

# CRS Issue Brief for Congress

,Received through the CRS Web

## India-U.S. Relations

Updated June 21, 2005

K. Alan Kronstadt  
Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

# CONTENTS

## SUMMARY

## MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

## BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

### Context of the U.S.-India Relationship

#### Regional Rivalries

Pakistan

China

#### Political Setting

National Elections

The Congress Party

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

### India-U.S. Relations and Bilateral Issues

#### Security Issues

The Kashmir Issue

Nuclear Weapons and Missile Proliferation

U.S. Nonproliferation Efforts and Congressional Action

U.S.-India Security Cooperation

#### Regional Dissidence and Human Rights

The Northeast

“Naxalites”

Gujarat

Human Rights

#### India’s Economy and U.S. Concerns

Overview

Trade

#### “Next Steps in Strategic Partnership” Issues

#### U.S. Assistance

Economic

Security

## India-U.S. Relations

### SUMMARY

The end of the Cold War freed India-U.S. relations from the constraints of global bipolarity, but interactions continued for a decade to be affected by the burden of history, most notably the longstanding India-Pakistan rivalry and nuclear weapons proliferation in the region. Recent years, however, have witnessed a sea change in bilateral relations, with more positive interactions becoming the norm. India's swift offer of full support for U.S.-led counterterrorism operations after September 2001 was widely viewed as reflective of such change. Today, the Bush Administration vows to "help India become a major world power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

Continuing U.S. interest in South Asia focuses on tension and conflict between India and Pakistan, a problem rooted in unfinished business from the 1947 Partition and competing claims to the former princely state of Kashmir. The United States strongly encourages maintenance of a cease-fire in Kashmir and continued, substantive dialogue between India and Pakistan.

The United States seeks to curtail the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles in South Asia. Both India and Pakistan have resisted external pressure to sign the major nonproliferation treaties. In May 1998, India and Pakistan conducted unannounced nuclear tests that evoked international condemnation. Proliferation-related restrictions on U.S. aid were triggered, then later lifted through congressional-executive cooperation from 1998 to 2000. Remaining sanctions on India (and Pakistan) were removed in October 2001. In recent years, the United States and India have engaged in numerous and unprecedented joint military exercises. Discussions of possible sales to India of major U.S.-built weapons systems are ongoing.

The United States also has been concerned with human rights issues related to regional dissidence and separatism in several Indian states. Strife in these areas has resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians, militants, and security forces over the past two decades. Communalism has been another matter of concern, with early 2002 rioting in the Gujarat state resulting in up to 2,000, mostly Muslim, deaths. The U.S. Congress, as well as the State Department and international human rights groups, has criticized India for perceived human rights abuses in these areas.

The United States supports India's efforts to transform its once quasi-socialist economy through fiscal reform and market opening. Since 1991, India has been taking steps to reduce its budget deficit, privatize state-owned industries, and reduce tariffs and licensing controls. Coalition governments have kept India on a general path of economic reform, although there is U.S. concern that movement remains slow and inconsistent. Plans to expand U.S.-India high-technology trade and civilian space and civilian nuclear cooperation have become key bilateral issues in recent years. Along with dialogue on missile defense, these are addressed through the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership initiative formally launched in January 2004.

A surprise resurgence of the Nehru-Gandhi-led Congress Party in May 2004 elections brought to power a new coalition government under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, a former finance minister. A Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led coalition had been headed by Atal Behari Vajpayee from 1998 to 2004. See also CRS Report RL32259, *Terrorism in South Asia*, and CRS Report RS21502, *India-U.S. Economic Relations*.

## MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In March, Secretary of State Rice visited New Delhi, where she lauded positive India-U.S. relations and the Bush Administration set as a goal “to help India become a major world power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” In May, the United States and India held a meeting of the U.S.-India Global Issues Forum with delegations led by U.S. Under Secretary for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky and Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, and the inaugural meeting of the U.S.-India Energy Dialogue was held in Washington. During a June 14 House International Relations Committee hearing on the United States and South Asia, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca said, “With India, this is a watershed year in U.S.-India relations. We’re accelerating and transforming this relationship, which moved briskly over the past four years. We’re now ready to take it to the next level.” Several Members in attendance spoke against a U.S. policy of selling combat aircraft to South Asian countries. One expert witness called for completing the “transformation of U.S.-Indian relations as rapidly as possible in order to permanently entrench India in the ranks of our friends and allies,” while another encouraged attention to India’s still relatively closed economy and its “anti-American voting record in the United Nations.”

The India-Pakistan peace initiative continues, most notably with Pakistani President Musharraf’s April visit to New Delhi, where India and Pakistan released a joint statement calling their bilateral peace process “irreversible.” Also in April, a new bus service was launched linking Srinagar in Indian Kashmir and Muzaffarabad in Pakistani Kashmir — a major confidence-building measure that allows separated Kashmiri families to reunite for the first time since 1947. Yet, in May and June, substantive India-Pakistan talks on a militarized dispute over the Siachen Glacier, a territorial dispute over the Sir Creek, and a water dispute over India’s Kishanganga dam project each ended in deadlock. Moreover, separatist-related violence in India’s Jammu and Kashmir state is ongoing and included a June 13 bomb attack near a school in Indian Kashmir. The attack killed 14 people and injured at least 100 more, including dozens of children. According to the Indian prime minister, “Not enough has been done [by Pakistan] to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism, which is still intact.”

On June 2, leaders of the moderate faction of the Hurriyat Conference of Kashmiri separatist groups began an unprecedented visit to Pakistan. During the visit, moderate Kashmiri separatist leader Mirwaiz Umer Farooq urged interested parties to “move beyond” U.N. resolutions that call for a plebiscite in the disputed region. On June 3, the U.S. State Department’s annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* again placed India on its “Tier 2 Watch List” for its “inability to show evidence of increased efforts to address trafficking in persons ...” On June 7, Indian opposition leader and former Deputy PM Lal Advani resigned his position as BJP president after coming under fierce criticism for comments he made in Pakistan where he called Pakistani founding father Mohammed Ali Jinnah a “secular” leader. Leading Hindu nationalists had called Advani a “traitor” and a “grave liability” to the BJP. Two days later, Advani withdrew his resignation after it was rejected by the BJP leadership. For more information, see CRS Report RS21589, *India: Chronology of Recent Events*.

## BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

### Context of the U.S.-India Relationship

In the wake of the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, India took the immediate and unprecedented step of offering to the United States full cooperation and the use of India's bases for counterterrorism operations. The offer reflected the sea change that has occurred in recent years in the U.S.-India relationship, which for decades was mired in the politics of the Cold War. The marked improvement of relations that began in the latter months of the Clinton Administration — President Clinton spent six days in India in March 2000 — was accelerated after a November 2001 meeting between President Bush and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, when the two leaders agreed to greatly expand U.S.-India cooperation on a wide range of issues, including counterterrorism, regional security, space and scientific collaboration, civilian nuclear safety, and broadened economic ties. Notable progress has come in the area of security cooperation, with an increasing focus on counterterrorism, joint military exercises, and arms sales. In December 2001, the U.S.-India Defense Policy Group met in New Delhi for the first time since India's 1998 nuclear tests and outlined a defense partnership based on regular and high-level policy dialogue. A U.S.-India Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism meets regularly.

U.S. and congressional interests in India cover a wide spectrum of issues, ranging from the militarized dispute with Pakistan and weapons proliferation to concerns about human rights, health, and trade and investment opportunities. In the 1990s, India-U.S. relations were particularly affected by the demise of the Soviet Union — India's main trading partner and most reliable source of economic assistance and military equipment for most of the Cold War — and New Delhi's resulting need to diversify its international relationships. Also significant were India's adoption of sweeping economic policy reforms beginning in 1991, a deepening bitterness between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, and signs of a growing Indian preoccupation with China as a potential long-term strategic threat. With the fading of Cold War constraints, the United States and India began exploring the possibilities for a more normalized relationship between the world's

two largest democracies. A visit to the United States by Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in 1994 marked the onset of improved U.S.-India relations. Rao addressed a joint session of Congress and met with President Clinton. Although discussions were held on nuclear nonproliferation, human rights, and other issues, the main focus of the visit was rapidly expanding U.S.-India economic relations. Throughout the 1990s, however, regional

#### INDIA IN BRIEF

**Population:** 1,080 million; *growth rate:* 1.4% (2005 est.)  
**Area:** 3,287,590 sq. km. (slightly more than one-third the size of the United States)  
**Capital:** New Delhi  
**Ethnic Groups:** Indo-Aryan 72%; Dravidian 25%; other 3%  
**Languages:** 15 official, 13 of which are the primary tongue of at least 10 million people; Hindi is primary tongue of about 30%; English widely used  
**Religions:** Hindu 81%; Muslim 12%; Christian 2%; Sikh 2% (2000 est.)  
**Life Expectancy at Birth:** female 65.1 years; male 63.6 years (2005 est.)  
**Literacy:** female 48%; male 70% (2003 est.)  
**Gross Domestic Product (at PPP):** \$3.3 trillion; *per capita:* \$3,100; *growth rate* 6.2% (2004 est.)  
**Inflation:** 4.2% (2004 est.)  
**U.S. Trade:** exports to U.S. \$15.6 billion; imports from U.S. \$6.1 billion (2004)  
**Sources:** CIA World Factbook; U.S. Department of Commerce

rivalries, separatist tendencies, and sectarian tensions continued to divert India's attention and resources from economic and social development. Fallout from these unresolved problems — particularly nuclear proliferation and human rights issues — presented serious irritants in bilateral relations.

President Clinton's 2000 visit to South Asia seemed a major U.S. initiative to improve cooperation with India. During his subsequent visit to the United States later in 2000, Prime Minister Vajpayee addressed a joint session of Congress and was received for a state dinner at the White House, where he and President Clinton signed a joint statement agreeing to cooperate on arms control, terrorism, and AIDS/HIV. During the Bush Administration, high-level visits have continued at an accelerated pace, and it is possible that President Bush himself will visit India in 2005. Today, the Bush Administration vows to "help India become a major world power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century," and U.S.-India relations are conducted under the rubric of three major "dialogue" areas: strategic (including global issues and defense), economic (including trade, finance, commerce, and environment), and energy.

## Regional Rivalries

**Pakistan.** Three wars — in 1947-48, 1965, and 1971 — and a constant state of military preparedness on both sides of the border have marked nearly six decades of bitter rivalry between India and Pakistan. The bloody and acrimonious nature of the partition of British India in 1947 and continuing in Kashmir remain major sources of interstate tension and violence. Despite the existence of widespread poverty across South Asia, both India and Pakistan have built large defense establishments — including nuclear weapons capability and ballistic missile programs — at the cost of economic and social development. The nuclear weapons capabilities of the two countries became overt in May 1998, magnifying greatly the potential dangers of a fourth India-Pakistan war.

The Kashmir problem is itself rooted in claims by both countries to the former princely state, now divided by a military Line of Control (LOC) into the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-controlled Azad (Free) Kashmir. India blames Pakistan for supporting "cross-border terrorism" and a separatist rebellion in the Muslim-majority Kashmir Valley that has claimed at least 40,000 and perhaps as many as 90,000 lives since 1989. Pakistan admits only to lending moral and political support to what it calls "freedom fighters" operating mostly in and near the valley region around the city of Srinagar. Normal relations between New Delhi and Islamabad were severed in December 2001 after a terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament was blamed on Pakistan-supported Islamic militants. Other lethal attacks on Indian civilians have been blamed on Pakistan-sponsored groups, including a May 2002 attack on an army base that killed 34, most of them women and children. This event spurred Indian leaders to call for a "decisive war," but intense international diplomatic engagement, including multiple trips to the region by high-level U.S. officials, apparently persuaded India to refrain from attacking. In October 2002, the two countries ended a tense, ten-month military standoff at their shared border, but there was no high-level diplomatic dialogue between India and Pakistan since a July 2001 summit meeting in the city of Agra failed to produce any movement toward a settlement of the bilateral dispute.

In April 2003, Prime Minister Vajpayee extended a symbolic "hand of friendship" to Pakistan. The initiative resulted in slow, but perceptible progress in confidence-building, and within months full diplomatic relations between the two countries were restored.

September 2003 saw an exchange of heated rhetoric by the Indian prime minister and the Pakistani president at the U.N. General Assembly; some analysts concluded that the peace initiative was moribund. Yet, in October 2003, New Delhi reinvigorated the process by proposing confidence-building through people-to-people contacts. Islamabad responded positively and, in November, took its own initiatives, most significantly the offer of a cease-fire along the Kashmir LOC (as of this writing, a formal cease-fire agreement continues). A major breakthrough in bilateral relations came at the close of a January 2004 summit session of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation in Islamabad. After a meeting between Vajpayee and Pakistani President Musharraf — their first since July 2001 — the two leaders agreed to re-engage a “composite dialogue” to bring about “peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, to the satisfaction of both sides.” A May 2004 change of governments in New Delhi had no effect on the expressed commitment of both sides to carry on the process of mid- and high-level discussions, and the new Indian PM, Manmohan Singh, met with Musharraf in September 2004 in New York, where the two leaders agreed to explore possible options for a “peaceful, negotiated settlement” of the Kashmir issue “in a sincere manner and purposeful spirit.” After Musharraf’s April 2005 visit to New Delhi, India and Pakistan released a joint statement calling their bilateral peace process “irreversible.” Some analysts believe that increased people-to-people contacts (“Track II diplomacy”) have significantly altered public perceptions in both countries and may have acquired permanent momentum.

**China.** India and China fought a brief but intense border war in 1962 that left China in control of large swaths of territory still claimed by India. The clash ended a previously friendly relationship between the two leaders of the Cold War “nonaligned movement.” Although Sino-Indian relations have warmed considerably in recent years, the two countries have yet to reach a final boundary agreement. Adding to New Delhi’s sense of insecurity have been suspicions regarding China’s long-term nuclear weapons capabilities and strategic intentions in South and Southeast Asia. In fact, a strategic orientation focused on China appears to have affected the course and scope of New Delhi’s own nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. Beijing’s military and economic support for Pakistan — support that is widely believed to have included WMD-related transfers — is a major and ongoing source of friction; past Chinese support for Pakistan’s Kashmir position has added to the discomfort of Indian leaders. New Delhi also has taken note of Beijing’s security relations with neighboring Burma and the construction of military facilities on the Indian Ocean.

During a landmark visit to China in 1993, Prime Minister Rao signed an agreement to reduce troops and maintain peace along the Line of Actual Control that divides the two countries’ forces at the disputed border. Periodic working group meetings aimed at reaching a final settlement continue; 20 have been held to date. Despite still unresolved issues, high-level exchanges between New Delhi and Beijing regularly include statements from both sides that there exists no fundamental conflict of interest between the two countries. A June 2003 visit to Beijing by Vajpayee was viewed as marking a period of much improved relations. Military-to-military contacts have included a modest, but unprecedented November 2003 joint naval exercise off the coast of Shanghai and small-scale joint army exercises in August 2004. In December 2004, India’s army chief visited Beijing to discuss deepening bilateral defense cooperation, and a first-ever India-China strategic dialogue was held in New Delhi in January 2005. In April 2005, Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao visited New Delhi where India and China agreed to launch a “strategic partnership” that will include broadened defense links and efforts to expand economic relations. While outstanding territorial

disputes remain unresolved, China formally recognized Indian sovereignty over the former kingdom of Sikkim and India reiterated its view that Tibet is a part of China.

## Political Setting

**National Elections.** India, with a robust and working democratic system, is a federal republic where the bulk of executive power rests with the prime minister and his or her cabinet (the Indian president is a ceremonial chief of state with limited executive powers). As a nation-state, India presents a vast mosaic of hundreds of different ethnic groups, religious sects, and social castes. Most of India's prime ministers have come from the country's Hindi-speaking northern regions and all but two have been upper-caste Hindus. The 543-seat Lok Sabha (People's House) is the locus of national power, with directly elected representatives from each of the country's 28 states and seven union territories. A smaller upper house, the Rajya Sabha (Council of States), may review, but not veto, most legislation, and has no power over the prime minister or the cabinet. National and state legislators are elected to five-year terms. National elections in October 1999 had secured ruling power for a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led coalition government headed by Prime Minister Vajpayee. That outcome had decisively ended the historic dominance of the Nehru-Gandhi-led Congress Party, which was relegated to sitting in opposition at the national level (its members continued to lead many state governments). However, a surprise Congress resurgence under Sonia Gandhi in May 2004 national elections brought to power a new left-leaning coalition government led by former finance minister and Oxford-educated economist Manmohan Singh, a Sikh and India's first-ever non-Hindu prime minister. Many analysts attributed Congress's 2004 resurgence to the resentment of rural and poverty-stricken urban voters who felt left out of the "India shining" perception of a BJP more associated with urban, middle-class interests. Others saw in the results a rejection of the Hindu nationalism associated with the BJP. For seven consecutive years, the often-cited Freedom House has rated India as "free" in the areas of political rights and civil liberties. (See CRS Report RL32465, *India's 2004 National Elections*.)

**The Congress Party.** With only 110 parliamentary seats after 1999, Congress was at its lowest national representation ever. Observers attributed the party's poor showing to a number of factors, including perceptions that party leader Sonia Gandhi lacked the experience to lead the country and the failure of Congress to make strong pre-election alliances (as had the BJP). Support for Congress had been in fairly steady decline following the 1984 assassination of then-PM Indira Gandhi and the 1991 assassination of her son, then-PM Rajiv Gandhi. Sonia Gandhi, Rajiv's widow, refused to be drawn into active politics until the 1998 elections. She later made efforts to revitalize the organization by phasing out older leaders and attracting more women and lower castes — efforts that appear to have paid off in 2004. Today, Congress again occupies more parliamentary seats (145) than any other party and, through unprecedented alliances with powerful regional parties, it is again at the head of India's government. Congress maintained control of the populous Maharashtra state in October 2004 elections there, solidifying its national standing and dealing another blow to the BJP and its allies. However, February 2005 elections in Bihar unseated the key Congress-allied Rashtriya Janata Dal and its prominent lower-caste leader, Lalu Yadav.

**The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).** Riding a crest of rising Hindu nationalism, the BJP increased its strength in Parliament from only two seats in 1984 to 181 seats in 1999. In 1993, the party's image was tarnished among some, burnished for others, by its alleged

complicity in outbreaks of serious communal violence in which a mosque was destroyed at Ayodhya and up to 3,000 people were killed in anti-Muslim rioting in Bombay and elsewhere. Some observers hold elements of the BJP, as the political arm of the extremist Hindu nationalist organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, or National Volunteer Force), responsible for the incidents. While leading a national coalition, the BJP worked — with only limited success — to change its image from right-wing Hindu fundamentalist to conservative, secular, and moderate, although early 2002 riots in Gujarat again damaged the party's national and international credentials as a secular and moderate organization. In 1998, the BJP oversaw a fragile National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coalition under party notable Atal Vajpayee, whose widespread personal popularity helped to keep the BJP in power. The BJP advocates “Hindutva,” or an India based on Hindu culture, and views this as key to nation-building. Popular among upper caste groups, the party continued to be looked upon with suspicion by lower-caste Indians, India's 145 million Muslims, and non-Hindi-speaking Hindus in southern India, who together comprise a majority of India's voters. Some controversial long-term goals of the BJP have included building a Hindu temple on the site of a 16<sup>th</sup>-century mosque in Ayodhya, establishing a uniform code of law to abolish special status for Muslims, and abolishing the special status granted to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution. The BJP leadership sought to put these goals on the back-burner while in power; there are signs they may return to the center of the BJP agenda now that the party again sits in opposition at the national level.

## India-U.S. Relations and Bilateral Issues

### Security Issues

**The Kashmir Issue.** Although India suffers from several militant regional separatist movements, the Kashmir issue has proven the most lethal and intractable. Conflict over Kashmiri sovereignty also has brought global attention to a potential “flashpoint” for interstate war between nuclear-armed powers. The problem is rooted in claims by both India and Pakistan to the former princely state, divided since 1948 by a military Line of Control (LOC) separating India's Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-controlled Azad [Free] Kashmir. Some Kashmiris seek independence from both countries. Spurred by a perception of rigged state elections that unfairly favored pro-New Delhi candidates in 1989, an ongoing separatist war between Islamic militants and their supporters and Indian security forces in Indian-held Kashmir has claimed 40,000-90,000 lives. India blames Pakistan for fanning the rebellion, as well as supplying arms, training, and fighters. Pakistan, for its part, claims to provide only diplomatic and moral support to what it calls “freedom fighters” who resist Indian rule in the Muslim-majority region. New Delhi insists that the dispute should not be “internationalized” through involvement by third-party mediators. Islamabad has sought to bring external major power persuasion to bear on India, especially from the United States. The longstanding U.S. position on Kashmir is that the issue must be resolved through negotiations between India and Pakistan while taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Some separatist groups, such as the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), continue to seek an independent or autonomous Kashmir. Others, including the Hizbul Mujahideen (HuM), seek union with Pakistan. In 1993, the All Parties Hurriyat [Freedom] Conference was formed as an umbrella organization for groups opposed to Indian rule in

Kashmir. The Hurriyat membership of more than 20 political and religious groups includes the JKLF (now a political group) and Jamaat-e-Islami (the political wing of the HuM). The Hurriyat Conference, which states that it is committed to seeking dialogue with the Indian government on a broad range of issues, calls for a tripartite conference on Kashmir, including India, Pakistan, and representatives of the Kashmiri people. Hurriyat leaders demand Kashmiri representation at any talks between India and Pakistan on Kashmir.

In 2001 and 2002, a series of violent incidents worsened the region's security climate and brought India and Pakistan to the brink of full-scale war. In October 2001, Islamic militants attacked the state assembly building in Srinagar, killing 38, and a brazen December attack on the Indian Parliament complex in New Delhi left 15 dead. Indian officials blamed Pakistan-based militant groups for both attacks and initiated a massive military mobilization that brought hundreds of thousands of Indian troops to the border with Pakistan. In May 2002, in the midst of this armed showdown, militants attacked an Indian army base in the Jammu town of Kaluchak, leaving 34 dead, most of them women and children. New Delhi leveled accusations that Islamabad was sponsoring Kashmiri terrorism; Indian leaders talked of "pre-emptive" military incursions against separatists' training bases on Pakistani territory. International pressure included numerous visits to the region by top U.S. diplomats. On receiving assurances from Secretary of State Powell and others that Pakistan would terminate support for infiltration and dismantle militant training camps, India began the slow process of reducing tensions with Pakistan. In October 2002, after completion of state elections in Jammu and Kashmir, New Delhi announced a redeployment of Indian troops to their peacetime barracks. (Elections to the Jammu and Kashmir state assembly resulted in the ouster of the National Conference and the establishment of a coalition government of the Congress Party and the People's Democratic Party. While the seating of this new and seemingly more moderate state government renewed hopes for peace in the troubled region, continued separatist violence dampened early optimism.) Islamabad responded with a stand-down order of its own, though the Indian and Pakistani armies continued to exchange sporadic small arms, mortar, and artillery fire along the LOC. An India-Pakistan peace initiative launched in the spring of 2003 produced a November 2003 bilateral cease-fire agreement for the entire LOC and shared international border. In February 2005, a major confidence-building measure came with the two countries agreeing to allow limited bus service across the LOC, a development that may improve the quality of life for Kashmiris.

**Nuclear Weapons and Missile Proliferation.** Policy analysts consider the apparent arms race between India and Pakistan as posing perhaps the most likely prospect for the future use of nuclear weapons by states. In May 1998, India conducted five underground nuclear tests, breaking a self-imposed, 24-year moratorium on such testing. Despite international efforts to dissuade it, Pakistan quickly followed. The tests created a global storm of criticism, and represented a serious setback for two decades of U.S. nuclear nonproliferation efforts in South Asia. Following the tests, President Clinton imposed full restrictions on non-humanitarian aid to both India and Pakistan as mandated under Section 102 of the Arms Export Control Act. Proliferation in South Asia is part of a chain of rivalries — India seeking to achieve deterrence against China, and Pakistan seeking to gain an "equalizer" against a conventionally stronger India. India currently is believed to have enough fissile material, mainly plutonium, for 55-115 nuclear weapons; Pakistan, with a program focused on enriched uranium, may be capable of building a similar number. Both countries have aircraft capable of delivering nuclear bombs. India's military has inducted short- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles, while Pakistan itself possesses short- and

medium-range missiles (allegedly acquired from China and North Korea). All are assumed to be capable of delivering nuclear warheads over significant distances. In August 1999, a quasi-governmental Indian body released a Draft Nuclear Doctrine for India calling for a “minimum credible deterrent” (MCD) based upon a triad of delivery systems and pledging that India will not be the first to use nuclear weapons in a conflict. In January 2003, New Delhi announced creation of a Nuclear Command Authority. After the body’s first session in September 2003, participants vowed to “consolidate India’s nuclear deterrent.” As such, India appears to be taking the next step toward operationalizing its nuclear weapons capability. (See also CRS Report RL32115, *Missile Proliferation and the Strategic Balance in South Asia*, and CRS Report RS21237, *India and Pakistan Nuclear Weapons Status*.)

**U.S. Nonproliferation Efforts and Congressional Action.** Soon after the May 1998 nuclear tests, Congress acted to ease sanctions. Through a series of legislative measures, Congress lifted restrictions on both India and Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> In September 2001, President Bush waived remaining sanctions on India pursuant to P.L. 106-79. During the 1990s, the U.S. security focus in South Asia sought to minimize damage to the nonproliferation regime, prevent escalation of an arms and/or missile race, and promote Indo-Pakistani bilateral dialogue. In light of these goals, the Clinton Administration set forward five key “benchmarks” for India and Pakistan based on the contents of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1172 (June 1998) which condemned the two countries’ nuclear tests. These were: 1) signing and ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); 2) halting all further production of fissile material and participating in Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty negotiations; 3) limiting development and deployment of WMD delivery vehicles; 4) implementing strict export controls on sensitive WMD materials and technologies; and 5) establishing bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan to resolve their mutual differences.

Progress in each of these areas has been limited, and the Bush Administration makes no reference to the benchmark framework. Aside from security concerns, the governments of both India and Pakistan are faced with the prestige factor attached to their nuclear programs and the domestic unpopularity of relinquishing what are perceived to be potent symbols of national power. Neither has signed the CTBT, and both appear to be producing weapons-grade fissile materials. (India has consistently rejected the CTBT, as well as the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, as discriminatory, calling instead for a global nuclear disarmament regime. Although both India and Pakistan currently observe self-imposed moratoria on nuclear testing, they continue to resist signing the CTBT — a position made more tenable by U.S. Senate’s rejection of the treaty in 1999.) The status of weaponization and deployment is unclear, though there are indications that this is occurring at a slow, but steady pace. Early optimism in the area of export controls waned and then vanished in February 2004 when it became clear that Pakistanis were involved in the export of WMD materials and technologies. In September 2004, two Indian scientists were sanctioned for providing WMD-related equipment or technologies to Iran. Some observers have called for a new U.S. approach that would provide technical assistance in enhancing the security of any

---

<sup>1</sup> The India-Pakistan Relief Act of 1998 (in P.L. 105-277) authorized a one-year sanctions waiver exercised by President Clinton in November 1998. The Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2000 (P.L. 106-79) gave the President permanent authority after October 1999 to waive nuclear-test-related sanctions applied against India and Pakistan. On October 27, 1999, President Clinton waived economic sanctions on India (Pakistan remained under sanctions as a result of the October 1999 coup). (See CRS Report RS20995, *India and Pakistan: Current U.S. Economic Sanctions*.)

WMD materials in South Asia (see CRS Report RL31589, *Nuclear Threat Reduction Measures for India and Pakistan*). Section 1601 of P.L. 107-228 outlined nonproliferation objectives for South Asia. Among concerns voiced by some Members of Congress was that there continue to be “contradictions” in U.S. nonproliferation policy toward South Asia, particularly as related to the Senate’s rejection of the CTBT and indications that the Defense Department may continue to develop low-yield nuclear weapons.

**U.S.-India Security Cooperation.** Unlike U.S.-Pakistan military ties, which date back to the 1950s, security cooperation between the United States and India is in the early stages of development. Since September 2001, and despite a concurrent U.S. rapprochement with Pakistan, U.S.-India security cooperation has flourished. Both countries acknowledge a desire for greater bilateral security cooperation and a series of measures have been taken to achieve this. In August 2004, a top U.S. diplomat in India said, “Without doubt, military cooperation remains one of the most vibrant, visible, and proactive legs powering the transformation of U.S.-India relations.” Joint Steering Groups between the U.S. and Indian armed services hold regular meetings. The India-U.S. Defense Policy Group (DPG) — moribund since India’s 1998 nuclear tests and ensuing U.S. sanctions — was revived in late 2001. A June 2004 session of the DPG reviewed accomplishments since the previous such meeting and marked the first high-level U.S. interaction with New Delhi’s recently-seated Congress-led government. Some analysts have lauded increased U.S.-India security ties as providing potential counterbalance to growing Chinese influence in the region.

Since early 2002, the United States and India have held numerous and unprecedented joint exercises involving all military branches. Advanced air combat exercises have provided the U.S. military with its first look at the Russian-built Su-30MKI; in 2004, mock air combat saw Indian pilots in late-model Russian-built fighters hold off American pilots flying older F-15Cs. U.S. and Indian special forces soldiers have held joint exercises near the India-China border, and annual “Malabar” joint naval exercises are held off the Indian coast. In July 2004, an Indian Air Force contingent participated in the Cooperative Cope Thunder exercises in Alaska. Despite these developments, there remain indications that the perceptions and expectations of top U.S. and Indian military leaders are divergent on several key issues, including India’s role in the Persian Gulf and Central Asia, approaches to countering terrorism, and a potential U.S. role in resolving the India-Pakistan dispute. Moreover, the existence of a nonproliferation constituency in the United States is seen as a further hindrance to more fully developed military-to-military relations.

Along with increasing military-to-military ties, the issue of U.S. arms sales to India has taken a higher profile. In February 2002, Congress was notified of the negotiated sale to India of eight counter-battery radar sets (or “Firefinder” radars) and arrangements soon were made for the sale of four additional sets in a deal worth a total of \$190 million. India also purchased \$29 million worth of counterterrorism equipment for its special forces and has received sophisticated U.S.-made electronic ground sensors to help stem the tide of militant infiltration in the Kashmir region. In July 2004, Congress was notified of a possible sale to India involving up to \$40 million worth of aircraft self-protection systems to be mounted on the Boeing 737s that carry the Indian head of state. The State Department has authorized Israel to sell to India the jointly developed U.S.-Israeli Phalcon airborne early warning system, an expensive asset that some analysts believe may tilt the regional strategic balance even further in India’s favor. The Indian government reportedly possesses an extensive list of desired U.S.-made weapons, including P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft, PAC-3 anti-

missile systems, electronic warfare systems, and possibly even F-16 fighters. In March 2005, the unveiling of the Bush Administration's "new strategy for South Asia" included assertions that the United States welcomes Indian requests for information on the possible purchase of F-16 or F/A-18 multi-role fighters, and indicated that Washington is "ready to discuss the sale of transformative systems in areas such as command and control, early warning, and missile defense." Still, some top Indian officials express concern that the United States is a "fickle" partner that may not always be relied upon to provide the reciprocity, sensitivity, and high-technology transfers sought by New Delhi.

In a controversial turn, the Indian government has sought to purchase a sophisticated anti-missile platform, the Arrow Weapon System, from Israel. Because the United States took the lead in the system's development, the U.S. government has veto power over any Israeli exports of the Arrow. Although U.S. Defense Department officials are seen to support the sale as meshing with President Bush's policy of cooperating with friendly countries on missile defense, State Department officials are reported to oppose the transfer, believing that it would send the wrong signal to other weapons-exporting states at a time when the U.S. is seeking to discourage international weapons proliferation. Indications are that a U.S. interest in maintaining a strategic balance on the subcontinent, along with U.S. obligations under the Missile Technology Control Regime, may preclude any approval of the Arrow sale.

Joint U.S.-India military exercises and arms sales negotiations have caused disquiet in Pakistan, where there is concern that the developments will strengthen India's position through an appearance that Washington is siding with India. Islamabad is concerned that its already disadvantageous conventional military status vis-à-vis New Delhi will be further eroded by India's acquisition of additional modern weapons platforms such as the Phalcon and Arrow. In fact, numerous observers have noted what appears to be a pro-India drift in the U.S. government's strategic orientation in South Asia. Yet the United States regularly lauds Pakistan's role as a key ally in the U.S.-led counterterrorism coalition and assures Islamabad that it will take no actions that disrupt strategic balance on the subcontinent. (For further discussion, see CRS Report RL31644, *U.S.-India Security Relations*, and CRS Report RS22148, *Combat Aircraft Sales to South Asia*.)

## Regional Dissidence and Human Rights

As a vast mosaic of ethnicities, languages, cultures, and religions, India can be difficult to govern. Internal instability resulting from diversity is further complicated by colonial legacies such as international borders that separate members of the same ethnic groups, creating flashpoints for regional dissidence and separatism. Separatist insurgents in remote and underdeveloped northeast regions confound New Delhi and create international tensions by operating out of neighboring Bangladesh, Burma, Bhutan, and Nepal. Maoist rebels continue to operate in eastern states. India also has suffered outbreaks of serious communal violence between Hindus and Muslims, especially in the western Gujarat state.

**The Northeast.** Since the time of India's foundation, numerous separatist groups have fought for ethnic autonomy or independence in the country's northeast region. Some of the tribal struggles in the small states known as the Seven Sisters are centuries old. It is estimated that more than 25,000 people have been killed in such fighting since 1948, including some 2,000 in 2004. The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the National Liberation Front of Tripura, the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), and the

United National Liberation Front (seeking an independent Manipur) are among the groups at war with the central government. In April 2005, the U.S. State Department named ULFA in its list of “other selected terrorists organizations,” the first time an Indian separatist group outside Kashmir was so named. New Delhi has at times blamed Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, and Bhutan for “sheltering” one or more of these groups beyond the reach of Indian security forces, and India reportedly has launched joint counter-insurgency operations with some of its neighbors. India also has accused Pakistan’s intelligence agency of training and equipping militants. Bhutan launched major military operations against suspected rebel camps on Bhutanese territory in December 2003 and appeared to have routed the ULFA and NDFB. In April 2004, five leading separatist groups from the region rejected PM Vajpayee’s offer of unconditional talks, saying talks can only take place under U.N. mediation and if the sovereignty issue was on the table. Then, it what seemed a blow to the new Congress-led government’s domestic security policies, an October 2004 spate of bombings and shootings in Assam and Nagaland killed 73 and were blamed on ULFA and NDFB militants who may have re-established their bases in Bhutan. Major Indian army operations in November 2004 may have overrun numerous Manipur separatist bases near the Burmese border.

**“Naxalites”.** Also operating in India are Naxalites — communist insurgents ostensibly engaged in violent struggle on behalf of landless laborers and tribals. These groups, most active in inland areas of east-central India, claim to be battling oppression and exploitation in order to create a classless society. Their opponents call them terrorists and extortionists. Related violence caused some 1,300 deaths in 2004. Most notable are the People’s War Group (PWG), mainly active in the southern Andhra Pradesh state, and the Maoist Communist Center of West Bengal and Bihar. In September 2004, the two groups merged to form the Communist Party of India - Maoist. Both appear on the U.S. State Department’s list of “other terrorist groups” and both are designated as terrorist groups by New Delhi; each is believed to have about 2,000 cadres. PWG fighters were behind an October 2003 landmine attack that nearly killed the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh. In July 2004, the Andhra Pradesh government lifted an 11-year-old ban on the PWG, but the Maoists withdrew from ensuing peace talks in January 2005, accusing the state government of breaking a cease-fire agreement. Violent attacks on government forces then escalated in the spring of 2005. New Delhi has expressed concerns that indigenous Maoists are increasing their links with Nepali communist rebels at war with the Kathmandu government.

**Gujarat.** In February 2002, a group of Hindu activists returning by train to the western state of Gujarat from the city of Ayodhya — site of the razed 16<sup>th</sup>-century Babri Mosque and a proposed Hindu temple — were attacked by a Muslim mob in the town of Godhra; 58 of them were killed. In the communal rioting that followed, up to 2,000 people died, most of them Muslim. Many observers criticized the BJP-led state and national governments for inaction; some even saw evidence of state government complicity in anti-Muslim attacks. Leading human rights groups have been harshly critical of the central government’s alleged inaction in bringing those responsible to justice. Some of these criticisms were echoed by the Indian Supreme Court in September 2003, when justices strongly admonished Gujarati authorities for their mishandling of attempts to prosecute some of those charged with riot-related crimes. In September 2004, the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom said that the 2002 riots were carried out by mobs that “appear to have been aided by state or local government officials.” In March 2005, the State Department made a controversial decision to deny a U.S. visa to Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi under a section of the Immigration and Nationality Act that bars entry for foreign government

officials found to be complicit in severe violations of religious freedom. The decision was widely criticized in India.

**Human Rights.** According to the U.S. State Department's *India: Country Report on Human Rights Practices, 2004*, the Indian government "generally respected the human rights of its citizens; however, numerous serious problems remained." These included extensive societal violence against women; extrajudicial killings, including faked encounter killings; excessive use of force by security forces, arbitrary arrests, and incommunicado detentions in Kashmir and several northeastern states; torture and rape by agents of the government; poor prison conditions and lengthy pretrial detentions without charge; forced prostitution; child prostitution and female infanticide; human trafficking; and caste-based discrimination and violence, among others. Terrorist attacks and kidnappings also remained grievous problems, especially in Kashmir and the northeastern states. All of these same "serious problems" were noted in the previous year's report as well.

The State Department has noted that "These abuses are generated by a traditionally hierarchical social structure, deeply rooted tensions among the country's many ethnic and religious communities, violent secessionist movements and the authorities' attempts to repress them, and deficient police methods and training." Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the National Human Rights Commission of India have been critical of India's human rights record on these issues, especially with regard to sectarian violence in Gujarat in the spring of 2002. Also, the March 2002 enactment of a new Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) came under fire as providing the government a powerful tool with which to arbitrarily target minorities and political opponents (POTA was repealed by the new Congress-led government in September 2004). The 1958 Armed Forces Special Powers Act has been called a facilitator of "grave human rights abuses" in Jammu and Kashmir and the northeastern states. In general, India has denied international human rights groups official access to Kashmir, Punjab, and other sensitive areas. The State Department's 2004-2005 report on *Supporting Human Rights and Democracy* called India "a vibrant democracy with strong constitutional human rights protections," but asserted that "poor enforcement of laws, especially at the local level, and the severely overburdened court system weaken the delivery of justice." In June 2005, a State Department report on trafficking in persons again placed India on the "Tier 2 Watch List" for its "inability to show evidence of increased efforts to address trafficking in persons, particularly its lack of progress in forming a national law enforcement response to interstate and transnational trafficking crimes."

A secular nation, India has a long tradition of religious tolerance (with occasional lapses), which is protected under its constitution. India's population includes a Hindu majority of 82% as well as a large Muslim minority of some 150 million (14%). Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and others each total less than 4%. Although freedom of religion is protected by the Indian government, human rights groups have noted that India's religious tolerance is susceptible to attack by religious extremists. In its annual report on international religious freedom released in September 2004, the State Department found that the Indian government "sometimes did not act effectively to counter societal attacks against religious minorities and attempts by state and local governments to limit religious freedom." For the sixth year in a row, the report singled out India for "state neglect of societal discrimination against, or persecution of, minority religions." However, it also noted "significant improvements" in religious freedom. A key shift from the 2003 report was recognition that May 2004 national elections brought the seating of a new coalition that pledges to respect

India's traditions of secular government and religious tolerance. In May 2005, the annual report of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom placed India on a "Watch List" of countries requiring "close monitoring due to the nature and extent of violations of religious freedom engaged in or tolerated by the governments." However, as a result of "marked improvement in conditions" since May 2004 elections, the Commission no longer recommends that India be designated as a Country of Particular Concern.

## India's Economy and U.S. Concerns

**Overview.** Although there is widespread and serious poverty in India, many observers believe that the country's long-term economic potential is tremendous, and recent strides in the technology sector have brought international attention to such high-tech centers as Bangalore and Hyderabad. Many analysts — along with some U.S. government officials — point to excessive regulatory and bureaucratic structures as a hindrance to the realization of India's full economic potential. The high cost of capital (rooted in large government budget deficits) and an "abysmal" infrastructure also draw negative appraisals as obstacles to growth. Constant comparisons with the progress of the Chinese economy show India lagging in rates of growth and foreign investment, and in the removal of trade barriers. Despite problems, the current growth rate of the Indian economy is amongst the highest in the world.

After enjoying an average growth rate above 6% for the 1990s, the Indian economy cooled somewhat with the global economic downturn after 2000. Yet sluggish Cold War-era "Hindu rates of growth" became a thing of the past. For FY2002/03 (ending March 2003), real change in GDP was 4.3%. Robust growth in services and industry was countered by drought-induced contraction in the agricultural sector. Analysts at first concluded that New Delhi's target of 8% growth for FY2003/04 was overly optimistic; the Indian government apparently agreed, lowering its projection to 6%. Yet, in July 2004, an annual growth rate of 8.2% was recorded, with monsoon rains driving strong recovery in the agricultural sector. Middle-term estimates are encouraging, predicting growth near 7%. A major upswing in the services sector is expected to lead; this sector now accounts for nearly half of India's gross domestic product. Inflation rates have been fairly low (4.4% in 2004), but rose slightly due to higher energy costs. In May 2004, India's foreign exchange reserves topped a record \$120 billion. The benchmark Bombay Stock Exchange gained an impressive 80% in 2003 and 11% in 2004, with the Sensex index reaching record highs in December 2004.

A major U.S. concern with regard to India is the scope and pace of reforms in what has been that country's quasi-socialist economy. Economic reforms begun in 1991, under the Congress-led government of then-Prime Minister Rao, boosted growth and led to huge foreign investment to India in the mid-1990s. Reform efforts stagnated, however, under the weak coalition governments of the mid-1990s. The Asian financial crisis and sanctions on India (as a result of its May 1998 nuclear tests) further dampened the economic outlook. Following the 1999 parliamentary election, the BJP-led government launched second-generation economic reforms, including major deregulation, privatization, and tariff-reducing measures. Once seen as favoring domestic business and diffident about foreign involvement, the government appears to gradually be embracing globalization and has sought to reassure foreign investors with promises of transparent and nondiscriminatory policies. In October 2004, the World Bank's India country director lauded the country's economic achievements, but called accelerating reforms "essential" for sustained growth and poverty reduction there,

and a top International Monetary Fund official said that “India remains a relatively closed economy” and urged greater trade liberalization and regional economic integration.

**Trade.** As India’s largest trading and investment partner, the United States strongly supports New Delhi’s continuing economic reform policies. U.S. exports to India in 2004 were valued at \$6.1 billion (up 22% over 2003), with machinery and transport equipment (42%) and chemicals (18%) as leading categories. Imports from India in 2004 totaled \$15.6 billion (up 19% over 2003). Leading imports include apparel, household goods, diamonds, and jewelry. Annual foreign direct investment (FDI) to India rose from about \$100 million in 1990 to \$2.4 billion by 1996. Net FDI in 2004 reached \$6.5 billion and is estimated at \$7.4 billion for 2005. More than one-third of these investments was made by U.S. companies. In March 2004, U.S. Ambassador to India David Mulford told an audience in Delhi that “the U.S. is one of the world’s most open economies and India is one of the most closed.” Despite significant tariff reductions and other measures taken by India to improve market access, according to the 2005 report of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), a number of foreign trade barriers remain, including “remarkably high” tariffs, especially in the agricultural sector. The USTR asserts that “substantial expansion of U.S.-India trade will be unlikely without significant Indian liberalization.”

India’s extensive trade and investment barriers have been criticized by U.S. government officials and business leaders as an impediment to its own economic development, as well as to stronger U.S.-India ties. For example, in September 2004, U.S. Under Secretary of State Larson told a Bombay audience that “trade and investment flows between the U.S. and India are far below where they should and can be,” adding that “the picture for U.S. investment is also lackluster.” He identified the primary reason for the suboptimal situation as “the slow pace of economic reform in India.” The Heritage Foundation’s *2005 Index of Economic Freedom* again rated India as being “mostly unfree,” highlighting an especially restrictive set of trade policies, heavy government involvement in the banking and finance sector, demanding regulatory structures, and a high level of black market activity.

Inadequate intellectual property rights protection has been a long-standing issue between the United States and India. Major areas of irritation have included counterfeiting of medicines and auto parts, and pirating of U.S. media. The USTR places India on its Special 301 Priority Watch List for “weak” protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights. The International Intellectual Property Alliance estimated U.S. losses of \$465 million due to trade piracy in 2004 — nearly half of this in the category of business software — and noted “only minor progress in combating piracy.” (See also CRS Report RS21502, *India-U.S. Economic Relations*.)

## **“Next Steps in Strategic Partnership” Issues**

The Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) initiative encompasses several major issues in India-U.S. relations. Since 2001, the Indian government has pressed the United States to ease restrictions on the export to India of dual-use high-technology goods, as well as to increase civilian nuclear and civilian space cooperation. These three key issues came to be known as the “trinity,” and top Indian officials have stated that progress in these areas was necessary to provide tangible evidence of a changed U.S.-India relationship. There were later references to a “quartet” when the issue of missile defense was included. In late 2003, Secretary of State Powell asserted that progress was being made on the “glide path” toward

agreement on the “trinity” issues. In January 2004, President Bush and the Indian prime minister issued a joint statement indicating that the U.S.-India “strategic partnership” includes expanding cooperation in these areas, as well as expanding dialogue on missile defense. The “glide path” itself was re-dubbed the NSSP. Some nongovernmental U.S. experts believe that, although India is not regarded as a proliferator of sensitive technologies, U.S. obligations under existing law may limit significantly the scope of NSSP engagement, and some Indian analysts fear that the NSSP may become moribund due to U.S. “bureaucratic obstacles.” Despite these considerations, many observers see in the NSSP evidence of a major and positive shift in the U.S. strategic orientation toward India.

Former Under Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Security Ken Juster — who took the lead in U.S.-India trade negotiations — sought to dispel “trade-detering myths” about limits on dual-use trade by noting that less than one-half of 1% of total U.S. trade with India in FY2002 was subject to licensing requirements and that 90% of all dual-use licensing applications for India were approved in FY2003. In July 2003, some 150 representatives of private industries in both countries met in Washington to share their interests and concerns with governmental leaders. Panel topics included investment, information technology, defense trade, life sciences, and nanotechnology. That month also saw the inaugural session of the U.S.-India High-Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG), where officials discussed a wide range of issues relevant to creating the conditions for more robust bilateral high technology commerce, including market access, tariff and non-tariff barriers, and export controls (the fourth public-private event held under HTCG auspices was in Washington in November 2004). In February 2005, the inaugural session of the U.S.-India High-Technology Defense Working Group was held under HTCG auspices. Some Members of Congress have expressed concern that dual-use technology trade with India might allow that country to advance its military nuclear and/or missile projects, but the Commerce Department insists that future civil nuclear and civil space cooperation with India will take place only within the limits set by multilateral nonproliferation regimes. Commerce’s Bureau of Industry and Security may create a permanent New Delhi post for a U.S. official to oversee export control compliance.

In 2003, the Chairman of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) visited India for the first time since before the 1998 nuclear tests, reportedly to discuss issues of safety and emergency operating procedures for India’s civilian nuclear program. In February 2005, an NRC commissioner led a U.S. delegation for further technical discussions and visits to selected Indian nuclear facilities. New Delhi has not requested U.S. assistance in building new nuclear power plants, but several safety-related initiatives are said to be underway. In April 2005, Secretary of State Rice indicated that, given international legal obligations and existing U.S. law, the United States is not currently in a position to sell civilian nuclear technology to India. A June 2004 conference on India-U.S. space science and commerce was held in Bangalore, where it was announced that the Bush Administration had approved a license authorizing Boeing Satellite Systems to work with the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) on possible joint development and marketing of communication satellites. Other cooperative efforts in space technology reportedly include applications for sustainable development and weather research. Since 1998, a number of Indian entities have been subjected to case-by-case licensing requirements and appear on the U.S. export control “Entity List” of foreign end users involved in weapons proliferation activities. These include the ISRO, seven of its subordinate entities, four Department of Atomic Energy entities, four subordinates of the Defense Research and Development Organization, and Bharat Dynamics

Limited, a missile production agency. In September 2004, as part of the implementation of Phase I of the NSSP, the United States modified some export licensing policies and removed the ISRO headquarters from the Entity List.

## U.S. Assistance

**Economic.** According to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), India has more people living in abject poverty (some 350 million) than do Latin America and Africa combined. From 1947 through 2004, the United States provided more than \$14 billion in economic loans and grants to India. USAID programs in India, budgeted at \$90 million in FY2005, concentrate on five areas: 1) *economic growth* (increased transparency and efficiency in the mobilization and allocation of resources); 2) *health* (improved overall health with a greater integration of food assistance, reproductive services, and the prevention of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases); 3) *disaster management*; 4) *environmental protection* (improved access to clean energy and water; the reduction of public subsidies through improved cost recovery; promoting more efficient technology and management); and 5) *education* (improved access to elementary education, and justice and other social and economic services for vulnerable groups, especially women and children).

**Security.** The United States has provided \$157 million in military assistance to India since 1947, more than 90% of it distributed from 1962-1966. Security-related assistance for FY2003 military training and nonproliferation export control enhancements was \$2 million, with greater emphasis on training in FY2004 and FY2005. Bush Administration requests for FMF in 2002 and 2003 were later withdrawn, and the United States and India have since agreed to pursue commercial sales programs, with the Pentagon reporting Indian military sales agreements worth \$138 million in FY2002 and \$63 million in FY2003.

**Table 1. U.S. Assistance to India, FY2001-FY2006**  
(in millions of dollars)

Program or Account	FY2001 Actual	FY2002 Actual	FY2003 Actual	FY2004 Actual	FY2005 Estimate	FY2006 Request
CSH	24.6	41.7	47.4	47.8	51.0	48.8
DA	28.8	29.2	34.5	22.5	24.0	29.6
ESF	5.0	7.0	10.5	14.9	14.9	14.0
IMET	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.4	1.2
NADR-EXBS	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.6
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$59.8</b>	<b>\$79.8</b>	<b>\$94.4</b>	<b>\$106.2</b>	<b>\$92.0</b>	<b>\$94.2</b>
P.L.480 Title II*	78.3	93.7	44.8	30.8	37.4	28.4
Section 416(b)*	-.	12.0	-.	-.	-.	-.
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$138.1</b>	<b>\$185.5</b>	<b>\$139.2</b>	<b>\$137.0</b>	<b>\$129.4</b>	<b>\$122.6</b>

**Sources:** U.S. Departments of State and Agriculture; U.S. Agency for International Development.

**Abbreviations:**

CSH: Child Survival and Health  
 DA: Development Assistance  
 ESF: Economic Support Fund  
 IMET: International Military Education and Training  
 NADR-EXBS: Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining, and Related - Export Control and Related Border Security Assistance  
 P.L.480 Title II: Emergency and Private Assistance food aid (grants)  
 Section 416(b): The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended (surplus agricultural commodity donations)

\*Food aid amounts do not include what can be significant transportation costs.