

U.S.-INDIA DEFENSE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, the United States is fortunate to have allies and partners across the world that we work with every day to combat terrorism and our other security challenges.

One of these relationships that I work closely on is the strategic partnership between the United States and India. Together, the U.S. and India face a set of common security challenges, and there can be no question that closer defense and security cooperation between our two democracies will greatly benefit all of our people.

Over the last few years, Mr. Speaker, we have seen substantial growth in this partnership, most recently formalized last year with the 10-year renewal of the defense framework. This partnership is also highlighted by forums such as the U.S.-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative. I firmly believe that Congress should be supporting and offering more opportunities for the U.S.-India defense partnership to succeed.

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That is why today I will be introducing the U.S.-India Defense Technology and Partnership Act. This legislation will cement the progress that has already been made and will lay the foundation for future cooperation and growth.

Additionally, this legislation will elevate India's status by shortening the time required for the notification of sale or export of defense articles from the United States to India.

It will also bring our defense establishment closer together by encouraging more joint contingency planning and will require the U.S. Government to review and assess India's ability to execute military operations of mutual interest.

Just as important as efforts like the legislation I am introducing today, I believe, is Congress' closer examination and oversight of other actions that impact the U.S.-India partnership.

One that certainly comes to mind, Mr. Speaker, is the delicate and, at times, seemingly confused policy with Pakistan. Pakistan has proven time and time again that it is an unreliable partner.

While Pakistan has taken some, but very limited, action to disrupt terror elements that operate within their borders, their demonstrated unwillingness to fulfill and execute counterterrorism efforts should leave no question as to their true intentions.

So why, Mr. Speaker, last month, did the administration notice a sale of eight F-16s to Pakistan? What, I ask, is the benefit of the sale to our national security and the security of the region and our partners?

This is one question, Mr. Speaker. But the request to use taxpayer dollars to finance the sale of these F-16s to Pakistan is entirely another question. What has Pakistan actually done to deserve these fighter jets, let alone financing from the United States taxpayers? Certainly not enough, in my view, as I firmly oppose the sale from start to finish.

Every year since 2011, the administration has been required to utilize a waiver to continue providing security assistance to Pakistan. Why, you might ask, does the administration need to continually use a waiver? Well, it is because Pakistan has failed to be an honest and real partner in the efforts to combat terrorism that is exported from its borders.

On this front, Mr. Speaker, I have joined with Congressman BERA to seek a restriction on the availability of security assistance to Pakistan next fiscal year. We are not seeking to completely prohibit the use of the Presidential waiver—although, I might add, this is a debate worth having here in the House. We are simply asking that 30 percent of the funds should not be subject to a waiver. This is a common-sense step that will, hopefully, after years of trying, get the Pakistani Government to cooperate and meet the requirements set in law.

Mr. Speaker, India should know that they have a strong and committed partner in the U.S. Congress, and I believe that steps such as passing the appropriations fence I just outlined and passing the U.S.-India Defense Technology and Partnership Act would send a strong message and certainly enhance our strategic partnership with India.

Mr. Speaker, we have a tremendous opportunity in front of us right now to further build an enduring defense and security partnership with India that will endure for years to come and, indeed, benefit both of our great democracies.

LACK OF LIBERTY AND FREEDOM IN CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, in 2014, President Obama said he wanted to go to Cuba if, and I quote, "I, with confidence, can say that we are seeing some progress in liberty and freedom. If we are going backwards," President Obama said, "then there is not much reason for me to be there. I am not interested in just validating the status quo."

Well, look at this poster, Mr. Speaker. These are human rights dissidents who were rounded up and beaten. If Obama's Cuba policy is not going backwards, I don't know what is, because the oppressive Cuban apparatus of repression only seems to be emboldened.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in Havana, Raul Castro was asked by a reporter if

he would release political prisoners in Cuba. Castro looked uncomfortable. Why? Because in Cuba, there is no free press. Reporters are not allowed to ask real questions to regime leaders.

Castro said, well, there are no political prisoners in Cuba at all, and if there were, he would free them by nightfall.

That's a good one. Well, there are 11 million people imprisoned by Castro's communist regime—the entire island.

But here is a list, Mr. Speaker, of over 50 political prisoners, and this is a list comprised by the Cuban Democratic Directorate. Some of these individuals have been in jail for over 20 years. Others are constantly detained, released, and rearrested.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to enter this list into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

PRELIMINARY LIST OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, CUBAN DEMOCRATIC DIRECTORATE, MARCH 21ST, 2016

1. Yasiel Espino Aceval/Condemned 4 years/ Ariza Prison
2. Alexander Palacio Reyes/Cerámica Roja Prison
3. Alexis Serrano Avila/Condemned 3 years prison
4. Andrés Fidel Alfonso Rodríguez/Melena Sur prison
5. Ernesto Borges Pérez/Combinado del Este prison
6. Carlos Amaury Calderin Roca/Valle Grande prison
7. Maria del Carmen Cala Aguilera/ Pendiente/Provincial Women's Prison Holguín Province
8. Enrique Bartolomé Cambria Diaz/Kilo 8 prison
9. Misael Canet Velázquez/Kilo 8 prison
10. Santiago Cisneros Castellanos/ Pendiente/Aguadores prison
11. Leonardo Cobas Pérez/Moscú prison
12. Felipe Martin Companione/Cerámica Roja prison/Condemned to 8 years in prison
13. Orlando Contreras Aguiar/Aguacate prison
14. Yeri Curbelo Aguilera/Condemned 3 years prison/Guantanamo Prison
15. Pedro de la Caridad Alvarez Pedroso
16. Jordys Manuel Dosi/Condemned 3 years prison
17. Carlos Manuel Figueroa Álvarez/ Combinado del Este Prison/Condemned to 6 years prison
18. David Fernández Cardoso/Bungo Ocho Prison
19. José Daniel Gonzalez Fumero/Nieves Morejón Prison
20. Ricardo González Sendiña/condemned 6 years/Combinado del Este
21. Ariel González Sendiña/condemned 6 years/Combinado del Este
22. Eglis Heredia Rodríguez/Boniato Prison
23. Mario Alberto Hernández Leiva/Melena del Sur prison/Condemned to 3 years prison
24. Geovany Izaguirre Hernández/ Aguadores Prison
25. Rolando Erimelio Jaco García/ Cerámica Roja Prison
26. Javier Jouz Varona/Social Dangerousness prison/Condemned to 3 years prison
27. Isain López Luna/Valle Grande Prison
28. Noel López Gonzalez/Condemned 12 years prison
29. Michael Mediaceja Ramos/Condemned 6 months/Guanajay prison
30. Osmaní Mendosa Ferrior/Las Mangas prison