

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 274

Expressing sympathy and pledging the support of the Senate and the American people to the victims of the devastating earthquake that struck South Asia and caused the severe loss of life and destruction on October 8, 2005, and pledging immediate United States assistance to save lives and help the region recover from this monumental tragedy.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 17, 2005

Mr. FRIST (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. LUGAR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing sympathy and pledging the support of the Senate and the American people to the victims of the devastating earthquake that struck South Asia and caused the severe loss of life and destruction on October 8, 2005, and pledging immediate United States assistance to save lives and help the region recover from this monumental tragedy.

Whereas on October 8, 2005, at 8:50 am local time, a devastating earthquake, measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale, struck parts of Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan, causing massive loss of life and destruction;

Whereas it is estimated that more than 39,000 people residing in Pakistan-administered Kashmir and the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan and between 1,000 to 2,000 people located in Indian-administered Kashmir have perished as a result of the earthquake and that tens of thousands of others have been injured;

Whereas the capital city of Pakistan-administered Kashmir, Muzaffarabad, located near the epicenter of the earthquake, was one of the worst-affected cities, suffering tens of thousands of deaths and widespread destruction throughout the city;

Whereas millions of people throughout the region have been left homeless as a result of this earthquake;

Whereas the earthquake damaged and destroyed sanitation systems and hospitals and left thousands of people more vulnerable to deadly diseases such as measles and cholera;

Whereas the Senate and the people of the United States acknowledge with deep sadness that this severe tragedy occurred during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, a time when Muslims across the world observe a fast during the daylight hours and focus on worship, contemplation, and strengthening family and community ties;

Whereas the United States immediately deployed material and technical assistance to the region, including plastic sheeting, blankets, water containers, food, and a United States Agency for International Development Disaster Assistance Response Team to assess humanitarian needs, coordinate assistance from the United States, and provide technical assistance as required;

Whereas the Department of Defense immediately dispatched 8 military helicopters and is providing additional helicopter support to assist in relief and rescue operations in remote areas that are largely inaccessible by road;

Whereas the United States made an initial pledge of \$50,000,000 in humanitarian assistance to help Pakistan cope with its massive relief and recovery needs;

Whereas Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, during her October 12, 2005, visit to Pakistan, said that the United States would support Pakistan over the long-term in the Pakistani Government's efforts to provide assistance to the victims of the earthquake and rebuild parts of the country devastated by the earthquake;

Whereas the United Nations launched a \$272,000,000 international flash appeal to support recovery efforts;

Whereas the United Nations estimates that as many as 2,500,000 people are homeless and 1,000,000 are in need of immediate assistance;

Whereas Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf has appealed for international assistance and called for more medicine, tents, and cargo helicopters;

Whereas Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared the earthquake a "national calamity" and pledged to rebuild the lives of thousands of people in Indian-administered Kashmir affected by the earthquake;

Whereas during humanitarian crises, such as the earthquake that struck South Asia, women and children often become more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and have difficulty accessing humanitarian relief;

Whereas India has begun sending a consignment of 25 tons of emergency relief supplies, including medicines, blan-

kets, tents, and food items, to Islamabad, the first time India has provided assistance to Pakistan in over 30 years; and

Whereas the recovery and reconstruction of the devastated areas will require the concerted leadership of the United States working with the governments of the affected countries and with the international community: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) expresses its sympathy and support for the
3 people of South Asia following the devastating earth-
4 quake that struck Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan
5 on October 8, 2005, during the Islamic holy month
6 of Ramadan;

7 (2) conveys its most sincere condolences to the
8 families, communities, and governments of the more
9 than 39,000 people that lost their lives in this ter-
10 rible natural disaster;

11 (3) expresses its admiration and full support for
12 the courageous rescue and relief workers, including
13 personnel of the United States Agency for Inter-
14 national Development and the United States mili-
15 tary, who are saving lives and providing relief and
16 assistance to those affected by the earthquake;

17 (4) supports the initial pledge by President
18 George W. Bush of \$50,000,000 in humanitarian as-
19 sistance, the deployment of United States military

1 assets to the region to assist in relief and recovery
2 efforts, and provision of additional United States as-
3 sistance necessary to save lives and help the region
4 recover from this monumental disaster;

5 (5) commends the ongoing international relief
6 effort that includes the work of individual countries,
7 numerous international organizations, and various
8 relief and nongovernmental entities;

9 (6) commends the Governments of Pakistan
10 and India for their cooperation in the common cause
11 of saving lives and providing humanitarian relief to
12 people on both sides of the Line of Control; and

13 (7) encourages further cooperation between
14 India and Pakistan on relief operations and efforts
15 to fortify and expand peace and stability in the re-
16 gion as they cope with the impact of the earthquake
17 over the next several months and seek to rehabilitate
18 the lives of those affected.

○