

Documents

Document: 1

Remarks by President Biden on the End of the War in Afghanistan, August 31, 2021.

THE PRESIDENT: Last night in Kabul, the United States ended 20 years of war in Afghanistan — the longest war in American history.

We completed one of the biggest airlifts in history, with more than 120,000 people evacuated to safety. That number is more than double what most experts thought were possible. No nation — no nation has ever done anything like it in all of history. Only the United States had the capacity and the will and the ability to do it, and we did it today.

The extraordinary success of this mission was due to the incredible skill, bravery, and selfless courage of the United States military and our diplomats and intelligence professionals.

For weeks, they risked their lives to get American citizens, Afghans who helped us, citizens of our Allies and partners, and others onboard planes and out of the country. And they did it facing a crush of enormous crowds seeking to leave the country. And they did it knowing ISIS-K terrorists — sworn enemies of the Taliban — were lurking in the midst of those crowds.

And still, the men and women of the United States military, our diplomatic corps, and intelligence professionals did their job and did it well, risking their lives not for professional gains but to serve others; not in a mission of war but in a mission of mercy. Twenty service members were wounded in the service of this mission. Thirteen heroes gave their lives.

I was just at Dover Air Force Base for the dignified transfer. We owe them and their families a debt of gratitude we can never repay but we should never, ever, ever forget.

In April, I made the decision to end this war. As part of that decision, we set the date of August 31st for American troops to withdraw. The assumption was that more than 300,000 Afghan National Security Forces that we had trained over the past two decades and equipped would be a strong adversary in their civil wars with the Taliban.

That assumption — that the Afghan government would be able to hold on for a period of time beyond military drawdown — turned out not to be accurate.

But I still instructed our national security team to prepare for every eventuality — even that one. And that's what we did.

So, we were ready when the Afghan Security Forces — after two decades of fighting for their country and losing thousands of their own — did not hold on as long as anyone expected.

We were ready when they and the people of Afghanistan watched their own government collapse and their president flee amid the corruption and malfeasance, handing over the country to their enemy, the Taliban, and significantly increasing the risk to U.S. personnel and our Allies.

As a result, to safely extract American citizens before August 31st — as well as embassy personnel, Allies and partners, and those Afghans who had worked with us and fought alongside of us for 20 years — I had authorized 6,000 troops — American troops — to Kabul to help secure the airport.

As General McKenzie said, this is the way the mission was designed. It was designed to operate under severe stress and attack. And that's what it did.

Since March, we reached out 19 times to Americans in Afghanistan, with multiple warnings and offers to help them leave Afghanistan — all the way back as far as March. After we started the evacuation 17 days ago, we did initial outreach and analysis and identified around 5,000 Americans who had decided earlier to stay in Afghanistan but now wanted to leave.

Our Operation Allied Rescue [Allies Refuge] ended up getting more than 5,500 Americans out. We got out thousands of citizens and diplomats from those countries that went into Afghanistan with us to get bin Laden. We got out locally employed staff of the United States Embassy and their families, totaling roughly 2,500 people. We got thousands of Afghan translators and interpreters and others, who supported the United States, out as well.

Now we believe that about 100 to 200 Americans remain in Afghanistan with some intention to leave. Most of those who remain are dual citizens, long-time residents who had earlier decided to stay because of their family roots in Afghanistan.

The bottom line: Ninety [Ninety-eight] percent of Americans in Afghanistan who wanted to leave were able to leave.

And for those remaining Americans, there is no deadline. We remain committed to get them out if they want to come out. Secretary of State Blinken is leading the continued diplomatic efforts to ensure a safe passage for any American, Afghan partner, or foreign national who wants to leave Afghanistan.

In fact, just yesterday, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution that sent a clear message about what the international community expects the Taliban to deliver on moving forward, notably freedom of travel, freedom to leave. And together, we are joined by over 100 countries that are determined to make sure the Taliban upholds those commitments.

It will include ongoing efforts in Afghanistan to reopen the airport, as well as overland routes, allowing for continued departure to those who

want to leave and delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan.

The Taliban has made public commitments, broadcast on television and radio across Afghanistan, on safe passage for anyone wanting to leave, including those who worked alongside Americans. We don't take them by their word alone but by their actions, and we have leverage to make sure those commitments are met.

Let me be clear: Leaving August the 31st is not due to an arbitrary deadline; it was designed to save American lives.

My predecessor, the former President, signed an agreement with the Taliban to remove U.S. troops by May the 1st, just months after I was inaugurated. It included no requirement that the Taliban work out a cooperative governing arrangement with the Afghan government, but it did authorize the release of 5,000 prisoners last year, including some of the Taliban's top war commanders, among those who just took control of Afghanistan.

And by the time I came to office, the Taliban was in its strongest military position since 2001, controlling or contesting nearly half of the country.

The previous administration's agreement said that if we stuck to the May 1st deadline that they had signed on to leave by, the Taliban wouldn't attack any American forces, but if we stayed, all bets were off.

So we were left with a simple decision: Either follow through on the commitment made by the last administration and leave Afghanistan, or say we weren't leaving and commit another tens of thousands more troops going back to war.

That was the choice — the real choice — between leaving or escalating.

I was not going to extend this forever war, and I was not extending a forever exit. The decision to end the military airlift operations at Kabul airport was based on the unanimous recommendation of my civilian and military advisors — the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and all the service chiefs, and the commanders in the field.

Their recommendation was that the safest way to secure the passage of the remaining Americans and others out of the country was not to continue with 6,000 troops on the ground in harm's way in Kabul, but rather to get them out through non-military means.

In the 17 days that we operated in Kabul after the Taliban seized power, we engaged in an around-the-clock effort to provide every American the opportunity to leave. Our State Department was working 24/7 contacting and talking, and in some cases, walking Americans into the airport.

Again, more than 5,500 Americans were airlifted out. And for those who remain, we will make arrangements to get them out if they so choose.

As for the Afghans, we and our partners have airlifted 100,000 of them. No country in history has done more to airlift out the residents of another country than we have done. We will continue to work to help more people leave the country who are at risk. And we're far from done.

For now, I urge all Americans to join me in grateful prayer for our troops and diplomats and intelligence officers who carried out this mission of mercy in Kabul and at tremendous risk with such unparalleled results: an airma- — an airlift that evacuated tens of thousands to a network of volunteers and veterans who helped identifies [identify] those needing evacuation, guide them to the airport, and provided them for their support along the way.

We're going to continue to need their help. We need your help. And I'm looking forward to meeting with you.

And to everyone who is now offering or who will offer to welcome Afghan allies to their homes around the world, including in America: We thank you.

I take responsibility for the decision. Now, some say we should have started mass evacuations sooner and "Couldn't this have be done — have been done in a more orderly manner?" I respectfully disagree.

Imagine if we had begun evacuations in June or July, bringing in thousands of American troops and evacuating more than 120,000 people in the middle of a civil war. There still would have been a rush to the airport, a breakdown in confidence and control of the government, and it still would have been a very difficult and dangerous mission.

The bottom line is: There is no evacuation- — evacuation from the end of a war that you can run without the kinds of complexities, challenges, and threats we faced. None.

There are those who would say we should have stayed indefinitely for years on end. They ask, "Why don't we just keep doing what we were doing? Why did we have to change anything?"

The fact is: Everything had changed. My predecessor had made a deal with the Taliban. When I came into office, we faced a deadline — May 1. The Taliban onslaught was coming.

We faced one of two choices: Follow the agreement of the previous administration and extend it to have — or extend to more time for people to get out; or send in thousands of more troops and escalate the war.

To those asking for a third decade of war in Afghanistan, I ask: What is the vital national interest? In my view, we only have one: to make sure Afghanistan can never be used again to launch an attack on our homeland.

Remember why we went to Afghanistan in the first place? Because we were attacked by Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda on September 11th, 2001, and they were based in Afghanistan.

We delivered justice to bin Laden on May 2nd, 2011 — over a decade ago. Al Qaeda was decimated.

I respectfully suggest you ask yourself this question: If we had been attacked on September 11, 2001, from Yemen instead of Afghanistan, would we have ever gone to war in Afghanistan — even though the Taliban controlled Afghanistan in 2001? I believe the honest answer is “no.” That’s because we had no vital national interest in Afghanistan other than to prevent an attack on America’s homeland and their friends. And that’s true today.

We succeeded in what we set out to do in Afghanistan over a decade ago. Then we stayed for another decade. It was time to end this war.

This is a new world. The terror threat has metastasized across the world, well beyond Afghanistan. We face threats from al-Shabaab in Somalia; al Qaeda affiliates in Syria and the Arabian Peninsula; and ISIS attempting to create a caliphate in Syria and Iraq, and establishing affiliates across Africa and Asia.

The fundamental obligation of a President, in my opinion, is to defend and protect America — not against threats of 2001, but against the threats of 2021 and tomorrow.

That is the guiding principle behind my decisions about Afghanistan. I simply do not believe that the safety and security of America is enhanced by continuing to deploy thousands of American troops and spending billions of dollars a year in Afghanistan.

But I also know that the threat from terrorism continues in its pernicious and evil nature. But it’s changed, expanded to other countries. Our strategy has to change too.

We will maintain the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan and other countries. We just don’t need to fight a ground war to do it. We have what’s called over-the-horizon capabilities, which means we can strike terrorists and targets without American boots on the ground — or very few, if needed.

We’ve shown that capacity just in the last week. We struck ISIS-K remotely, days after they murdered 13 of our service members and dozens of innocent Afghans.

And to ISIS-K: We are not done with you yet.

As Commander-in-Chief, I firmly believe the best path to guard our safety and our security lies in a tough, unforgiving, targeted, precise strategy that goes after terror where it is today, not where it was two decades ago. That’s what’s in our national interest.

And here’s a critical thing to understand: The world is changing. We’re engaged in a serious competition with China. We’re dealing with the challenges on multiple fronts with Russia. We’re confronted with cyberattacks and nuclear proliferation.

We have to shore up America’s competitive[ness] to meet these new challenges in the competition for the 21st century. And we can do

both: fight terrorism and take on new threats that are here now and will continue to be here in the future.

And there's nothing China or Russia would rather have, would want more in this competition than the United States to be bogged down another decade in Afghanistan.

As we turn the page on the foreign policy that has guided our nation — our nation the last two decades, we've got to learn from our mistakes.

To me, there are two that are paramount. First, we must set missions with clear, achievable goals — not ones we'll never reach. And second, we must stay clearly focused on the fundamental national security interest of the United States of America.

This decision about Afghanistan is not just about Afghanistan. It's about ending an era of major military operations to remake other countries.

We saw a mission of counterterrorism in Afghanistan — getting the terrorists and stopping attacks — morph into a counterinsurgency, nation building — trying to create a democratic, cohesive, and unified Afghanistan -- something that has never been done over the many centuries of Afghans' [Afghanistan's] history.

Moving on from that mind set and those kind of large-scale troop deployments will make us stronger and more effective and safer at home.

And for anyone who gets the wrong idea, let me say it clearly. To those who wish America harm, to those that engage in terrorism against us and our allies, know this: The United States will never rest. We will not forgive. We will not forget. We will hunt you down to the ends of the Earth, and we will — you will pay the ultimate price.

And let me be clear: We will continue to support the Afghan people through diplomacy, international influence, and humanitarian aid. We'll continue to push for regional diplomacy and engagement to prevent violence and instability. We'll continue to speak out for basic rights of the Afghan people, especially women and girls, as we speak out for women and girls all around the globe. And I've been clear that human rights will be the center of our foreign policy.

But the way to do that is not through endless military deployments, but through diplomacy, economic tools, and rallying the rest of the world for support.

My fellow Americans, the war in Afghanistan is now over. I'm the fourth President who has faced the issue of whether and when to end this war. When I was running for President, I made a commitment to the American people that I would end this war. And today, I've honoured that commitment. It was time to be honest with the American people again. We no longer had a clear purpose in an open-ended mission in Afghanistan.

After 20 years of war in Afghanistan, I refused to send another generation of America's sons and daughters to fight a war that should have ended long ago.

After more than \$2 trillion spent in Afghanistan — a cost that researchers at Brown University estimated would be over \$300 million a day for 20 years in Afghanistan — for two decades — yes, the American people should hear this: \$300 million a day for two decades.

If you take the number of \$1 trillion, as many say, that's still \$150 million a day for two decades. And what have we lost as a consequence in terms of opportunities? I refused to continue in a war that was no longer in the service of the vital national interest of our people.

And most of all, after 800,000 Americans serving in Afghanistan — I've travelled that whole country — brave and honourable service; after 20,744 American servicemen and women injured, and the loss of 2,461 American personnel, including 13 lives lost just this week, I refused to open another decade of warfare in Afghanistan.

We've been a nation too long at war. If you're 20 years old today, you have never known an America at peace.

So, when I hear that we could've, should've continued the so-called low-grade effort in Afghanistan, at low risk to our service members, at low cost, I don't think enough people understand how much we have asked of the 1 percent of this country who put that uniform on, who are willing to put their lives on the line in defense of our nation.

Maybe it's because my deceased son, Beau, served in Iraq for a full year, before that. Well, maybe it's because of what I've seen over the years as senator, vice president, and president traveling these countries.

A lot of our veterans and their families have gone through hell — deployment after deployment, months and years away from their families; missed birthdays, anniversaries; empty chairs at holidays; financial struggles; divorces; loss of limbs; traumatic brain injury; posttraumatic stress.

We see it in the struggles many have when they come home. We see it in the strain on their families and caregivers. We see it in the strain of their families when they're not there. We see it in the grief borne by their survivors. The cost of war they will carry with them their whole lives.

Most tragically, we see it in the shocking and stunning statistic that should give pause to anyone who thinks war can ever be low-grade, low-risk, or low-cost: 18 veterans, on average, who die by suicide every single day in America — not in a far-off place, but right here in America.

There's nothing low-grade or low-risk or low-cost about any war. It's time to end the war in Afghanistan.

As we close 20 years of war and strife and pain and sacrifice, it's time to look to the future, not the past — to a future that's safer, to a future that's more secure, to a future that honors those who served and all those who gave what President Lincoln called their "last full measure of devotion."

I give you my word: With all of my heart, I believe this is the right decision, a wise decision, and the best decision for America.

Thank you. Thank you. And may God bless you all. And may God protect our troops.

Source:<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/08/31/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-end-of-the-war-in-afghanistan/>

Document 2:**India- Russia Joint Statement Following the Visit of the President of the Russian Federation, New Dehli, December 6, 2021.****INDIA-RUSSIA: Partnership for Peace, Progress and Prosperity**

1. At the invitation of Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi, President of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr. Vladimir Putin paid a working visit to New Delhi on 6 December 2021 for the 21st India–Russia Annual Summit.

2. The completion of 5 decades of the 1971 Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation and 2 decades of Declaration on Strategic Partnership is symbolic of the long standing and time-tested India-Russia relations characterized by mutual trust, respect for each other's core national interests and similarity of positions on various international and regional issues.

3. The Sides reaffirmed their commitment to the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia. They underscored that as major powers with common responsibilities, this important relationship continues to be an anchor of global peace and stability.

4. The Sides positively assessed the multi-faceted India-Russia relations that span various areas of cooperation including political and strategic, economy, energy, military and security, science and technology, culture and humanitarian cooperation. They noted that while the traditional areas of cooperation are being further strengthened, new drivers of growth have led to diversification and expansion of bilateral cooperation.

5. The Leaders highly appreciated the sustained momentum in bilateral ties despite the negative impacts of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. They acknowledged that the Annual Summit could not be held in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Sides noted with satisfaction the continued intensification of contacts at all levels including 6 telephonic conversations between the two leaders since the last Summit; visits of Foreign Minister, Raksha Mantri, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Minister of Steel from Indian Side; visit of Russian Foreign Minister and Secretary of Security Council to India; holding of Foreign Office Consultations, India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue, consultations on UN issues, Arctic, policy planning etc.

6. The Leaders welcomed the holding of back-to-back meetings of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military and Military-Technical Cooperation and the first 2+2 Dialogue of Foreign and Defence Ministers of India and Russia in New Delhi on 6 December 2021. They underscored the importance of regular annual 2+2 meetings for exchanging views on global and regional political-security developments.

7. The Leaders noted the ongoing interaction between the Parliaments of two countries and underlined the importance of regular meetings of Inter-Parliamentary Commission as a valuable component of India- Russia relations.

8. The Leaders reiterated the importance of the security dialogue at the level of NSA and NSCS on bilateral and regional issues and welcomed regular interactions between them. This has served to enhance strategic understanding and coordination between the two countries.

Cooperation in Covid-19 Pandemic

9. The Sides exchanged views on the Covid-19 pandemic situation and highly appreciated the ongoing bilateral cooperation in the fight against Covid-19, especially with respect to "Sputnik-V" vaccine.

10. The Leaders expressed gratitude to each other's countries for timely assistance during the pandemic. India's assistance in supplying critical medicines, including paracetamol, hydroxychloroquine, and certain antibiotics during the first phase in Russia and Russia's assistance in providing ventilators, oxygen concentrators and other critical equipment during India's second phase, was a humanitarian gesture well-received by both Sides.

11. The Sides expressed confidence that early mutual recognition of Covid vaccination certificates will further facilitate movement of persons between the two countries and agreed to fast track the formalities in this regard.

12. The Sides expressed appreciation for the efforts of relevant agencies involved in evacuation efforts as well as transport of life saving equipment and medicines. They noted that the Air-bubble arrangement has served the interim travel needs of citizens of both countries. Both Sides agreed to consider resumption of direct passenger and cargo flights to their pre-pandemic capacity.

Economy

13. The Sides appreciated the resumption of the positive trajectory of bilateral trade, with trade registering an increase of about 38% in the first half of 2021 compared to the same period in 2020 despite the pandemic-related restrictions. They positively assessed the overall increase of bilateral trade in 2019-20 compared to the previous year.

14. The Sides noted that the bilateral trade does not reflect the potential of strength and depth of India-Russia strategic partnership. The leaders stressed on the need for greater efforts to achieve the trade target of USD 30 billion by 2025. In this regard, they placed strong emphasis on new drivers of growth for long-term cooperation.

15. The Sides underscored the need for commencement of negotiations on Trade Agreement between India and The Eurasian Economic Union.

16. The leaders noted the relevance of continued engagement under the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC) for bilateral economic cooperation in various priority areas. They acknowledged the holding of 12 Working Group and Sub-group meetings under the IRIGC-TEC and instructed the concerned officials to expeditiously conclude meetings of pending Working Groups. The Sides also welcomed the setting up of the new Working Groups and Sub Groups on Transport, Urban Development and Railways and looked forward to the early holding of their inaugural meetings.

17. The Sides welcomed the holding of the 3rd edition of the India-Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue (IRSED) on April 15, 2021 in virtual format. They noted the productive discussions under this format in the areas of transport, agriculture, digital transformation, tourism, industry and banking and small and medium enterprises. The Sides considered the need to look at the way forward for the collaboration under this mechanism.

18. The Sides appreciated the outcomes of the visit of Minister of Steel of India to Moscow to attend the Russian Energy Week in October, 2021 and welcomed the progress made in a short span in reviving collaboration in coking coal and steel sectors. A mutually beneficial MoU for reliable long-term supplies of coal to India for steel production was signed. Discussions were held on production of specialty steel under Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme in India, and utilization of technologies from Russian state steel institutes for steel production in India by private and public sector companies. The Indian Side welcomed the interest of Russian Side in learning from India's experience of gainful utilization of coal residues. The Sides also welcomed the meeting of the 1st Working Group on Coking Coal in virtual format in October, 2020.

19. The Leaders welcomed the signing of Agreement of Intent between Indian PSUs and Russian company PhosAgro for supply of fertilizers in the period of 2021/2022 calendar years. They instructed their officials to continue discussions for agreement on long term supply and pricing arrangements.

20. Trade in pharmaceuticals continues to be one of the main items of India's exports to Russia. Both Sides noted with satisfaction the continued strength of this commodity as well as Indian companies' participation in Russia's localization programme under Pharma 2020 and Pharma 2030 schemes. They recognized the growing collaboration in medical devices as a new promising area of economic engagement in the context of the pandemic.

21. The Sides appreciated the rapid recovery of collaboration in diamond sector between the two countries, following the initial downturn witnessed during the pandemic.

22. The Sides welcomed the progress on discussions on elimination of trade barriers in respect of critical commodities under the aegis of the Sub-Group on Elimination of the Trade Barriers of IRIGC-TEC. Both Sides agreed to consider fast-tracking elimination of barriers by way of closing critical gaps in phytosanitary and veterinary requirements of both countries in agricultural and agro-processed products.

23. The Sides recognised the need to further streamline and fast-track the process of Customs clearances of cargoes. In this regard, the Sides agreed to replace the discussions on the 'Green Corridor Project' with an Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) and a MoU on Exchange of pre-arrival Customs data. The Sides, also, agreed to commence discussions on this Agreement and MoU at the earliest.

24. The Indian Side encouraged participation of Russian companies in the 13 key sectors of Production Linked Incentive scheme of Government of India under the 'Atmanirbhar' and 'Make in India' programme. The Indian Side also invited the Russian Side to continue consideration of setting up manufacturing facilities in Greenfield industrial cities under Industrial Corridor Programme of Government of India.

25. The Sides recognized that the pandemic slowed down progress on certain investment decisions by companies on both Sides. However, both Sides noted with satisfaction that several investment ideas continue to progress, particularly those in inland waterways, railways, shipbuilding and repair, steel and coking coal, medical devices, petrochemicals, ports, banking and re-insurance services, pharmaceuticals, agriculture and agro processing, healthcare, IT and oil & gas.

26. The Sides urged the corresponding Ministries to finalize negotiations of the Bilateral Investment Treaty in a spirit of mutual understanding in order to protect mutual investments. They welcomed the signing of the MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Intellectual Property between Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce, India and Federal Service for Intellectual Property, Russian Federation.

27. The Sides reiterated their commitment to strengthen inter-bank and insurance cooperation. Commercial Indo Bank, Moscow, the only Indian Bank operating in Russia, has upgraded its rating significantly over the last year. Indian Side expressed hope that this will allow the Bank to enter into retail segment after obtaining necessary approvals. Similarly, GIC Perestrakhovanie LLC, a 100% subsidiary of General Insurance Corporation of India, commenced its operations in September 2020 and is now offering reinsurance support to all major general insurers in the Russian Federation.

28. The Sides agreed to continue joint work on promoting mutual settlement of payments in national currencies, which will help reduce cost and time as well as risks involved in payments.

29. The Sides also expressed interest in continuing dialogue on accepting RuPay and MIR Cards within national payment infrastructures, as well as on interaction of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and the Faster Payments System of the Bank of Russia (FPS). The Russian Side invited Indian credit institutions to connect to the financial messaging system of the Bank of Russia to facilitate faultless interbank transactions.

30. The Indian Side invited Russian Side's participation in civilian shipbuilding and inland waterways as promising new areas of collaboration. The two leaders welcomed the preparation of bilateral document in the area of civilian shipbuilding, which will facilitate enhancement of interaction and specialist training, investments in ship building and repair, scientific research, development of intelligent transport and navigation systems, international transport corridors. They welcomed the signing of the Agreement of Intent between Mazagaon Dock Ltd. and Zvezda Shipyard for commercial shipping signed in September this year.

Cooperation in the Russian Far-East

31. President Putin welcomed Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's commitment to an Act Far-East Policy under which India could be a reliable partner in the development of the Russian Far-East. He supported Prime Minister Modi's concept of Sangam as a development tool for the region. The Russian Side warmly welcomed the successful visit of Prime Minister Modi to Vladivostok to attend the 5th Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) in 2019 and his virtual participation in the 6th EEF this year.

32. The Sides noted the greater intensity of Inter-regional dialogue on economic cooperation between the States of India and the regions of Russia including the virtual meeting between the Chief Minister of Gujarat and Governor of Sakha Republic (Yakutia) in September, 2021. They appreciated holding of several B2B, G2G and B2G meetings recently between Indian companies and Russian regions. They welcomed the signing of 9 twinning agreements between the cities/states of India and the regions of Russia so far for mutual cooperation in diverse areas.

33. The Sides welcomed the interest of Indian companies in cooperating in the Russian Far East. Energy, transport and logistics, maritime connectivity, diamond processing, forestry, pharmaceuticals & healthcare, tourism and humanitarian fields have been identified as areas of further cooperation in the Russian Far-East.

34. The Indian Side reiterated its commitment to enhanced trade and investment in the Russian Far-East. The Sides agreed to continue discussion on the operationalization of the US\$ 1 billion Line of Credit announced by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in 2019 for projects for development of the Russian Far East.

Energy

35. The Leaders reaffirmed that bilateral energy cooperation is a key pillar of the bilateral ties and an energy bridge between the two countries. Both Sides reiterated their joint efforts under the Roadmap for Cooperation in Hydrocarbons for 2019-24 to further deepen bilateral cooperation in the energy sector and welcomed the opening of Bharat Energy Center in Moscow, representing five Indian oil and gas public sector companies to enhance engagement with Russian stakeholders in energy sector.

36. The Sides noted with satisfaction, the fruitful, wide-ranging collaboration between the oil and gas companies of the two countries, including between JSC Rosneft Oil Company and Oil and Gas Public Sector Undertakings of India in implementing the Vankorneft, Sakhalin-1 and Taas-Yuryakh Neftegazodobycha projects in Russia, and Nayara Energy Limited's oil refinery in India. They also welcomed prospective two way investment initiatives of both countries, which are currently under discussion.

37. The Sides reaffirmed their commitment for increasing sourcing of Russian crude oil on long term contracts through preferential pricing, strengthening LNG imports to India, and the possible utilization of the Northern Sea Route for energy supplies. The two Sides further agreed for the expansion of cooperation in gas sector and welcomed the creation of Gas Task Force to identify mutually beneficial areas including the development of investment in gas infrastructure and distribution projects, use of natural gas in transport and emerging fuels including hydrogen.

38. Both Sides, appreciating the strength of the Indian petrochemical market, agreed to expand collaboration through Russian participation by way of investment, technological and other ways of collaboration in Indian petrochemical sector. The Sides welcomed the interest of Nayara Energy in production of products like polypropylene in India.

39. Both Sides also agreed to consider prospects for expanding cooperation in hydro and thermal power, energy efficiency and the sector of renewable energy. They also noted the need for cooperation in hydrogen economy, low-emission development, including exchange of best practices. The Indian Side emphasized the need for responsible and reasonable pricing of global energy supplies determined by market forces. Both Sides noted the importance of dialogue between consumers and producers for stabilizing energy prices.

Transport and Connectivity

40. The Indian Side welcomed the growing participation of Russian companies in modernization of the railway sector in India. This includes Russian Side's interest in implementing projects using Russian technology, equipment and capital in India, particularly in signalling and telematic

systems, high-speed rail projects, electrification of railways while abiding by India's Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat programmes.

41. The Indian Side appreciated Russia's participation in electronic toll collection technology based on satellite navigation technologies on Indian highways, implemented by the joint Russian-Indian company Bharat Telematic Systems Pvt Ltd.

42. The Sides emphasized on greater and effective usage of the International North-South Transport Corridor for cargo transport at lesser cost and time to enhance connectivity in the Eurasian Space. In this context, they welcomed the signing of agreement between Russian Railways (RZD) and CONCOR last year to jointly develop multi-modal logistics services along INSTC route. The Russian Side expressed support for India's proposal to include Chabahar port within the framework of INSTC. They stressed that connectivity initiatives should be based on the principles of transparency, broad participation, local priorities, financial sustainability and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.

43. The Indian Side informed that the feasibility study of the Chennai-Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor is in advance stage, and the study so far done indicates an array of opportunities for increased traffic upon the successful implementation of its recommendations. The Sides expressed optimism that the implementation of the recommendations of the study will provide a fillip to the bilateral trade.

Civil Nuclear Energy and Space

44. The Sides noted the significant progress achieved in the construction of the remaining nuclear power plant units at Kudankulam. Both Sides noted the importance of continued further discussion on the second site in India; the Indian Side will strive to finalize formal allotment of the second site in accordance with earlier signed agreements. They welcomed continuation of technical discussions on the VVER 1200 of the Russian design, joint manufacturing of equipment and localization of components.

45. Both Sides noted successful cooperation in the setting up of the Rooppur NPP in Bangladesh and expressed their readiness to explore similar cooperation in third countries as well.

46. The Sides welcomed the enhanced cooperation between the State Space Corporation "Roscosmos" and the Indian Space Research Organization, including in the human spaceflight programs and satellite navigation and agreed to study the prospects of the development of mutually beneficial cooperation in the development of launch vehicles and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, including planetary exploration.

47. The Sides welcomed the active work carried out within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the State Space Corporation "Roscosmos" and the Indian Space Research Organization on

joint activities in human spaceflight program and noted with satisfaction the training of 4 Indian astronaut candidates from the «Yu.A.Gagarin Research & Test Cosmonaut Training Center» FSBO.

48. To facilitate further cooperation in Space, the Sides welcomed the signing of Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on technology protection due to cooperation in field of research and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and building and operation of launch vehicles and ground-based space infrastructure.

49. Both Sides intend to strengthen cooperation within the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN COPUOS), including the issues of the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

Military and Military-Technical Cooperation

50. Russian Side appreciated the participation of Indian Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh along with a Tri-Service contingent of the Indian armed forces in the Victory Day Parade at Red Square in Moscow to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Victory of the Soviet People in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945.

51. Military and military-technical cooperation has traditionally been the pillar of Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia. Responding to India's quest for self-sufficiency, the partnership is reorienting presently to joint research and development, co-development and joint production of advanced defence technology and systems.

52. The Sides expressed satisfaction with regular military contacts and joint exercises of the Armed Forces of the two countries which reached unprecedented heights this year with three exercises being held within a span of 60 days besides simultaneous participation of large Indian contingents in the International Army Games. The Russian Side deeply appreciated participation of INS Tabar in the 325th Russian Navy Day celebrations. The Sides agreed to continue and expand regular defence dialogue, mutual training and exercises, subject matter expert exchanges and other activities under the aegis of India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission on Military and Military Technical Cooperation.

53. Both Sides noted with satisfaction the successful implementation of the 2011-2020 Long-Term Program for Military and Technical Cooperation and welcomed the signing of a new long-term program for the period 2021-2031.

54. The Sides reiterated their commitment to upgrade the defence cooperation, including facilitating joint development and production of military equipment, components and spare parts, enhancing the after-sales service system, progress towards mutual recognition of quality control and regular joint exercises of the Armed Forces of the two countries. The two leaders agreed that for peace, stability and mutual

economic development, there is a need for the two countries to work closely together in the advanced and emerging fields of defence technology and for the Armed Forces of the two countries to work together in niche domains of military capabilities.

55. Both Sides agreed to take forward ongoing engagements to encourage joint manufacturing in India of spare parts, components, aggregates and other products for maintenance of Russian origin Arms and defence equipment under Make-in-India program through transfer of technology and setting up of joint ventures for meeting the needs of the Indian Armed Forces as well as subsequent export to mutually friendly third countries.

56. The Sides recognized the requirement of an institutional arrangement for reciprocal provision of logistic support and services for the Armed Forces.

Science and Technology

57. Emphasizing the importance of joint research in science, technology and innovation, the two Sides welcome the signing of Roadmap for Science, Technology & Innovation Cooperation and, expressed satisfaction with respect to launching joint calls in priority areas as states in the Roadmap.

58. The Sides expressed satisfaction on launching of India-Russia Technology Assessment and Accelerated Commercialization Program by the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India and Russian Foundation for Assistance to Small Industrial Enterprises (FASIE), which provides opportunities to Start-ups and SMES of the two countries to address societal challenges through innovative technologies.

59. The Sides also agreed to facilitate collaboration between government and private sector organizations to find ways of joint development of software products, platforms and services as well as in the area of electronics manufacturing. The Sides confirmed their interest in further developing cooperation in the sphere of digital technologies, including those related to information protection, security of critical infrastructure and law enforcement.

60. The Sides noted the promotion of youth exchanges by bringing together co-innovation programs at School level with the Support of Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog and Talent & Success Fund (SIRIUS Centre, Sochi), Russia. These programs engaged students on both Sides to generate hands-on technological solutions for societal problems such as Distance Literacy in remote areas; Rural Health & Well-being and Digital asset monitoring etc.

61. The Indian Side congratulated the Russian Side for its ongoing successful chairmanship of the Arctic Council from 2021-23 and expressed its readiness to play an active role as an Observer in the Arctic Council. Both Sides recalled the bilateral consultations on the Arctic held last year.

The Indian Side also expressed its interest in collaborating with Russia on the Northern Sea Route.

Education, Culture and Tourism

62. Recognising the traditionally strong cooperation between India and Russia in the sphere of education, the Sides appreciated efforts taken by both countries to ensure well-being of students during the Covid-19 pandemic. They agreed to continue their efforts in promoting educational linkages between universities and educational institutions. The Sides also agreed for organizing exchange programs for their diplomats at the respective training institutes under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

63. The Sides appreciated the successful implementation of bilateral Cultural Exchange Program, which plays a crucial role in enhancing people to people contact and noted the signing of the India Russia Cultural Exchange Programme during the summit for continuance of the bilateral cultural cooperation. It was agreed to continue the mutually beneficial practice of reciprocally holding cultural and film festivals. Need for geographical expansion of cultural exchanges and greater involvement of the youth and folk art groups was highlighted. Both Sides agreed to continue their joint efforts in promoting Russian language in India and Hindi in Russia comprehensively, including by developing contacts between relevant educational institutions. They welcomed the signing of MoU between National Sports University, Imphal, India and the Russian International Olympic University Sochi, Russia.

64. The two Sides appreciated the dynamism in tourist exchanges between Russia and India. To further deepen the cooperation in tourism, the Sides expressed intent to discuss ways of cooperation both at government and private sector level with the aim to enhance tourist exchanges between the two countries.

65. Both Sides welcomed progressive simplification of visa formalities, including introduction of eVisa by both countries. India has opened group tourist visa from October 15, 2021 and normal tourist visa from November 15, 2021, which would further strengthen people-to-people contacts. They agreed to continue the work on further simplification of the visa regime in future.

Cooperation in UN and Multilateral Fora

66. Both Sides noted the high level of political dialogue and cooperation on issues at the UN and agreed to deepen it further. Both Sides stressed the importance of reinvigorating multilateralism, with the central coordinating role played by the United Nations in world affairs. The Sides underlined the primacy of respect for international law and emphasized their commitment to the purposes and the principles stated in the UN Charter including the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States.

67. Russia welcomed India's election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council with an overwhelming majority for a two-year term. Russian Side appreciated India's UNSC priorities which includes commitment to strengthen and reform of the multilateral system, rule of law, fair and equitable international system and are anchored in the Indian ethos of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", i.e. the world being one family. Both Sides highlighted that India's election to the UNSC has provided additional opportunities to coordinate efforts on most pressing issues at the UN based on mutual understanding and a shared view and approach to the global world order.

68. Both Sides called for comprehensive reform of the UNSC to reflect contemporary global realities and to make it more representative, effective and efficient in dealing with issues of international peace and security. President Putin congratulated India on its successful Presidency of the UN Security Council in the month of August and reiterated Russia's support for India's permanent membership of a reformed and expanded UN Security Council. Prime Minister Narendra Modi thanked President Putin for his participation in the UNSC high-level debate on Maritime Security chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 9, 2021 as part of India's Presidency of the UNSC.

69. Both Sides reiterated their commitment to enhanced cooperation within BRICS. President Putin congratulated India on its successful BRICS Chairmanship in 2021, including hosting of the XIII BRICS Summit on 09 September 2021 and adopting the New Delhi Declaration. The Sides also welcomed deliverables of BRICS cooperation in 2021, in particular the signing of the Agreement on BRICS Cooperation on Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation, finalization of the Agreement on BRICS Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters, adoption of the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan, Action Plan 2021-2024 for Agricultural Cooperation, Innovation Cooperation Action Plan 2021-2024 and establishment of the BRICS Alliance for Green Tourism. Both Sides reaffirmed their commitment to implement the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025.

70. The Leaders recognised the role of the New Development Bank (NDB) as vital to addressing development challenges, including health and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and encouraged the NDB to explore the possibility of financing more social infrastructure projects, including those that use digital technologies. They commended the NDB's substantive progress in membership expansion despite challenges emanating from the COVID-19 pandemic. They reiterated that the process of expansion should be gradual and balanced in terms of geographic representation.

71. India and Russia stressed the achievements of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the last two decades of its operation and noted the great potential for further interaction among the SCO

Member States. Both Sides will continue to strengthen the SCO as one of the key pillars of the emerging, more representative, democratic, just and multipolar world order based on international law, above all the UN Charter.

72. The Sides intend to focus particularly on increasing the effectiveness of countering terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking, cross-border organized crime, and information security threats, in particular by improving the functionality of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure.

73. The Sides support increased role of SCO in international affairs, comprehensive development of the Organization's contacts with the UN and its specialized agencies, and other multilateral organizations and associations. In this context, they support the establishment of official ties between the SCO and Eurasian Economic Union.

74. Both Sides agreed to intensify cooperation within the RIC framework to promote common approaches to pressing issues on the global and regional agenda. The Russian Side expressed appreciation for India's chairmanship of RIC. Both Sides welcomed the results of the RIC Foreign Ministers meeting on 26 November 2021.

75. The Sides highlighted their cooperation within the G20 format and agreed to intensify the same on issues of global and mutual interest, keeping in view India's presidency of the G20 in 2023.

76. Both Sides strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and urged the international community to intensify cooperation against terrorism including safe havens, terror financing, arms and drugs trafficking, radicalization and malicious use of ICTs to spread extremist, terrorist and other illegal content.

77. Both Sides underscored the importance of implementing the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council resolutions on countering terrorism and extremism as well as the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, while taking into account national experiences and state specificities. Both Sides reaffirmed their shared fight against international terrorism, concerted action against all terrorist groups, including those proscribed by the UN, condemned cross-border movement of terrorists and called for the perpetrators of terror attacks to be brought to justice, without any political or religious Considerations. They denounced any use of terrorist proxies and emphasized the importance of denying any logistical, financial, or military support to terrorist groups to launch or plan terror attacks. Both Sides reaffirmed the need to support and strengthen the FATF and the UN Office of Counter Terrorism in their shared fight against terrorism. They reaffirmed their mutual commitment to strengthening the current international drug control regime based on the three relevant United Nations conventions.

78. The Sides agreed that safeguarding of global commons including our oceans, outer space and information space should be based on the principles of transparency, accessibility and upholding international law.

79. The Sides appreciated close cooperation in the field of security in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) through inter-agency cooperation under bilateral mechanisms and at multilateral platforms. They highlighted the leading role of the United Nations in the decision-making process on security in the use of ICTs. The Sides also recognized the need for further work on rules, norms and principles of responsible behavior of State aimed at preventing conflicts and promoting peaceful use of ICTs. The Sides reaffirmed the importance of international cooperation against criminal use of ICTs and in this regard they welcome the establishment of an open-ended Ad hoc intergovernmental committee of experts to elaborate a comprehensive international convention on countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes as stipulated in the UN GA resolutions 74/247 and 75/282.

80. Both Sides expressed concern over the possibility of an arms race in outer space and outer space turning into an arena for military confrontation. They reaffirmed commitment to take efforts for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and its weaponization. They stressed the paramount importance of strict compliance with existing international legal agreements providing for the peaceful uses of outer space and promoting international peace and stability, promotion of international cooperation and mutual understanding. The Sides supported negotiation of a multilateral legally binding instrument for prevention of an arms race in outer space. In this regard they noted the relevance of draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against space objects, submitted to the Conference of Disarmament for future negotiations. The Sides reaffirmed that the Conference on Disarmament, is the only forum for holding multilateral negotiations on an international agreement (or agreements) on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

81. The Sides reaffirmed support to full and effective adherence to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC) by all States Parties. The Sides noted that, the BTWC functions, including in what concerns the UN Security Council, should not be duplicated by other mechanisms. The Sides expressed the support to strengthening of BTWC including by adopting a protocol to the Convention providing for, inter alia, an effective compliance verification mechanism.

82. Both Sides reaffirmed support to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and their determination to uphold efforts and initiatives aimed at preserving the integrity of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). They called upon the States Parties

to the CWC to engage in a constructive dialogue with a view to restoring the spirit of consensus in the OPWC.

83. To address the threat of chemical and biological terrorism, both Sides emphasized the need to launch multilateral negotiations on an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism at the Conference on Disarmament.

84. Both Sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening global efforts for non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Russia expressed its strong support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The Sides urged all members of the international community to work towards enhancing the level of mutual trust, in order to promote global peace and security.

85. The Sides discussed the evolving situation in Afghanistan, especially the security situation and its implications in the region, the current political situation, issues related to terrorism, radicalisation and drug trafficking etc. They outlined the priorities which include ensuring formation of a truly inclusive and representative government, combating terrorism and drug trafficking, providing immediate humanitarian assistance and preserving the rights of women, children and minorities.

86. The leaders reiterated strong support for a peaceful, secure and stable Afghanistan while emphasizing the respect for sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity and non-interference in its internal affairs. They also discussed the current humanitarian situation and decided to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people.

87. The leaders emphasised that Afghanistan's territory should not be used for sheltering, training, planning or financing any terrorist groups including ISIS, Al Qaeda, LeT etc. They reaffirmed their firm commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including its financing, the dismantling of terrorist infrastructure and countering radicalization, to ensure that Afghanistan would never become a safe haven for global terrorism. Both Sides recalled the importance of the relevant UN Resolutions on Afghanistan, as well as the recent outcome documents of Moscow format consultations and other international and regional mechanisms. The leaders emphasized the central role of the United Nations in Afghanistan.

88. The leaders welcomed close coordination between India and Russia on Afghanistan including through the creation of a permanent consultative mechanism on the issue between the Security Councils of both countries. They highly appreciated the finalisation of the Roadmap of interaction between India and Russia on Afghanistan, which symbolized convergence of views and interests of the two Sides.

89. The Russian Side welcomed Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan of National Security Advisors/Secretaries of Security Council

on 10 November 2021 in New Delhi and welcomed the Delhi Declaration on Afghanistan that emerged from that meeting.

90. The Sides reaffirmed their strong commitment to sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria. The Sides also reaffirmed their commitment that there is no alternative to advancing a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned, UN- facilitated political process in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015) and the necessity to mobilize comprehensive humanitarian assistance to all the Syrians in need without politicization and preconditions as required by UNSCR 2585(2021).

91. The Sides reiterated the importance of the full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and UNSC Resolution 2231 and expressed their support to the relevant efforts to ensure the earliest reinvigoration of the JCPOA.

92. Both Sides urged all the concerned parties to work towards denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula to promote establishment of lasting peace and stability and stressed on the need to continue dialogue to achieve this goal.

93. The Sides agreed to explore mutually acceptable and beneficial areas of cooperation in third countries especially in the Central Asia, South East Asia and Africa.

94. The Sides reiterated the need to preserve and strengthen the role of the World Trade Organization for upholding a transparent, non-discriminatory, and inclusive multilateral trading system with the fundamental principles at its core. They agreed that the post-pandemic world requires diversified global value chains that are based on trust, resilience and reliability.

95. Both Sides emphasized the importance of deepening regional economic cooperation to ensure sustainable socio-economic development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the expansion of cooperation within the framework of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in such key areas as transport, energy and trade.

96. The Sides reaffirmed that the emerging regional security architecture should be free, open, transparent and inclusive, based on universally recognized principles of international law and aimed at maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation in the region. They agreed to strengthen joint efforts to build an architecture of equal and indivisible regional security. The Sides agreed to intensify consultations on complementarities between integration and development initiatives in greater Eurasian space and in the regions of Indian and Pacific oceans. They underscored their recognition of the ASEAN centrality in the regional architecture of security and cooperation and reiterated the importance of closer cooperation and consultations in various regional fora and

initiatives such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), to jointly contribute to regional peace, security and stability.

97. The Indian Side looked forward to Russia's joining of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

98. The Sides noted with satisfaction the coinciding and similar approaches to their foreign policy priorities and reaffirmed their commitment for further strengthening of the India-Russia Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership, both in the context of the current bilateral relations and in addressing regional and international issues. They expressed their mutual intention to strengthen and expand their bilateral relations for the benefit of the peoples of India and Russia.

99. President Vladimir Putin thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the gracious hospitality extended to him and his delegation in New Delhi and invited him to visit Russia next year for the 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit.

Source: https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/34606/India_Russia_Joint_Statement_following_the_visit_of_the_President_of_the_Russian_Federation

Document 3:**China-U.S. Presidential Meeting: Setting Direction and Providing Impetus for Bilateral Relations, Virtual Meeting, November 16, 2021.****Transcript of Vice Foreign Minister Xie Feng's Interview with the Press**

Q1: This is the first ever virtual meeting between the Chinese and U.S. Presidents, and the two leaders had quite a long discussion. Did the meeting achieve its objective?

A: On the morning of 16 November, Chinese President Xi Jinping had a virtual meeting with U.S. President Joe Biden. This is the first ever virtual meeting between the two heads of state in the history of China-U.S. relations. It has great significance for both China-U.S. bilateral ties and international relations. The meeting lasted for three and a half hours, from 8:45 a.m. to around 12:25 p.m. Beijing time, longer than scheduled. The two sides had an extensive exchange of views on the strategic, overarching and fundamental issues in China-U.S. relations, on their respective development agenda and domestic and foreign policies, and on international and regional issues of mutual interest. It was a candid, in-depth, constructive and fruitful meeting. Under the current circumstances, it is crucial that the two Presidents take the helm for the China-U.S. relationship. The meeting has chartered the course and provided impetus for China-U.S. relations to develop going forward.

Q2: The meeting has covered major strategic issues about the future of China-U.S. relations and important issues of shared interest and concern. Could you tell us more details about what has been discussed? Any consensus reached?

A: The meeting can be recapped by a set of figures-3, 4, 2 and 1. To be specific, President Xi put forward three principles and four priority areas for growing China-U.S. relations; the two Presidents reached two principled common understandings; President Xi Jinping worked on the U.S. side on one important question.

On the **three principles**. At the meeting, President Xi pointed out the right way for China and the United States to get along in the new era: **First, mutual respect**. The two sides need to respect each other's social systems and development paths, respect each other's core interests and major concerns, and respect each other's right to development. They need to treat each other as equals, keep differences under control, and seek common ground while reserving differences. **Second, peaceful coexistence**. No conflict and no confrontation is a line that both sides must hold. **Third, win-win cooperation**. The interests of China and the United States are deeply intertwined. The world is big enough for our two countries to develop individually and collectively. The right thing to do is

to choose mutual benefit over zero-sum game or the I-win-you-lose approach.

On the **four priority areas**. President Xi identified at the meeting four areas where China and the United States should focus their efforts on:

First, shouldering responsibilities of major countries and leading global response to outstanding challenges. China-U.S. cooperation may not solve all problems, but few problems can be solved without it. The global initiatives China has proposed are open to the United States, and we hope the same is true for initiatives from the United States.

Second, acting in the spirit of equality and mutual benefit to move forward exchanges at all levels and in all areas and generate more positive energy for China-U.S. relations. The two Presidents have stayed in close contact through meetings, letters and phone calls, chartering the course for bilateral relations. The two countries, with broad common interests in a wide range of areas including economy, energy, mil-to-mil, law-enforcement, education, science and technology, cyber, environmental protection and sub-national cooperation, may draw on what each other has to offer and make the cake bigger for China-U.S. cooperation. Our two sides could fully harness the channels and mechanisms of dialogue between our diplomatic and security, economy, trade and finance, and climate change teams, in an effort to advance practical cooperation and resolve specific issues.

Third, managing differences and sensitive issues in a constructive way to prevent China-U.S. relations from getting derailed or out of control. It is only natural for our two countries to have differences. What matters is to manage differences in a constructive manner and prevent them from getting magnified or escalated. China stands firm in defending its sovereignty, security and development interests. It is important that the United States handle the relevant issues with prudence.

Fourth, strengthening coordination and cooperation on major international and regional hotspot issues to provide more public goods to the world. In a world that is still not peaceful, China and the United States need to work together with the rest of the international community to defend world peace, promote global development, and safeguard a fair and equitable international order.

On the **two principled common understandings**. Both Presidents underscored the importance of China-U.S. relations. President Xi noted the importance of the China-U.S. relationship to the two countries and, beyond the bilateral scope, to the whole world. We have no alternative but to get it right, and we cannot mess it up. A sound and steady China-U.S. relationship is required for advancing our two countries' respective development and for safeguarding a peaceful and stable international environment. Our two sides need to increase communication and cooperation, each manage our domestic affairs well and, at the same time,

shoulder our share of international responsibilities, take China-U.S. relations forward in a positive direction, and work together to advance the noble cause of world peace and development. Doing so will advance the interests of our two peoples and meet the expectation of the international community.

President Biden said that how U.S.-China relations evolve has a profound impact not only on the two countries, but also on the rest of the world. The two countries have a responsibility to the world as well as to the two peoples. The two sides must not mess up the relationship, and the United States has no objective to change China's system. He noted the need for the two sides to respect each other, have peaceful coexistence, enhance communication, reduce misunderstandings and handle differences in a constructive way.

Both Presidents expressed that their opposition to a "new Cold War" and that China and the United States should not have conflict or confrontation. China rejects a "new Cold War" in whatever forms. And President Biden has also made it clear at the UN General Assembly that the United States would not seek a "new Cold War". All countries, including U.S. allies, are unwilling to return to the old path of Cold War or to choose sides between China and the United States. At the meeting, President Xi said that drawing ideological lines or dividing the world into different camps or rival groups will only make the world suffer. The U.S. side needs to meet its word of not seeking a "new Cold War" with concrete actions, and play a constructive and uniting role in the Asia-Pacific. President Biden noted that the U.S. revitalization of its alliances is not anti-China, and that the United States' objective is not to have a conflict with China. The immediate priority is for the two sides to have candid, extensive and substantive dialogues in this relationship, and make sure that competition between the two countries is healthy and does not veer into conflict.

Q3: Could I assume that the "one important question" you mentioned in the end must be the Taiwan question? Tensions are rising again in the cross-Straits relations. This is a matter of concern for every Chinese. On the Taiwan question, the United States has repeatedly interfered in China's internal affairs and stepped on China's red lines, much to the dislike of the Chinese people.

A: Promoting national reunification and safeguarding territorial integrity is the shared will and firm resolve of all Chinese people. The Taiwan question has always been the most important and sensitive issue in China-U.S. relations, and a fixed topic for every discussion between our Presidents. At this meeting, President Xi Jinping pointed out that the one-China principle and the three China-U.S. Joint Communiqués are the political foundation of China-U.S. relationship. Successive U.S. administrations have made clear commitments on this question. In the UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 and the three joint communiqués, the

true status quo of the Taiwan question and what lies at the heart of one China have been articulated in clear-cut terms, i.e. there is but one China in the world and Taiwan is part of China, and the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing China.

Achieving China's complete reunification is an aspiration shared by all sons and daughters of the Chinese nation. We will strive for the prospect of peaceful reunification with the utmost sincerity and efforts. That said, should the separatist forces for Taiwan independence make provocations, force our hands or even cross the red line, we will be compelled to take resolute measures. On this question of China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, there is no room for China to back down.

President Biden reiterated at the meeting that the United States abides by the one-China policy and does not support "Taiwan independence".

On the question of Taiwan, I have a few more words to say. As you said, the Chinese people are very unhappy about the recent wrongful words and actions by the U.S. side, which were attempts to misrepresent and obscure the one-China policy. The Chinese government has made serious representations to the U.S. side for multiple times. The meaning and connotations of one China are clear, legally and politically. They are reflected in the three joint communiqués and the UN General Assembly Resolution 2758, which are official international agreements and documents with legal effect. They should not be altered, distorted or negated. The UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 has made it clear that "the representatives of the Government of the People's Republic of China are the only lawful representatives of China to the UN". The Office of Legal Affairs of the UN Secretariat, in a number of legal opinions following the resolution, has also confirmed that "the United Nations considers 'Taiwan' as a province of China with no separate status", and the "'authorities' in 'Taipei' are not considered to enjoy any form of government status". The three Sino-U.S. Joint Communiqués say in black and white that "The United States of America recognizes the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China, and acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China". The United States should adhere to the official bilateral agreements reached with China and resolutions adopted with overwhelming majority at the UN General Assembly, respect the fact that most countries uphold and stand for the one-China principle. The U.S. side is expected to change its course and take steps to win the trust of the Chinese people as well as the international community.

Q4: The rest of the world is very concerned about risk management in China-U.S. relations. The United States has talked about risk management many times, stressing the need for making

the rules of the road or "guardrails" in the bilateral relationship. What is China's view? The United States is frequently talking about competition with China. What is China's response?

A: President Xi Jinping said that China is willing to discuss with the U.S. side effective risk management on the basis of mutual respect. The high levels of the two sides, and the departments of foreign affairs and national defense, among others, need to keep and increase communication. That said, it is important to have the resolve to prevent and avert crises, and remove their root causes. That would bring fundamental solutions.

As for competition, President Xi Jinping pointed out that cooperation should be prioritized. Cooperation may involve areas of competition, such as the economic field, but competition must be fair and healthy, conducive to respective and common development.

Let me draw an analogy: putting out fire is certainly important, but fire prevention is equally important. So, inflammables and explosives shall be removed whenever they are spotted.

Importantly, whether it is making rules for competition or installing guardrails for a relationship, it should be done through consultation on equal footing, agreed and adhered to by both sides, rather than one side imposing conditions or demands on the other.

Q5: Since the start of this year, values have often been made an issue by the U.S. side, and a "Leaders' Summit for Democracy" will be held before the end of this year. Did the two sides talk about this summit during the meeting?

A: President Xi Jinping said at the meeting that democracy is not a one-size-fits-all product that has only one model or configuration for the whole world. Whether a country is democratic or not should be judged by its own people. Dismissing forms of democracy that are different from one's own is in itself undemocratic. We are willing to have dialogues on human rights on the basis of mutual respect, but we oppose using human rights to interfere in other countries' internal affairs. Hong Kong, Xinjiang, Tibet and maritime issues concern China's sovereignty, territorial integrity and core interests, and are close to the hearts of the Chinese people. On these questions, China has no room to back down. The United States should respect China's interests and concerns, and handle the relevant issues in a prudent and proper way.

Let me also say that China advocates peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity. Democracy is not a slogan to be chanted, but requires concrete actions. The key criteria is whether it benefits the people and has people's support.

Q6: We know that both Chinese and U.S. Presidents care a lot about climate change. Was this issue covered at this virtual meeting?

A: Climate change is a common concern of the international community, and an important area of China-U.S. cooperation. At the meeting, President Xi Jinping recalled China-U.S. cooperation that brought about the Paris Agreement on climate change. A few days ago, the two sides issued their second joint declaration about climate change. As both countries are transitioning to green and low carbon economy, climate change can well become a new highlight of cooperation.

Needless to say, cooperation on climate change is inseparable from the broader climate of China-U.S. relations, and thus requires efforts from both sides to foster an enabling atmosphere. Since last year, China has announced its goals of carbon peak and carbon neutrality, and then its decision of not building new coal-fired power projects abroad. This means that China will use the shortest time in history to realize the world's biggest cut in carbon emission intensity, a task that will take extraordinary efforts. China is still the biggest developing country in the world. All countries need to uphold the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and strike a balance between climate change response and livelihood protection. What the world needs is less finger-pointing or blame game, but more solidarity and cooperation. Promises matter, but actions matter even more. Developed countries need to earnestly fulfill their historical responsibilities and obligations, and maintain consistency in their policies.

Q7: COVID-19 is still ravaging the world and the world economy is struggling to recover. Mankind faces multiple crises. Did the two Presidents talk about possibilities of cooperation to address the crises?

A: Emerging from the shadow of the pandemic, achieving recovery and stability, and overcoming the various risks and challenges are shared aspirations of the international community. President Xi Jinping has stressed on many occasions China's readiness to work with all sides in the spirit of solidarity at trying times.

At the meeting, President Xi pointed out that the pandemic once again proves that humanity lives in a community with a shared future. There is no higher priority than putting people's lives first. Solidarity and cooperation are the most powerful weapons for the international community to defeat COVID-19. Response to epidemics must be based on science. Politicizing health issues does no good but great harm. The pressing priority in the global COVID response is to address the vaccine deficits and close the vaccination gap.

At the early stage of the pandemic, China suggested making COVID vaccines a global public good. Recently we have raised a Global Vaccine Cooperation Action Initiative. China is among the first to offer vaccines to developing countries in need, delivering over 1.7 billion doses of finished and bulk vaccines to the world. In the course of this year, the vaccines we will provide to the international community may exceed two billion doses.

On top of its US\$100 million donation to COVAX, China has announced a donation of another 100 million doses of COVID vaccines to developing countries within this year. And we will consider making additional donations in light of the needs of developing countries, the least developed ones in particular.

To get better prepared in the future, China and the United States should advocate the establishment of a cooperation mechanism for global public health and communicable disease prevention and control, and step up prevention against communicable diseases such as influenza. The two countries may also conduct exchanges and cooperation in areas such as the monitoring of COVID pandemic, research on scientific bottlenecks, disease prevention and treatment, and vaccination.

Q8: Did the two Presidents discuss regional and international hot spot issues at the meeting?

A: The two Presidents exchanged views on the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, the Iranian nuclear issue and Afghanistan, among other regional and international issues of mutual interest. President Xi pointed out that China and the United States need to uphold the international system with the United Nations at its center, the international order based on international law, and the basic norms governing international relations underpinned by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. A multilateralism without China-U.S. cooperation or the participation of either would be incomplete and unrealistic.

I wish to stress here that China is willing to enhance cooperation on the relevant issues on the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit. China will continue to play a positive role on the relevant issues and make its own efforts. At the same time, we call upon the U.S. side to play a constructive role, actively respond to, take seriously and address reasonable concerns of parties concerned, and shoulder its due responsibilities and obligations.

Q9: You said that the two Presidents also exchanged views on the domestic development agenda. In China, we have just had the sixth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee, a big event that has drawn a lot of attention. Did the two Presidents talk about this?

A: At the meeting, President Xi shared with President Biden, in the context of the sixth Plenum, the major accomplishments and historical experience of the CPC in the past 100 years. President Xi said that over the past centenary, the CPC has kept to its founding aspiration and mission, namely to strive for the happiness of the Chinese people and rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. We have accomplished a lot in that direction, and we will continue to do more. Our people's aspiration for a better life is what the Party strives for. "Serving the 1.4 billion Chinese people and working with them for a better life is my great honor and a great responsibility, and I shall put aside my own well-being and live up to people's expectations," said President Xi. Our people's aspiration for a

better life is the biggest internal driver for China's development and an inevitable trend of history. Any attempt to stop this historical trend will be rejected by the Chinese people, and will by no means succeed.

President Xi also reiterated China's unwavering determination to open wider at a high standard, to share development opportunities with the rest of the world, and to make economic globalization more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial for all. China is talking about a new development paradigm for the purpose of expanding domestic market, fostering a combination of domestic and international circulations with greater scope and scale, and building a business environment that is more market-oriented, law-based and up to international standard. All this will provide a bigger market and greater opportunities to the United States and other countries.

Q10: How will this meeting shape the future of China-U.S. relations? Do both sides have any arrangement for the two Presidents to meet in person sometime in future?

A: This meeting, held at a crucial moment, is an occasion for the two Presidents to once again set the direction for this relationship and will have significant and far-reaching impact for China-U.S. relations. President Xi and President Biden agreed to keep in touch by multiple means. We are open to all forms of communication between the two Presidents, including an in-person meeting. We will let things take their natural course. What matters is to move in the same direction and foster a favourable atmosphere for the meeting to generate good outcomes.

If the China-U.S. relationship cannot go back to what it was in the past, then it must move toward the future. China has no illusion. But we have confidence, and will continue to stay the course. We are open to all options that can take this relationship forward. That said, we also have our principles, in short, the three principles put forward by President Xi Jinping today: mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation.

The China-U.S. relationship stands at a crossroads. We hope that the United States will work with China, follow the spirit of the two Presidents' meeting with concrete actions, maintain dialogue and communication, strengthen exchanges and cooperation and manage differences in a responsible way, so as to promote sound and stable development of China-U.S. relationship.

Source:https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjbxw/202111/t20211116_10449035.html

Document: 4**Statement by the Prime Minister of Pakistan H.E. Imran Khan to the Seventy-Sixth Session of the UN General Assembly, New York, September 25, 2021.**

Mr. President,

I congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the 76th session of the General Assembly.

I also wish to express appreciation for the significant achievements of your predecessor, Volkan Bozkir, who guided the Assembly skilfully under the difficult circumstances imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr. President,

The world is facing triple challenge of the Covid-19, the accompanying economic crisis, and the threats posed by climate change.

The virus does not discriminate between nations and people. Nor do the catastrophes imposed by uncertain weather patterns.

The common threats faced by us today not only expose the fragility of the international system; they also underscore the oneness of humanity.

By the grace of Almighty Allah, Pakistan has been successful so far in containing the Covid pandemic. Our calibrated strategy of 'smart lockdowns' helped save lives and livelihoods and kept the economy afloat. Over 15 million families survived through our social protection programme of Ehsaas.

Mr. President,

Climate change is one of the primary existential threats that our planet faces today.

Pakistan's contribution to global emissions is negligible. Yet we are among the 10 most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change in the world.

Being fully aware of our global responsibilities, we have embarked upon game-changing environmental programmes: reforesting Pakistan through our 10 billion tree tsunami; preserving natural habitats; switching to renewable energy; removing pollution from our cities; and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

To address the triple crisis of covid pandemic, economic downturn, and climate emergency, we need a comprehensive strategy that should include:

One, vaccine equity: everyone, everywhere, must be vaccinated against Covid, and as soon as possible;

Two, adequate financing must be made available to developing countries. This can be ensured through comprehensive debt restructuring; expanded ODA (Official Development Assistance); redistribution of

unutilized SDRs (Special Drawing Rights), and allotment of a greater proportion of SDRs to developing countries; and finally, provision of climate finance; and

Three, we must adopt clear investment strategies which help alleviate poverty, promote job creation, build sustainable infrastructure, and of course bridge the digital divide.

I propose that the Secretary-General convene an SDG summit in 2025 to review and accelerate implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Mr. President,

Because of the plunder of the developing world by their corrupt ruling elites, the gap between the rich and the poor countries is increasing at an alarming speed.

Through this platform, I have been drawing the world's attention towards the scourge of illicit financial flows from developing countries.

The Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (FACTI) has calculated that a staggering 7 trillion dollars in stolen assets are parked in the financial "haven" destinations.

This organized theft and illegal transfer of assets has profound consequences for the developing nations. It depletes their already meagre resources, accentuates the levels of poverty especially when laundered money puts pressure on the currency and leads to its devaluation. At the current rate, when the FACTI Panel estimates that a trillion dollar every year is taken out of the developing world, there will be mass exodus of economic migrants towards the richer nations.

What the East India Company did to India, the crooked ruling elites are doing to developing world - plundering the wealth and transferring it to western capitals and offshore tax havens.

And Mr. President, retrieving the stolen assets from the developed countries is impossible for poor nations. The rich countries have no incentives, or compulsion, to return this ill-gotten wealth, and this ill-gotten wealth belongs to the masses of the developing world. I foresee, in the not-too-distant future a time will come when the rich countries will be forced to build walls to keep out economic migrants from these poor countries.

I fear a few "wealthy islands" in the sea of poverty will also turn into a global calamity, like climate change.

The General Assembly must take steps meaningfully to address this deeply disturbing, and morally repugnant, situation. Naming and shaming the 'haven' destinations and developing a comprehensive legal framework to halt and reverse the illicit financial flows are most critical actions to stop this grave economic injustice.

And at a minimum, the recommendations of Secretary General's FACTI panel should be fully implemented.

Mr. President,

Islamophobia is another pernicious phenomenon that we all need to collectively combat.

In the aftermath of 9/11 terrorist attacks, terrorism has been associated with Islam by some quarters. This has increased the tendency of right-wing, xenophobic and violent nationalists, extremists and terrorist groups to target Muslims.

The UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy has recognized these emerging threats. We hope the Secretary-General's report will focus on these new threats of terrorism posed by Islamophobes and right-wing extremists.

I call on the Secretary-General to convene a global dialogue on countering the rise of Islamophobia. Our parallel efforts, at the same time, should be to promote interfaith harmony, and they should continue.

Mr. President,

The worst and most pervasive form of Islamophobia now rules India. The hate-filled 'Hindutva' ideology, propagated by the fascist RSS-BJP regime, has unleashed a reign of fear and violence against India's 200 million strong Muslim community. Mob lynching by cow vigilantes; frequent pogroms, such as the one in New Delhi last year; discriminatory citizenship laws to purge India of Muslims; and a campaign to destroy mosques across India and obliterate its Muslim heritage and history, are all part of this criminal enterprise.

New Delhi has also embarked on what it ominously calls the "final solution" for the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. It has undertaken:

- a series of illegal and unilateral measures in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir since 5th August 2019;
- it has unleashed a reign of terror by an occupation force of 900,000;
- it has jailed senior Kashmiri leadership;
- imposed a clampdown on media and internet;
- violently suppressed peaceful protests;
- abducted 13,000 young Kashmiris and tortured hundreds of them;
- it has extra-judicially killed hundreds of innocent Kashmiris in fake "encounters"; and
- imposed collective punishments by destroying entire neighbourhoods and villages.

We have unveiled a detailed dossier on gross and systematic violations of human rights by the Indian Security Forces in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

This repression is accompanied by illegal efforts to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory, and transform it from a Muslim majority into a Muslim minority.

Indian actions violate the resolutions of the UN Security Council on Jammu and Kashmir. The resolutions clearly prescribe that the “final disposition” of the disputed territory should be decided by its people, through a free and impartial plebiscite held under the UN auspices.

India’s actions in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir also violate International Human Rights and Humanitarian Laws, including the 4th Geneva Convention, and amount to “war crimes” and “crimes against humanity.”

It is unfortunate, very unfortunate, that the world’s approach to violations of human rights lacks even-handedness, and even is selective. Geopolitical considerations, or corporate interests, commercial interests often compel major powers to overlook the transgressions of their “affiliated” countries.

Such double standards are the most glaring in case of India, where this RSS-BJP regime is being allowed to get away with human rights abuses with complete impunity.

The most recent example of Indian barbarity was the forcible snatching of the mortal remains of the great Kashmiri leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, from his family, denying him a proper Islamic funeral and burial, in accordance with his wishes and Muslim traditions.

Devoid of any legal or moral sanction, this action was even against the basic norms of human decency. I call on this General Assembly to demand that Syed Geelani’s mortal remains be allowed to be buried in the “cemetery of martyrs” with the appropriate Islamic rites.

Mr. President,

Pakistan desires peace with India, as with all its neighbours. But sustainable peace in South Asia is contingent upon resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Last February, we reaffirmed the 2003 ceasefire understanding along the Line of Control. The hope was that it would lead to a rethink of the strategy in New Delhi. Sadly, the BJP government has intensified repression in Kashmir and continues to vitiate the environment by these barbaric acts.

The onus remains on India to create a conducive environment for meaningful and result-oriented engagement with Pakistan. And for that, it must do:

One, reverse its unilateral and illegal measures instituted since 5th August 2019;

Two, stop its oppression and human rights violations against the people of Kashmir; and

Three, halt and reverse the demographic changes in the occupied territory.

It is also essential to prevent another conflict between Pakistan and India. India's military build-up, development of advanced nuclear weapons, and acquisition of destabilising conventional capabilities, can erode mutual deterrence between the two countries.

And now Mr. President, I want to talk about Afghanistan. For the current situation in Afghanistan, for some reason, Pakistan has been blamed for the turn of events, by politicians in the United States and some politicians in Europe.

From this platform, I want them all to know, the country that suffered the most, apart from Afghanistan, was Pakistan, when we joined the US War on Terror after 9/11.

80,000 Pakistanis died. \$150 billion dollars were lost to our economy. There were 3.5 million internally displaced Pakistanis. And why did this happen? In the 1980s, Pakistan was a front-line state in fighting against the occupation of Afghanistan. Pakistan and the United States trained Mujahideen groups to fight for the liberation of Afghanistan. Amongst those Mujahideen groups was Al-Qaeda, various groups from all over the world. There were Mujahideen, Afghan Mujahideen. These were considered heroes.

President Ronald Regan invited them to the White House in 1983. And according to a news item, he compared them to the founding fathers of the United States. They were heroes.

Come 1989, the Soviets leave, and so do the Americans - abandoning Afghanistan. Pakistan was left with 5 million Afghan refugees. We were left with sectarian militant groups which never existed before. But the worse cut of it was, that a year later Pakistan was sanctioned by the US. We felt used.

Fast forward 9/11, Pakistan is needed again by the US, because now the US-led coalition was invading Afghanistan, and it could not happen without Pakistan providing all the logistical support.

What happened after that?

The same Mujahideen that we had trained, that fighting foreign occupation was a sacred duty, a holy war or jihad, turned against us.

We were called collaborators.

They declared jihad on us. Then all along the tribal belt bordering Afghanistan - Pakistan's semi-autonomous tribal belt - where no Pakistan army had been there since our independence, they had strong sympathies with the Afghan Taliban, not because of their religious ideology but because of Pashtun nationalism, which is very strong. Then there are three million Afghan refugees still in Pakistan all Pashtoos, living in the camps.

500,000 in the biggest camp, 100,000 camps. They all had affinity and sympathy with the Afghan Taliban.

So, what happened? They too turned against Pakistan. For the first time, we had militant Taliban in Pakistan. And they too attacked the Government of Pakistan. When our Army went into the tribal areas first time in our history - whenever an army goes into the civilian areas, there is collateral damage - so, there was collateral damage, which multiplied the militants to seek revenge. But not just that. The world must know that in Pakistan there were 480 drone attacks conducted by the US. And we all know that the drone attacks are not that precise. They cause more collateral damage than the militants they are targeting.

So, people whose relatives had been killed sought revenge against Pakistan. Between 2004 and 2014, there were 50 different militant groups attacking the State of Pakistan.

At one point, people, people like us were worried, that will we survive this? There were bombs going all over Pakistan. Our capital was like a fortress.

Had it not been for one of the most disciplined army in the world and one of the best intelligence agencies in the world, I think Pakistan would have gone down.

So, when we hear this at the end. There is a lot of worry in the US about taking care of the interpreters and everyone who helped the US.

What about us?

The only reason we suffered so much was because we became an ally of the US - of the Coalition - in the war in Afghanistan. There were attacks being conducted from the Afghan soil into Pakistan. At least there should have been a word of appreciation. But rather than appreciation, imagine how we feel when we are blamed for the turn of events in Afghanistan.

After 2006, it became apparent to everyone who understood Afghanistan and its history that there would be no military solution in Afghanistan. I went to the US, I spoke to thinktanks, I met the then Senator Biden, Senator John Kerry, Senator Harry Reid - I tried to explain to them that there would not be any military solution, and political settlement was the way forward. No one understood then.

And unfortunately, in trying to force a military solution is where the US went wrong. And if today, the world needs to know why the Taliban are back in power, all the world has to do is to do a deep analysis of why a 300,000 well-equipped Afghan army - and remember Afghans are one of the bravest nations on earth - gave up without a fight.

The moment a deep analysis of this is done, the world would know why the Taliban came back to power and it is not because of Pakistan.

Mr. President,

Right now the whole international community should think what is the way ahead. There are two paths that we can take. If we neglect Afghanistan right now, according to the UN half the people of Afghanistan are already vulnerable, and by next year almost 90% of the people in Afghanistan will go below the poverty line. There is a huge humanitarian crisis looming ahead. And this will have serious repercussions not just for the neighbours of Afghanistan but everywhere. A destabilized, chaotic Afghanistan will again become a safe haven for international terrorists - the reason why the US came to Afghanistan in the first place.

Therefore, there is only one way to go. We must strengthen and stabilize the current government, for the sake of the people of Afghanistan.

What have the Taliban promised?

They will respect human rights.

They will have an inclusive government.

They will not allow their soil to be used by terrorists.

And they have given amnesty.

If the world community incentivises them, and encourages them to walk this talk, it will be a win-win situation for everyone. Because these are the four conditions that the US-Taliban dialogue in Doha was all about.

If the world can incentivise them to go this direction, then after all this twenty-year presence of the coalition forces in Afghanistan would not be wasted. Because the Afghan soil would not be used by the international terrorists.

I end Mr. President, by urging everyone that this is a critical time for Afghanistan.

You cannot waste time. Help is needed there. Humanitarian assistance has to be given there immediately. The Secretary General of the United Nations has taken bold steps. I urge you to mobilize the international community, and move in this direction.

Thank you.

Source: https://pmo.gov.pk/press_release_details.php?pr_id=3742

