric 404 engines for India's light combat aircraft, and so on and so forth. I mean, the relationship started burgeoning forward, including in the security and in more sensitive areas. And I'm talking of the period that was the height of the Cold War.

The Soviet Union had invaded Afghanistan in 1979, and you're talking of the Indo-U.S. relationship taking a very major turn in the early 1980s, so it's not so much that this relationship is a function of the collapse of the Soviet Union, as it is often projected, and seen as a very convenient kind of a fall-out of the change of the global political pattern. But actually, the Indo-U.S. relationship in terms of the change that took place began at the height of the Cold War in the early 80s, and flows from the fact that both countries sought in their interest to develop and establish a closer relationship between the two.

I'm very glibly going over these facts, because I was closely associated with them. I was part of the team that negotiated the MOU, its implementing procedures, and also I was associated with the visits of our Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to the United States, and I was very much associated with the visits of Defense Secretaries Weinberger and Carlucci to India,

which took place in 1987 and 1988.

Therefore, when in 1990, August, you had a vision of Kuwait by Iraq under the dictatorship and the leadership of Saddam Hussein, it was the first time that India provided at the U.S. request provisions for landing and refueling of U.S. military aircraft that were flying from the east on to address the challenge that had been thrown out by the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq.

So what happened in 1990-91 was a culmination of things of developments and a convergence of interests, and a closer convergence of political thinking that was evident from the time of the early 1980s. So today when you look at Indo-U.S. relations as another growth industry in every aspect, I think it's important to understand that it was not something which is reacting to episodic events in international relations, but has a foundation and a very strong deep foundation of self-interest that both countries see in developing and taking this relationship forward.

Today as we look at the Indo-U.S. relationship, I was reading the joint press conference of Secretary Condoleezza Rice and our External Affairs Minister, Mr. K. Natwar Singh, and I just want to quote from one of the lines that Secretary Rice mentioned. She said and I quote: "I think it shows" – she's talking about the way India has cooperated in Afghanistan – "how we have together reacted in a similar way to the unfortunate reversal of democracy in Nepal." And flowing from all that, she said that: "I think it shows that India and the United States have regional responsibilities, but also increasingly global responsibilities."

And I think it's important when we look at Indo-U.S. relations to think outside the box, to think outside the sub-regional context, and to look at this relationship as addressing challenges and concerns on a much broader, and a much bigger canvas. The moment we restrict this relationship to very traditional boxes, and very traditional kind of confining boxes, then we are already going to not able to realize its potential, and we're also going to keep it from

being a factor of greater influence, and greater positive energy in the international community.

As I mentioned earlier, we are looking forward to the visit of President Bush to the United States most probably later this year. In a conversation with our Prime Minister, he had reiterated his intention to go to India. There's also an invitation to our Prime Minister to visit the United States. And when we look at these forthcoming events, I think it's important to realize that the frequency of these political contacts itself is reflective of a new, I won't say new beginning, but a new stage in Indo-U.S. relations.

President Clinton's visit to India in the year 2000 took place after a gap of 22 years. The last visit to India was of President Carter, and then President Clinton to India. Since then, we have had a frequent number of contacts back and forth. Our former Prime Minister Vajpayee visited the United States in the year 2000, the same year that President Clinton came. We've had highest-level contacts regularly since then, and now these upcoming events that I was talking to you about.

And I want to just focus on four important pillars that I will very briefly mention, which I believe constitute the fundamentals of Indo-U.S. relations. One is, greater economic interlinkages based on the exciting new opportunities that are presented before the business and industry community of the United States, to come and take part in the growth and development of India.

And I'll give you a small barometer. If you look at the telecom sector in India, or if you look at the software, the computer software sector in India, you look at the kind of opportunities that countries like Israel are already taking advantage of, and to mutual benefit.

India is adding more than two and a half million cellular phone subscribers every month, and this proportion is only going to increase as we increase the tele density and the penetration of telecommunications in our market.

India's exports of software now are approximately \$13 billion. It was about \$300 mil-

lion five, six years ago. It's \$13 billion today, and we anticipate that by 2008, this should reach about \$50 billion. We have an economy, as I told you, which is growing at a tremendous pace, and it is time that the United States business and industry community took advantage of the economic opportunities that are there.

The second is a strengthened political understanding, as I mentioned, set against a very broad canvas of issues that are there in front of the international community as a whole, and not restrict this relationship into small boxes that I think represent old thinking. The third pillar will be a deeper and a closer understanding of each other's security concerns and aspirations, and greater complementarities in defense and security issues. In this I include issues like combating terrorism, counter-terrorism. I include greater and a more intensive defense and strategic dialogue. I include defense industry collaboration, defense research and development, and all these constitute an important pillar of Indo-U.S. ties.

And the third is greater institutional and people-to-people linkages between institutions, universities, research bodies, scientists, and students. These all together we believe constitute pillars of what will be, and is emerging to be a very important relationship between India and the United States.

When it comes to Israel, I would like to just mention that Indo-Israel relations were established in 1992, I mean formal diplomatic relations. We can trace our relationship back to perhaps centuries, because the first Jewish settlements in India I think grew at the time of the destruction of the first temple, so it's a relationship and a connection that goes back many, many centuries. And in fact, there's reference in the bible to ships coming from Hodu, which is India, bearing things to the court of King Solomon, so there's a very old connection. But in the modern times, Indo-Israel relations were formally established, diplomatic relations in 1992 when we opened an embassy in Tel Aviv. And, of course, Israel always had a mission in

India since the 1950s. But today if you look at the relationship, Indo-Israeli trade is about \$2 billion, and I'm not counting defense in that. This is Indo-Israel commodity trade.

Number two, Indo-Israeli science and technology collaboration has been developing in areas like biotechnology, material sciences, information technology, and include now we are starting to collaborate together on nanotechnology, as well as space. Now greater complementarities between the two sides are taking place as the scientific communities from both sides get together. We are seeing a huge surge forward in science and technology collaboration.

We have a security relationship with Israel in the sense that we have a defense relationship, we have a joint working group on defense set up in 1992. We have a counter-terrorism dialogue with Israel, and again a joint working group set up that same year in 1992, which has been meeting every six, seven months, once in Israel and once in India. We have a similar dialogue with the United States, and an institutional mechanism to deal with this issue of counter-terrorism.

We have, as I said, now good space cooperation with Israel, and next year we expect to launch an Israeli payload in one of our satellites. There is a very good tourism back and forth between India and Israel. In fact, there's a small anecdote – I don't know if it's true or not – I don't think it is, but it's a very telling kind of anecdote; which is that an Israeli tourist was asked by one Indian in Bombay that how many Israelis are there, asking about the population of the country, and the Israeli tourist said six million. And the guy said no, we don't mean in Bombay, because there are parts of India now from Dharamsala in the north, to Kerala, where the Cochin Jewish community has come, to Bombay, to every part of India where the presence of Israeli youngsters is a fact of life. They are welcome over there. They're also learning about India, and it's an experience that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

Approximately 34,000 Israeli youth visit

India every year. I met with large numbers of them when I was in Israel, and each one of them have come back with a very, very positive and a very warm sense of connection, spiritual connection, and all kinds of other connections that bring them close to India. We have encouraged this, and we hope that over the next few years, we'll have covered the entire younger population of Israel.

It is said that there are three kinds of people in Israel; that those who have been to India, those who are planning to go to India, and those who should be going there if they haven't been there so far, because it's a relationship that has developed, I think, again out of a natural order of things because the countries made the right choices. What Prime Minister Ben Gurion did in Israel, what Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru did in India in the early parts of independence of the two countries is what led to the kind of relationship that we have today.

The investment we all did in human resource development, in democratic polity, and in every other area of trying to develop modern societies in very ancient lands has led to a situation where when the flood gates were opened, the countries were able to move together on a huge range of issues quite naturally, and it flowed from, as I said, choices and investment that both countries had made in their own human resource development, in their polity, in their economies.

I believe that when you look at then all three, India, Israel, and the United States together, and when you look at the role of India as it is emerging today, I think that there is a basic overlap and a basic synergy that is going to be reflected more and more in our foreign policies, and in our priorities, I daresay not only for India, but also for the United States, and for Israel. And I think that together this is going to be a factor of importance, and a very positive factor in the international community. Thank you.