

THE EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA: THE AMERICAN RESPONSE

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

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THE EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA: THE AMERICAN RESPONSE

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2001

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 9:05 a.m. in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Benjamin A. Gilman [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Mr. GILMAN. The Subcommittee will come to order.

I am pleased that we have our friends overseas with us this morning.

Can you hear us all right?

Ambassador CELESTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you. We will introduce you in just a moment.

On January 26th this year, a devastating earthquake struck western India, causing enormous human suffering and incalculable material devastation.

On behalf of our Committee on International Relations, I first want to express our sympathy and our condolences of the American people and the Congress of the United States to the people and government of India, as well as to the thousands of Indian-Americans who mourn the loss of their family and their close friends.

We also want to express our concern for those who have been injured or killed in yesterday's earthquake in Seattle and for their survivors and friends as well.

Luck, divine providence, and the sturdy construction that is possible in a developed nation have permitted casualties to be mercifully light for a seismic event of that magnitude. Difficulties in our own Nation should make us even more sympathetic those who suffered so much in Gujarat.

This earthquake, the most severe in India in the past 50 years, registered an incredible 7.9 on the Richter scale. Resultant loss of life has already exceeded 20,000 and estimates are that additional thousands might have perished. It is estimated that 600,000 have left homeless and 165,000 injured.

President Bush promptly pledged to provide immediate assistance to India which even weeks after the tragedy continues to be in urgent need of emergency relief, as I am certain we will hear from today's witnesses.

In January, the House of Representatives passed H.Con.Res. 15, a resolution I co-sponsored supporting the joint efforts of our gov-

ernment, the World Bank, the Asia Development Bank, and the international development community as these institutions provide assistance to the government of India and to the private, voluntary organizations that are engaged in relief efforts.

Among those organizations are CARE and Catholic Relief Services, organizations that are represented today by witnesses who are working on the ground in India.

India is the most populous democracy on earth and is a strategic partner of our own nation. It is therefore befitting that our Committee on International Relations is holding this hearing to determine the extent of the devastation in India as a consequence of the extreme destruction caused by the January 26th earthquake and to assess the type and quantity of bilateral and multi-lateral support that is so urgently needed to ease the human suffering in India and necessary for their ongoing reconstruction efforts.

We also need to know how American interests have been affected, how the American government and private sector have responded and what impact that response has had and what lessons we have learned about our disaster response capabilities and those of other nations such as India.

We want to extend a special welcome to the witnesses who are testifying through our video conference from Delhi.

I am pleased to introduce Ambassador Richard Celeste, thank you for being with us, Ambassador Celeste, who has served with great distinction as our Ambassador in India since 1997 and brings executive service expertise to this challenging position by virtue of his prior service as governor of Ohio.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gilman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE BENJAMIN A. GILMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIAs

The Committee will come to order.

On January 26, 2001, a devastating earthquake struck western India and caused enormous human suffering and incalculable materiel devastation. On behalf of the Committee on International Relations, I first wish to express our sympathy and the condolences of the American people and the Congress of the United States to the people and government of India as well as to the thousands of Indian-Americans who mourn the loss of family and friends.

This earthquake, the most severe in India in the past 50 years, registered an incredible 7.9 on the Richter scale. The resultant loss of life has already exceeded 20,000 and estimates are that additional thousands might have perished and it is estimated that 600,000 have been left homeless and 166,500 injured.

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We extend a special welcome to our witnesses who are testifying through our video conference from Delhi. I am pleased to introduce Ambassador Richard Celeste, who has served with great distinction as our Ambassador to India since 1997 and brings executive service expertise to this challenging position by virtue of his service as Governor of Ohio. Welcome, Mr. Ambassador.

We are also fortunate that AID Director for India Walter North is testifying before our Committee today. Mr. North is one of AID's most seasoned professionals and an expert on South Asian affairs. We look forward to your testimony, Director North.

Also testifying before the Committee this morning are Mr. Sean Callahan, of CARE/India, and Mr. Thomas Alcedo of Catholic Relief Services/India. Both Messrs. Callahan and Alcedo have extensive development experience and have worked on disaster relief efforts throughout the world. The Committee looks forward to your insights regarding the ongoing reconstruction work in India and suggestions on what additional measures should be undertaken.

I am also pleased to introduce two seasoned diplomats who serve here in Washington. Alan Eastham, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs is with us today representing the State Department and Leonard Rogers, the Acting Assistant AID Administrator for the Bureau of Humanitarian Response, is also with us today to represent AID, to provide a "Washington perspective" on some of the issues that may arise.

Mr. GILMAN. Welcome, Mr. Ambassador.

Ambassador CELESTE. Thank you very, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you. We are also fortunate that AID Director for India, Walter North, is testifying before our Committee today from India. Mr. North is one of AID's most seasoned professionals and expert on South Asian affairs.

We look forward to your testimony, Director North, and we welcome you for being with us today.

Also testifying before our Committee this morning are Mr. Sean Callahan of CARE India and Mr. Thomas Alcedo Catholic Relief Services in India. Both Mr. Callahan and Mr. Alcedo have extensive development experience and have worked on disaster relief efforts throughout the world.

The Committee looks forward to your insights regarding the ongoing reconstruction work in India and suggestions of what additional measures should be undertaken.

I am also pleased to introduce two seasoned diplomats who serve here in Washington.

Alan Eastham is Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, is with us today representing the State Department. We thank Mr. Eastham for being with us.

And we also have with us Leonard Rogers, the Acting Assistant AID Administrator for the Bureau of Humanitarian Response, who is also with us today to represent AID to provide a Washington Perspective on some of the issues that may arise.

Mr. Royce, who has just returned from India, would like to note some opening remarks.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing. I did return 1 week ago from India, having co-lead a congressional delegation which surveyed the destruction in Gujarat and assessed the relief and reconstruction efforts underway there. Mr. Pitts was with me on that trip and we actually had a chance to speak with many of our witnesses here today.

The losses in lives and property there are devastating. There are perhaps one and a half million homeless Gujaratis today and it is hard to describe the damage in Bhuj, which was the epicenter, where we visited, and home after home had collapsed there in rubble. But I do have a few observations, Mr. Chairman, I would like to share with my colleagues.

The response of the Gujarat government, although criticized in some Indian media reports, was praised by World Bank and NGO representatives and others. The USAID DART team received good marks. The Indian army was widely commended for its quick relief response which saved hundreds of lives. And while there is always room for improvement, the relief and reconstruction efforts are proceeding satisfactorily in the view of experienced observers that we talked to.

The reconstruction stage will be defined by many difficult political issues, including whether or not to rebuild Bhuj. Some are asking why the city should be rebuilt, given that it lies on earthquake-prone land and that the debris removal will be costly. The World Bank representatives noted, however, that there is no history of successful relocation of cities.

USAID is trying to assist the government in developing a strategy for debris removal that preserves historic and culturally important buildings and other useful materials. My sense is that Bhuj will be rebuilt because in India where this has been tried in the past and they have attempted to relocate, people have gone back to the site and begun to rebuild the city.

The two top aid priorities are debris removal and temporary shelter. Temporary shelter must be completed before the monsoon season arrives in June and this is a race against time.

Charges that the government is intentionally discriminating in its aid distribution based on caste, religion and ethnicity at this point do not have merit. Of course, this concern bears watching by aid providers.

Indian government officials are very appreciative of aid provided by the U.S. Government and the outstanding efforts of the Indo-American community. Our delegation visited the U.S.S. Cowpens in Bombay harbor which had delivered tents and other desperately needed basics. These and other American efforts were most welcomed.

Concerning U.S. policy, a few recommendations. We should push for soft window funding for India from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Currently, the Asian Development Bank does not offer concessional loans to India, but donor countries could make an exception and, in this case, it is the United States that could change its position and make that happen.

NGO's have submitted a proposal to the Department of Agriculture under the 416(b) surplus commodities program to generate funds for disaster mitigation. The proposal went through technical reviews in December and January and received positive reviews from USAID and the Departments of State and Agriculture, but it appears to be stalled by the OMB.

Interested Members should look into what the concern is there at the OMB and push for approval of this proposal, so we will be doing that.

We should share the expertise of disaster management authorities in earthquake-prone American regions, such as California, with Indian officials to help the develop long-term disaster management plans. The Indian government has established the Disaster Management Authority but it is still in its infancy. Some Indian government officials expressed their interest in working with FEMA, so we will be following up on that.

We should preposition materials in the future. Tents, emergency supplies should be pre-positioned in regions such as this. India has suffered several natural disasters in the last few years. The Indians are very realistic in facing the fact that there will be another disaster in the near future.

The U.S. and India have been rapidly developing a closer relationship over the last several years. Developing closer trade, security and other ties with India is strongly in our national interest. As Gujarat moves beyond the relief and into the rebuilding stages, it is important that we as a nation go the extra mile for our friends.

India and the Indian people are important to us. It is my intention to see that the U.S. does all it can in the most effective way to show our support for India.

Mr. Chairman, I do have a couple of photographs, large photographs, that were taken there on the ground that Mr. Pitts and myself brought back and at this time I am just going to show them to the Members very quickly.

This is the devastation that we saw, Mr. Chairman, in Bhuj.

This is a photo of some of the relief work that is going on.

One of the sites we visited that shows how the buildings collapsed.

Another typical view of the landscape there.

This was once an apartment building.

Homes in the village that were destroyed.

This is the situation of the homeless today.

Here is another example of an apartment complex that came down. Many of these buildings, although they had filed with the building commissioner that they had sufficient support, in fact the plans submitted were different than the construction materials used in the buildings and the number of pillars used to hold up the buildings, so there is an enforcement problem there as well.

Another view of the heart of the town.

This shows you the landscape in this rural area, where there is also a drought.

I will show you a few more photographs here of Bhuj and Ahmedabad.

This is Bhuj right here. This was once a palace or a temple.

And in the rural countryside, outside the village, this is what things look like today.

And so one of the key questions again, Mr. Chairman, is whether before the monsoons come temporary shelter can be provided for these people and also whether the dams that have been damaged can be repaired in time to hold some of the water for these people who are also undergoing a severe drought.

Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Royce.

Mr. Pitts, any opening statement?

Mr. PITTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a new Member of the International Relations Committee—

Mr. GILMAN. We welcome you.

Mr. PITTS [continuing]. And a new Member of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, it is a privilege to serve.

As Mr. Royce said, I was with him and David Bonior and Jim McDermott on the Codel a few weeks ago in India and Pakistan.

I would like to say hello to Ambassador Celeste and thank him for his hospitality while we were there. We had a very informative visit.

The visit to Gujarat was most shocking and astounding as we saw the results of that great tragedy. The Codel toured some of the sites and we met with the chief minister of Gujarat and the other ministers that serve with him.

To try describe Gujarat is hard, the pictures certainly show a lot of the devastation—over 18,000 deaths and 166,000 were injured there. Twenty million people had been affected, either displaced from their homes or jobs, and 800,000 people without shelter. It is a very, very serious problem, but I was impressed with the resilience of the Indian people and look forward to hearing the testimony today as to how we can be more helpful.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Pitts.

Ms. Davis, any opening remarks?

Ms. DAVIS. I have one that I submitted for the record, Mr. Chairman, but I would like to say thank you very much for holding this hearing.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Davis follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JO ANN DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Subcommittee and the Chairman for holding this hearing today, regarding, "*The Earthquake in India: The American Response*". As we all know, India represents a country with one of the world's largest populations. It is a country critical to maintaining regional stability and peace.

When I heard about the tragedy in India, I was concerned about what this would mean to regional stability. However, I was also concerned for the people. Oftentimes, in situations such as this, the initial earthquake or natural disaster is not the worst of the country's problems. It is generally followed by a breakdown in basic social services and the spread of deadly disease. In fact, this is precisely what has occurred in the aftermath of the earthquake. In total, approximately 17,000 people died and 167,000 people were injured.

Today, we will examine the role and response of the United States with respect to this tragedy. I look forward to the opportunity to further discuss and address these issues. As a freshman, I look forward to the opportunity to engage in oversight of the United States' foreign policy. Only in a country such as ours, could a regular citizen genuinely affect the course of a nation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you. Without objection, your statement will be made part of the record.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Issa, any opening statement?

Mr. ISSA. No, thank you.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Schiff?

Mr. SCHIFF. No, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you.

And Mr. Cantor?

Mr. CANTOR. No, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. All right. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ambassador, to begin our discussions, will you please give us your assessments of the efforts of the government of India on our behalf? And also, we would like you to tell us about the reconstruction efforts in Gujarat and following your response we have some questions we would like to raise regarding this situation.

Mr. Ambassador, please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE RICHARD F. CELESTE, U.S.
AMBASSADOR TO INDIA**

Ambassador CELESTE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. To you and to your colleagues, I want to express my appreciation for arranging this unusual hearing that spans the globe, and the time zones, I might add. We are very pleased to have a chance to share our thoughts with you.

As you indicated, I am joined here by our AID director, Walter North, and by two outstanding leaders of our NGO community, Tom Alcedo, who handles CARE and provides leadership there, and Sean Callahan who is providing leadership for CRS.

I have submitted written testimony and rather than repeat it, I would like to underscore a few points, if I may, Mr. Chairman.

As you know, in the wake of the recent earthquake, the United States working in partnership with the government of India and many others responded very quickly with emergency relief. Now, our attention is turning, as Mr. Royce indicated, to recovery efforts and to the challenge of rebuilding.

As all of you know, relations between the United States and India have improved significantly in the last 2 years. As the world's largest democracies, our two nations share values and interests. I believe that we have forged an effective partnership for the new millennium and this tragic event in a sense testified to that partnership, underlining the strength of our relationship as we responded to the challenge in Gujarat.

That earthquake hit just over a month ago. It killed, as you have said, more than 19,000 people. It has injured nearly 150,000 people. It has destroyed or seriously damaged almost three-quarters of a million homes and it has caused at least \$2.1 billion in direct damage to the state's infrastructure.

We responded quickly to the disaster, engaging the key technical material and financial resources of the United States government, departments like the Department of Defense, U.S. Government agencies like USAID, and our private partners like CARE, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision and others.

I was proud of how quickly we responded and the way in which people who ranged from communications technicians here at the Embassy and Embassy drivers provided support to the teams that came in, the DART team that assembled from around the world, really, the Defense Department team and others.

To date, we have provided nearly \$13 million in disaster relief. This figure includes the cash contribution to the prime minister's relief fund, food and material assistance from USAID, cash grants

to the private voluntary organizations and NGOs from USAID and material and supply assistance from the Department of Defense.

The government of India played a major role in responding to the emergency, even though technically the responsibility for disaster relief rests with the state government, rather than the center. But the government of India showed an unprecedented openness to receiving assistance from international donors, including the United States Government.

To its credit, the government of India took the lead in strongly encouraging the Indian private sector to engage in relief and reconstruction.

Over 15,000 Indian military service personnel as well as much of their heavy equipment were deployed to the area. This provided invaluable transportation and distribution support to relief operations from the state and central governments to NGOs like CARE and to our USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and DOD efforts.

Many other countries provided relief support. I think over 44 foreign governments have now responded to this effort. And, of course, a number of international organizations as well. And I would stress that the Indian citizenry and its private sector have been robust in their response.

Just as one example, CARE, and Tom Alcedo might speak to this in a few moments, has forged a partnership with the Federal of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry for reconstruction efforts.

The situation today, a little over 1 month after the disaster struck, is vastly improved. Immediate suffering has been greatly reduced. Because food and health needs are being addressed and because coordination on the ground is stronger and stronger, today a shift in our emphasis from relief to reconstruction is emerging.

Food supply and distribution issues have by and large been resolved. The United States mission here continues to closely monitor this situation with our Title 2 partners like CRS and CARE and the World Food Program.

For the longer term response, a key issue is the fact that even before this earthquake, as Congressman Royce pointed out, the most seriously impacted areas in the Kutch district were among some of the poorest in India and were suffering their third year of drought, very, very serious hardship, before homes and schools and hospitals were flattened by this earthquake.

At the top of the list of critical recovery needs is shelter for the hundreds of thousands of people who lost their homes. This is both interim shelter and, of course, longer term reconstruction.

The health sector capacity in the Kutch district has to be rebuilt. Clean water and its supply are also essential to avoid an outbreak of disease and, frankly, the whole water issue needs to be approached with a sensitivity to the drought problem so that we do not compound long-term water shortages with short-term solutions in the current situation.

There is a tremendous concern about basic survival and by that I mean finding the work that will provide people livelihood so that they can sustain themselves and their families. In many cases, this means restarting cottage industries and land-based industries.

And, of course, finally replacing basic infrastructure like roads, bridges, schools and power lines.

The health sector capacity in Kutch has to be restored. Water and sanitation remain pressing concerns. Day-to-day coping and survival is a major challenge and I know that the congressman as part of the Codel certainly paid close attention to this, the need for trauma counseling, for help with physical rehabilitation, for survivors who have lost limbs, who have suffered severe injuries.

The costs of rebuilding Gujarat are substantial. The World Bank-Asian Development Bank team has just provided a preliminary report of reconstruction costs, setting the figure at \$2.3 billion. They anticipate providing about \$1.5 billion in loan financing toward these costs, but there is still a challenge for Indian leadership and to the non-resident Indian community, the Indian business community and friends of India like the United States to make up the shortfall.

For many reasons, the United States should continue to help survivors of the earthquake meet their enormous challenges in rebuilding lives, homes and livelihoods.

USAID New Delhi has developed a special recovery initiative that will begin to address this challenge by providing \$10 million, money from our existing bilateral budget, to fund quick impact activities that reach effective communities. Some examples include cash for work and other NGO programs to help repair roads, wells, water systems, homes and other infrastructure, cash for work programs to clear away rubble and debris and to repair public facilities such as health clinics and child nutrition centers, and survey support to assess damaged buildings and to support municipalities as they develop effective and practical community renewal plans.

Let me just say in conclusion that I am extremely proud of the response of our Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and the DART team that was on the ground and the representatives who came from the Pacific Command DOD as part of our PACOM assessment team. They did an outstanding job of support and facilitation and, in many respects, they modeled the kind of civilian military cooperation which I think any effective response to a disaster of this magnitude requires.

I am also grateful for the interest that you and your colleagues have shown, Mr. Chairman. That means a great deal to us in the field and we look forward to working with you closely as we address the problems of rebuilding communities in Kutch and Gujarat and in so doing further strengthening the partnership between our two countries.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Celeste follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE RICHARD F. CELESTE, U.S. AMBASSADOR
TO INDIA

Mr. Chairman, thank you for arranging this hearing. I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk with you and the members of your sub-committee about the situation in Gujarat. In the wake of the recent earthquake, the United States, working in partnership with the Government of India and many others, responded quickly to provide emergency relief. Now attention is turning to recovery efforts. While the recovery process will take time, I am gratified that we are remaining engaged in helping the people and the economy of Gujarat come back to life.

My statement reports on the impact of the earthquake; the response of the Government of India, the United States and others to the suffering caused by the quake; the situation on the ground today; and plans for the future.

As you know, relations between the United States and India have improved significantly in the last two years. As the world's largest democracies, our two nations share many values and interests. I believe that we have forged an effective partnership for the new millennium. This partnership is one of mutual benefit and mutual respect. A tragic event like the earthquake in Gujarat underlines the strength of our relationship, particularly our concern for the well being of the people of our countries in times of need.

THE EARTHQUAKE.

At 8:46 AM on Friday, January 26,—Republic Day—Gujarat was rocked by a massive earthquake. This state of about 45 million people is located in North Western India. The earthquake hit as people were preparing to enjoy the three day weekend. Children, gathered together to march to commemorate India's independence, were crushed to death as the quake caused walls to crumble on top of them. Thousands of others met a similar fate.

This was India's strongest earthquake in 50 years—measuring somewhere between 7.7 and 8.1 on the Richter scale. Devastation was extensive—even reaching Ahmedabad, Gujarat's capital and largest city. The destruction was greatest, however, at the earthquake's epicenter—13 miles northeast of Bhuj—and across the towns and villages in the Kutch district.

The quake affected thousands upon thousands in nearly 8,000 villages in the 23 most seriously affected districts. The Government of India (GOI) reports that the quake killed more than 19,000 people and injured at least 146,000. Kutch District registered most of the deaths (90%) and injuries (78%). The official death toll is based on the family registration of deaths. As in the case of the Orissa cyclone, many deaths were probably unreported. Gujarat's final death toll might well be over 30,000. Precise data on the total death toll and damage from the quake is impossible to obtain. Certainly, if the quake had happened during the night, the death toll would have been much higher. As it is, tens of thousands of families have been devastated by the disaster. Thousands of children are homeless; many were orphaned. I believe that young, non-school-age children represent a significant percentage of the dead and injured.

Most observers believe that the earthquake affected at least half of the state's population, about 22 million. They have lost sons and daughters, siblings, parents, grandparents and other relatives. Communities have been deprived of teachers, doctors, friends, or jobs, livestock, equipment, savings, homes, schools, places of worship, health facilities and other community infrastructure.

The earthquake struck a catastrophic blow to infrastructure and property. The cost to repair and rebuild infrastructure is still unclear. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) estimate exceeds \$1.3 billion. The GOI's initial estimates put the costs at \$4.6 billion. A recently concluded World Bank study estimates damages at \$2.1 billion—not including the costs of reconstruction for earthquake resistant structures. Broadly speaking, about half of these costs are associated with shelter for families. As with the death toll, exact figures for damages and losses are hard to come by.

All observers agree that the greatest damage occurred in Kutch District. Of the 230,000 houses destroyed in the state, over 150,000 were in Kutch alone. Another 400,000 homes were seriously damaged in the state; with over 107,000 of these found in Kutch.

Close to 1,000 government primary schools were flattened; over 4,000 classrooms need to be reconstructed. Kutch's healthcare infrastructure—300 primary health care centers and 1,300 child nutrition centers—is virtually lost. Two major hospitals collapsed. The remaining hospitals were severely damaged. Damage to much infrastructure is so extensive that repair is unfeasible. The basic infrastructure—bridges, roads, water and power systems—needed to sustain even simple commercial and industrial activity has been severely damaged or disrupted. Most places of employment and income generation, including handicraft workshops, a leading source of jobs for women, were destroyed. In Ahmedabad, fortunately, fewer lives were lost and damage to infrastructure was less extensive.

An ongoing drought is a factor that will complicate recovery efforts in an area of the state where livelihoods are highly dependent on rainfall. Kutch and several other districts in Gujarat were already suffering from a severe drought that started in 1997. If the monsoon rains in June are late, inadequate, or fail, it will become even more difficult for the people of Kutch to recover.

THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE.

Government of India: The GOI's constitution gives the primary responsibility for disaster relief to the concerned state government(s). Still, in light of the magnitude of this disaster, the central government has played a major and useful role in helping to activate disaster relief efforts. For example, the Prime Minister set up special Cabinet level committees to oversee recovery and reconstruction efforts. He and key ministers have visited the area to mobilize the relief response. The GOI's National Crisis Management Committee met immediately following the quake and it continues to meet regularly to follow the response and to determine how to assist relief and rehabilitation operations.

The Indian military (over 15,000 service people with logistical and relief support have been deployed) has played an outstanding role in the relief effort. Military personnel and equipment have provided invaluable transportation and distribution support to the state and central governments, to donors like the USG, and to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like CARE. The US Department of Defense (DoD) reports that the Indian airforce and army cooperation with transportation, off-loading and other critical steps in the delivery of DoD relief supplies was outstanding.

The Prime Minister welcomed the strong international donor response. While the GOI did not formally request USG or other international assistance, it signaled that offers of aid would be welcome, and it worked effectively with the international donor community to maximize effectiveness and minimize duplication of contributions.

The Prime Minister encouraged the Indian business community and non-resident Indians to adopt villages. Importantly for the international community, the GOI announced that all relief goods imported for this emergency would be exempt from import duties. Several of India's state governments provided contributions (e.g., cash, food, blankets, water tankers) for the relief effort.

USG: The USG responded quickly to the disaster. I issued a Disaster Declaration on the day of the disaster. This enabled the USG to immediately contribute \$25,000 to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. Within two days, that contribution was increased to \$100,000. Members of my staff and I were in close and frequent contact with senior Government officials and NGO representatives. Based on these consultations, we prepared requests for assistance for Washington approval. Most importantly, airlifts of urgently needed supplies were mobilized, with the first airlift arriving in India on Monday, January 29. Throughout the disaster, as needs emerged, additional funds were made available from Washington through both USAID and the Department of Defense (DOD).

Concurrently, a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) from USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) was mobilized. The DART team leader, Mr. William Berger, arrived in Bhuj on Sunday, January 28. He confirmed the life-saving needs identified by the Government: ready-to-eat food, temporary shelter, clean water, and blankets.

Meanwhile, USAID approved Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) and CARE's verbal requests to reprogram over 1,800 metric tons of Title II ready-to-eat food and oil to meet the emergency feeding needs of 300,000 earthquake victims in Bhuj and surrounding areas. Subsequently, emergency assistance grants were made to CARE, CRS, World Vision, World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

The DART team leader was joined by an 11-member team of experts and a six-person DOD humanitarian assistance survey team from the Pacific Command. They assessed the situation, processed necessary program documentation and assisted authorities and NGOs to carry out emergency relief activities. With U.S. Mission support, they organized and coordinated airlifts, trucking, procurement and distribution of relief commodities including technical equipment, shelter materials, blankets, tents, sleeping bags, equipment for water/sanitation, and household kits for needy families.

As one example of our efforts to be responsive to the GOI's and Government of Gujarat's requests, OFDA/DART procured and transported 200 low-tech rotary saws and blades to assist local authorities in Bhuj and Ahmedabad to remove debris and rubble.

To date, the USG response to the disaster totals \$12,801,491. USAID's total food and material assistance to the effort to date totals \$3,226,463. Total USAID cash grant emergency assistance to CARE, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, UNDP, WHO and the Prime Minister's Fund comes to \$4,975,028.

DOD's total contributions in materials totaled \$4.6 million (not including transport costs). DOD staff were key in providing liaison with the Indian military authorities and for arranging Indian military logistics support on the ground.

NGOs and IOs: The GOI designated the Indian Red Cross as the coordinator for the distribution of relief commodities. The Indian Red Cross' ability to meet this responsibility was enhanced with the assistance of UNOCHA team that arrived in India over the weekend of the 26th. Coordination meetings in the field began in earnest shortly thereafter. Private Voluntary Organizations (PVO) partners like CARE and Catholic Relief Services were fully engaged. They also served as consignees for the relief materials to be distributed and supported the on-the-ground operations of the USAID DART and DOD teams. Local NGO coordination networks were formed and are receiving USAID support through a grant awarded to UNDP.

With USAID grant funding, Catholic Relief Services is providing temporary shelter, bedding materials, water and trauma counseling in the areas of Bhuj, Anjar, Gandhidham and Bhachau. Its program will reach 75,000 earthquake victims. CARE, with USAID cash grant support, is focused on emergency food distribution and community infrastructure in a number of severely hit areas in Kutch. World Vision is centering its efforts with USAID cash grant support on the nutrition and water needs of affected families in Anjar, Bhuj and Bachau. Under a USAID grant, UNDP is distributing food, shelter material, and essential household items, as well as providing water to homeless communities in Bhuj and surrounding areas. USAID's grant to WHO will strengthen the GOI and international efforts to obtain reliable data on the health and sanitation effects of this disaster.

The UN agencies, e.g., UNICEF, UNDP, WHO and World Food Program (WFP), have been heavily engaged in the relief efforts. UN volunteers from local communities—many that lost loved ones and personal possessions including homes in the quake—have been mobilized to work on distribution. Other major international NGOs that have been active in the relief emergency phase include Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF), the International Federation of the Red Cross, Oxfam, and Save the Children/UK. Finally, other US PVOs like the Direct Relief Foundation and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee have reported shipments and airlifts of supplies to local NGO affiliates.

Other Donors: Many other countries provided support for the relief effort. Countries located closer to India (Great Britain, France, China, Switzerland, Turkey, Germany and Japan) were able to provide search and rescue teams early enough to be of help. Over 44 foreign governments responded generously to the emergency, providing donations bilaterally or through the UN system. The European Commission Humanitarian Organization (ECHO) is reported to be one of the larger contributors—with pledges estimated at just over \$12 million for immediate relief needs. The governments of the United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Australia, Canada, and Italy have been among the larger cash contributors to the relief effort to date. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) both announced their readiness to lend the GOI support for recovery within days after the disaster struck.

The Indian Private Sector. The response from Indian citizens and the private sector has been robust. For example, CARE is partnering with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) to put up temporary shelters and permanent housing in some quake-hit areas of Kutch. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)—a national association of 10,000 corporations, many of which are affiliates of Fortune 500 companies—has been collecting pledges to support reconstruction efforts, as well as temporary shelter needs. It will partner with UNDP. Numerous telephone calls, faxes and letters continue to stream into the Embassy and USAID offices with offers of assistance from Indian corporate officials and private citizens. The challenge for the USG, for other concerned foreign governments, and for the GOI, is to find effective ways of channeling this generosity.

The Indian-American Community: The United States has a special interest in assisting the people of Kutch. Half a million US citizens trace their heritage to Gujarat and they have millions of relatives there. Many have suffered severe personal losses. More than 6,000 American citizens reside in Gujarat on any given day, as residents (2,500) or as tourists (3,500). The American and Indian media carried a number of stories highlighting the return of Indian-American to their ancestral villages in the hopes of finding relatives and helping to rebuild.

A team of Indian-American doctors in the States flew in within days to provide emergency medical support, although most medical needs were being addressed effectively by local resources. In the Chicago area alone, an Indian-American community raised between \$60,000 to \$80,000. Northern California and New York were reportedly blanketed by fund-raising drives. It is difficult to come up with any precise dollar estimate on the contributions Indian-Americans might have made to relief ef-

forts. Still, their support and donations have been significant. This will remain a critical ingredient in helping rebuild Gujarat.

THE SITUATION TODAY.

State and district level officials, donors and NGOs working in the affected area are working to assure the delivery of supplies to outlying areas that were affected. A shift from relief to reconstruction is emerging. Today, the focus is on the restoration of utilities, removal of debris, and development of viable plans for rebuilding towns and villages in Kutch.

Reports confirm that the GOI has organized a capable debris removal program of major thoroughfares and bigger buildings. This is an important first step in a long-term infrastructure replacement effort. Sufficient equipment is available on site to effect this effort.

Sincere and concerted efforts to improve on-site coordination have been made by district government authorities, international organizations, US PVOs, and local NGOs. The results are vastly improved information availability and better sharing of plans and programs among these partners. The arrival of United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) was catalytic in this regard. With the UNOCHA teams recent departure, UNDP has assumed this role and the momentum is being sustained. Special sector meetings covering issues like water, health and shelter are taking place three to four times a week in the field. In New Delhi, the major bilateral and multilateral donors are also continuing to meet weekly. UNDP and WHO have taken the lead on organizing these sessions.

Food supply and distribution issues, which surfaced during the first week after the quake, have been resolved. The U.S. Mission continues to closely monitor this situation with our Title II partners like CARE and CRS, and the World Food Program.

Re-establishing routine health services and rebuilding the Integrated Child Development Services support network (the equivalent of the U.S.' Head Start program) is just beginning to take place. The health situation is generally positive. There are no reports of any major disease or infection outbreaks. Surveillance systems, e.g., for respiratory disease, measles and other potential outbreaks, are in place with the support of the UNICEF and WHO. The WHO reports that the health staff situation is still constrained because many health personnel were either killed in the quake or left the affected areas.

Today, according to DART/DOD reports, GOI statements, and recent U.S. Mission visits to the affected areas, the water supply situation has improved in a 70-km radius of Bhuj. Water tankers make daily trips to distribute water to communities that are still cut off. Electricity has been restored to most villages. This is helping villages to pump water from bore holes. Donors are providing generators to some communities still without power to help them gain access water.

Sanitation is being seriously examined and addressed by municipalities and donors. A UNDP/NGO Water and Sanitation Coordination Committee has been pushing this issue and recently reported that the GOI has a plan for dealing with the issue in Bhuj. In the more rural areas, sanitation systems for human waste are not normally used, so restoration is not an immediate concern.

THE LONGER TERM RESPONSE.

For the State Government, the highest priority after relief will be reconstruction. While exact figures may still not be clear, the costs for rebuilding Gujarat—in human and physical terms—will be enormous. The process of rebuilding for the GOI, the state government or donors like the World Bank will have to take into account the complex social structure of Kutch, particularly on gender, religious and caste issues, to assure that resources are provided equitably and do not exacerbate social tensions.

Defining future needs depends on recognizing that even before the quake, the most seriously affected areas in the Kutch district were among some of the poorest of India. About 40% of the population are literate. Many villagers depend on subsistence farming and simple handicraft production. The earthquake's impact on communities that were already coping with serious recurrent droughts and other social and economic pressures is profound.

For example, the *health sector capacity in Kutch has to be restored*. In Kutch, where even before the quake, infant mortality was high and less than half of the children were fully immunized, routine service delivery is a priority. Reliable cold chain systems to support immunization programs have to be rebuilt. Curative service facilities also need to be reconstructed.

Water and sanitation remain pressing concerns. Water supply is adequate today. But if the monsoon fails again this year, water supply and its safety could become serious concerns.

Shelter—at the household and at the community level—is a critical need. People need help in assessing damage to their homes and to their community structures. Many—having lost everything in the devastation—will need help to rebuild these.

Day-to-day coping and survival is a major challenge. Many survivors need trauma counseling services and physical therapy. For others, the challenges are reestablishing basic living patterns and safeguarding their remaining assets. These survivors need seeds to plant in their fields, fodder for their livestock, and short-term employment that can provide them with some cash.

Restoring peoples' livelihoods is a priority. Employment schemes, credit and technical assistance to restore enterprises, small-scale manufacturing, dairy cooperatives, and handicraft producer groups will be pressing needs.

Rebuilding the State's and Kutch's commercial and public infrastructure is an obvious priority. Appropriate earthquake-proofing standards, as well as practices that meet the needs of the disabled, will be needed. For Kutch District, revitalizing town and villages will also depend on repair and building of community facilities and public infrastructure.

As earlier noted, a joint mission of the World Bank/Asian Development Bank/USAID/Dutch undertook a damage assessment mission in Gujarat from February 12 to 22. With the Government of Gujarat participating, the Mission team rapidly assessed damage as well as the economic and fiscal impact resulting from the earthquake. Areas covered were: the social sectors of housing, health, and education; the infrastructure sectors of municipal infrastructure and public buildings, rural water supply and sanitation, irrigation, power, transport, ports, and telecommunications; and the productive sectors of agriculture *and livestock, industry, and services.*

On the basis of this assessment, the team has proposed a comprehensive recovery strategy to address the immediate and medium term needs. Their preliminary estimate of direct damage resulting from the earthquake is \$2.1 billion. Their preliminary estimate of reconstruction costs, meaning replacing the damaged assets with improved earthquake and cyclone resistance, is \$2.3 billion. The World Bank and Asia Development Bank propose to lend the Government of India significant funds. Both loans should be presented to the Banks' respective Boards in the next few months.

USG FUTURE SUPPORT.

The USG has been one of the largest donors in the relief effort. The United States intends to be an active participant in the recovery program. The US Mission, with USAID in the lead, has developed a Gujarat Earthquake Recovery Initiative that would target poor communities and families affected by the earthquake. This initiative would provide a tangible demonstration of a continuing commitment to the urgent humanitarian requirement occasioned by the earthquake.

USAID has identified \$10 million for this activity. Funds will come from reprogrammed resources within the existing USAID budget and would go to responsible non-governmental and international organizations.

With a target of launching this initiative within the next 45 days to two months, the program will support "quick impact" activities to meet the most urgent needs of the survivors. Some examples of "quick impact" activities are:

- Cash for Work and other NGO programs to help repair roads, wells, water systems, homes, work places and other infrastructure needed to restart economic activities;
- Cash for Work or other programs to clear away debris and rubble and to repair public facilities such as health clinics and child nutrition centers;
- Survey support to assess damaged but still standing buildings, to determine whether they can be repaired and retrofitted or they need to be demolished and rebuilt altogether;
- Support to municipalities and local NGOs to develop community renewal plans that will help reconstruct devastated communities.

The U.S. Mission is currently seeking the support of the Government of India for this initiative.

USAID has consulted with its existing partners (e.g., under the Financial Institutions Reform and Expansion Project) and identified several options for responding positively to Government of Gujarat requests for assistance. Examples of possible support that will be provided over the coming months includes damage assessment support and reconstruction planning for Rajkot, and Wankaner; private sector re-

search and training in retrofitting and enforcement support for earthquake prone areas. Funds for these activities will come from ongoing USAID programs.

USAID is also continuing its existing programs in India, totaling approximately \$62 million, for maternal/child health, HIV/AIDS, women's empowerment, micro-finance, financial reform, and the environment.

Lastly, since 1988, USAID/OFDA has funded the Program for the Enhancement of Emergency Response (PEER), a regional training initiative that promotes the development of earthquake preparedness and response capabilities in India. This collaborative program, implemented in a partnership with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center and Miami-Dade Fire and Rescue Department, held its first training of trainers course in December. A second course, on collapsed structure search and rescue training, is planned for March.

We expect more details on how the USG might continue to support the recovery needs in Gujarat will emerge during the review of the World Bank/ADB assessment report.

FINAL COMMENTS.

I have been deeply impressed and heartened by the outpouring of concern for earthquake victims and their future. The interest of you and your colleagues in the Congress is especially welcome. Thanks to the Congress' and Administration's support, I believe we were able to provide timely, relevant assistance to the earthquake victims. I appreciate the confidence Secretary Powell and others in the Administration expressed in the US Mission in New Delhi's coordination and management of the emergency response effort. I am also grateful for the superb support we received from Washington departments and agencies, the OFDA/DART team and CINCPAC.

The USG effort was directly responsive to needs on the ground. Villages our USAID/DART and DOD teams visited, communities they met with, Indian officials, including Indian military officers they worked side by side with, and the PVOs that have been our partners—all have expressed appreciation for the emergency relief that the United States provided.

The USG's emergency relief effort for the Gujarat earthquake stands out as an excellent example of civilian/military cooperation in responding to a natural disaster. It attests to the ever improving and closer relationship the USG has with the Government and people of India. With your continued interest, we will work to find ways of leveraging that foundation to catalyze continued support to help in the difficult and costly task of rebuilding Gujarat.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. We appreciate your taking the time at a late hour in India to give us the benefit of your thinking.

We now call on Walter North, the AID Country Director.

Mr. North?

STATEMENT OF WALTER NORTH, MISSION DIRECTOR TO INDIA, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. NORTH. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for calling this hearing and allowing us to appear before you and talk about the situation in Gujarat.

I really have nothing substantial to add to the comments made by the Ambassador except to underline that I believe the response was timely, it has been effective and that the needs of the communities that we are working in, particularly portions of those communities which are most disadvantaged, that those needs are being addressed.

We are looking forward to participating with the support of the government and our NGO partners in some quick impact activities which can help these communities to recover from the disaster. When we think about the earthquake that hit Seattle yesterday, and I have just seen some pictures of the damage from CNN in Seattle, and I compare that with the damage that the congressional

delegation saw during their visit last week, I am very thankful that we in the United States have the capacity to both build strong buildings and to take better care of our citizens. I hope that we have a foundation here in India as a result of this disaster to assist our Indian colleagues to do a better job of rebuilding so that communities like Bhuj and other communities in northern India, which are disaster prone and subject to severe earthquakes, will be better able to cope with these kinds of situations in the future.

Thank you again very much for your interest and we look forward to answering your questions.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. North. And I understand we have two NGO people with you, Sean Callahan from CARE and Tom Alcedo from Catholic Relief Services. May we call on them at this time?

Ambassador CELESTE. Mr. Chairman, if I might, I know it is perhaps inappropriate for the Ambassador to correct the Chairman, but I do want to point out that Sean Callahan is with Catholic Relief Services and Tom Alcedo with CARE, so I do not want to get them in trouble.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you very much for the correction. I appreciate that.

Ambassador CELESTE. That is all right. Maybe we will let Sean go first.

Mr. GILMAN. Sean Callahan, Catholic Relief Services.

**STATEMENT OF SEAN L. CALLAHAN, SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL
DIRECTOR, CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES**

Mr. CALLAHAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee.

As Ambassador Celeste and Mr. North have said, it is really a pleasure to speak to the Committee on behalf of CRS, and we appreciate the fact that the Committee is holding a hearing at this time.

I would like to reiterate, as an American citizen working in India, the pride I have regarding the response of the United States Government. The resolution that Congress made and the congressional visit to the site were very, very important as a symbol to this great country of U.S. solidarity.

The efforts that the Embassy, USAID and OCA made, in not only strengthening the response of the Indian government but also working hand in hand with the American private relief and development agencies here. This is an example for future efforts.

On behalf of Catholic Relief Services as well, I must compliment my organization for committing \$650,000 in private funds and arranging the visit of a board member from Anchorage, Alaska. Archbishop Schwietz demonstrated CRS' solidarity for the people of the affected area.

In addition, CRS committed its Africa based emergency technical unit and staff from as far away as Bosnia. CRS continues to deal with the destruction of housing in other ways, coming out here to assist in the destruction that occurred to these people.

CRS continues to show its solidarity on the ground with over 30 of its full-time staff working on the relief initiative. In addition, our partner organizations, established largely due to the U.S. AID

PL-480 Title 2 program. The platform that our partners established is the one on which CRS, OFDA, and other NGO organizations could establish a foundation. The U.S. assistance was essential in having an important and quick and immediate emergency response.

The emergency response is one that is now coming to a close. Shelter, protection, hygiene and trauma counseling to all the communities was immediate as was probably possible at the time.

As has been mentioned by the speakers, we can all do more in these emergencies, and, as Mr. Royce had said, pre-positioning materials and some of the other issues that he raised would be helpful. Despite this, I would say, the response was effective and the coordination, given the circumstances, good.

I think we have to all be conscious of access to particular communities in these areas. There were isolated communities and there were pockets within these areas that required special attention. I think the NGO communities have reached out to those areas.

The second phase, which we are entering now, is a stabilization phase with a continuation of trauma counseling, and the organization and the mobilization of these communities to assist them in bring back some normalcy to their lives. Planning for the future and also working together as communities, where previous divisions may have existed in an effort to work together to build a stronger civil society following this earthquake can be a great motivation for the United States.

I would also like to reiterate the point raised by the Ambassador and that is that we are talking about an emergency within an emergency here. This is an area that is suffering from a long-term drought. We have been meeting with our local partners in the area and the suffering that will occur if an immediate response to the drought is not taken could have long-term impact and serious humanitarian repercussions.

There is no doubt that reconstruction and rehabilitation in this area are crucial at this time and reconstruction which promotes livelihood, which uses traditional methods of reconstruction with some added technical support and also an awareness that we are putting more pressure on farms that are particularly vulnerable at this time, the farms are going to be more and more vulnerable due to the drought and many of these families survive not only on their farm income, but on small enterprises that have now been destroyed.

We must not only ensure that there is housing security for these people but also ensure that there is food and water security.

The Indian government I think has made great attempts and is trying to coordinate a strong response to this area. Concerns that we in the NGO community have is that the Indian government cannot do it alone. The Indian government is making every effort, I think, to try to respond to this crisis and the state government as well, but assistance is required and I think in these times of great humanitarian crisis the extended hand of the United States would be very important.

I would reiterate as well, as the Ambassador said, this is an area that was in serious economic condition before, the Kutch district. The people have shown a great resiliency. They are working to try

to rebuild their lives, but more is definitely needed and there will be long-term repercussions.

I would add one last comment and that is that I think you can be proud of the response of the U.S. NGO community and that has been ensuring that relief gets to all sectors of the population. And I think the Indian government has intended that to be so, but sometimes traditional structures do impede that and conflicts arise. I will say that Catholic Relief Services and other organizations have ensured that the isolated populations are being reached and that there is no discrimination in the aid that is being provided.

We intend to be here for the long haul. We intend to assist with the reconstruction and rehabilitation and the strengthening of water catchment and support structures as mentioned by Mr. Royce. I think these are essential for the future. The 416(b) proposal, if there is assistance that can be provided in freeing that up, it will assist CRS, CARE and USDA in providing greater responses to these areas and we look forward to continued cooperation between the United States and the Indian government and the United States NGOs.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Callahan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SEAN L. CALLAHAN, SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL DIRECTOR,
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Committee on International Relations, As an American working in India, I would like to express my appreciation to the House for the resolution it passed expressing sympathy for the victims of the earthquake in Gujarat, India. This resolution, the recent visit of your House colleagues (Congressmen Ed Royce, Jim McDermott, David Bonior, and Joseph Pitts) to the earthquake affected areas, and the provision of material, financial, and human support have demonstrated the compassion of the American people and further strengthened the relationship between the United States and India. Similarly, the support and collaboration offered by the United States Mission in India (the Embassy and USAID) to the Government of India and American organizations such as Catholic Relief Services ensured that emergency assistance was available to the affected populace in a timely manner.

Since the loss of life and devastation caused by the earthquake is well known, I will focus my comments on the following points:

- 1) Catholic Relief Services' response to the earthquake.
- 2) United States Government support for reconstruction/rehabilitation.
- 3) Vulnerability Context:

I. CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES RESPONSE

Catholic Relief Services has been implementing a PL-480 Title II program in Gujarat, India, for over forty years, and its local partner network began the delivery of locally available Title II commodities to the affected populace on the same day as the January 26th earthquake. Local partners also facilitated the establishment of a CRS base camp at the perimeter of Bhuj, one of the most affected cities, within 36 hours, and CRS subsequently facilitated the establishment of the OFDA/DART base camp at the same location. Since CRS' long-term partners are highly regarded in this area, one of them became the United States Government consignee for emergency relief supplies and equipment being designated to local and international NGOs. CRS, in collaboration with CARITAS India (similar to Catholic Charities USA) and other local partners, established three principal base camps in the Kutch district (Bhuj, Bachau, and Gandidnam) to ensure that staff and volunteers were able to survey the situation of affected communities and provide the most urgently required assistance to the most vulnerable sectors of the population. In the immediate response phase of this disaster, CRS has concentrated its efforts on the following activities:

- CRS has mobilized initial cash resources to meet the immediate shelter, protection, and personal hygiene needs of over 65,000 people in 73 villages (tarps, tents, sleeping mats, blankets, buckets, jerry cans, and soap).
- Catholic Relief Services established units to provide trauma counseling for the affected families in these 73 villages.
- CRS and its local partners actively engaged communities and sought out isolated villages to ensure that the most vulnerable sectors of the population (women, children, scheduled caste and scheduled tribes, elderly, and minorities) were not excluded from assistance.

In addition to the assistance provided above, CRS, its partners, and associated volunteers demonstrated their solidarity with the affected communities by maintaining a consistent presence in the area since the earthquake.

II. USG ASSISTANCE IN THE REHABILITATION/RECONSTRUCTION

The response to the earthquake can be divided into three phases. The first phase (0–6 weeks) or immediate response which is now coming to a close involved the saving of lives; the provision of food, shelter, medical attention, basic personal protection; hygiene items; and trauma counseling. The second phase (6–12 weeks) includes the stabilization of communities, continuation of trauma counseling, community organization and mobilization, and planning for the future. The third phase is the longer-term rehabilitation/reconstruction of communities, and the strengthening of civil society that was weakened by the earthquake. This phase (3–24 months) includes the reconstruction of housing, promotion of livelihoods, and the reestablishment of normalcy (schooling for children, productive work for adults, and community level governing structures—panchayat and village councils). The United States was an active and visible actor in phase I, and it is imperative that it maintain a significant presence in phase III to fulfill its humanitarian responsibilities in the wake of a disaster of this magnitude. The United States approach should be one that espouses the values of solidarity, humility, community participation, and cultural sensitivity yet is not biased against particular castes or communities. In order to maximize United States assistance, a thoughtful approach should be utilized which includes the partial reconstruction of homes through self-construction and traditional architectural techniques. Stone-cutters and masons (prevalent in the area) should be hired to provide technical assistance to the communities. Ring beam support structures and tile roofing should be implemented to reduce the loss of life should another earthquake strike the region. The promotion of self-construction will contribute to the generation of livelihoods as small enterprises can be developed to supply construction materials, and laborers (principally family members) can receive compensation (food and/or cash) for their contributions to the program. In addition to reconstruction and the commensurate promotion of livelihoods, assistance should target the agriculture sector and, in particular, water catchment structures and the development of watersheds as this area has been subject to two years of drought, and the integrity of water catchment structures has yet to be assured. Prior to the earthquake Catholic Relief Services in collaboration with CARE, USAID/India, and USDA submitted a USDA 416(b) proposal to respond to the severe weather conditions (principally drought) in Western and Central India. This proposal, though still not approved, highlights needs even more acute now than before the earthquake. Reservoirs are currently much lower than last year, and the likelihood of population emigration will be great if the effects of the drought are not mitigated. Pressure on the vulnerable agriculture sector in this area is likely to increase as the poorer families survived partially on family participation in agriculture and partially on small enterprises. The income previously generated by small enterprises destroyed in the earthquake will now need to be replaced by agricultural production and labor associated with reconstruction. Although there are many sectors which require support including macro level infrastructure, surely the most reliable is the partnering of United States assistance with local contributions and community based organizations that coordinate their efforts with local governing structures.

III. VULNERABILITY CONTEXT

The devastation caused by the earthquake has affected India's Kutch district and all of India at a crucial period. Kutch, even in normal times, has a vulnerable population of children as 45% have experienced "stunting" due to malnutrition. It is expected that this population of children as well as those families living below the poverty line will be even more vulnerable this year due to the continuing drought. Out of concern for these populations, Catholic Relief Services, CARE, and WFP are conducting a joint nutritional assessment to determine the level of food insecurity in

the wake of the earthquake. Similarly, India is experiencing lower than expected growth rates resulting in a tight budget. Although the Government of India and many international donors have good intentions, and wish to respond to the earthquake and drought, it now appears that established needs far outstrip projected assistance levels. In addition, the Government of India and the Government of Gujarat may be forced to reallocate resources required for less visible vulnerable populations to respond to the victims of the earthquake. Therefore we believe that the Congress and Administration should appropriate additional resources to respond to this need.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, I would like to share with you my admiration for the resiliency of the people of Kutch as they are actively working to rebuild their lives despite the great loss of life and physical destruction. Women are raising new born babies amongst their broken homes, men are pulling iron from the rubble for sale, families are striving to recover lost possessions, and all are thankful for the assistance provided. Yet, Mr. Chairman, they continue to be wary. The ground continues to shake, their houses remain in rubble, and they have no guarantee for their future or that of their children. If you close your eyes for a moment and exchange places with these individuals, even just for a moment, you will know that it is right and just that the United States partner with these survivors and build a future together.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Callahan. We appreciate your testimony.

Mr. Alcedo of the CARE Agency?

STATEMENT OF TOM ALCEDO, COUNTRY DIRECTOR, CARE-INDIA

Mr. ALCEDO. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee.

I would first like to echo, on behalf of CARE, my colleagues' appreciation. I would like to thank you for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to share our perspective from the field. You have certainly demonstrated your concern for India and the people of Gujarat in a variety of timely and thoughtful ways.

Though the size and the scope of this earthquake were widely reported, it was difficult for those of us who did not experience it firsthand to understand the suffering of those who actually did. Survivors experienced terror, grief and disorientation as they frantically searched for missing family members and struggled to survive in below freezing temperatures.

As we have seen, past natural disasters have taught us that rehabilitation can unite communities so that they are better able to tackle their problems. The people of Gujarat are telling us quite frequently thank you for the immediate relief, but do not just give us handouts, help us reconstruct our communities to again work productively.

Mr. Chairman, they are also extremely ready to work together, both with international organizations like CRS and CARE, and to work in a manner in which they provide their own labor and materials like sand, aggregate and water in the massive reconstruction effort.

CARE's efforts to date have reached over 175,000 people in the most remote and devastated areas. Due to the outpouring of support from those in India and abroad, the need for emergency food was quickly satisfied. However, for hundreds of thousands of people there remains the need for temporary shelter. CARE and CRS were certainly not alone in our response.

First and foremost, the government, as you have heard from the other speakers, did a first class job. The government of India deployed army troops to Bhuj for rescue operations, logistics and

medical treatment and was able to quickly restore communications to most of the region.

The airport and customs authorities in both Delhi and Ahmedabad were also exemplary in their assistance, allowing relief flights to come in from many locations, including from Pakistan. They facilitated these arrivals and cleared these emergency materials in record time. They even went so far as to assist relief agencies such as our own to load the truck and to ensure that the dispatch of the essential items was made on a timely basis to those in need.

To date, as you have heard, there have been somewhere between 40 and 50 countries that have provided assistance. Much of CARE's timely response is made possible with grants from the USAID, OFDA and other bilateral donors, as well as an outpouring of support from thousands of concerned American citizens. Corporations such as the Bank of America, Microsoft, AIG, Digital Partners and Pepsi, to name a few, have also made very generous contributions.

As Ambassador Celeste also mentioned, CARE India has also entered into a partnership with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, which joins the skills and assets of this large business network in India with CARE's international relief and development expertise. We have established very ambitious, but important, targets to help reconstruct between 30 and 35 communities in the hardest hit area of the epicenter.

While it is evident that the physical reconstruction must be a priority, perhaps less apparent is the need to ensure that families are able to find work and to meet their basic needs.

Along with buildings, jobs and economic opportunities were also destroyed, Mr. Chairman. While they rebuild their lives, people must also eat, buy medicine and send their children to school. Reconstruction will present many employment and economic opportunities. Housing, schools, health centers, water systems, must be rebuilt using earthquake resistant technology, traditional practice and public experience to ensure that the future loss of life and economic disruption are minimized.

Until the economy bounces back, cash for work programs such as the Ambassador mentioned are important to promote self-help, avoid dependence and ensure that people can meet their basic needs.

Organizations such as CARE promote civic participation in all of our programs, especially in times of need. It is important that we continue to help the communities to work on their priorities and to take responsibility for their own development. This participation ensures accountability and equity and strengthens communities' abilities to meet their future challenges.

Emergency readiness must be addressed at the national, state and community levels. Investing in systems that reduce the risks and buffer the impacts of natural disasters is both humane and cost effective. We must in the words of the U.S. Secretary General shift from the culture of reaction to a culture of prevention.

Mr. Chairman, to sum up, CARE would like to recommend the following.

First, that additional and substantial resources are imperative to respond adequately to reconstruction and rehabilitation initiatives over the next 24 to 36 months in Gujarat.

Second, experience from previous disasters suggest that successful rehabilitation requires the full involvement of program participants in its design, planning and implementation. We should also be aware not to reallocate resources from ongoing development and rehabilitation programs in other vulnerable areas to bolster emergency relief efforts. Moving resources from such communities in the long run perpetuates their vulnerability to future risks and disasters.

Next, comprehensive disaster plans including vulnerability and risk analysis should be developed at state and regional levels. Such plans must enable the quick mobilization of various response components including search and rescue and mobile communications capacity.

Additionally, emergency response capacity can be improved through the pre-positioning of essential emergency and disaster assistance equipment and materials near disaster prone areas.

Developing local disaster mitigation and preparedness capacity at the community level through community-based organizations and through local non-government organizations is also required.

Finally, it would be useful to increase the level of U.S. discretionary funding available to U.S. missions for immediate emergency response. This could be programmed directly through cooperating sponsors or others who are on the ground and ready to mount significant response initiatives—for the people of Gujarat as they rebuild their community and their lives.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Alcedo follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TOM ALCEDO, COUNTRY DIRECTOR, CARE-INDIA

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,
 CARE would like to thank you for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to speak with you from the unique perspective of the field. We also appreciate the special interest and the concern you have shown for India and the people of Gujarat in the aftermath of the earthquake: the Congressional Resolution, the immediate and life saving emergency assistance delivered through USAID, the timely and thoughtful visit of the House delegation last week and now the chance to discuss with you the most effective U.S. response to the longer term needs of the people of Gujarat as we begin the massive tasks together with them as they rebuild their lives and communities.

CONTEXT

The earthquake that struck India's Gujarat State on January 26 left more than 17,000 people dead and hundreds of thousands homeless. The Government of India estimates that a total of 15 million Indians in 7,904 villages were affected to some degree by the most devastating disaster to hit the region in half a century.

The quake's epicenter was near the town of Bhuj in Kutch District. In this district alone, some 300,000 houses were destroyed or damaged, and 5,000 schools flattened. Health centers, water supply systems, sanitation facilities and other crucial infrastructure were devastated. In Bhuj, Rapar, Bhachau and Anjar, Kutch's four most affected blocks¹, between 70 and 100 percent of all physical structures were destroyed.

Though the size and scope of this earthquake were widely reported, it is difficult for those of us who did not experience it first-hand to understand the suffering of those who did: the sense of disorientation and terror the survivors experienced, their

¹India's smallest administrative unit, a block consists of 100 to 150 villages.

frantic search for missing family members, and their struggle to survive in below-freezing temperatures are overshadowed by the physical destruction.

A time of crisis can also be seen as a unique moment to turn adversity into opportunity. Past natural disasters have taught us that the rehabilitation processes can either build economies and communities or can undermine the self-help spirit of the people. To avoid the latter, the communities participate in the design and implementation of the rehabilitation process. This process needs to be guided by a vision that moves toward a more prepared, self-reliant and sustainable community, not one that is powerless and dependent. The people of Gujarat support their communities and are investing in this effort. They tell us, 'Don't just give us random aid. Let us get involved. Don't make beggars out of us.'

My testimony will briefly describe CARE's history and involvement with the provision of emergency relief and our interaction with other important organizations involved in this effort. It then reviews the current situation in India and the needs that inform CARE's programming for rehabilitation. The final section examines recommendations for aid.

About CARE

CARE was founded in 1945 to assist in the post-war reconstruction of Europe. Today CARE is one of the world's largest relief and development organizations, with humanitarian assistance programs in the areas of emergency relief, agriculture and natural resources, basic and girls' education, health (including reproductive health, children's health, and water, sanitation and environmental health), and small economic activity development. Since 1945, CARE has helped more than one billion needy people in 125 countries worldwide. CARE has worked in India since 1949.

Fifty-five years after CARE's founding, emergency relief programs continue to be an essential part of its work. Since those first shipments of CARE Packages[®], the organization has become an international leader in its ability to rapidly assess and respond to the human needs created by calamity. CARE provides emergency aid to people whose ability to feed and shelter themselves has been disrupted and who are at risk of death by hunger, disease and/or violence. In addition to food aid, CARE provides essential items such as clean water, temporary shelter, blankets and other basic necessities.

CARE's emergency programs also include measures to prevent disease outbreaks and mitigate environmental destruction. CARE designs its emergency response programs with a view towards moving quickly into a rehabilitative phase to help people bridge the gap between loss and resumption of livelihood. Importantly, CARE directly engages communities, governments and local organizations in all aspects of emergency response so that they can quickly get back on their feet and help themselves.

CARE has played a key role in most of the humanitarian disasters of our time, from feeding five million people a day in famine-stricken India in 1965-66, to helping the people of Central America recover from Hurricane Mitch in 1998-99 and providing vital emergency and rehabilitation assistance to hundreds of thousands of Kosovars in 1999-00. In its 1999 fiscal year, CARE managed 48 emergency response operations in 28 countries, reaching 6.6 million people.

THE FIRST 96 HOURS

CARE mobilized the morning after the earthquake to assess the damage in the hard-hit Kutch district. CARE was one of the first international agencies on the scene and among the first to begin supplying lifesaving supplies, including food, blankets, tarpaulins and water purification tablets. These items were followed by the distribution of over 10,000 family-size tents for temporary shelter. In addition CARE quickly assembled and mobilized emergency medical teams that provided treatment and trauma counseling to survivors in hard to reach places. CARE's efforts focused on Anjar, Bhachau, Rapar, and Bhuj, four of the hardest hit areas.

CARE's relief efforts stretched well beyond the first four days of this disaster and continued through the first month. In that time period, we reached over 175,000 people by focusing our efforts on remote villages where needs were the greatest. Due to the outpouring of support from those in India and abroad, the need for food was quickly satisfied. However, the need for temporary shelter still exists as hundreds of thousands of people are still living in the open or only under plastic sheeting.

THE AFTERMATH

The earthquake in Gujarat significantly aggravated the extreme difficulties that rural people, in particular, already faced as the result of a two-year drought and subsequent food insecurity. Moreover, most households lost family members and/or

friends, homes and/or important assets. While the quake's impact was felt by all socioeconomic groups, its long-term impact will be greatest on the poor and marginalized who have the fewest resources to recover from the disaster.

Prior to the earthquake, people were unaware that local house construction could not withstand even moderate seismic movements. Villagers are now painfully aware of the dangers of local construction methods, and eager to learn about earthquake resistant techniques. However, rebuilding "safer" houses will be a major challenge for resource poor farming communities who are already suffering economic hardship as a result of two years of drought.

Families have lost their savings and assets. Those who have land do not have money to pay workers to farm it. This loss of work, combined with the additional burden of having to rebuild homes with more expensive construction techniques, has the potential to perpetuate poverty and food scarcity in this region. A CARE assessment of the needs of poor families in Gujarat found that the first priority of poor families is finding work that will enable them to meet their basic needs.

To address these broader issues, livelihoods need to be strengthened. Reconstruction will be the major economic activity in the short to medium term and a source of immediate employment. Workers need on-the-job skills training in construction techniques. Technical and financial assistance is needed to support the growth of related income generating activities, such as the small-scale production of building components.

The overall strategy needs to be one that uses the rehabilitation effort as an opportunity to improve village life, including appropriate sanitation facilities, safer design of homes and neighborhoods, improved land drainage, waste disposal systems, and the regularization of land titles. These should all contribute towards helping the affected villages re-establish normalcy, improve on the pre-quake conditions, reduce vulnerabilities to future natural disasters (earthquake, cyclone, drought), and support an overall revitalization of the economy.

The Response of Donors

The government of India deployed army troops to Bhuj for rescue operations and also provided more than 20,000 injured people with treatment. Despite the extensive damage, the Government was able to quickly restore communication and essential services to most of the regions affected by the earthquake. In addition to this direct relief, the coordination and logistics support of humanitarian efforts provided by the state government and army was truly impressive.

CARE, with the timely and appropriate support of USAID/OFDA, was able to respond quickly. CARE also received grants from Bank of America, the Gates Foundation, Microsoft and Pepsi, as well as an outpouring of support from thousands of individuals who were moved by the events in India and willing to help.

Additionally, CARE has entered into a partnership with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), which brings together the considerable skills and assets of the Indian organization and its network with CARE's international relief and development expertise.

In response to the huge requirement for relief and rehabilitation assistance in the Gujarat region, the government of India together with national and international humanitarian organisations have mobilised resources, but it is still insufficient. Rehabilitation and reconstruction will be one of the largest economic activities to take place in the region. To date, more than 50 countries have provided direct assistance to the earthquake survivors.

The financial cost of physical reconstruction is estimated to be about US\$4.5 billion. The government of India (GOI) has already committed US\$1 billion. As the cost of the rehabilitation operation is beyond the present resources, the government of Gujarat is holding a series of discussions with major international donors and international financial institutions to raise supplementary funding. Foreign aid agencies including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank have already pledged US\$690. A further US\$434 million dollars had been committed by India's Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) and the National Housing Bank.

The government of Gujarat has established an Earthquake Rehabilitation Task Force under the auspices of the National Disaster Management Authority and is preparing a comprehensive rehabilitation plan. International donors, international relief agencies and local NGOs are invited to take part in short and long term efforts to reconstruct infrastructure and services. Given that the magnitude of the disaster is beyond the limited capacities of the community themselves to respond, the government of Gujarat plans some financial assistance to help the communities recover.

As immediate needs were met, CARE began shifting from relief to rehabilitation in order to foster long-term recovery.

In general, CARE's approach is to ensure that through this reconstruction project, pre-quake conditions are improved. Before the earthquake, for example, sanitation facilities were not widely available, and water supply was scarce. By emphasizing livelihood opportunities, infrastructure and community development, people will not only rebuild the bricks and mortar, but they will rebuild their lives.

Livelihood Opportunities

Reconstruction provides a unique opportunity for improving the local economy. The need for basic building supplies will provide a market for artisans and merchants for items such as terra cotta roof tiles. Moreover, because the extent of destruction is enormous compared to the available pool of skilled labor in Gujarat State, rapid training of villagers in earthquake-resistant building techniques is critical.

Another economic opportunity is the 25 percent of Kutch District's rural workforce with skills such as weaving, dyeing and embroidery. In order to re-establish these important economic activities, CARE will help local craftspeople to form some 200 artisan groups, which will help them in the management of production, distribution and sales, and the provision of start-up loans for production and marketing.

Infrastructure

The primary reason for the widespread destruction throughout Kutch District was construction practices inappropriate for an area at high risk of seismic activity. Almost fifty years had passed since the last major quake in Gujarat, and building techniques, especially in rural areas, had not kept pace with recent advances in quake-resistant building methods. CARE will work closely with the Indian government and technical experts to identify materials and methods that can be combined cost-effectively to create earthquake resistant buildings that are acceptable according to local preferences and customs.

It is important to emphasize that CARE will not build houses outright on behalf of affected households. Rather, our plan is to help families rebuild their own houses with the assistance of skilled workers. Families will learn simple construction techniques that they can replicate in the future when adding on to their homes or assisting in other village-level construction. Each house will have its own latrine. In every village, there will be some households without able-bodied adults to undertake construction labor. Houses for such families will be built first and serve as training grounds for other villagers to learn the skills they will need to rebuild their own houses.

The rehabilitation efforts need to include the reconstruction of primary health centers, health posts, and 50 *anganwadi* centers (similar to Head Start centers). Centers need to be equipped with water sources and latrines. Also, the destruction of school buildings was nearly total, and many children were killed while they were at school. Besides the physical rebuilding of schools, it is critical that children, parents and teachers be given the support and, when necessary, the counseling they need to cope with the trauma and loss.

Re-establishing water supply and water management is crucial for the physical and economic well-being of affected villages, and requires careful assessment and planning because the earthquake's force altered the salinity of groundwater in many areas. Help is needed for communities to repair open wells and tube wells as appropriate and feasible and rehabilitate traditional water harvesting structures that are designed both for irrigation and collection of drinking water. New home design will likely include rainwater catchment devices to take advantage of rainfall during the short but dramatic monsoon season.

Community Development

The infrastructure component needs to provide training in construction skills. Food-for-Work programs allow participants to earn food staples in exchange for their work. Food-and-Work will not only benefit those providing construction labor, it will also help those who contribute in other ways such as overseeing work or providing day care for workers' children.

In the earthquake's wake, affected villagers must cope with their personal losses and also with the often-confusing array of relief and rehabilitation aid being channeled into the area. As the rehabilitation phase solidifies, and the roles and responsibilities—of all groups, from the national government to the *panchayat* (the lowest level of local government), from the World Bank to the local NGO—are assigned, CARE will work closely with villages to understand the services available to them.

Working through local organizations, CARE will help participating villagers work through issues such as legal aspects of land ownership and allocation, loans and credit programs available, and regulations surrounding construction and repayment of partial costs to the government. The intent of CARE's rehabilitation work is to help people protect their own interests in a manner that will enable them to re-establish their livelihoods.

CARE's Plan

The extent of damage in Kutch District, and the depth of trauma experienced by its residents, led CARE to commit to a major rehabilitation effort that will last between two and three years.

This work will focus on 35 villages—all of which sustained damage to 70 percent or more of their infrastructure and all are located within Kutch's four most-affected blocks. It is important to note that the governments of India and of Gujarat State are deeply involved not only in rehabilitation efforts but also in coordinating the local, national and international groups that are assisting in those efforts to ensure that assistance is spread appropriately among affected populations. The government of Gujarat State has pledged to provide 50 percent of reconstruction costs.

CARE's commitment

(In collaboration with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry)

<i>Shelter</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10,000 affordable houses, resistant to earthquakes and cyclones, built through self-help initiatives
<i>Other Infrastructure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 118 community service facilities (schools, <i>anganwadi</i>² centers, health centers, <i>panchayat</i>³ offices) built through self-help initiatives
<i>Water and Sanitation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 105 water systems, to be managed by villagers post-construction • 10,000 latrines (one per house) • Domestic waste disposal systems
<i>Livelihoods</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to employment and income-generating for at least 6,000 people • Villagers trained in quake-resistant building methods • Improved market linkages; increased handicraft production
<i>Agriculture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed management systems in each village • Irrigation systems where needed
<i>Community Institutions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village committees advocate effectively for their rights, coordinate local responsibilities • Government reconstruction policies reflect needs of rural communities

² Maternal and child health/early childhood development center, part of the Government of India's Integrated Child Development Services program.

³ Elected, village-level governing body.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CARE respectfully proposes the following:

- Additional and substantial resources are imperative to respond adequately to reconstruction and rehabilitation initiatives over the next 24–36 months.
- Ensure that we bring to bear our experience from previous disaster programs. This experience, for example strongly suggests that any rehabilitation, including reconstruction and economic revitalization needs the full participation of local community based organizations with the program participants in design, planning and implementation of the program.

- Don't reallocate resources from on-going development and rehabilitation programs in other vulnerable areas to bolster emergency relief efforts. Moving resources from such communities in the long run perpetuates their vulnerability to future disaster.
- Comprehensive disaster preparedness plans, including vulnerability and risk analysis, should be required at the State and regional levels. Such plans must enable the quick mobilization of various response components including search and rescue and mobile communications capacity.
- Ensure adequate emergency response capacity through the pre-positioning of essential emergency and disaster assistance equipment and materials near disaster prone areas.
- Increase the level of U.S. discretionary emergency response funding available for immediate response. This would enable our U.S. missions to program emergency resources directly through cooperating sponsors or others who are on the ground and ready to mount significant response initiatives.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Alcedo.

We will reserve our questions until we finish with all of our witnesses.

We will now turn to our witnesses who are here with us today, Alan Eastham, Acting Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs, Department of State.

Mr. Eastham?

STATEMENT OF ALAN W. EASTHAM, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. EASTHAM. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I do not have a formal statement. I would like to associate myself with the statement and remarks of Ambassador Richard Celeste in New Delhi. We have an attitude these days at the State Department that the people on the scene know best and in this instance I will fully associate myself with that.

Also very important this morning have been the first hand impressions of Mr. Royce and Mr. Pitts, who have just visited the region. We found that to be a very useful and helpful visit by a delegation of several Members and we were glad that they could be here this morning to share their impressions with us.

I have noted the specific points that Mr. Royce made in his opening statement and I will take those back and try to get him a response on those specific points. I believe Mr. Rogers has a statement to make, sir.

Thank you.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Rogers?

STATEMENT OF LEONARD M. ROGERS, ACTING ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor for me to appear before the Subcommittee today. If I might, I would like to submit my statement for the record.

Mr. GILMAN. Without objection, your full statement will be made part of the record.

Mr. Rogers is the Acting Administrator for Humanitarian Response at USAID.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you. I would like to begin with just a few brief oral remarks.

By way of introduction, USAID responds to international disasters around the world and we have recent experience with earthquakes in El Salvador, Turkey and Colombia. However, the Gujarat earthquake was a major disaster by any standard. To illustrate, in terms of energy released, the Gujarat earthquake was nearly 30 times as powerful as the one yesterday near Seattle. The loss of life and physical destruction were horrendous.

From the beginning, we have worked on how the U.S. could best help the government of India. Based on our experience around the world, the Indians have done a good job establishing priorities and managing the overall response. The U.S. has contributed nearly \$13 million worth of disaster assistance through USAID and DOD.

The Embassy under Ambassador Celeste, the USAID Mission, our disaster assistance response team and the NGOs, particularly CARE and Catholic Relief Services, have worked tirelessly to see that our assistance reached those in need.

Nevertheless, most of the material and manpower have come from the Indians themselves and they deserve credit for making the operation as effective as it has been.

Now the relief phase is transitioning to reconstruction. It will be important to build back better. Most lives are saved in an earthquake through preparations before the earthquake happens and we know Gujarat will be subject to future earthquakes. The Indians have already shown the ability to marshal much of the financing necessary for the reconstruction effort from their own governmental resources, from the private sector and from the multi-lateral banks. We will support their efforts with the banks.

In terms of direct U.S. assistance, USAID has so far identified approximately 10 million in reprogrammed development assistance that can be used to help affected communities in Gujarat. Our Mission is working with the Indian government to see whether quick impact projects to restart economic activity and restore social services plus earthquake mitigation programs would be the best use of this aid.

As we continue to refine our assessment of India's needs, we intend to determine whether further U.S. reprogramming might be necessary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to answer questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rogers follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LEONARD M. ROGERS, ACTING ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR,
BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor to appear before the Subcommittee today. I welcome the opportunity to discuss the recent devastating earthquake in India and the U. S. Government's response.

As you know, on January 26, 2001, an earthquake measuring 7.7 on the Richter Scale hit western India. The epicenter was located a few miles northeast of the town of Bhuj in Gujarat State, but it also affected neighboring countries, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. This was the most powerful earthquake in India since 1950.

POPULATION AFFECTED AND PROPERTY DAMAGED

Official Government of India data place the current death toll at more than 19,000, with some estimates suggesting the final toll may be as high as 30,000. Estimates of the number of people injured range from almost 150,000 to over 165,000. Most of the deaths and injuries occurred in Kutch district. In total, upwards of

twenty million people have been affected, including perhaps one and a half million left homeless.

An estimated 275,000 houses were destroyed, while another roughly 665,000 were damaged. In addition, the earthquake destroyed some 17,000 classrooms, three hospitals, 25 health centers, and 14 health sub-centers. Total damage, based on government estimates and a preliminary World Bank assessment, will likely exceed two billion dollars.

THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Following the first reports of the earthquake, the U. S. Government began working with the Government of India to decide priorities and determine what we could best do to help. After the Indian Government's initial assessment, it was decided that the U. S. would concentrate on shelter and water. Search and rescue efforts were to be handled primarily by the Indians themselves, supported by countries closer to the disaster, such as Russia. Medical assistance would come from the Indian Government and from other donors.

On the very day the earthquake occurred, USAID activated a Washington-based operations center, open round the clock, to support relief work in the field, to serve as a central clearinghouse for information and to facilitate the coordination of all U. S. Government activities in support of the disaster response. USAID's Office of U. S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in the Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR) began deploying a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to India on January 26.

To date, USAID/OFDA has responded with a total of \$7.4 million in emergency relief assistance. Grants have been approved for water and sanitation, shelter, emergency food distribution, community infrastructure and nutrition interventions to five implementing partners, including: Catholic Relief Services, CARE, World Vision Relief and Development, World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Development Program (UNDP). USAID-funded airlifts of relief commodities began arriving in India on January 30 and included blankets, sleeping bags, and equipment for water and sanitation.

The Department of Defense also contributed relief supplies, including tents and heavy equipment. These supplies were airlifted to Ahmedabad on four flights from Guam. The total value of the DOD contribution was \$4.6 million.

USAID's Office of Food for Peace has provided approximately \$800,000 in emergency P.L. 480 Title II food aid through Catholic Relief Services and CARE. Both partners were already implementing longer-term food assistance programs at the time of the earthquake, which meant that they were immediately able to divert food stocks in-country to the disaster area.

As of February 14, USAID's DART reported that the repair of power, telephone, and water supply systems and the removal of debris from the streets were well under way, and people were being housed in temporary shelters. Although the incidence of orthopedic injuries is extremely high, there have been no major outbreaks of infectious disease resulting from the disruption in water supplies and displacement of large numbers of people. Sanitation remains a primary concern, however, particularly in urban areas and densely populated relief camps.

The U. S. Government's emergency assistance to India in the aftermath of the earthquake totals *\$12.8 million*.

OTHER DONORS AND PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS

The enormous outpouring of assistance from private citizens and local businesses, as well as the international community, contributed significantly to a rapid relief effort and the beginning of a return to "normal" living conditions by many of the people affected by this tragedy. Many countries have made in-kind or cash donations either bilaterally or through the United Nations system. The World Food Program has provided 300 metric tons of high-protein biscuits for the most vulnerable population, launched an emergency food distribution program for 300,000 persons, and established a joint logistics cell to coordinate relief logistics.

INDIAN LEADERSHIP

From the beginning, the Government of India has provided strong leadership in response to this major disaster. They deployed their military as an integral part of the relief effort and, through both national and state governments, have provided most of the material support. Following an initial period of needs assessment, they have done a sound job of prioritizing relief needs and coordinating the overall response.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL U. S. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

USAID and the DOD carried out a joint survey assessment of ongoing support requirements. Continuing health concerns include rehabilitative and reconstruction supplies and specialists, trauma counseling, restoration of health facilities—especially primary health care centers—and the identification of local health professionals who can provide assistance once international medical personnel and mobile health clinics depart the affected areas. Shelter remains a concern.

RECONSTRUCTION

As the relief phase of this disaster transitions into reconstruction, it will be important for the Government of India to focus on “building back better.” It is a difficult fact to accept, but lives are saved in earthquakes through measures taken before the earthquakes happen. Proper building codes are essential, sound construction practices need to be adhered to, and people living in areas prone to earthquakes need to prepare. Since Gujarat is close to the edge of a tectonic plate, it will be subject to earthquakes in the future. So, measures taken during reconstruction will save lives and mitigate damage in the next earthquake.

The World Bank has provided a preliminary estimate of total reconstruction costs of \$2.3 billion. India is a country with substantial resources of its own to contribute to reconstruction. The private sector is vigorous and is supporting the effort, as is the non-resident Indian community. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank can be expected to make major contributions, and the United States will support them in doing so.

In terms of direct U. S. assistance for reconstruction, USAID has so far identified approximately \$10 million in reprogrammed development assistance that can be used to help affected communities in Gujarat. I understand the U. S. Mission is currently seeking GOI support for this effort. These resources will be used to start quick-impact activities that put communities back to work repairing physical infrastructure necessary to restart economic activity and restore social services. The U. S. PVO, Catholic Relief Services, will continue feeding earthquake victims in Gujarat with a portion of the more than 53,000 metric tons of food aid (valued at twenty million dollars) that the organization is providing India this fiscal year under USAID's P.L. 480 Title II program. We will also work with the Government of India to determine whether assistance on disaster mitigation might be desirable to help prepare for future earthquakes. As we continue to refine our assessment of India's needs, we intend to determine whether further U. S. reprogramming might be necessary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Eastham.

We will now proceed with questions.

To summarize, it appears the Indian government has done good work in a number of areas, the airport and port were reopened in short order. Also, the government was able to put the damaged railway track back in use within 36 hours. This allowed adequate amounts of food and other supplies to be brought in quickly. We are pleased that efforts to maintain health and sanitary conditions in the affected areas also have been upon the whole largely successful. However, more can and should be done, we all recognize that, to help the victims and their families and effective coordination of the relief effort should be paramount as well as oversight to make certain that the dollars that are being spent are going to the right place.

As for the longer term infrastructure needs are going to be enormous. India has already approached the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank for a loan of \$1.5 billion for reconstruction and our nation should do all it can to ensure that the World Bank assistance is provided quickly.

I want to commend the bipartisan delegation of Members of the House that visited Gujarat and the wonderful generosity of the In-

dian-American community for its assistance in this tragedy as exemplified by Dr. Gupta and his son who helped organize a rally yesterday on the steps of the Capitol.

Mr. Eastham, would you please outline for us the State Department's proposed blueprint to monitor the ongoing reconstruction effort in India and any contingency plans in case the international donor effort is not adequate?

And before you do that, I would just like to summarize our dollars in this effort. I understand that our total effort at this point is nearly \$15 million through the various agencies and that CARE is raising another \$30 million through private sources. It is sound policy that of the U.S. government assistance \$1.9 million has been provided through CARE and \$1 million is being provided through CRS.

Let me also note that there is an additional sum of \$10 million that is going to be allocated for the India Development Assistance Fund to support the reconstruction effort.

Mr. Ambassador, is that correct?

Ambassador CELESTE. Yes, that is correct. This will be reprogrammed money that will allow us to begin to focus on reconstruction.

Mr. GILMAN. So we have some sizeable efforts that are already underway and we want to make certain that we are going to fulfill the needs of this reconstruction period. And I think it is essential, too, that we emphasize how important it is to provide oversight.

So, Mr. Eastham, would you outline the State Department's proposed blueprint for us?

And you are going to have to forgive me, I am going to turn the chair over to Mr. Chabot, the gentleman from Ohio, the Vice Chairman of our Committee, since I have to testify over at the Senate for a few minutes and I will return as quickly as possible.

Let me remind our colleagues that the Full Committee goes into session here in this room at 11:00, so please be brief in your questioning and I will ask our witnesses to please be brief in their response so that everyone will have an opportunity to be heard.

Mr. Chabot.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much.

Before we listen to the response to the Chairman's question, I would like to personally—being a resident of Cincinnati, Ohio and representing Cincinnati in the House, I would like to thank Ambassador Celeste for his many years of public service as our Governor in Ohio for 8 years. We certainly do appreciate everything he did for our state and everything now he is doing for our nation and the people of India where he is now.

Thank you very much, Ambassador, although I still like to call you Governor.

Ambassador CELESTE. Thank you very much, Congressman. I am glad that you have forgiven me the fact that I root for the Browns when they play the Bengals.

Mr. CHABOT. To be honest, the Bengals have not been much for a number of years.

Ambassador CELESTE. Nor have the Browns.

Mr. CHABOT. If you all would be kind enough to respond to the Chairman's question, we would appreciate it very much.

Mr. EASTHAM. Mr. Chairman, the question related to the plan for monitoring the distribution and implementation of aid programs. If I might suggest that our colleagues in the field who are charged with this responsibility might comment on that question.

Ambassador CELESTE. Certainly. Let me start and then I will see if Walter North or our friends from CARE and Catholic Relief would like to add something.

We have regular meetings among all of the donor organizations here in Delhi and there are regular meetings on the ground in Gujarat. One of the reasons for focusing our effort largely through established relationships with non-government organizations, not only our partner organizations like CARE and Catholic Relief, but non-government organizations that are indigenous to Gujarat, that are on the ground there and active on a regular basis, is that we believe that affords us the most reliable way for assuring that the funds we commit reach those who they are intended to reach.

This has been important in the early stages, during the immediate relief phase, when I think as both Sean Callahan and Tom Alcedo indicated, their efforts helped to ensure that emergency assistance got out to the most distant and the most vulnerable of people who were affected by this devastation. And we continue to have that concern.

Our whole strategy is to focus our limited resources, and they are limited, on efforts that will be aimed at helping communities that are the most seriously affected and the most vulnerable: women and children who have been impacted by this, members of the lowest castes, members of very distant or remote villages who might otherwise not be in the public focus.

So there are regular meetings. Our people from USAID participate in them. And there are meetings on the ground involving very effective coordination among NGOs who we believe have a track record for responsible management of their resources.

I hope that is responsive, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHABOT. Yes, it is, and we thank you very much for that response.

I would ask unanimous consent to have a statement by Mr. Ackerman of New York put in the record and without objection we will do that.

[The information referred to follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GARY L. ACKERMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Mr. Chairman, while I am pleased that the first hearing of our new subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia focuses on India, I am saddened that the focus comes at such a horrific price.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, on the morning of January 26, a devastating earthquake measuring 7.9 on the Richter scale ripped through Gujarat State in northwestern India, leaving in its wake destruction on a staggering scale. The full extent of the damage is as yet unknown, but the numbers of dead are in the tens of thousands, the number of injured in the hundreds of thousands and the number of displaced is over half a million. The estimate of property damage now tops \$4 Billion. But mere numbers cannot capture the extent of the devastation, nor the horror at the loss of life and loved ones.

As I have previously, I want to express my personal condolences to all of those in India for the tragic losses they have suffered. I also want to express my condolences to those Indian-Americans whose family or friends have been affected by the earthquake. I know that the Indian-American community has mobilized since the

earthquake to provide donations to those organizations that are assisting relief operations on the ground in India. Yesterday's rally on the Capitol steps is further proof that the Indian-American community is continuing its vigorous efforts to ensure that the United States is an active participant in the reconstruction of Gujarat. The community should be commended for its efforts.

The U.S. Agency for International Development has responded with almost \$13 million in emergency assistance joining 44 other nations as the international community comes together to assist in the search and rescue effort. I am sure that in this hour of India's deepest need, the United States and the international community will continue to do all they can to assist India in the rescue and reconstruction efforts.

Mr. Chairman, I want to emphasize that I believe that the United States has a humanitarian responsibility to provide reconstruction assistance to India. Over the past two years, the bilateral relationship between the United States and India has improved dramatically. Now is the time to demonstrate to the people of India that our new relationship has substance as well as show. I hope that this morning's hearing will convince the Administration to send a request for supplemental appropriations to Congress soon. In addition, I believe that, with the request of the Government of India for reconstruction loans from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, it is time for the United States to lift the remaining sanctions on India and in particular to lift those that prohibit U.S. support of lending to India from international financial institutions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to hearing from today's witnesses.

Mr. GILMAN. We will now turn for questioning from other Members of the Committee and we do this by the time that the Members arrived here today and we will move at this point, I believe, to the gentleman from California, Mr. Royce, next. Is that correct?

Mr. ROYCE. I will let Ms. Davis go first.

Mr. CHABOT. Okay. To Ms. Davis of Virginia.

Ms. Davis.

Ms. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I do have one question. I guess the one thing that concerns me the most is that the buildings were not built according the plans that had been approved.

My concern is when the money is there for relief and the new buildings are built, is there going to be some effort made to ensure that they are built in the quality and the way that they should be so that we do not have this type of mass disaster again?

And, if they had been built the way the plans were set, would it have alleviated some of the mass disaster?

I do not know who that question would go to.

Ambassador CELESTE. Let me take a start at this and then, again, I would welcome my colleagues.

This is Ambassador Celeste, Congresswoman Davis.

There are two situations in terms of the collapse of structures. In the epicenter, it is doubtful that anything other than the most sophisticated construction to withstand earthquakes would have withstood this earthquake. If you have looked at the pictures which Congressman Royce passed around, it is our conviction that even the buildings that are still standing should be demolished because they have suffered sufficient damage that they need to be replaced and not cosmetically re-built.

There were problems, however, and I think this is the point that you are alluding to, particularly in the urban area in Ahmedabad, where multi-story structures were built without attention to the building requirements. One classic case that has been in the newspapers here recently was where a tenant on the top floor of an

apartment building added a swimming pool on the roof, totally contrary to any of the structural underpinnings in that building.

I think that there is going to be very close attention by the government of India to these kinds of problems, but, frankly, most of our assistance is going to be focused on people who do not live in multi-story buildings. It is going to be focused on folks who live in one and two and three-story houses that accommodate a family or an extended family. And there we believe that it will be important to introduce sufficient technology to ensure that there is certainly an earthquake-proof room in the house some place where a family can seek shelter from the earthquakes that this area is prone to.

Ms. DAVIS. Thank you.

Mr. CALLAHAN. If I might just add, Congresswoman, this is Sean Callahan from Catholic Relief Services, as the Ambassador said, some of the multi-story buildings may have been damaged due to code violations, the damage may have been much worse, but in looking at the most vulnerable sectors of the population, as he had mentioned, we are looking at more the construction of one room and using some of the traditional materials in the area and traditional practices and then support them with some newer techniques of support.

Many of the people the villages who died, it was because they had changed from a traditional structure of a tile roof to a slab roof which when the walls were weakened they were crushed by it. Their walls did not have proper support, some ring support around the walls, and so the walls collapsed on people.

These are relatively inexpensive techniques that we can employ while allowing people to participate in self-construction.

We found from our partners that people in the area are not looking for handouts, they would like to work. The organizations working here have established partners in the area who have integrity of implementing U.S. Government programs before and I think that if we address the lower status of the population here, the poorest of the poor, they will help reconstruct their own houses and I think we can use techniques that will allow them to build them in a safer way.

Ms. DAVIS. Thank you, sir.

Mr. GILMAN. We thank the gentlelady very much for her questions. We will now turn to the gentleman from California, Mr. Sherman.

Mr. SHERMAN. I just want to thank the Ambassador and others for joining us. I want to thank the Chair and Acting Chair of the Committee for holding these important hearings. I look forward to learning not only what can be done to better assist India, but also how our AID programs can provide assistance around the world to other villages, third world cities and our own cities, as to better construction techniques and other techniques to avoid the harm of an earthquake.

Thank you.

Mr. GILMAN. Okay. Thank you very much and we will now turn to Mr. Cantor of Virginia.

Mr. Cantor?

Mr. CANTOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ambassador, thank you so much for allowing us this opportunity.

If I could just shift to the outlook going forward and really turn to the political situation and the economic effects of the earthquake and the relief effort and if you could just comment briefly on any potential threats to political stability and certainly on the economic front, how do we turn things around and make sure there is no long-term effect on tourism and other economic trade?

Ambassador CELESTE. My sense, Congressman Cantor, is that the political issue which will be debated over the course of the next few months will be the speed with which the state government responded to the tragedy in the first few days. They have now mobilized very effective and, frankly, I think that what one is seeing is the maturity of Indian democracy, really, to go forward and carry on. There will be ongoing debates about allocation of resources in the budget speech which the Indian finance minister presented to parliament yesterday. He announced a 2 percent surcharge on the taxes specifically to cover the costs of Gujarat relief. And his budget speech was very well received.

He balanced this new surcharge by eliminating several others that had been on the books from previous problems or requirements that had been imposed on Indian taxpayers. So I would say that by and large though the impact in the area where the quake struck was enormous, when you look at it in the context of a country of one billion people and an economy the size of India's, the ripple effect is much more manageable, frankly. So I would not predict fundamental problems in either the political arena or the economic arena, at a national level. There may be some local impact, as I said.

Interestingly, there is a kind of humanitarian tourism that has occurred. Because of the tremendous strength of the Gujarati community in diaspora, in the United States, in the United Kingdom and in other parts of the world, we have seen large numbers of people who have actually come back to look at how they can help first-hand and I do not know that it is right to refer to it as a form of tourism, but the fact of the matter is there are people who want to contribute from around the world and certainly many of them in the United States and this phenomenon is striking a very responsive chord here in India. People respect it and appreciate it enormously.

Mr. CANTOR. Thank you very much.

Mr. GILMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. We appreciate the questions and we will now turn to the gentleman from California, one of our chairmen, Mr. Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.

I wanted to say first on behalf of Congressman Jim McDermott, I know that he wanted to be here. Jim McDermott is from Seattle and the Seattle quake was 6.8, so he is back home. He went home last night and could not be here today.

I want to thank Ambassador Celeste for the many meetings that you attended with us in Gujarat. I had one question about how receptive Indian authorities would be to recommendations on building codes. I used to be in the cement business and later in the ready mix concrete business.

When we went into the Kutch region, into Bhuj, some of the building materials there, you would pick up what was supposed to be cement and it had the lowest ratio, this concrete had the lowest ratio of cement to sand that I have ever seen. You could actually hold it in your hand and in one hand, like a dirt clod, you could crumple it up. And I wonder how the Indian authorities will respond to our recommendations on that.

And I also was going to ask you, you have put forward various proposals in various meetings. Ambassador, what is the single most important thing in your estimation that the United States could do to help in the reconstruction effort? What is the overriding single most important thing we should do?

Ambassador CELESTE. Let me take the second question first and I will give you my response, but then I invite the others here in New Delhi to comment on it.

I believe it is to provide resources targeted to the most vulnerable communities in Kutch villages for work which they will do to rebuild homes, health centers, school classrooms. It is giving people a livelihood and it may be replacing looms for people who are doing hand loom weaving. As you saw, these are proud people. These are tough people. They live in a tough place. And they want to get back to taking care of their own. So I would say it is targeted assistance aimed at those who are most vulnerable. And I think we can identify the villages, we can identify the people in those villages, and we have organizations like CARE and Catholic Relief and others on the ground, Abhiyan, the umbrella organization that you had a chance to interact with and some of the participants who represent these villages.

On the issue of building standards and whether we can be helpful, it is interesting. We have already had several professors of engineering from U.S. institutions invited to the university in Ahmedabad, the engineering faculty there that wants to look at what went wrong in terms of construction and what should be changed to try and ensure that it does not go wrong again.

Part of it is making sure that the requirements are sufficient, the other part of it, as you well know, is enforcement, is having a mechanism by which the requirements are really monitored and followed. And that is a matter of the will of local government, here as it is anywhere in the United States, and I think that this lesson is a very harsh lesson and my hunch is that people will be very attentive in Bhuj and Anjar, Bhachau, and Ahmedabad, the communities that were affected.

Maybe others would like to answer the question about what would be the one thing we can do in a way that is different from mine.

Mr. NORTH. If I could just relate an anecdote that I heard while we were preparing for your visit, Congressman. I was talking with a major in the Indian military whose unit had been deployed to Bhuj on the night of the earthquake. They arrived at about 1 in the morning, about 15 hours after the actual quake, and when they arrived in the community of Bhachau, they arrived to find a scene of fires all over the city as people were cremating their loved ones. They immediately started to work to try to rescue people from the rubble. They were unable to get any community help in doing so

because the people living in that community were so traumatized and stunned by the losses that they were going through that they were unable to give any help.

A few days later when I visited the area, you could already see that the people in the community had started to literally use their hands to dig out the rubble, try to get back into their homes and try to get back into their businesses.

I would strongly support the Ambassador's point that the best thing that we can do is to do things that have a quick impact in affected communities, particularly in the most marginalized population. This will get the life blood of those communities going again so that they can do what they want to do, which is to help themselves to get back on their feet, to reconstruct their houses, to reconstruct the social infrastructure, the schools and medical facilities, so that their families can enjoy a better quality of life.

Thank you.

Mr. ALCEDO. Mr. Chairman, certainly from some of the visits that we have made out to the most affected areas, one of the most obvious things that seems to be happening right now is there has been a rush of many ideas of different designs and solutions. I think certainly as Walter points out, these people are most interested in getting back into normal routines.

Most people are certainly in agreement at this point that what is important is to try and use both traditional practices of construction together with improved engineering techniques that add some multi-hazard dimension, both for earthquakes and cyclones, since this area is also an area that is prone to getting hit by cyclones every few years.

It does appear that if people have temporary shelter in the form of tents that they are willing to wait and see what their options are, to both internalize and try to better understand not only what has happened to them but also to choose an option with others that are making a number of offers to them that ensure that the building does not collapse again.

Interestingly enough, in CARE's own interaction with the corporate network of FICI, we have been told by a number of experts that fully 70 to 80 percent of all of the construction in India does not in fact come under any sanctioned codes and regulations. And that includes Delhi, which is also in a zone 5 seismic area.

I think that also as was mentioned that there does seem to be enough attention on this area that what most people would like to see done is to go in and do a minimal core house that offers protection to a family. This incorporates both the traditional and the improved design so that people can both understand the construction techniques to get their family protected and to continue to expand on that in the future, whether horizontally or vertically.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Tom.

I just wanted to ask one last question of Walter.

Walter, you were on the ground there immediately after the quake. Do you think a FEMA type blueprint with a strong component of communication and coordination to it, if we are able to popularize that and get that prescription or blueprint out around the world, that that would save a lot of lives in this type of situation?

I know that the response after the first 72 hours was organized and effective, but as you explained, it is in the first hours after the quake when everyone is in a state of shock, if people had on hand a blueprint that explained exactly how to organize, how to coordinate, how to communicate, how much of a difference would that have made?

Mr. NORTH. Congressman, that is a very difficult question to answer. I think you understand, having seen the extent of the damage at a place like Bhuj, that the devastation was immense and total. All sort of forms of communication were cut off and it was very difficult to mobilize, in part because the government was not able to communicate as effectively and, of course, the people who had the responsibility on the ground for responding to the crisis were oftentimes people who were having to deal with crisis within their own family. So I do not know even if they had had systems immediately it would have the way they should.

Mr. ROYCE. And in many cases, they may have died themselves. That is true. Yes.

Mr. NORTH. That is correct. But certainly as a result of this crisis, within India there has been a very vigorous discussion in public about what should be done and how they can better organize to deal with these kinds of crises in the future. The FEMA experience, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, the kind of expertise that we have developed in dealing with crises like fire fighting in the United States, for example, have been widely discussed. I think there is a lot of interest in exploring options and picking something that can work in this vast country where, as you know, you are dealing with a billion people and a Federal system so much of the responsibility is at the state level.

Ambassador CELESTE. Congressman, if you would permit me just to add one thought.

As a former governor who has been the beneficiary of FEMA when we had disasters strike in the state of Ohio, I think a FEMA type organization would be a very beneficial step for India and I sense that there is a keen interest in developing that capability at the top level and center. I know that the prime minister expressed that interest to you and your colleagues when you were here.

There is a companion element of this. That is, the first 72 hours, the issue with search and rescue. The distance between the United States and India meant that we virtually could not be an effective contributor in that effort. There were teams from Europe, a team from Japan and others who did help, some help from Israel was very helpful as well, but I think what we might do in addition to help them think through how they might structure a FEMA type organization would be to see whether it is possible to establish and train and promote an organization that has the capabilities of, say, the Miami-Dade fire and rescue folks or something like that who would be available for deployment anywhere in India, indeed, anywhere in the region, should a disaster like this strike because you really need that kind of a team within a 24-hour delivery capability.

And we may be able to partner on that. Certainly we learned in our military-to-military contact that the army engineering units and others have a lot of skills that could be very effective in this

kind of setting and the challenge would be how to shape it in a way that the Indians could support it and be comfortable with.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you again, Ambassador Celeste.

Mr. NORTH. If you will forgive me, I will just add that we had started to do some of that kind of training before the earthquake through a program that OFDA has on disaster mitigation, but it was just getting started. This underlines, I think, the importance of expanding and building on that kind of an approach.

Mr. ROYCE. Walter, Tom, Sean, thank you again very much.

Thank you, Ambassador.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much, Mr. Royce.

I just have a couple of questions. First of all, could you address the issue of other countries and their involvement, how significant were their contributions relative to aiding the people of India in this terrible tragedy? How does that compare with the United States? Were efforts coordinated well? Is there any area for improvement in that particular area?

Ambassador CELESTE. My understanding, Congressman, is that something on the order of \$90 million was generated overall from other countries on behalf of Gujarat relief and reconstruction.

The coordination has happened through these informal but regular donor meetings. Some countries do not have people on the ground with the same experience or skills as we enjoy both on the public side with our people at USAID and the NGO community.

There are some donor countries, I might say, who do a magnificent job. The Netherlands, which has been active in Gujarat, it had chosen Gujarat as a partner state and had been active there before the earthquake, has been a real leader in this and they plan to substantially increase their resources over the next 3 years to focus on reconstruction and primary education, rural water supply and health programs, just to give you one example.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much.

In addition, could you comment on the involvement of the military of India, and how successful they were in dealing with this tragedy? Is there anything that India should learn from that effort?

Ambassador CELESTE. In many respects, the military turned out to be the first responders for India. It happened that the Indian air force bore the brunt of this quake. They have a base at Bhuj, they had 140 or 150 officers or family members who were killed in the earthquake and so they suffered right alongside the ordinary citizens of those communities. And still they were working within hours to make sure that the airport was open and could begin to receive assistance.

The Indian army moved in engineering units. We worked very closely with them. We had a team, a PSAT team from the Pacific Command, who arrived here beginning about 72 hours or maybe 4 days after the event. They included an engineer and a health planner, a logistics expert and a communications expert. But we had people from our mission, we had one of our Army captains who is part of our defense attache office on the ground at the Bhuj airport within 48 hours. We had I think the only functioning satellite phones for probably the first 2 days working alongside the Indian military.

As soon as we landed equipment for water purification, for example, it was the Indian army engineers who would move that equipment out, make sure it was set up properly, make sure that there was an NGO able to operate it and then move on to the next challenge.

When we brought in our very large tents, we called the super tents, our instruction manual says these tents take six people and 5 hours to erect. We had a team give a lesson to the Indian army engineering folks who were there and we discovered that half a day later they were erecting these tents in an hour and a half. So our people came away very impressed by the skills and determination and the professionalism of the Indian military in this effort. Both the air force and the army were extremely involved.

At the same time, India is a country that is very, very focused on civilian responsibility and as soon as they felt things had stabilized the army engineers began to turn things over to civilians and many of the activities that involved the Indian military are now being conducted by the state public servants and local authorities and others.

But I would say they played a critically important role and their professionalism and their integrity and their ability to work cooperatively with our folks was magnificent. We brought supplies in to Delhi, we landed a big 747 full of supplies, and immediately the Indian air force was helping us to move portions of that onto their planes to fly on down to Bhuj. So the ability to move firsthand the equipment and the relief supplies that we received out to those who were affected was in many respects a direct result of the support and the logistical assistance that we received from the Indian military.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador.

I would like to direct this question to the officials here in Washington.

Have we become any better in responding to earthquake relief in general? Are there lessons that we can learn from Gujarat and other recent earthquakes to improve our response in the future, whether it be in India or California or the state of Washington or wherever it might occur?

Mr. ROGERS. Again, I would say that the lesson to be learned here is a lesson we know well. It is repeated here in this instance and that is earthquake preparation is the most important thing, both in terms of building practice and in terms of preparing the people to deal with an earthquake because most lives are saved in an earthquake before the earthquake happens. Those that are saved in search and rescue are saved in the first few hours of the disaster, normally by the people in the community themselves.

I think one of the lessons that has come out of this and one of the things that we are interested in at AID, is the idea of the case of India as a sort of FEMA model. The Ambassador's suggestion that we might work with India to do training for a local search and rescue operation comparable to the Fairfax or Miami-Dade units that we deploy around the world.

I think there are lessons that we continue to learn, but, again, the main thing I think we need to be mindful of is that we need to prepare for earthquakes. Once they happen, particularly if they

are of the scale of the one that we had in Gujarat, that you are going to have a lot of devastation, you are going to have a loss of life. These are just massive events, they release tremendous amounts of energy. So we do what we can, we learn what we can, and I think we have learned from this, but preparation is the real key.

Mr. EASTHAM. No, sir. This is not my area of expertise.

Mr. CHABOT. Okay. Thank you.

Do any of the other members of the panel on either side have anything to add?

[No response.]

Mr. CHABOT. Okay. Well, then, I think that is all the questions we have and without objection statements from Mr. Burton, from other Members of the Committee, and from the U.S. India Earthquake Relief Fund will be received for the record if submitted to the Committee within the time permitted by the rules.

We thank all of those participating in this conference and if there is nothing further, we are adjourned.

Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 10:35 a.m. the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DAN BURTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Mr. Speaker, as we begin this hearing, I would briefly like to commend the country of Pakistan for the relief, which it sent to India's Earthquake victims. President Bush, in a letter released on February 21, "applauded Pakistan's gesture in sending relief supplies for the victims" of the earthquake disaster in Gujarat and also "expressed pleasure" at the telephone conversation which took place between Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. In his letter, President Bush also made note of the "long history of cooperation and goodwill between Pakistan and the United States." General Musharraf was one of the first world leaders to extend sympathies and condolences to the Indian Prime Minister over the loss of life and property as a result of the earthquake in Gujarat. The Government of Pakistan also immediately sent relief goods for the victims of the earthquake disaster. The Pakistan High Commissioner in New Delhi played a key role in coordinating the arrangement with the Indian government, and shortly after, Pakistan sent 3 planeloads of relief supplies for the earthquake victims. On February 2, General Musharraf took the initiative to telephone Prime Minister Vajpayee. This was the first direct contact between the two leaders since they assumed their respective offices. The Indian Prime Minister expressed appreciation for the relief goods provided by Pakistan. The two leaders agreed to remain in touch with each other. On February 2, in New Delhi, Prime Minister Vajpayee said, "Pakistan is helping us and that is a matter of happiness."

Mr. Speaker, I think you will agree that Pakistan should be commended for its efforts to help India. I think that we all hope that the goodwill and cooperation that was demonstrated between the two countries on this tragic occasion can continue to other areas of the Pakistan-India relationship.

ROBERT MENENDEZ
13TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY
VICE CHAIR OF THE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

All Press Releases Can Be Found at [Http://Menendez.House.Gov](http://Menendez.House.Gov) under "Bob Speaks Out."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 28, 2001

Contact: Andrew Kauders (202) 225-0591

**MENENDEZ CALLS FOR INCREASED U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE
FOR INDIA EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS**

WASHINGTON, DC – Rep. Bob Menendez (D-NJ), a co-founder of the Caucus on India and Indian-Americans, today addressed a rally on the East steps of the U.S. Capitol to press for increased U.S. government assistance for victims of last month's earthquake in Gujarat, India. His statement follows:

"Today's rally is important to the future of India, its people, and its economy. It also represents the commitment of the Indian-American community to this cause. You are the representatives of the entire community and having you here in Washington is a visible demonstration to Members of Congress that Indian-Americans across this nation want to assist in the relief and rehabilitation of Gujarat.

"In the midst of this tragedy we've seen Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, and other organizations come together to provide food, medical aid, and general assistance to those affected by the earthquake. This displays what we've always known about India: that it is a pluralistic and tolerant society, which holds together even when the harshest of calamities strikes.

"The lives lost will never be replaced, but we should do everything possible to rebuild Gujarat and assist in the ongoing relief efforts. Our shared democratic values, and commitment to the rule of law and basic freedoms demonstrate why it's in America's interest to assist India, a growing trading partner, in its full recovery. While the Agency for International Development has already provided a few million dollars in emergency humanitarian and disaster assistance, I hope President Bush will seek to do much more. Assisting India is clearly in America's national interest as we join together to fight against terrorism, protect the environment, and expand commerce and trade.

"As a world leader, the U.S. and President Bush must be willing to play a leading role in earthquake recovery efforts; with the help of such efforts, India will remain a strong and stable democratic nation in a rough neighborhood of the world. America needs India to be strong economically so it can continue to be India's largest trading partner and largest investor.

(more)

"This earthquake was a devastating reminder of the power of Mother Nature. No earthquake ever arrives at a good time. This one came as India was in the midst of robust economic growth fueled by economic reforms -- on a steady path to a true free market system.

"It comes at a time when a single catastrophe could cause the Indian economy to collapse, especially when it occurs in an industrially productive and dynamic state like Gujarat, which manufactured and produced goods for the entire country. We should help Gujarat rebuild as quickly as possible so it can once again be a leader in India's new economy.

"That's why I am going to introduce a bill in the House International Relations Committee to provide needed relief and assistance to India. My bill also will provide developmental assistance, because poverty reduction serves to mitigate the damage and destruction a disaster brings. The bill will include funds for disaster mitigation and preparedness, so we can help the Indian government prepare for future emergencies and rescue efforts.

"I am hopeful that I will be able to work with my colleagues and the Bush Administration on a bipartisan basis to pass this legislation. By passing this legislation, our country will reaffirm its strong partnership with India, and help India rebuild itself while making it even stronger for the future."

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NEWS FROM:

U.S. Rep. Ed Royce

California's 39th district representative, 2202 Rayburn Building, Washington, D.C. <http://www.house.gov/royce>

For Immediate Release
March 1, 2001

Bryan Wilkes
(202) 225-4111

Statement of Representative Ed Royce
Co-Chairman, Congressional Caucus on India
"The Earthquake in India: The American Response"

"Thank you for holding this hearing, Chairman Gilman. One week ago, I returned from India, having co-led a congressional delegation which surveyed the destruction in Gujarat, and assessed the relief and reconstruction efforts underway. The losses in lives and property are devastating. There are perhaps one and a half million homeless Gujaratis. It is hard to describe the damage in Bhuj, at the epicenter, where home after home has collapsed in rubble.

"I have a few observations I'd like to share with my colleagues:

*The response of the Gujarat government, although criticized in some Indian media reports, was praised by World Bank and NGO representatives, and others. The USAID DART team received good marks. The Indian Army was widely commended for its quick relief response, which saved hundreds of lives. While there is always room for improvement, the relief and reconstruction efforts are proceeding satisfactorily in the view of experienced observers.

*The reconstruction stage will be defined by many difficult political issues, including whether or not to rebuild Bhuj. Some are asking why Bhuj should be rebuilt given that it lies on earthquake-prone land and that debris removal will be costly. The World Bank representatives noted, however, that there is no history of successful relocation of cities. USAID is trying to assist the government in developing a strategy for debris removal that preserves historic and culturally important buildings and other useful materials. My sense is that Bhuj will be rebuilt.

*The two top aid priorities are debris removal and temporary shelter.

*Temporary shelter must be completed before the monsoon season arrives in June. This is a race against time.

*Charges that the government is intentionally discriminating in its aid distribution based on caste, religion, or ethnicity at this point do not have merit. Of course, this concern bears watching by aid providers.

-- more --

*Indian government officials are very appreciative of aid provided by the U.S. Government and the outstanding efforts of the Indo-American community. Our delegation visited the *USS Cowpens* in Bombay Harbor, which had delivered tents and other desperately needed basics. These and other American efforts were most welcomed.

“Concerning U.S. policy, a few recommendations:

*We should push for soft-window funding for India from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Currently, the ADB does not offer concessional loans to India, but donor countries could make an exception.

*NGOs have submitted a proposal to the Department of Agriculture under the 416(b) surplus commodities program to generate funds for disaster mitigation. The proposal went through technical reviews in December and January, and received positive reviews from USAID and the Departments of State and Agriculture, but it appears to be stalled by OMB. Interested members should look into what the concern is and push for approval of this proposal.

*We should share the expertise of disaster-management authorities in earthquake-prone American regions, such as California, with Indian officials to help them develop long-term disaster management plans. The Indian government has established the Disaster Management Authority, but it is still in its infancy. Some Indian government officials expressed their interest in working with FEMA.

*We should pre-position materials – tents, emergency supplies – in the region. India has suffered several natural disasters in the last few years. The Indians are very realistic in facing the fact that there will be another disaster in the near future.

“The U.S. and India have been rapidly developing a closer relationship over the last several years. Developing closer trade, security and other ties with India is strongly in our national interest. As Gujarat moves beyond the relief and into the rebuilding stages, it’s important that we as a nation go the extra mile for our friends. India, and the Indian people, are important to us. It is my intention to see that the U.S. does all it can in the most effective way to show our support for India.”

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US India
Earthquake Relief Fund

Carrying America's Spirit to Help Mankind around the World

Visit our website at hcsglobal.com/earthquake

February 14, 2001

The Florida Cong. Delegation
Washington, DC 20515

Cong. Majority and Minority Leadership
Cong. Black Caucus

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Delegation:

I am here today on behalf of all Indian-Americans living in this country. Regardless of our political affiliation, all of us are humanitarians. We neither believe in violence, nor do we believe in terrorist activities... we are a peace-loving, hard working, educated people. The country of our origin not only brought us into this world, but also educated us. Our traditional culture was embedded in our everyday living, whether it is through our children or our spouses or our elders or the people who either work for us or the people we work for. We have given all we have to this land of opportunity and our adopted home.

In the 1970's, thousands of us came here, which was our first big wave of migration. Each of us came here in search of excellence in entrepreneurial skills and innovation and neither expected nor asked for any handouts. We sought equal treatment and the freedom to work hard and realize our dreams. We are executives, physicians, scientists,

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US India Earthquake Relief Fund is an affiliate of Clothes, Food and Education for the Needy, a non-profit organization to assist Victims of Earthquake in Gujarat, India. Fed ID # 65-0879026

engineers, hotel owners, university professors, service providers, successful entrepreneurs, and we are American citizens who vote and support the political process.

After settling down in the 80's, we summoned our loved ones and started building temples and places of social activity so that our parents, brothers and sisters could be comfortable in adjusting here and our children who are the future of this nation could absorb our rich heritage and traditions and have the best of both worlds. We took the skills, values and convictions we learned in India and put them to work here with great success.

In the 90's, we started not only mastering the entrepreneurial ways of the United States, but also began to participate in its political system. We likewise studied the experience of other minorities who have learned to use with great effect the political system of the country to protect their interests. I witnessed one aspect of this by going to Israel with one of my dear friends, Congressman Peter Deutsch, who was kind to take me with ten other members of Congress. Ours is still a relatively small population in the United States but one that also holds education and family values in the highest regard.

Now I want to come to the point as to why I am here. It is the first time when not only the State of Gujarat, but in India's history, never has such vast devastation taken place, where instantly 30,000-50,000 people were killed, 100,000 were seriously injured, and millions of people were rendered homeless without any water, electricity, clothes, food, etc. The national calamity which befell last month on India far exceeds the death and destruction of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Even in the early 1900s, the United States was much better prepared than India in 2001, and therefore, January's devastation was beyond comprehension. We 1.5 million Indian Americans living in this country have supported all political parties, and most of the Florida caucus members who are sitting here are very familiar with the contributions of the Indian-American community in their districts and the support for their causes. Thus we felt truly dismayed by the initial relief of a paltry \$5 million in aid, which I understand has been increased to \$9 or \$10 million, to a country of 1 billion people. The largest democracy in the world is being treated by the richest, mightiest and only superpower in the world as if it deserved scarcely a drop in the bucket worth of humanitarian assistance. I am sad to say that in South Florida, out of the congressmen representing all of us, some members of the delegation have yet to respond to our hand-delivered request to join the Earthquake aid appeal. Congressman Wexler wrote a letter to the President, and more recently on February 9, 2001, Congressman Foley and 40 House members who are here today forwarded another letter to the White House where the statistics underplayed the gravity of the calamity.

US India Earthquake Relief Fund



US India
Earthquake Relief Fund

Carrying America's Spirit to Help Mankind around the World

The Honorable Governor Jeb Bush
The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida

On Friday, January 26, 2001, a devastating earthquake that struck India's Western state of Gujarat shook the sub-continent from top to bottom. Killing about 30,000 people and seriously injuring more than 100,000, and many thousands still missing. The earthquake is said to have been as devastating as the great San Francisco earthquake of 1906.

Earthquake victims need blankets, tents, medical supplies, doctors and nurses, food, water, clothing as well as bulldozers, cranes and other heavy equipment to rescue people from collapsed buildings. Every day countless numbers of babies and elderly people are discovered barely alive in these ruins, and the hope is that thousands more can be saved. As Americans, we should try to give every assistance to our brothers and sisters in India who so desperately need our help. Never before have the 1.4 million Indian-Americans rallied around a more important cause, and on behalf of them, I urge you to help the people of the country of our ancestors not only in the relief effort, but in the Herculean efforts which will be necessary to rebuild the cities and the lives of the region. This calamity is all the more devastating because it occurred on the same day the people celebrated the adoption of the Indian Constitution. The state's hospitals are scenes of confusion and heartbreak: women and children with skulls cracked or limbs hanging broken, needing immediate attention that is unavailable to most.

On behalf of the more than 1.4 million Indian-Americans in this country, I beg you to help the State of Gujarat by giving a helping hand to the Chief Minister of my father's home State of Rajasthan, as after all, we are the oldest democracy in the world.

It was on June 25, 1999 that I first met you and our own great President, George W. Bush, at a fund-raiser hosted by the Indian-American community in Fort Lauderdale. If you remember, on May 12, 1999, you were very kind to write me a very encouraging letter, a copy of which is enclosed.

I hope you will not consider me presumptuous, especially as this letter is written by a 19-year old college student. First, I feel very certain of your deep and genuine commitment to humanitarian assistance. It was one of the factors which compelled the Indian-American community to support yours and the presidential campaign in record numbers. Second, my family has taught me that in spite of my age, I owe my community, whether here in America or in our native India, more than my community owes me. Two years ago, I was blessed with the opportunity to raise \$52,000 for an organization that I started in the name of Clothes, Food and Education for the Poor and Needy, 100% of which was donated to poor families throughout South Florida.

For my part, I am contributing \$10,000 from my educational fund to help the victims of India's greatest tragedy. My parents will also be contributing \$10,000, as will my three uncles. In addition, I am contacting not only the Asian Indians in America, but the international community for the economic assistance to meet the substantial relief and reconstruction needs facing India. In addition, I would appreciate it if you would intervene on my behalf of the Indian community to use your leadership by arranging any assistance you can give, particularly to be the chief guest at a fundraising event we are planning some time in February, which my father had briefly mentioned to you when he saw you at the dedication ceremony for the nursing home built for the veterans.

If you are able to help the people of India, not only will your legacy as a great leader be enhanced universally, but your compassion for a people courageous in democracy will be unsurpassed.

I eagerly await your reply to this humble request.

Sincerely,

Abhishek Gupta

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US India
Earthquake Relief Fund

Carrying America's Spirit to Help Mankind around the World

Honorable Senators
United States Senate
White House, Washington, D.C.

On Friday, January 26, 2001, a devastating earthquake that struck India's Western state of Gujarat shook the sub-continent from top to bottom, killing about 30,000 people and seriously injuring more than 100,000, and many thousands still missing. The earthquake is said to have been as devastating as the great San Francisco earthquake of 1906.

Earthquake victims need blankets, tents, medical supplies, doctors and nurses, food, water, clothing as well as bulldozers, cranes and other heavy equipment to rescue people from collapsed buildings. Every day countless numbers of babies and elderly people are discovered barely alive in these ruins, and the hope is that thousands more can be saved. As Americans, we should try to give every assistance to our brothers and sisters in India who so desperately need our help. Never before have the 1.4 million Indian-Americans rallied around a more important cause, and on behalf of them, I urge you to help the people of the country of our ancestors not only in the relief effort, but in the Herculean efforts which will be necessary to rebuild the cities and the lives of the region. This calamity is all the more devastating because it occurred on the same day the people celebrated the adoption of the Indian Constitution. The state's hospitals are scenes of confusion and heartbreak: women and children with skulls cracked or limbs hanging broken, needing immediate attention that is unavailable to most.

On behalf of the more than 1.4 million Indian-Americans in this country, I beg you to send not just condolences, but the richest, most powerful country and the oldest democracy in the world should dig deeper to help the world's largest democracy. I am asking you to recommend and approve \$50-100 million in aid to save and rebuild the lives of these people as per the resolution passed by the 107th Congress on January 31, 2001.

I hope you will not consider me presumptuous, especially as this letter is written by a 19-year old college student. First, I feel very certain of your deep and genuine commitment to humanitarian assistance. Second, my family has taught me that is spite of my age, I owe my community, whether here in America or in our native India, more than my community owes me. Two years ago, I was blessed with the opportunity to raise \$52,000 for an organization that I started in the name of Clothes, Food and Education for the Poor and Needy, 100% of which was donated to poor families throughout South Florida.

For my part, I am contributing \$10,000 from my educational fund to help the victims of India's greatest tragedy. My parents will also be contributing \$10,000, as will my three uncles. In addition, I am contacting not only the Asian Indians in America, but the international community for the economic assistance to meet the substantial relief and reconstruction needs facing India. I have written to your colleagues and senators, as well as the President, to support this worthy cause, and I would appreciate it if you will arrange a congressional delegation to visit the disaster area, and if you would write on my behalf to the United States Embassy in New Delhi to facilitate my personal delivery of these funds.

Additionally, I am asking that you use your leadership to compel the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund to accelerate its plans to establish relief in India.

If you are able to help the people of India, not only will your legacy as a great leader be enhanced universally, but your compassion for a people courageous in democracy will be unsurpassed.

I eagerly await your reply to this humble request.

Sincerely,

Abhishek Gupta

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF MIKE LANE, WORLD VISION

Thank you for the opportunity to share before the International Relations Committee. I spent four days in Gujarat from February 10–13 and wanted to share what World Vision has done and is doing there to assist children and families in the talukas of Bhachau and Anjar that were impacted by the 7.7 earthquake.

I remember interviewing a key leader from the village of Vatiya, 125 kilometers from Bhuj, the epicenter of the quake. He called on his brothers and sisters around the globe. He said without help he didn't know if the village of 800 families had the will to rebuild. This village sustained 49 deaths, 200 injuries and all homes in the village were either destroyed or severely damaged and inhabitable.

Within six hours of the earthquake, World Vision began distributions of food to over 300 families.

World Vision's emergency relief strategy consists of four phases:

- Phase I—Emergency Support—7 days
- Phase II—Stabilization (30 days)
- Phase III—Longer Term (90 days)
- Phase IV—Rehabilitation—Nine months.

World Vision has over 100 staff based in Gandhidham, 45 kilometers from Bhuj. This warehouse is capable of housing 8,000 tons of commodities. There are 10 distribution teams, transporting on average 20–30 truckloads of commodities per day to 70 targeted villages.

World Vision, which is in 51st year, has a well-established record in India. WV began operations there in 1962 and serves the poor through 105 area development programs in 23 states and 30 other independent projects.

The Area Development Program (ADP) model is WV's way of gaining the most impact from available resources. A number of different sectoral activities are integrated into a geographic area—initially in a block—and then radiated to the entire district. Additionally, multiple funding sources support the work in an ADP. Increasing agricultural productivity can have an effect on school attendance, improved health can impact income; empowered community leadership can lead to clean drinking water. Through an integrated and holistic approach, the ADP tries to leverage sectoral linkages with supporting activities and resources.

The ADPs rely upon the community to identify needs and implement work. World Vision is often a catalyst, mobilizing resources and eliciting participation from key stakeholders. Community participation is the fundamental building block to World Vision's work in India. World Vision makes a commitment to support each ADP for 10 to 15 years. Each plan has been jointly developed with the community with a plan for sustainability.

World Vision has responded to disasters in India—the 1994 earthquake in Maharashtra in 1994, the Orissa Cyclone in 1999 and the flood in West Bengal and drought in Rajasthan in 2000 before the earthquake on January 26, 2001.

World Vision just completed distribution of a comprehensive ration of food to 19,877 families in Gujarat. This ration included 30kgs of rice, 3 kgs of dal, 5 kgs of wheat, 2 kgs of oil, 2kgs of jaggery and 6 kgs of biscuit.

For the long term, World Vision's focus will be on 41 villages and 15,000 families or 75,000 people. Those villages are Ajapar, Ambapar, Anjar Satapur, Budharmora, Chandiya, Chandrani, Hirapar, Kara Pasariya, Khambra, Kirsara, Lakhapar, Lohariya Mota, Makhiana, Maringana, Mitha Bashwari, Motinagalpur, Navagam, Pantiya, Sunugra, Tappar, Vadada, Vagura, Amardi, Bharudia, Chobari, Gumavada, Halara, Jangi, Kankoi, Karmariya, Kharoi, Kunjisar, Lakhavath, Maai, Morgar, Nara, Rajansar, Shikra, Shivilakha, Voghda and Vandhiya.

Thank you for this opportunity to enter this statement into the record. Please call me if you have questions.



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE (BHR)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

INDIA – Earthquake

Summary Fact Sheet Fiscal Year (FY) 2001

February 28, 2001

Background

- On January 26, at approximately 8:46 AM local time, an earthquake measuring 7.7 on the Richter Scale occurred in western India. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) places the epicenter of the earthquake 43 miles northeast of Bhuj in Gujarat State. Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh were also impacted.
- The earthquake was the most powerful to strike India since August 15, 1950, when an 8.5-magnitude earthquake killed 1,538 people in northeastern Assam state.

Numbers Affected

- Official Government of India (GOI) figures place the death toll at 19,739 and the number of injured at 166,836—with more than 18,139 dead and 136,048 injured in the Kutch district.
- GOI assessments indicate that 600,000 people are homeless and 15.85 million people have been affected.

Current Situation

- According to GOI reports, electric power has been restored in Gujarat State. The GOI also indicated that telephone and water supply systems are increasingly operable. Markets are open, debris has been removed from the streets, evacuations have occurred, and people are recovering their belongings, removing debris from their property, and rebuilding their homes or settling into temporary shelters.
- GOI property damage surveys indicate that 348,729 houses were destroyed, and 751,086 houses were damaged. In addition, the GOI reports that the earthquake destroyed 6,698 schoolrooms, three hospitals, 21 primary health centers, four community health centers, and 140 health sub-centers. The earthquake also damaged 17,033 schoolrooms.
- The GOI estimates that the total infrastructure loss exceeds \$453 million. On February 27, 2001, the GOI announced a comprehensive package for the rehabilitation of industry damaged during the earthquake.
- Immediately following the earthquake, the affected populations began migrating from the destroyed villages toward the cities. It remains unclear how many people have returned to damaged homes or villages.

Food Security

- The Food Insecurity Atlas of India reports that Gujarat is the second most vulnerable state in India to food insecurity. More than 24 percent of the population in Gujarat lives below the poverty line and the cereal production in the state is below consumption levels—resulting in 48 percent of households in the state being dependent on the public food distribution in non-emergency conditions. The total food insecure population may increase as a result of the earthquake if the public distribution system is not expanded.
- From the onset of the disaster, the United States Agency for International Development Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART) monitored the local food requirements as rations were distributed and populations continued to migrate. The destruction of mills, food warehouses and irrigation structures, as well as a disruption of harvesting of crops - including wheat, sorghum, and cotton, and food production remain an overall food security concern.
- In addition, a three-year drought is underway in the affected region—endangering the food security situation for those who normally do not require food assistance. The drought affected 2.9 million residents of Gujarat state in 2000. On February 7, the World Food Program (WFP) released an interim food security analysis of Gujarat state that stated the earthquake had serious nutritional implications for poor rural households already affected by the extended drought. In February, WFP began the distribution of supplemental food to approximately 300,000 people for four months and plans to channel supplementary food for an additional 20,000 families through non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Water and Sanitation

- At the onset of the disaster, the water supply was a concern, but through a combination of rapid repairs to piped water distribution systems, as well as emergency relief measures such as tankering of water, roadside water distribution points, generators to operate pump wells, and the use of water purification systems, the water sector needs in the affected areas have been met adequately.
- USAID/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA)-provided water purification systems are fully operational, producing an average of approximately 78,000 liters of water per day, and have reached

beneficiaries either by direct or tanker distributions in Adhoi, Anjar, Kvada, and Sukhpar. The water purification systems will remain in India for future humanitarian responses to localized disasters.

- Sanitation remains a primary concern, particularly in urban areas and relief camps. The GOI and relief organizations are constructing latrines, providing public sanitation training, and distributing hygiene packs, and water treatment interventions.

Health

- No major epidemics have occurred, although some expected cases of diarrhea and acute respiratory infection have been noted. The majority of injuries reported are orthopedic in nature.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has been designated the lead coordination agency for health issues, and is chairing regular health meetings in Bhuj. Through a USAID/OFDA-funded grant, the WHO has opened a disease surveillance center at the U.N. On-Site Operations Coordination Center (OSOCC) in Bhuj.
- Priority health needs remain, including the restoration of rehabilitative and reconstruction supplies and specialists. Other health challenges include addressing trauma counseling, reestablishing immunization programs and public health facilities—including access to primary, maternity, and emergency care, and identifying local health professionals to provide medical assistance upon the departure of international medical personnel and mobile health clinics.

Shelter

- On February 27, the GOI announced its formal approval of a resettlement and reconstruction project for the victims of the earthquake rendered homeless.
- Long-term shelter remains a priority concern. The GOI has indicated that there are adequate tents and other shelter materials in the pipeline to meet the short-term relief needs. The Gujarat State government has announced interim measures to build as many as 100 tent camps, each of which will have the capacity to provide shelter for 5,000 people. To assist with medium-term and long-term housing requirements, construction materials, such as bamboo and corrugated sheeting, have been made available at no cost by the local government and manufacturers.

Logistics and Distribution

- While airports in Bhuj and Ahmedabad were operational throughout most of the emergency relief effort, limited cargo handling capacity impacted the number of commodity flights each airport could accommodate. The majority of the off-loading was done by hand.
- On February 11, WFP launched a Joint Logistics Center (JLC) in Bhuj to coordinate the movement of humanitarian cargo, relief workers, and transport assets within the affected area. In addition, the JLC identified logistical bottlenecks, coordinated with local authorities, and provided information regarding the prioritization of humanitarian commodities and transport options.

Coordination

- The local government designated Abhiyan, a local consortium of NGOs, with primary responsibility for NGO coordination. Although coordination was slow to evolve, it now functions smoothly with daily meetings occurring with participation from the Gujarat State government, local and international NGOs, and the U.N.
- At the onset of the disaster, the GOI and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) coordinated relief operations from Ahmedabad. OCHA moved its coordination efforts to the airport at Bhuj, which became the focal point for the collection and dissemination of assessment information.

U.S. Government Assistance

- On February 1, USAID announced that it was prepared to provide \$9 million in emergency humanitarian assistance. To date, USAID/OFDA has responded to the India Earthquake with a total of \$7.4 million in emergency relief assistance, and USAID/ Food for Peace (FFP) is providing 1813 metric tons (MT) of P.L.480 Title II emergency food assistance valued at approximately \$800,000. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and CARE are distributing the food aid to approximately 300,000 beneficiaries.
- On January 26, USAID/OFDA activated a 24-hour USAID/OFDA Response Management Team (RMT) to coordinate the U.S. Government response to the disaster. On January 28, an eleven-member USAID/DART, comprised of a team leader and logistics, information, program, and communications personnel, as well as a military liaison officer and a water technical specialist, was sent to operate in the affected areas and in New Delhi. As the relief efforts concluded and reconstruction initiatives began, on February 15, the USAID/DART demobilized and the RMT in Washington, D.C. deactivated.
- USAID/OFDA-funded airlifts arrived in India with relief commodities on January 30, February 3, and February 4. The USAID/OFDA-provided relief commodities included technical equipment, shelter materials, blankets, sleeping bags, equipment for water/sanitation, and other commodities used in the relief effort. The commodities

- were consigned to USAID/OFDA's implementing partners and the Indian military. The total value of the commodities with transport costs is \$2,426,463.
- Since January 31, USAID/OFDA has provided \$4,875,028 in grants to five implementing partners, targeting more than 450,000 beneficiaries. These grants focus on shelter, water and sanitation, emergency food distribution, health and nutrition, community infrastructure, and coordination activities in the earthquake-affected areas.
 - USAID/OFDA provided more than \$1.5 million to CRS for the implementation of an emergency water and shelter program in Gujarat to benefit 250,000 affected persons in Bhuj, Anjar, and Bachao. CRS is purchasing and distributing relief items and emergency shelter materials, including 1,500 MT of P.L.480 Title II emergency food assistance, and is offering trauma counseling for three months.
 - CARE received \$1.8 million from USAID/OFDA to implement emergency food distribution and community infrastructure programs, benefiting 50,000 people in Kutch district. CARE is providing basic family emergency kits and shelter to the affected population, repairing existing community tubewells, and providing temporary shelters to serve as health/nutrition delivery centers and schools.
 - USAID/OFDA provided \$400,000 to the United Nation's Development Program (UNDP) for the immediate distribution of food, shelter material, water, and essential household items to earthquake victims in Bhuj, Patan, and Surendranagar.
 - USAID/OFDA funded an \$852,403 grant to World Vision to provide three months of emergency aid to the worst-affected populations in Gujarat. World Vision is maintaining basic nutritional levels and providing basic household supplies to 15,000 families in Bhuj, Anjar, and Bachao. World Vision also is ensuring access to potable water for 7,500 families in 50 villages.
 - WHO received \$232,000 from USAID/OFDA to implement a six-month water/sanitation, environmental health, and disease surveillance program in the earthquake affected areas.
 - USAID/OFDA provided an initial \$100,000 in disaster assistance through USAID/New Delhi to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund for immediate assistance to those affected by the earthquake.
 - The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) responded by providing personnel, relief supplies, equipment, and transport assistance. USAID/OFDA provided approximately \$2,300 to assist with the storage and transport of DOD commodities, which arrived on February 3 in Ahmedabad. The commodities included 92 large tents, 10,000 blankets, 1,500 sleeping bags, two rough terrain forklifts, two water trailers, and a 2.5 ton truck. In addition, a six-person DOD humanitarian assistance survey team completed an assessment of ongoing support requirements in coordination with USAID/DART on February 14.
 - Since 1998, USAID/OFDA has provided funding in support of the Program for the Enhancement of Emergency Response (PEER), a regional training initiative designed to promote, develop and strengthen SAR capabilities in earthquake-prone countries of Asia. This collaborative program, implemented in partnership with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department has helped to increase earthquake preparedness and response capabilities in India prior to this disaster. PEER held its first training of trainers course for India in December. The course focused on medical first response, and included eighteen participants. A second course, collapsed structure search and rescue training, is planned for March. For additional information on the PEER, please visit <http://www.adpc.ait.ac.th/peer/peer.html>.

Other Donor and International Organization Assistance

- In-kind or cash donations have been made either bilaterally or through the UN system for by the following nations: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. ECHO has also contributed to the relief efforts.
- In addition, the WFP, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), the WHO, the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) were involved in the response to the disaster in India.

USG Funding Summary

USG Agency	Implementing Partner (if applicable)	Project/Sector	Location (if applicable)	Beneficiaries (persons)	Dollar Amount
USAID/OFDA	Prime Minister's Fund		All		\$100,000
	USAID/New Delhi	In-kind Commodities	Bhuj	46,000	\$843,806
	USAID/New Delhi	Technical Equipment	Bhuj		\$878,657
	Commercial Aviation	Airlift	Bhuj		\$704,000
	CRS	Shelter, Water/Sanitation	Gujarat	250,000	\$1,590,625
	CARE	Emergency Food Distribution, Community Infrastructure	Kutch	50,000	\$1,800,000
	UNDP	Shelter, Water/Sanitation, Food, Coordination	Bhuj, Patan, Surendranagar		\$400,000
	WVRD	Nutrition/Water	Gujarat	75,000	\$852,403
	WHO	Water/Sanitation, Health	Gujarat		\$232,000
	DOD	Storage and Transport of DOD Commodities	Ahmedabad		\$2,300
	USAID/DART	Travel and Admin Costs			\$25,840
	USAID/OFDA Total			421,000	\$7,429,631
USAID/FFP	CARE/ CRS	Title II Food Assistance	Gujarat		\$800,000
	USAID/FFP Total				\$800,000
	Total USAID				\$8,229,631
DOD	Commodity Airlift	Relief Supplies, Equipment, Transport	All		\$4,600,000
	DOD Total				\$4,600,000
	Total USG Assistance				\$12,829,631

Public Donation Information

- In the interest of effective coordination of public response, USAID encourages the public to contact directly those private voluntary organizations (PVOs) currently working in the region in order to provide monetary donations. Cash donations are the preferred response to the emergency.
- For a list of non-governmental organizations providing disaster assistance in the region, please visit USAID's website at <http://www.usaid.gov>. Those interested in providing specific technical relief services or commodities can obtain guidelines for private voluntary organizations through Volunteers in Technical Assistance's (VITA's) Disaster Information Center at <http://www.vita.org>.
- USAID will not deviate from standard Denton Program procedures for transporting privately-donated relief supplies. USAID will prioritize delivery of essential relief commodities. For more information on the Denton Program, please refer to the USAID website at http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/pvc/denton.html.
- For additional information about the relief effort in India, please refer to the Natural Disasters section of ReliefWeb at <http://www.reliefweb.in/>

USAID/OFDA fact sheets can be obtained from the USAID web site at http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html

