

Opening Statement

Nomination Hearing 02/07/12

Thank you all for coming. Before we begin, let me say a few words about recent events in Egypt. I am alarmed by the attacks against civil society in Egypt, including American organizations like NDI, IRI, the International Center for Journalists, and Freedom House. Yesterday's prosecutions are a slap in the face to Americans who have supported Egypt for decades and to Egyptian individuals and NGOs who have put their futures on the line for a more democratic Egypt. This is a dangerous game that risks damaging both Egypt's democratic prospects and the U.S.-Egyptian bilateral relationship.

Egypt faces an array of critical challenges—a pending fiscal crisis, a worsening security environment, and a difficult political transition. The Egyptian government cannot continue to undermine civil society and persecute the very talent seeking to bring Egypt security and prosperity. America stands as an eager partner in supporting Egypt's democratic transition and economic stabilization, but this requires an atmosphere in which Egyptian civil society—and its American friends—are protected.

Turning to India, I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to discuss what has become, really, one of the most significant partnerships in U.S. foreign policy. There are few relationships that will be as vital in the 21st century as our growing ties with India and its people. On all of the most critical global challenges that we face, India has a central role to play. And that means that Washington is going to be looking to New Delhi not only for cooperation, but increasingly for innovation and regional leadership as well.

India's growing significance has been clear to many of us for quite some time now. That's why President Obama invited Prime Minister Singh to be his guest at the first state dinner, Secretary Clinton has visited India twice, and both countries inaugurated the U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue two years ago. Both Republicans and Democrats understand the need to capitalize on the democratic values and strategic interests that our two countries share. And that's why it is

important that we work together every day—as I think we are—to further cultivate our relationship.

Given the significance of this relationship, I am extremely pleased that the President has nominated Nancy Powell to represent us in New Delhi. Nancy is a former Ambassador to both Nepal and Pakistan, and she has served tours of duty in both India and Bangladesh, making her one of the foremost South Asia experts in the Foreign Service. She is one of our best, and it is only appropriate that she be tasked with one of the State Department's most important postings.

I think Ambassador Powell would agree with me that U.S. and Indian interests and values are converging today as never before, and, consequently, America is an interested stakeholder in India's rise. India's economy is projected to be the world's third-largest in the near future, and total trade between our countries reached \$73 billion in 2010 and could exceed \$100 billion this year. On defense, our security cooperation has grown so dramatically that India now conducts more military exercises with the United States than any other country.

Education is fast becoming one of the strongest links between our nations, and I look forward to building on the progress we made at the Higher Education Summit last fall. Whether it's helping India build a network of community colleges that can revolutionize access to education or creating educational opportunities via the Internet, we can give millions of people a brighter future.

As our economies and education systems grow more intertwined, our peoples will have a great opportunity to work together on technological breakthroughs. Already, India is playing a leading role in clean energy innovation. A report released last week found that India saw 52 percent growth in clean energy investments in 2011—a rate higher than any other significant global economy. With leadership from companies like Suzlon and Reliance Solar, India has the world's fourth-largest installed wind capacity and incredible solar energy potential. It's why I strongly support the 2009 U.S.-India Memorandum of Understanding on energy and climate change signed by President Obama and Prime Minister Singh, which is being implemented through initiatives like the Partnership to Advance Clean Energy.

India's strategic role is also growing. We all agree that the dynamism of the Asia-Pacific region requires India's sustained presence and engagement—whether to combat nuclear proliferation, to promote economic stability in Afghanistan, or to encourage human rights in Burma and Sri Lanka. India enjoys strong cultural, historical, people-to-people, and economic links to East Asia, and I frequently hear that its eastward neighbors see real merit in India's contributions to regional peace and prosperity. In the coming years, I hope our two countries can deepen our cooperation throughout Asia, not based on any common threats, but on the bedrock of shared interests and values.

One area that is showing some signs of promise, especially on economic cooperation, is the India-Pakistan relationship. I am encouraged that Pakistan granted India Most Favored Nation status and that the two nations are continuing their dialogue on a host of issues. I hope both countries can seize this moment to break with the perilous politics of their past.

True, as India moves forward abroad, it will have to continue addressing its complex domestic challenges, including poor infrastructure, booming energy demand, restrictive trade and investment practices, significant human trafficking, and some 500-600 million people living in poverty. I know we can be a real partner in this effort, in a way that empowers all classes of Indian society. Indians must feel that a partnership with the United States delivers real, tangible benefits to their everyday lives.

Ambassador Powell, I want to thank you and your family for your service, and I look forward to the Senate moving your confirmation as quickly as possible.

Senator Lugar.