



# OFFICIAL TEXT



Office of Public Affairs

U.S. Embassy

## Remarks by U.S. Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker at Dadar Boys School Inauguration Dadar, NWFP, Pakistan

October 8, 2006

(Begin Transcript)

**Ambassador Crocker:** Mr. Prime Minister, Governor Aurakzai, Mr. Saleem, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, and most especially the students and teachers of the Dadar boys and girls schools.

It is a pleasure to be with you today and to reflect with you, how far Pakistan has come, in the year since the devastating earthquake of October 8<sup>th</sup>. A minute of silence for Mian Ashfaq I think helps me personify through that one student, the depth of suffering this country experienced -- because you multiply that death by well over 70,000 and you begin to understand just how great the losses were.

It is also a time to reflect how our two countries and peoples have come together in partnership. We had our Chinook helicopters here on the ground from Afghanistan within 48 hours running rescue missions. They continued those up to the end of March, which made it the longest U.S. military relief operation in our history and the largest since Berlin airlift.

Through USAID, the United States government put \$100 million dollars into the relief effort, along with well over \$110 million through the U.S. military. Those Chinooks flew thousands of missions; they evacuated thousands of casualties and they helped uncountable people make it through the winter. I am very pleased, those Chinooks are back here today, again coming from Afghanistan, and bringing with them the same crews that helped in the earthquake efforts. Col. Bradley and his pilots, and one of those pilots is here with us today, Betty Piña.

Lt. Piña flew -- I am not sure either of us can count how many -- missions during the disaster relief, but we are delighted that she could come back because she personifies what nations can do when they give full opportunity to both halves of their populations. And I am very pleased therefore to see, the girls of Dadar here too, and their headmistress, Shabana Kasur, a women of extraordinary will, energy and drive.

### ISLAMABAD

Diplomatic Enclave, Ramna 5  
Phone: 2080000  
E-mail: infoisb@state.gov

### KARACHI

Collector's Lane, 8 Abdullah Haroon Road  
Phone: 5685170-9  
E-mail: irckhi@state.gov

### LAHORE

50, Empress Road  
Phone: 6034000  
E-mail: irclahore@state.gov

### PESHAWAR

11, Hospital Road, Peshawar Cantt.  
Phone: 279801-3, 285901-3

Today, we stand in front of the Boy's School. In a short period of time, the Girl's School, which USAID is also building, will be completed. And that will be the opportunity for the girls of Dadar to join their brothers in having really no limit put on what they can do in life. I would like to say a word too, to the boys. I got here little bit early, and brought up some cricket gear, which we handed out and then the boys divided into two teams and gave me a demonstration of some first class cricket at the school level. Afterwards, I said to the boys, "I was really impressed. I know baseball and now I am learning cricket. You guys are good. May be one of you will be an Inzimam one day." What they said to me was, "We are all going to be Inzimams." And that, ladies and gentlemen, more than anything else I think, captures the spirit of the Pakistani people. It shows the energy, the drive, the enthusiasm, and the dedication. That more than anything else is the real rebuilding from the devastation of the earthquake. It's all about the people.

Mr. Prime Minister, we are proud to be your partner, as we were in the relief phase, now in the reconstruction phase. Today, we stand in front of the first school that USAID has completed through its contractor Development Associates. I would recognize engineer Zahid Noor, who led a heroic effort to bring this to completion in less than 90 days. I told him, 90-days is good, you've just set the standard for every other school that we are going to be building. It is our intention Sir, that we will begin work shortly on an additional 50 schools, 25 in Azad Kashmir, and 25 here, in NWFP. And then in coordination with your Authorities, we will look forward to carrying on construction at a similar level each year over the next four years.

The school buildings, of course, are the hardware. They have to have the software to go with it – and that means the trained teachers. So, another part of our program will be the training of 30,000 teachers in the two areas to ensure that in addition to new buildings, built to the highest earthquake standards, that the teachers also are teaching the highest standards to set you on your way in life.

The schools and the teacher training are just one component of a total \$206 million commitment to reconstruction. That \$206 million in its turn is a supplement to the \$3 billion in economic and security assistance that we will extend over a 5 year period to assist your agenda, your priorities and your program in the development of Pakistan. So in this, sir, as in so many others things, we are proud to be your friend, your partner, and your strategic ally over the long run. Shukria.

**(End transcript)**