



India-Pakistan Sanctions Legislation Fact Sheet

June 11, 2001

Contact: Steve LaMontagne 202.543.4100 x100

During the Cold War, India was viewed as a potential counterweight to communist China and the Soviet Union. The U.S. was therefore willing to overlook India's fledgling nuclear program, and even provided nuclear technology to India under the Atoms for Peace program. The U.S. also trained Pakistani nuclear scientists and supplied Pakistan with a nuclear research reactor.

About Us

Issues

Elections

Resources

Get Involved

Contribute

Search!

110 Maryland Ave. NE
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 543-4100
clw@clw.org

*MAY 18, 1974- India conducts a "peaceful" nuclear explosion. Pakistan begins to accelerate its nuclear program.

*1976- Congress adopts the Symington Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. This amendment prohibits most U.S. economic and military assistance to any country delivering or receiving nuclear enrichment equipment, material, or technology not safeguarded by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

*1977- Congress adopts the Glenn Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. This amendment prohibits U.S. assistance to any non-nuclear weapon state (as defined by the Non-Proliferation Treaty), that conducts a nuclear explosion. The Symington and Glenn amendments did not apply retroactively to India or Pakistan.

*1978- Congress passes the Nuclear Nonproliferation Act, which prohibits the export of nuclear technology to non-nuclear weapon states unless the recipient state accepts full IAEA safeguards. The Act also threatens sanctions against any state attempting to acquire unsafeguarded technology.

*APRIL 1979- President Carter imposes unilateral military and economic sanctions against Pakistan after discovering that Islamabad is secretly constructing a facility to enrich uranium and is therefore in violation of the Symington amendment. These sanctions did not stop grants and loans from international financial institutions.

*DECEMBER 1979- Sanctions are waived, despite evidence that Pakistan is pursuing a nuclear weapons program. Presidential waivers would continue to allow the U.S. to provide economic and military assistance to Pakistan from 1982-1990, in part as a reward for Pakistan's anti-Soviet efforts in Afghanistan.

*1985- Congress adopts the Pressler Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. This amendment bans most economic and military assistance to Pakistan unless the President can certify on an annual basis that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear device and that U.S. aid would reduce the risk of Pakistan possessing such a device. Although Pakistan disclosed in 1984 that it could enrich uranium for nuclear weapons, and revealed in 1987 that it could assemble a nuclear device, the U.S. would continue to certify Pakistan's non-nuclear status until 1990.

*1990- Pressler Amendment sanctions are finally imposed against Pakistan, which lost strategic significance following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

*1995- Congress passes the Brown Amendment, which provides for the delivery of \$368 million of military equipment purchased but not received by Pakistan before the imposition of Pressler amendment sanctions in 1990. The amendment also exempts several forms of assistance from the embargo against Pakistan, including for counter-narcotics purposes; for military-to-military contact, training, humanitarian, and civic assistance projects; for peacekeeping and other multilateral obligations; and for anti-terrorism assistance. The amendment passes despite evidence of Chinese transfers of nuclear and missile components and technologies to Pakistan.

Meanwhile, India prepares to conduct nuclear tests, but the U.S. warns that testing will result in sanctions under the Glenn amendment. The tests are postponed.

*MARCH 1998- Hindu nationalists, led by Atal Behari Vajpayee, take power in India. The ruling party's election manifesto declares an intention to "exercise the option to induct nuclear weapons."

*MAY 1998- India conducts nuclear tests, and Pakistan follows with tests of its own. Days later, President Clinton imposes Glenn amendment sanctions against both countries. Aid under the Foreign Assistance Act, including economic development assistance, is terminated; foreign military sales under the Arms Export Control Act are suspended; credits and credit guarantees by the U.S. government are suspended; U.S. banks stop all loans to the governments of India and Pakistan; loans from international financial institutions, such as the IMF and World Bank, are suspended; and exports of dual-use nuclear or missile items are prohibited.

*JULY 1998- Congress rushes to pass legislation granting India and Pakistan a one-year exemption from Glenn amendment restrictions on the purchase of agricultural commodities from U.S. farmers.

One day later, Congress also passes legislation sponsored by Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS), the India-Pakistan Relief Act of 1998 (also referred to as Brownback I), that provides the President with the authority to waive, for a period of one year, Glenn, Symington, and Pressler amendment sanctions against India and Pakistan, except for sanctions on military assistance, dual-use exports, and military sales. Brownback I was signed into law in October 1998.

*NOVEMBER 1998- President Clinton exercises his waiver authority under Brownback I, restoring some non-military aid programs in India and lifting restrictions on the activities of U.S. banks in India and Pakistan.

*JUNE 1999- Congress passes Brownback II, giving the president permanent authority to waive sanctions. The amendment also allows the President to waive Symington and Pressler amendment sanctions that had prohibited all military and economic assistance to Pakistan since 1990.

*OCTOBER 1999- President Clinton waives sanctions on activities in India by the Export-Import Bank, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the Trade and Development Agency. In December, fifty-one Indian entities are removed from the export control sanctions list maintained by the U.S. Bureau of Export Administration.

*APRIL 2001- Reps. Ed Royce (R-CA) and Jim McDermott (D-WA) introduce a bill to remove all remaining sanctions on India and Pakistan.

The contents of this page may be reproduced in whole or in part without further permission with proper credit given.