



## Remarks with Afghanistan Foreign Minister Rangin Dadfar Spanta at the Signing Ceremony After Their Meeting

**Secretary Condoleezza Rice**

Washington, DC

May 13, 2008

[View Video](#)

**SECRETARY RICE:** Good morning. I'm very pleased to welcome the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan. Minister Spanta, it's great to have you here. And we are about to sign a declaration reaffirming the mutual goals of the people of Afghanistan and the people of the United States and their governments. These goals include: effective security to defend Afghanistan and protect its people; to create the conditions for Afghanistan's future prosperity; to bring good governance to the Afghan people; and to end the scourge of illegal drugs.

The United States and Afghanistan have a shared vision for the future. And we now, of course, have a shared history. It is a shared responsibility to fight terrorism and extremism and to replace their dark vision with an ideology of hope and democracy and prosperity for all people. It is a vision that will triumph. It is difficult because it has determined enemies. It is difficult because Afghanistan is a country that has gone through too many years of trial and tribulation and civil war. It is difficult because, quite frankly, the international community after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan did not stay with the people of Afghanistan. We will not make that mistake again, Minister. We are committed to Afghanistan. We are committed to its future. The United States and NATO are engaged in military operations in Afghanistan, but also in supporting the civilian reconstruction of Afghanistan. And there is much progress that can be reported, but there is much work yet to do.

And so, Minister, I hope that this declaration, more than anything, is yet another sign to the people of Afghanistan that they will have a friend in the United States for many, many years to come, and we look forward to the day when Afghanistan is completely stable, free, and prosperous. But because of your leadership, because of the leadership of President Karzai, and of the toughness of the Afghan people, I know that that day is coming soon.

**FOREIGN MINISTER SPANTA:** Thank you very much, Madame Secretary. Ladies and gentlemen, it's a great pleasure to be here in the capital of United States, our great friends and partner who continue to support Afghanistan in very dark and difficult days. Your people, Madame Secretary, came to Afghanistan they brought us liberation, when six and a half years after the collapse of Taliban regime, today, we have more than six million children and 38 percent of (inaudible) women go to schools. That is a common achievement. Thank you for support and contribution.



We are committed to make Afghanistan's young democracy stronger to bring this country to the family of democracy of the world. And this is our commitment. We work together. We have a common enemy, international terrorist network of al-Qaida and Taliban, is (inaudible) it's for the peace and stability and prosperity of the people of the region and worldwide. I have to thank you for the support and this document will be signed for our cooperation -- strengthening our cooperation. We will continue with that. We are very thankful for great contribution for the life of the people, young people. They are coming from this country to support us and they brought us security and prosperity. Thank you very much.

**SECRETARY RICE:** Thank you.

[The declaration was signed.]

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rice, are you considering --

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Sorry. Are you considering forced intervention in Burma?

**SECRETARY RICE:** We're working very hard with the international community. You may have seen the comments from Secretary General Ban Ki-moon yesterday. We have our own contacts with Burma and we're calling upon them to allow the international community to help the people of Burma.

**QUESTION:** So you're not considering forced intervention?

**SECRETARY RICE:** We are doing everything that we can because this is a humanitarian issue, not a political issue. And we want to make very clear that our only desire is to help the people of Burma. Thank you.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

2008/387

Released on May 13, 2008

[BACK TO TOP](#)