



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
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President Welcomes Prime Minister Aziz of Pakistan to the White House

The Oval Office

[In Focus: Global Diplomacy](#)

11:50 A.M. EST

PRESIDENT BUSH: Mr. Prime Minister, welcome. We have just had a wide-ranging discussion, which one should expect when we've got a strategic relationship like we have with Pakistan. I think the relationship with Pakistan is a vital relationship for the United States, and I want to thank the Prime Minister, and thank the President, for working closely with us on a variety of issues. We're working closely to defeat the terrorists who would like to harm America and harm Pakistan.

We talked about the importance of trade and commerce and investment. And we also talked about the world response to the terrible tragedy that Pakistan has gone through. It's hard to imagine the devastation. The country lost 75,000 people; 4 million people were made homeless. I was very pleased that the United States, our taxpayers, our military could contribute to helping the people of Pakistan recover. They are our friends, and we consider this friendship to be a vital friendship for keeping the peace.

And so Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for coming. I'm really looking forward to going to your country. I'll be traveling to India and Pakistan in March. And I want to thank you for your invitation and your hospitality in advance.

PRIME MINISTER AZIZ: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for receiving us. The United States and Pakistan have a multifaceted relationship, covering a host of areas. It goes back in history, and the people of Pakistan value the relationship very much.

Let me at the outset say that the assistance the United States has given to Pakistan -- the Chinooks, the MASH hospitals, the engineers, and the financial assistance after the earthquake -- has touched the hearts and minds of all Pakistanis -- and including your private sector and civil society. We really appreciate what has been done, and it will help restore the lives of the people who've been impacted



VIDEO Multimedia

President's Remarks

[view](#)



by the earthquake.

A sense of caring and sharing always builds a better relationship between countries. And that's what we are seeing between Pakistan and the United States.

Mr. President, we have a multifaceted relationship, and our discussions today, which we'll continue later, have covered a host of areas: the economic side, trade and investment -- we are very keen to expand that. Pakistan has a growing economy, and U.S. investors can take part in this growth.

We also strive for peace in our area. It's an area which has a lot of challenges, and we are pursuing peace with all our neighbors. We want a solution of all disputes, including the Kashmir dispute. We want to see a strong, stable Afghanistan. We are against proliferation of nuclear weapons by anybody. And we want to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. There is no good terrorist or bad terrorist, and terrorism knows no borders. Our coalition with the United States in fighting terrorism is very important to all of the world and all of civil society.

We are delighted we are here to share this time with you, and the people of Pakistan and the President and all of our Cabinet and various stakeholders in Pakistan are looking forward to your visit, because we think that this is an important visit for building relations further between our two countries and serving the cause of peace in the world.

PRESIDENT BUSH: Thank you, sir.

END 11:54 A.M. EST

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