

We condemn the heinous crime in Mumbai

A Statement from Pakistani Peace Activists

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The bomb blasts on local trains and at railway stations in Mumbai, in which over 160 people have been killed and many more are on the verge of dying, are perhaps the most shocking of all such killings that have occurred in the subcontinent of late. The reason is that this massacre has targeted thousands of office and factory going men and women returning home to be with their children and parents after a whole day's hard work. Those who committed this great crime cannot even be called animals because animals do not commit such crimes. Only human beings do.

It is time for the governments of Pakistan and India to re-assess their priorities and be on a state of high alert. As long as they fail to resolve their mostly man-made disputes and allow free and unfettered people-to-people interaction between the two countries, all sorts of extremists and terrorists would find it easy to indulge in and get away with such insane barbarities. What has happened in Mumbai is indicative of a widening of the dimensions of terrorist outreach. It calls for united effort by not only the governments of Pakistan and India but the people at large to identify and wipe out this cancer that is spreading far and wide at a frightening pace.

Pakistan needs to take stern measures to put down all kinds of demonstrations and displays of religious extremism in the country, which directly or indirectly encourages terrorist activities in the name of religion and undermines the peace process between Pakistan and India. Similarly, India needs to curb the activities of religious fanatics using the umbrella of India's pluralist democratic political system, to spawn communal conflicts and derail the peace process. In order to avert a possible collapse of the peace process as a result of such tragic incidents, it is necessary that the two governments put their heads together and take immediate steps to create a relaxed political atmosphere in the subcontinent by removing all outlandish restrictions on the movement of people between the two countries, thus making it impossible for the terrorists to operate.

We would also ask all the sane, secular forces among the Muslims of the world to rise above their petty sectarian positions and help launch an international movement against terrorist activities in the name of Islam.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the members of the families who have lost their near and dear ones in the bomb blasts and assure them that we will strive, along with those in Pakistan and India and the world who abhor religious extremism and terrorism, to fight this evil till it is eliminated for good.

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