

on defense reform and performing operational supporting tasks, such as counterterrorism and supporting the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in all of these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to these deployments, and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Ted Stevens, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 18.

**Remarks on Signing the
Henry J. Hyde United States-India
Peaceful Atomic Energy
Cooperation Act of 2006**

December 18, 2006

Thank you all. Welcome; please be seated. Thanks for coming. Welcome to the White House. Today I have the honor of signing a bill that will strengthen the partnership between the world's two largest democracies. The relationship between the United States and India has never been more vital, and this bill will help us meet the energy and security challenges of the 21st century. I want to thank the Congress for delivering this historic bill to my desk. I'm look forward to signing it.

The Henry Hyde United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act passed with strong bipartisan support. It is a fitting tribute to its sponsor and the man whose name it carries. During his 32 years in Congress, Chairman Hyde earned the respect of his colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I appreciate his effective and principled leadership. I wish him all the very best in his retirement.

I'm proud to be joined here by Secretary of State Condi Rice. This bill would not have happened without her leadership. I thank very much the Members of the Senate and the House who have joined us up here, people from both parties who worked hard to get this bill passed: Senator Bill Frist and Senator Dick Lugar and Senator George Allen; Congressman Gary Ackerman; Frank Pallone; Joe Crowley; Thad McCotter. Thank you all for joining us. Thanks for your good work.

I appreciate our Ambassador, David Mulford, and wife, Jeannie, for joining us. Thanks for your good work, Ambassador. I'm also proud to be joined by Ambassador Jassal. I want to thank you for coming, Ambassador.

I thank the Indian American community leaders who are here today. The Indian American community was vital to explaining this strategic bill to our fellow citizens. I appreciate so very much your carrying the message not only here at home but in India. And I want you to know that your voice was very effective, and I welcome it.

The United States and India are natural partners. The rivalries that once kept our nations apart are no more, and today, America and India are united by deeply held values. India is a democracy that protects rule of law and is accountable to its people. India is an open society that demands freedom of speech and freedom of religion. India is an important ally in the war against extremists and radicals. Like America, India has suffered from terrorist attacks on her own soil. And like America, India is committed to fighting the extremists, defeating their hateful ideology, and advancing the cause of human liberty around the world.

The United States and India are working together to expand economic opportunities in both our countries. India's economy has more than doubled in size since 1991, and it is one of the fastest growing markets for American exports. If you visit India today, you are going to see a lot of people using goods and services made by American companies, and that helps raise the standard of living not only in India but here at home. Trade is good for both countries, and we're going to continue to work with India to promote free and fair trade.

In our meetings in Washington and in New Delhi, Prime Minister Singh, for whom I have a lot of respect—we discussed the importance of working together to meet the energy needs of our growing economies. We recognize that energy, clean energy is going to be important to the advancement of our economies. And on my visit to India earlier this year, we concluded an historic agreement that will allow us to share civilian nuclear technology and bring India's civilian nuclear program under the safeguards of the IAEA. This cooperation will help the people of India produce more of their energy from clean, safe nuclear power, and that, in turn, will help their economy grow. And it's in our interest that the Indian economy continue to grow. It helps make America more secure.

As part of the agreement, the United States and India have committed to take a series of steps to make nuclear cooperation a reality, and we're going to fulfill these commitments. The bill I sign today is one of the most important steps, and it's going to help clear the way for us to move forward with this process. The bill is going to help us achieve four key goals.

First, the bill will help us strengthen cooperation between India and United States on one of the most important challenges in the 21st century, and that is energy. India is now the world's fifth largest consumer of energy, and its demand for electricity is expected to double by 2015. The United States has a clear interest in helping India meet this demand with nuclear energy. By helping India expand its use of safe nuclear energy, this bill lays the foundation for a new strategic partnership between our two nations that will help ease India's demands for fossil fuels and ease pressure on global markets.

Second, the bill will help promote economic growth. This bill helps open a new important market for American businesses by paving the way for investment in India's civilian nuclear industry for the first time ever. This new trade will help American companies gain new customers abroad and create new jobs here at home.

Third, the bill will help make it possible for India to reduce emissions and improve its environment. Today, India produces nearly 70 percent of its electricity from coal.

Burning coal produces air pollution and greenhouse gases, and as India's economy has grown, emission levels have risen as well. We must break the cycle, and with nuclear power, we can. We can help India do so, and we can do so here at home by the use of nuclear power.

Nuclear power is the one source of energy that can generate massive amounts of electricity without producing any air pollution or greenhouse gases. And by sharing advanced civilian nuclear technology, we will help our friend India meet its growing demand for energy and lower emissions at the same time.

Finally, the bill will help keep America safe by paving the way for India to join the global effort to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. India has conducted its civilian nuclear energy program in a safe and responsible way for decades. Now, in return for access to American technology, India has agreed to open its civilian nuclear power program to international inspection. This is an important achievement for the whole world. After 30 years outside the system, India will now operate its civilian nuclear energy program under internationally accepted guidelines, and the world is going to be safer as a result.

The bill I'm about to sign is evidence of the growing bonds of trust between our two countries. Congress acted quickly and passed it with overwhelming bipartisan support. You know why? Because the American people have come to see India as a friend. And I view the Prime Minister as a trustworthy man and a friend. I appreciate Prime Minister Singh's leadership on this very important issue. I look forward to continuing to work with him to make civil nuclear cooperation a reality.

And now it is my honor to sign the Henry J. Hyde United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act of 2006.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to India's Ambassador to the U.S. Raminder Singh Jassal; and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India. H.R. 5682, approved December 18, was assigned Public Law No. 109-401.

**Statement on Signing the
Henry J. Hyde United States-India
Peaceful Atomic Energy
Cooperation Act of 2006**

December 18, 2006

Today I have signed into law H.R. 5682, an Act containing the “Henry J. Hyde United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act of 2006.” The Act will strengthen the strategic relationship between the United States and India and deliver valuable benefits to both nations.

Section 103 of the Act purports to establish U.S. policy with respect to various international affairs matters. My approval of the Act does not constitute my adoption of the statements of policy as U.S. foreign policy. Given the Constitution’s commitment to the presidency of the authority to conduct the Nation’s foreign affairs, the executive branch shall construe such policy statements as advisory. Also, if section 104(d)(2) of the Act were construed to prohibit the executive branch from transferring or approving the transfer of an item to India contrary to Nuclear Suppliers Group transfer guidelines that may be in effect at the time of such future transfer, a serious question would exist as to whether the provision unconstitutionally delegated legislative power to an international body. In order to avoid this constitutional question, the executive branch shall construe section 104(d)(2) as advisory. The executive branch will give sections 103 and 104(d)(2) the due weight that comity between the legislative and executive branches should require, to the extent consistent with U.S. foreign policy.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act that mandate, regulate, or prohibit submission of information to the Congress, an international organization, or the public, such as sections 104, 109, 261, 271, 272, 273, 274, and 275, in a manner consistent with the President’s constitutional authority to protect and control information that could impair foreign relations, national security, the deliberative processes of the Ex-

ecutive, or the performance of the Executive’s constitutional duties.

George W. Bush

The White House,
December 18, 2006.

NOTE: H.R. 5682, approved December 18, was assigned Public Law No. 109–401. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

**Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony
for Robert M. Gates as Secretary of
Defense in Arlington, Virginia**

December 18, 2006

Thank you all. I’m pleased to join you here at the Pentagon. We’re here to congratulate Bob Gates on becoming our Nation’s 22d Secretary of the Defense.

Bob Gates entered public service 40 years ago. He is an experienced and thoughtful leader. He has got a track record of steering large organizations through change and transformation. I know Bob Gates will be an outstanding Secretary of the Defense.

I want to thank Bob’s wife, Becky, and their family and their many friends who are with us here today. I appreciate the fact that the Vice President is here to administer the oath. I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who have joined us in welcoming a new member to the Cabinet. I appreciate so very much Senator John Warner and Senator Carl Levin for joining us. I thank the other Members of the United States Congress who are with us today, not the least of whom is my Congressman, Chet Edwards, from central Texas. [*Laughter*] I suspect he’s here because of the Texas A&M connection. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Deputy Secretary England for joining us. I thank Dr. Harvey and Dr. Winter and Michael Wynne, Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, for joining us here today. I appreciate so very much General Pete Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and his wife, Lynne, as well as the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I thank our distinguished guests.

Most importantly, I thank those who wear our uniform. This has got to be an exciting