

# India and the United States: A vision for the 21st century

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

GOOD afternoon and Vanakkam. I am delighted to be here today. I want to thank Chief Librarian Naresh for welcoming me to this absolutely extraordinarily impressive facility, and for telling us all to the largest public library in India. And I am delighted to finally be here in Chennai. I've been coming to India since the 1990s as my country's first lady, as a senator from New York, and as a Secretary of State in the Obama Administration.

President Obama made a state visit to India last year. I have been here twice in the last two years. And why, one might ask? Why are we coming to India so often and welcoming Indian officials to Washington as well? It's because we understand that much of the history of the 21st century will be written in Asia, and that much of the future of Asia will be shaped by decisions not only of the Indian Government in New Delhi, but of governments across India, and perhaps, most importantly, by the 1.3 billion people who live in this country.

And we have a great commitment to our government-to-government relations, but we have an even greater commitment to our people-to-people ones. And we view them as absolutely central to the partnership and friendship between our countries. As President Obama told the Indian parliament last year, the relationship between India and the United States will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century. How will we work together to inject content into it?

Well, speaking for the United States, I can tell you that we are, in fact, betting on India's future. We are betting that the opening of India's markets to the world will produce a more prosperous India and a more prosperous South Asia. It will also spill over into Central Asia and beyond into the Asia Pacific region. We are betting that advances in science and technology of all kinds will both enrich Indian lives and advance human knowledge everywhere. And we are betting that India's vibrant, pluralistic democracy will produce measurable results and improvements for your citizens and will inspire others to follow a similar path of openness and tolerance.

Our nations are built on the same bedrock beliefs about democracy, pluralism, opportunity, and innovation. We share common interests like stopping terrorism and spurring balanced and broad-based economic growth that goes deeply into our societies. And that is why our two governments have established a Strategic Dialogue which we announced when I first came as Secretary of State back in 2009 and when Prime Minister Singh visited later that year, and which, of course, we now have held two important sessions of, one in Washington and then this week in New Delhi. I met with a broad array of Indian officials, and I am very pleased to report to you that our work together is producing real results. We have already established a new clean energy research and development center that will be putting out the requests for proposals so we know what it is we can work on together to advance our common goal of clean energy and combat climate change.

We have new initiatives linking students and businesses and communities, and one of my personal favorites is the Passport to India, a program designed to bring more American students to study in India to match the great numbers of Indian students

that come to America to study, because we want to create those bonds between our young people and our future leaders.

We also consulted on the work we will be doing in the months ahead, strengthening our joint fight against terrorism, boosting our economic ties, completing our civilian-nuclear partnership, and deepening our defense cooperation. We think this work is very much in the interests of both of our countries and both of our peoples.

So what does for India and for the United States and for the world, what does this global leadership mean in practical terms? India's election commission, widely viewed as the global gold standard for running elections (applause) is already sharing best practices with counterparts in other countries, including Egypt and Iraq. To help rebalance the global economy after the recession of 2008 and to spur growth, India and the United States are working together through the G-20 which has become the premier forum for international economic cooperation.

India was a very constructive partner to the United States and others at both the conferences in Copenhagen and Cancun, where we're not making enough progress, but we could put some milestones of progress and ongoing processes together to continue our efforts. To curb nuclear proliferation, we are working together with the international community to address shared concerns about provocative actions by countries like Iran. We have called for Iran to meet its international obligations at the IAEA. India has taken steps to ensure that products from your high-tech industry cannot be diverted to that nuclear weapons program. And we work with India, who is currently a nonpermanent member of the Security Council, to persuade Iran's leaders to change course. And to promote sustainable development, the United States is encouraging India to share broadly its expertise in dry field, drought-tolerant agriculture, and to apply other lessons about how to lift millions of people out of extreme poverty.

Today, I want to focus on two aspects of our cooperation, where the choices we make in the immediate term will have profound impacts on our security and prosperity in the years ahead. First, our work together in the Asia Pacific, and second, our shared interests in South and Central Asia, because this is a moment when these regional concerns have profound global resonance.

The United States has always been a Pacific power because of our very great blessing of geography. And India straddling the waters from the Indian to the Pacific Ocean is, with us, a steward of these waterways. Will it build the regional architecture of institutions and arrangements to enforce international norms on security, trade, rule

of law, human rights, and accountable governance? Through its Look East policy, India is poised to help lead toward the answers to these questions.

We both wish to expand economic ties. The United States is pushing forward on comprehensive trade deals like the Trans-Pacific Partnership and our free trade agreement with South Korea. We are also stepping up our commercial diplomacy and pursuing a robust economic agenda at APEC. India, for its part, has concluded or will soon conclude new bilateral economic partnerships with Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, South Korea, and others. The more our countries trade and invest with each other and with other partners, the more central the Asia Pacific region becomes to global commerce and prosperity, and the more interest we both have in maintaining stability and security.

President Obama looks forward to joining Prime Minister Singh at the East Asia Summit later in the year this fall in Indonesia. We want to work with India and all of our friends and allies to build the East Asia Summit into the Asia Pacific's premier



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forum for dealing with political and security issues. And high on this list should be maritime security, including developing multilateral mechanisms of cooperation. The East Asia Summit should also focus on disaster readiness, response, and relief, and nonproliferation, including working toward a denuclearized Korean Peninsula.

Now, later this week, Foreign Minister Krishna and I will attend the ASEAN Regional Forum, and we will there be working in conjunction with ASEAN partners and others, and we will soon inaugurate a trilateral U.S.-India-Japan dialogue. America's treaty alliances with Japan has long been a cornerstone of security in East Asia, and as a fellow democracy with us and India, we believe enhanced cooperation will be beneficial. We are also committed to a strong, constructive relationship among India, the United States, and China.

As India takes on a larger role throughout the Asia Pacific, it does have increasing responsibilities, including the duty to speak out against violations of universal human rights. For example, we recognize that India has important strategic interests in maintaining a peaceful border and strong economic ties with Burma. But the Burmese Government's treatment of its own people continues to be deplorable. And I hope New Delhi will continue to encourage the

Burmese Government to engage in dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and also to release other political prisoners.

India also has a great commitment to improving relations with Bangladesh, and that is important because regional solutions will be necessary on energy shortages, water-sharing, and the fight against terrorists. And in Nepal, as the latest deadline for concluding the peace process and promulgating a new constitution approaches, Indian support for that process is critical. And in the Maldives, India is providing important economic assistance and partnerships to improve ports and other infrastructure. Looking north, in Central Asian states like Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, India has forged new partnerships on energy, agriculture, cyber security, and other areas, because India and the United States share an interest in helping the people of this entire region build strong democratic societies and market economies, and to resolve long-festering conflicts.

The United States is committed to Afghanistan and to the region. At the same time, we are pursuing an active diplomatic effort with all the countries in the region toward two goals: First, a responsible political solution in Afghanistan, and second, stronger economic ties through South and Central Asia so that goods, capital, and people can flow more easily across borders. As we have said many times, there are unambiguous redlines for

reconciliation with insurgents. India has pioneered some of this work over years of effort in bringing people into the political system and taking them out of the forest or out of insurgencies.

How do we get from where we are to where we and especially the Afghan people need to end up? Number one, people must renounce violence. Number two, the Taliban must abandon their alliance with al-Qaida. And number three, anyone wishing to reconcile must agree to abide by the laws and constitution of Afghanistan.

In Kabul earlier this year, Prime Minister Singh reaffirmed India's commitment to the Afghan-led reconciliation. And the Indian Government reinforced that commitment last month by supporting a United Nations Security Council resolution that cleared the way for lifting sanctions on insurgents who do reconcile.

We welcomed Pakistan's decision to participate in a joint peace commission with Afghanistan and in what we call the core group of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the United States to manage the withdrawal. Achieving lasting peace and security in the region will require a stable, democratic, prosperous Pakistan free from violent extremism. And beyond India and Pakistan, all of Afghanistan's other neighbors Russia, Iran, China, the Central Asian states should

recommit themselves to the goal of a stable and independent Afghanistan.

We have to have trade and investment coming. The Afghan people themselves do not want receive aid forever. An Afghanistan firmly embedded in the economic life of a thriving South and Central Asia would be able to attract new sources of foreign investment and connect to markets abroad, including hundreds of millions of potential new customers in India. And increasing trade across the region would open up new sources of raw material, energy, and agricultural products, creating more jobs in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

An Indian business must import cement from Southeast Asia instead of from the flourishing cement industry next door in Pakistan. Now, we have no illusion about how difficult it will be to overcome the long-standing distrust that holds back economic cooperation, but we also are absolutely convinced this is very much in India's interest, Pakistan's interest, Afghanistan's, and other nations as well.

Historically, the nations of South and Central Asia were connected to each other and the rest of the continent by a sprawling trading network called the Silk Road. Let's work together to create a new Silk Road. Not a single thoroughfare like its namesake, but an international web and network of economic and transit connections. That means building more rail lines, highways, energy infrastructure, like the proposed pipeline to run from Turkmenistan, through Afghanistan, through Pakistan into India. It means upgrading the facilities at border crossings, such as India and Pakistan are now doing at Waga.

I was very encouraged by the reports of the resumption of discussions between India and Pakistan, the meeting between Prime Ministers Singh and Gillani at Mohali, and the forward-looking roadmap produced by the Indian and Pakistani commerce secretaries in April are very important steps. The upcoming meeting of Indian and Pakistani foreign ministers is another chance to make tangible progress. And I was pleased to see Afghanistan and Pakistan commit to implement fully their transit trade agreement.

When Indian Americans used to come to the United States, their hard work and their success was such a symbol of what was possible. Today, there's migration back from the United States to India, because the opportunity society has arrived here. Pakistani Americans, Afghan Americans, they still come to the United States seeking opportunity. They too deserve an opportunity society.

In what I've discussed today, India's growing role in the Asia Pacific and in South and Central Asia, I do so because I think this is the only way forward.

In a democracy, we are all helping to shape our future. For both America and India, the threats, the perils, the problems are discussed endlessly. This is a time to seize the opportunities of the 21st century, and it is a time to lead. For each of us to make our contribution, for each of us to work in every way we can not only for our own personal betterment although that comes in an open society like yours and mine but to work for the common good, to work for our nation, and to work for a world that is worthy of our dreams. So let us commit to do so. Thank you all very much.

This is an edited version of the remarks of US Secretary of State during the US-India Strategic Dialogue in Chennai on July 20, 2011.

# Iraqi Prime Minister's first strategic visit to China

BARRISTER HARUN UR RASHID

ON 18th July, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki arrived in Beijing for his first official visit to China as a guest of his Chinese counterpart Wen Jiabao.

Iraq realises that China has been an emerging power and is also oil-hungry for its development and at the same time China recognizes that Iraq has the fourth largest oil reserves in the world. Both nations have mutual interests to strengthen their ties.

A number of huge deals with Chinese oil companies were cancelled in 2003 after the downfall of former leader Saddam Hussein. Steps have been undertaken to re-establish the trade ties. Iraq was China's seventh largest oil supplier last year.

During al-Maliki's four-day stay in China, President Hu Jintao met with him, and Premier Wen held talks with the Iraqi prime minister.

Before the trip, Nouri al-Maliki said, "Iraqi hopes to mend diplomatic ties with China and other important countries in the world. This is in the interests of two countries. And this visit aims to further solidify the relations of the two countries."

Maliki noted that Iraq is becoming gradually stable in recent years. He said the major task for the government is the country's reconstruction. This requires making the best use of Iraq's oil and natural gas to get adequate funding.

The prime minister stressed that China plays a significant role in Iraq's reconstruction.

Nouri al-Maliki said, "One of the purpose of my visit this

time to get more Chinese companies to join the construction of Iraq's infrastructure as well as power, crude oil and other important industries, helping Iraq restore its own industry." He hoped the Chinese government will continue supporting and aiding Iraq's economic development.

Chinese leader Hu Jintao welcomed Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki on 19th July when they met for talks in Beijing to enhance bilateral trade and economic ties.

Maliki informed Hu of his hopes to foster Sino-Iraqi cooperation, and to develop economic, political, scientific, and cultural partnerships with the Chinese regime.

During his tour, the leaders of the two countries discussed the development of bilateral relations, especially in the fields of

- energy,
- transportation,
- agriculture,
- commodities,
- services and investment.

Ali al-Mousawi, an adviser to Maliki, told the media that the prime minister's visit was aimed at attracting more Chinese investment in Iraq.

Iraq needs about \$36 billion U.S. dollars to finance strategic and construction projects. This includes the reconstruction of railways, ports, schools, and other projects, which Chinese investments might be able to supply.

China has been currently involved in several sectors in Iraq, including electricity, water, manufacturing and oil. Last month, China National Petroleum Corporation started operations at the Al-Ahdab oilfield in Iraq, making it the

first major new area to start production in Iraq in 20 years. The site is expected to produce around 25,000 barrels of oil per day in the first three years.

Gao Zugui, associate president at the Research Institute for International Strategic Studies, affiliated to the Party School of the Central Committee of Communist Party of China, said "Iraq has been facing lots of challenges since its reconstruction started and China has taken an active part in the process through both bilateral and multilateral cooperation. China has also reduced and cancelled Iraq's debts and offered various kinds of assistance."

"All these efforts by China have laid good foundations for the two countries to enhance political understanding and mutual trust," he added. In October 2010, Iraq raised its estimate of national crude oil reserves to 143.1 billion barrels, Oil Minister Hussain Al-Shahrastani said overtaking Iran as home to the world's fourth-largest petroleum deposits.

The 24% percent increase in estimated reserves lifts Iraq past neighboring Iran, which has 137.6 billion barrels, while leaving it behind Saudi Arabia, Canada and Venezuela.

The Iraqi government may hope to use the augmented reserves figure "to show the potential of Iraq" to foreign investors, including Chinese, said Ahmed Jiyad, an Iraq specialist at the Centre for Global Energy Studies, a London-based consulting firm. It may also want to use the higher estimate to strengthen Iraq's case for a large production quota within OPEC.

Energy has always been an important field for both countries and was believed to have focused during Maliki's

visit. In essence, China eyes oil as Iraqi PM sees Chinese investments during trade talks.

An unprecedented need for resources is now driving China's foreign policy. A booming domestic economy, rapid urbanization, and increased export processing are increasing the country's demand for oil and natural gas, industrial and construction materials, foreign capital and technology.

China is the world's second-largest importer and, it alone accounted for 31 percent of global growth in oil demand. Now that China is the workshop of the world, its hunger for electricity and industrial resources has soared.

With US troops set to leave by the end of this year, China will find more opportunities as Iraq starts to shoulder more responsibilities for its development and defense.

"China is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and is influential in the formation of international decisions, so politics will inevitably come up," he said.

China and Iraq share a traditional friendship adding that the two countries have witnessed smooth development of bilateral relations, steadily growing economic cooperation and increasing cultural exchanges.

China is ready to work with the international community and to continue to provide assistance for the Iraqi people to improve their livelihoods.

Given the above scenario, Iraq and China have mutual interests and the visit has ushered in a framework of cooperation and has sought to strengthen further collaborative effort between the two nations.

The writer is former Bangladesh Ambassador to the UN, Geneva.