

**Testimony of Timothy J. Roemer,
Ambassador-Designate to India
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Senate Foreign Relations Committee**

“India is the mother of history, the grandmother of legend and the great grandmother of tradition,” said our celebrated and acclaimed author, Mark Twain. While the past is certainly alluring, it is the future--the people to people relationships, the global possibilities and strategic partnerships – that are exciting and rich with potential. It is an honor and privilege to appear before you today to discuss my nomination to be United States Ambassador to the Republic of India.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I would like to express my deep gratitude to President Obama and Secretary Clinton for their support and nomination. I have had the opportunity to meet with them and discuss their views and vision for future relations with India, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with the United States Senate and the Legislative Branch.

In addition, I would like to recognize and thank my family, starting with my wife, Sally, for her love and commitment. I would also like to thank my four children -- Patrick, Matthew, Sarah and Grace for joining me today. I am grateful for their fresh perspectives, youthful optimism, and sense of adventure. I would also like to recognize my parents, Jim and Mary Ann Roemer, who have always

encouraged me to pursue the public service path of compassionate leaders such as Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy in the U.S. and leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Mother Teresa in India. I am also proud to acknowledge Sally's parents, people who have successfully blazed the trail of great success here in these halls, Senator Bennett Johnston and his wife Mary. Finally, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the friends, co-workers, and family members who are here today and have helped advance me this far.

My involvement and dedication to the public service and government has now spanned nearly four decades. Beginning in the late 1970s, I worked on my hometown Congressman John Brademas' local election and interned in his Washington office. He taught me to deliver responsive and effective constituent services and seek out committee assignments where you can work passionately on issues you deeply care about. After graduation from the University of California and the University of Notre Dame, I returned to Washington and Capitol Hill in the 1980s to work for Senator Dennis DeConcini of Arizona. He assigned me the portfolio of national security, international trade, the Pentagon and defense and global development issues. Senator DeConcini encouraged me to travel in order to experience how the world actually worked and to utilize all our nation's valuable tools and assets, as he was an early advocate of "smart power." In the 1990s, I successfully ran for public office and served my local community in Indiana in the United States Congress. I was fortunate to apply the lessons learned from my previous experiences in politics and gained committee assignments

on the Intelligence Committee, the Education and Labor Committee, and the Science and Technology Committee. More importantly, Mr. Chairman, each of these committees has an important and relevant application to current bilateral relations with India today.

I believe that my past experience working with the Legislative Branch of our government on various issues will be invaluable as we seek to advance and strengthen our global, regional and bilateral interests with India. On the Hill, I worked on economic topics such as trade agreements, agricultural initiatives, micro-enterprise projects, and promoting rural development programs. Additionally, on the security topics, I was very involved in programs impacting our counter-terrorism policies, our defense issues, and our intelligence priorities.

I used my position on the Intelligence Committee to support the work of a Joint Congressional Inquiry into the nature of the 9/11 attacks and was the key sponsor of legislation establishing the “9/11 Commission.” If confirmed, I look forward to sharing with my Indian counterparts the lessons we learned from 9/11 as India addresses the aftermath of its own terrorist tragedy in Mumbai and as we work together to prevent other attacks from occurring. I am certain there are improvements we can impart to India, and there are best practices we can learn directly from them. When I recently met with President Obama, we discussed national security and how both of our countries can work together to address the common threat of radical extremism.

Since leaving Congress in 2003, I have combined my interest in bipartisan solutions with my expertise in the complex national security issues facing our country today through my work at the Center for National Policy. The Center was founded in 1981 by Senator Ed Muskie, a former Secretary of State and continued with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. The trend of former and future Secretaries of State heading the Center continued in the 1990s with Madeleine Albright taking charge. I was selected as President in 2003. Since then, I have worked to bring together decision makers, policy experts, opinion leaders, and the American public to critically examine and make policy recommendations addressing the challenges facing our national security, including U.S. engagement abroad, security and intelligence reform, terrorism, proliferation, and homeland security. My current work is not limited to counter-terrorism issues. As member of the Board of Directors for the Meridian International Center, I have worked to promote our public diplomacy efforts by supporting international exchanges and cultural dialogue through “smart power”—strengthening those “people to people” ties that are so critical in all human relationships. If confirmed, I plan to make smart public diplomacy and outreach part of our daily mission at the U.S. Embassy in India.

Days after the devastating 9/11 attacks on America, I remember traveling up to New York City to express solidarity with the people and meet with the victims of this brutal assault. The number of victims and attacks since 2001 has expanded

worldwide--from Madrid and Mumbai to Istanbul and Islamabad. In fact, I was on my way to Pakistan in September of 2008 when a truck bomber blew up the Marriott Hotel where I was due to stay later that day. Dozens of innocent workers—clerks, maids, taxi drivers, hotel guests—were murdered by terrorists. Great global powers and concerned world citizens must work together to create a safer and more peaceful world.

While our security relationship is important, our relationship with India goes beyond sharing lessons learned from terrorist attacks and capacity building of law enforcement agencies. As is the case in all of America's most enduring relationships, the U.S.-India bond is between two democratic societies and two free peoples--not just two governments. The Indian Diaspora community (including over two million American citizens of Indian ancestry), the influx of more than 94,000 Indian students to our universities, collaboration between our NGOs and civil society and growing economic and business interests – all have been pulling India and the United States closer for decades.

If confirmed, I envision spending my time working to strengthen economic and trade cooperation, helping to expand the frontiers of human knowledge by deepening our science and technology cooperation, and thinking creatively about new education partnerships, clean energy projects and microenterprise initiatives to help women, children and the urban poor. These programs will not only help India; they will advance U.S. interests

by helping to nourish an emerging middle class in the most populous democratic country in the world.

On the regional front, we will work closely with India to promote stability, prosperity and development in the often volatile region of South Asia. On Pakistan, we need to continue to support improvement in the overall India-Pakistan relationship, including resumption of a dialogue process that will address issues vital to each country while still ensuring that Pakistan takes concrete steps to address the threat of terrorism. The recently passed Kerry-Lugar legislation should greatly facilitate this process. In Sri Lanka, we can engage with India and other regional and international partners to discuss issues such as providing for the large number of internally displaced persons, promoting political accommodation of minorities and coordinating reconstruction assistance in ways that will support peace and reconciliation efforts. If confirmed, I will engage with the Indian government and seek their ideas on the most effective way to achieve this.

Yet, the central question facing India in the coming years is how India defines its greatness as it takes an increasingly prominent role in global affairs. Indian software entrepreneur Nandan Nilekani, in a new book called “Imagining India”, articulates the challenge for internal change and reform:

“India now stands evenly balanced between

[Indians'] reluctance to change in the face of immense challenges and the possibilities we have if we do tackle these issues head-on."

Nilekani is referring to the key issues such as clean energy, environmental problems, and public health care concerns.

The real test of our partnership will be how we work together on the important common global challenges of our era, including addressing the urgent danger posed by climate change, which has a long-term impact on water and food shortages that are so pressing for India.

Other global issues include strengthening the global trade and investment system, addressing transnational threats like nuclear weapons proliferation, terrorism and pandemic disease, promoting sustainable economic development to alleviate poverty, and helping other nations become more democratic and open.

We already work together to promote clean technologies, energy efficiency, and renewable energy through the U.S.-India Energy Dialogue and the seven-nation Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate, and the Civil Nuclear Agreement. The 2005 Open Skies agreement paved the way for the growth in travel: the doubling of American visas issued to Indians and record number of Americans visiting India. Earlier this year, a bi-national foundation helped award Fulbright-Nehru scholarships focused on management, public policy, governance, agriculture, and the

environment. We are dramatically expanding our ties in both Education and Science and Technology, and in looking ahead, are interested in working with the new Human Resource Development Minister and Minister of Science and Technology to deepen this partnership. We also want to help India unleash a “second green revolution” that helps enhance the food security of both India and the world. We want to work on education initiatives at the University level with joint partnerships in India.

Our relationship with India is a good news story. And while our relationship has gone through different stages, we are certainly moving ahead on an upward trajectory. This is not a zero sum game with winners and losers but a positive sum game—with India as a strong, stable global democracy increasing peace and prosperity for all.

As we embark on this critical third stage of our relationship, we should do so with a clear-eyed recognition that we will not always agree on how best to address the vital challenges of our times. Our history, geography and economic development are different, and will inevitably lead to some divergence of perspectives. But our shared objectives and democratic values – and our intertwined fate – require us to make the effort to seek common ground. That is the commitment of President Obama and Secretary Clinton, and one that I look forward to advancing.

I recall an interesting story I recently heard and was attributed to former Secretary of State George Shultz. When Secretary Shultz met with incoming Ambassadors, he would pull out a globe of the world and ask the ambassador-designates to “point to their country”. Without fail, each prospective Ambassador would point to the country he or she was being assigned to—Jordan, South Africa or Indonesia. Secretary Shultz paused. His response was that “their country” is the United States of America, and that’s the country whose interests they will represent.

I want you all to know that if I am confirmed, I will faithfully represent the United States and our interests. I will look forward to hearing your views and concerns and cooperating closely with the Senate and the House.

In 1949, India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in a speech delivered at the Indian Council of World Affairs in New Delhi said:

“The problems of Asia today are essentially problems of supplying what may be called the primary human necessities.”

He went on to mention the problems of supplying food, clothing, housing, health, education, and the like... Today, more than 450 million Indians live on less than \$1.25 per day.

While much progress has been made, India still faces serious development challenges. Prime Minister Singh vigorously campaigned in rural communities and pledged to bring more of the benefits of trade and progress to the poor. I hope to work to address some of these problems and move the U.S./India relationship forward. If confirmed, I believe I have the knowledge, experience and dedication to public service to work together to achieve these goals. Over the past decade, the achievements and successes of our U.S.-Indian partnership have numerous contributors—the Clinton Administration, the Bush Administration, Republicans, Democrats, Ambassadors, businesses, citizens, NGOs and several Congresses. I look forward to joining with you and taking our partnership with India to new heights.

Thank you again, Chairman Kerry and members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear before you. I would be happy to answer any questions you have.