

United States-India Joint Leadership Statement on HIV/AIDS March 24, 2000

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is not only an Indian problem, it is not only an American problem, it is a global crisis, threatening every country. It burdens our health systems, our economies and, most importantly, the lives of too many of our citizens. But the AIDS epidemic can be slowed, and ultimately reversed by raising awareness, changing behavior and developing new technologies including—eventually—a vaccine.

To that end, India and the United States are working closely together, involving our public, academic, business and non-governmental sectors for the benefit of our nations, and the world. India and the United States are home to some of the world's finest scientists and facilities. We intend to expand collaborative research efforts in HIV/AIDS prevention. Together we are applying our nations' substantial public health expertise and scientific capacities to fight the global pandemic.

India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, through the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), which coordinates HIV/AIDS policy formulation and implements prevention and control programs, has recently launched a new phase of its National AIDS Control Program. With a substantial commitment from the Indian Government, bolstered by additional re-

sources from the World Bank, USAID and other donors, NACO is now working with State health authorities and non-governmental organizations to reduce high-risk behaviors and increase awareness in the general population.

USAID is the major supporter of HIV/AIDS prevention programs in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu States. Additionally, the United States (under its "LIFE" initiative) will support Indian efforts to prevent infection, care for the affected, and build capacity. Planning for these efforts include: establishing an HIV/AIDS resource center; establishing a business coalition for employer-based HIV prevention activities with private and public sector employers; supporting NGO activities for children affected by AIDS; and sensitizing journalists to HIV/AIDS issues.

Science alone will not win the world's struggle against HIV/AIDS. This will require leadership, which India and the United States are determined to provide. We hereby commit our continued, personal involvement to stopping AIDS in India, the United States, and around the world.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks to the Business Community in Hyderabad March 24, 2000

Thank you. Thank you very much. First of all, thank you all for coming out in such large numbers on this warm day to this wonderful facility. It may be that every day is a warm day, but for us, it's a new experience. *[Laughter]* And I rather like it.

Mr. Raju, thank you very much. President Bajaj, President Batnagar, Mr. Hariharan, and Chief Minister Naidu, thank you all for welcoming us here. And I must say, when I was watching the Chief Minister give his speech, I wish I had brought some slides—*[laughter]*—because it was so very impressive. And you

should know that he is becoming—*[applause]*—yes, he did a good job. If a picture is worth a thousand words, you will remember much more of what he said than what I am about to say. *[Laughter]* And he is becoming very well-known in the United States and very much admired for all of these remarkable achievements, and I thank him.

I would like to thank your Ambassador to the United States, Ambassador Chandra, for coming back home to India and making this trip with me. And thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador, for what you do.