

Statement by Official Spokesperson on the outcome of the Conference in the US Congress reconciling the Waiver Bills on civilian nuclear energy cooperation between India and the USA

08/12/2006

Government welcomes the outcome of the Conference in the US Congress that has reconciled the Waiver Bills earlier passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate respectively which would enable resumption of civilian nuclear energy cooperation between India and the USA.

The Bill awaits favourable votes by the House and the Senate. The US Administration has assured us that once passed, this legislation would enable it to fulfill all its commitments and obligations under the 18 July Joint Statement and the Separation Plan.

The enactment of the waiver has wider implications for India's access to international cooperation in civilian nuclear energy and is, therefore, of historic significance.

We appreciate the personal effort and commitment demonstrated by President Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in taking this initiative forward. We are also encouraged by the broad bipartisan support of the Congressional leadership for stronger Indo-US ties.

Government also notes that this draft legislation contains certain extraneous and prescriptive provisions. As Prime Minister stated in Parliament, no legislation enacted in a foreign country can take away from us the sovereign right to conduct foreign policy determined solely by our national interests.

The legislation that would be passed is an amendment to a law of the United States. Our obligations and commitments will be those that we undertake in the bilateral 123 Agreement. We expect that to adhere to the 18 July Joint Statement and the Separation Plan. We look forward to working with the US Administration for an early conclusion of a satisfactory Agreement.

External Affairs Minister will be making a statement in the Parliament soon.

**New Delhi
December 8, 2006**