
LAHORE DECLARATION AND COMPOSITE DIALOGUE

Signed: 21 February 1999.

Parties: India and Pakistan.

Treaty Text

Provisions: The Lahore Declaration reaffirms India and Pakistan's commitment to find a peaceful resolution to the issue of Jammu and Kashmir. Each side pledged to "take immediate steps for reducing the risk of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and discuss concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at prevention of conflict."

The Lahore Declaration signed by the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan on 21 February 1999, *inter alia*:

- recognizes that the nuclear dimension of the security environment of the two countries adds to their responsibility for avoidance of conflict between them;
- commits both to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the [United Nations](#), and the universally accepted principles of peaceful co-existence;
- reiterates the determination of both countries to implement the Simla Agreement in letter and spirit;
- commits both countries to the objectives of universal nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation;
- recognizes the importance of mutually agreed confidence-building measures for improving the security environment; and
- recalls their agreement of 23 September 1998, that an environment of peace and security is in the supreme national interest of both sides and that the resolution of all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, is essential for this purpose.

The Prime Ministers agreed that their respective governments:

- shall intensify their efforts to resolve all issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir;
- shall refrain from intervention and interference in each other's internal affairs;

- shall intensify their composite and integrated dialogue process for an early and positive outcome of the agreed bilateral agenda; and
- shall take immediate steps for reducing the risk of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and discuss concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at prevention of conflict.

Background: The Declaration was signed during the meeting of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and the Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, in Lahore (Pakistan) on 20-21 February 1999. The two leaders discussed the entire range of bilateral relations, regional cooperation within the [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation \(SAARC\)](#), and other issues of international concern. In a joint statement they decided that:

- their Foreign Ministers will meet periodically to discuss all issues of mutual concern, including nuclear-related issues;
- the two sides shall undertake consultations on World Trade Organization (WTO)-related issues with a view to coordinating their respective positions;
- the two sides shall determine areas of cooperation in information technology, in particular for tackling the problems of Y2K;
- the two sides will hold consultations with a view to further liberalizing the visa and travel regime; and
- the two sides shall appoint a two-member committee at the ministerial level to examine humanitarian issues relating to civilian detainees and missing prisoners of war.

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The Declaration is considered a foundation for the ongoing Composite Dialogue process of talks between the two sides. Started in 2004, the renewed dialogue utilizes multiple diplomatic channels and levels. It aims at stabilizing relations over a range of issues, including water, cross-border trade, as well as the Jammu and Kashmir region.

Developments:

2011: From 28-29 March, India and Pakistan held talks at the Home/Interior Secretary level and issued a [joint statement](#) afterwards. The sides agreed to set up a “Hotline” in order to “facilitate real time information sharing with respect to terrorist threats.” They also discussed growing concerns with narcotics and drug trafficking, and the ongoing mutual release of prisoners “who have completed their sentence.”

On 13 May, India and Pakistan held talks at the Ministry of Water and Resources/Power level and issued a [joint statement](#). Both sides agreed to the “need for an early and amicable resolution” of the Indus Waters Treaty. India agreed to provide Pakistan with “comprehensive technical data within one month,” and Pakistan agreed to examine and respond to India’s report by 15 September 2011.

On 3 June, India and Pakistan met at the Home/Interior Secretary level and issued a [joint statement](#). The two sides discussed visa procedures and plans to “finalize the draft of [the] Bilateral Visa Agreement.” They agreed to continue the discussion of visa procedures before the end of August 2011.

2010: On 25 February, India and Pakistan held talks at the Foreign Minister level, marking the first meeting between the two sides under the Composite Dialogue process since the [2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks](#). Both sides mainly discussed the issue of terrorism and did not set a future date for continuing talks.

On 24 June, Indian Foreign Minister Nirupama Rao [met](#) for the second time with Pakistani Foreign Minister Salman Bashir since the 2008 Mumbai attacks. India retained its position on countering Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) as a precondition for restarting comprehensive talks on Jammu and Kashmir, water and other issues.

From 25-26 June, India and Pakistan held talks at the Home/Interior Secretary level. Both sides agreed to [release prisoners](#) prior to the meeting, and India pressed Pakistan for further action against LeT and other elements associated with the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

On 15 July, Indian Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna and Pakistani Foreign Minister Sheh Mehmood Qureshi met and [further discussed](#) the issue of terrorism. They also agreed to continue dialogue, echoed by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s statement of hope for restoring talks “sooner or later.”

2009: On 16 July, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Pakistani Prime Minister Yousef Raza Gilani issued a [joint statement](#) on fighting terrorism and cooperation to counter the threat. They also agreed “dialogue is the only way forward,” along the creation of “an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence.”

2008: From 25-26 November, India and Pakistan held its fifth round of talks at the Home/Interior Secretary level as part of a Composite Dialogue agreement. The states issued a [joint statement](#) on terrorism and drugs trafficking, condemning terrorism “in all its forms and manifestations” and also agreed to exchange “prisoners and fisherman... as a gesture of goodwill and on humane considerations.”

2006: On January 17-18, foreign secretary of India, Shri Shyam Saran, and the Pakistani foreign secretary, Mr. Riaz Mohammad Khan, met in New Delhi to discuss the issues of Jammu and Kashmir and peace and security, including confidence-building measures (CBMs) in accordance with the Lahore Declaration. The two foreign secretaries reviewed and assessed positively the progress made during the meetings of experts on Nuclear and Conventional CBMs. With the objective of promoting a stable environment of peace and security, they agreed to mandate the two experts groups to continue consultations on security concepts and nuclear doctrines to develop measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields.

2005: In October, after a two-day meeting, the two countries issued the October 4 Joint Statement of Pakistan and India. They recalled the outcomes of previous discussions reflected in the joint statements of 6 January 2004, 24 September 2004, 18 April 2005, and 14 September 2005. The ministers reiterated that possible options for a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the issue of Jammu and Kashmir should be explored in a sincere, purposeful, and forward-looking manner, resolving to not let terrorism impede the peace process. The two sides agreed to further details regarding bus routes between New Delhi and Lahore and prisoner return issues. The two ministers welcomed the signing of an agreement on prenotification of flight-testing of

ballistic missiles and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on establishment of a communication link between the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency and the Indian Coast Guards.

2004: In January, the two countries reached agreement on the January 6 Joint Statement of Pakistan and India. The new accord is significant in that it builds on the Lahore Declaration's roadmap for peaceful settlement in Kashmir, noting Pakistan's public commitment to prevent "any territory under its control" from committing "terrorism against India."

2003: On 18 April, Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee announced an initiative to "extend a hand of friendship to Pakistan" in order to establish dialogue in accordance with the Lahore Declaration. The initiative yielded a number of successes, including the appointment of respective high commissioners, Delhi-Lahore bus services, and the return of prisoners. The Indian Prime Minister noted, however, that "dialogue and terrorism do not go hand in hand" and that the two must work to solve terrorism issues before they can reach successful consensus through bilateral talks.

2002: On January 13, the Indian Government issued a statement welcoming the commitment of the Pakistan Government not to support or permit anymore the use of its territory for terrorism anywhere in the world. The Indian officials also stated that they expect Pakistan to cooperate with India in stopping all infiltration across the international border and the Line of Control. The statement emphasizes that the Indian Government remains committed to the bilateral dialogue process with Pakistan in accordance with the Shimla Agreement and Lahore Declaration.

In response to a terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament, thought to have been committed by Pakistan-based militant outfits on 13 December 2001, the Indian and Pakistani armies mobilized across the Line of Control in Kashmir and an additional 2,200 miles of shared border. The stand-off continued throughout most of the year, but on 24 October, India began to withdraw its troops from the border. Both governments recognized the level of tension between the two countries needed to be reduced through dialogue but noted that tension will remain until the issue of Kashmir is resolved.

2001: The dialogue process seemed to be slowly reviving in 2001. At the August 2001 summit meeting in Agra, India, the sides did not mention the "Lahore Process" but discussed some of the issues that play an important role in the process. India said it would implement the unilateral confidence-building

measures (CBMs) announced on the eve of the summit, which covered trade, visa issues, educational exchanges, and security. The two sides discussed nuclear risk-reduction measures, cooperation to stop drug trafficking and other cross-border issues, and trade relations. The sides, however, failed to agree on a joint statement due to disagreement on the Kashmir issue.

On 11 March, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan called upon both India and Pakistan to retain the spirit of the Lahore Declaration, saying that it would require restraint, wisdom, and constructive steps from both sides.

Following the August 2001 Agra summit, India reiterated the necessity of implementing the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration. It said that India would support the Simla Agreement, Lahore Declaration, and the issue of cross-border terrorism.

1999: Two Prime Ministers, and the foreign secretaries of Pakistan (Shamshad Ahmad) and India (K. Raghunath) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 21 February 1999, identifying measures aimed at promoting an environment of peace and security between the two countries. The MOU reaffirmed the continued commitment of their respective governments to the principles and purposes of the UN Charter; reiterated the determination of both countries to implementing the Simla Agreement in letter and spirit; and that an environment of peace and security is in the national interest of both countries and that resolution of all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, is essential for this purpose. The two countries also adopted measures pursuant to the directive given by their respective prime ministers in Lahore, for promoting a stable environment of peace, and security between the two countries. The foreign secretaries agreed that the two sides:

- shall engage in bilateral consultations on security concepts and nuclear doctrines, with a view to developing measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at avoidance of conflict;
- undertake to provide each other with advance notification in respect of ballistic missile flight tests, and shall conclude a bilateral agreement in this regard;
- are fully committed to undertaking national measures reducing the risks of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons under their respective control;
- undertake to notify each other immediately in the event of any accidental, unauthorized, or unexplained nuclear incident that could create the

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risk of a fallout with adverse consequences for both sides, or an outbreak of a nuclear war between the two countries; adopt measures aimed at diminishing the possibility of such actions, or such incidents being misinterpreted by the other;

- shall identify/establish the appropriate communication mechanism for notification of nuclear incidents;
- shall continue to abide by their respective unilateral moratorium on conducting further nuclear test explosions unless either side, in exercise of its national sovereignty decides that extraordinary events have jeopardized its supreme interests;
- shall conclude an agreement on prevention of incidents at sea in order to ensure safety of navigation by naval vessels, and aircraft belonging to the two sides;
- shall periodically review the implementation of existing CBMs and where necessary, set up appropriate consultative mechanisms to monitor and ensure effective implementation of these CBMs;
- shall undertake a review of the existing communication links (e.g., between the respective Directors-General, Military Operations) with a view to upgrading and improving these links, and to provide for fail-safe and secure communications; and
- shall engage in bilateral consultations on security, disarmament, and nonproliferation issues within the context of negotiations on these issues in multilateral fora.

Where required, the technical details of the above measures were to be worked out by experts of the two sides in meetings to be held on mutually agreed dates, before mid-1999, with a view to reaching bilateral agreements.

On 19 March, during the 21st Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers at Nuvara Eliya, Sri Lanka, the foreign ministers of India and Pakistan issued a joint statement, in which they reiterated the historic significance of the Lahore Declaration and discussed ways and means to build on it. The two foreign ministers agreed on the urgency of taking concrete measures for implementation of the Lahore Declaration, the MOU and the Joint Statement issued during the Lahore Summit. They agreed on the following steps: to hold the meeting of experts for implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding within the next two months; to hold the next round of the composite and integrated dialogue process in accordance with the agreed MOU commencing in May 1999 in New Delhi and Islamabad and lasting over a period of six weeks.

Due to the outbreak of hostilities in the summer of 1999 in the Kargil area, in the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the "Lahore Process" stalled and no further discussions took place between the two countries on promoting the dialogue and CBMs initiated at Lahore in February 1999.

1997: On 19-23 June, the foreign secretaries of Pakistan and India, Shamshad Ahmad and Salman Haider, respectively, met in Islamabad to continue their wide-ranging and comprehensive dialogue on all outstanding issues between the two countries with each side elaborating its respective position. They also agreed that both sides would take all possible steps to prevent hostile propaganda and provocative actions against each other. They issued a Joint Statement in which they agreed to:

1. address all outstanding issues of concern to both sides including, *inter alia*:
 - peace and security, including CBMs,
 - Jammu and Kashmir,
 - Siachen Glacier;
 - Wullar Barrage Project / Tulbul Navigation Project,
 - Sir Creek,
 - terrorism and drug-trafficking,
 - economic and commercial cooperation, and
 - promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields; and
2. set up a mechanism, including working groups at appropriate levels, to address all these issues in an integrated manner, with the issues of peace and security, Jammu and Kashmir to be dealt with at the level of foreign secretaries tasked with coordination and monitoring of the progress of work of all the working groups.