

# **CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION**

J 1346, Palam Vihar, Gurgaon, Haryana – 122017

Tel. no. 0124 – 2460602, Fax no. 0124 – 4070291, Email – cdr@cdr-india.org

A group of Indian and Pakistani intellectuals who met in Delhi during past two days have issued the following statement at the end of the gathering.

## **Joint Statement by Indians and Pakistanis**

We understand and share the anger of the people over the Mumbai attack. We also stress and reiterate the need for those individuals and organizations guilty of the ghastly attack on Mumbai to be named and punished, in a free, fair, impartial investigation and prosecution. Equally we feel the need to eliminate terrorism that has impacted on India recently and the entire region of South Asia and threatens the peaceful co-existence between peoples and countries.

We appreciate all the more restraint that the Indian government has exercised on those who have advocated reprisal. We appreciate its readiness, indeed its determination, to discourage hasty conclusions concerning the nature and extent of the involvement, if any, of the Pakistani state. But precisely because it has shown sagacity so far, we would urge it, in the strongest possible terms, to refrain from taking any steps, and discourage members of the government from making any statements, that will weaken the bonds that have developed between civil societies in our two countries over the past five years. Both our countries and both our governments have worked hard to lower the barriers of mistrust and misinformation that had earlier prevented us from forging these bonds. We are all truly proud of the progress we have made so far, and hold it responsible for the success we have had in moving towards the resolution of the many issues that have bedeviled our relationship, to our mutual loss, ever since our free nations were born.

War is not an option and all talk of partial or targeted action are ill informed and dangerous given the nuclearisation of the sub-continent. We regret that a need, being felt in political circles in India to take some symbolic action that will express in anger, has endangered this precious, yet fragile web of emerging relationship. We urge the government of India to check this tendency and reverse, at the earliest possible moment, the restrictive measures on travel and people to people contacts that have been imposed in the wake of the Mumbai attack. A drastic weakening of precisely that element of India Pakistan relations that has brought us closest to peace is self defeating.

Difficult as it may seem, we believe it is necessary for the two governments to resume the peace process. In this context we welcome the statement made by External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee in Srinagar that India-Pakistan dialogue in the context of Kashmir will not be affected.

The recent elections in the State provide some encouraging signals. Among these was the high turnout, deliberate eschewing of violence by militants and the freedom from externally inspired disruption. We realize that the State elections by themselves can not

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provide a solution to the larger issue of Jammu and Kashmir. They do, however, offer an opportunity for achieving consensus amongst Kashmiris of all shades of opinion.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has indicated his desire for reconciliation amongst people of the State. He has also expressed his readiness to facilitate a dialogue with the separatists. We urge all Kashmiris to enter the dialogue process and work towards a consensus about the future of the State.

## Signatories

Mr. Rajmohan Gandhi  
Mr. Salman Haidar  
Mr. Kapil Kak  
Mr. Wajahat Habibullah  
Prof. Amitabh Mattoo  
Ms Teesta Setalvad  
Mr. M. Syed Malik  
Mr. Muzamil Jaleel  
Ms Neerja Chowdhary

Dr. Humayun Khan  
Mr. Aziz Ahmad Khan  
Mr. Prem Shankar Jha  
Dr. Syeda Hameed  
Ms Sushobha Barve  
Mr. Siddharth Vardarajan  
Mr. Iftekhar Gillani  
Ms Nidhi Razdan