

**Opening Statement of Chairman Joseph Lieberman
“Lessons from the Mumbai Terrorist Attacks”
Washington, DC
January 8, 2009**

On the night of November 26th, 2008, 10 terrorists made an amphibious landing onto the jetties of Mumbai, India, and proceeded to carry out sophisticated, simultaneous deadly attacks on multiple targets, including its main railway station, two of its most prominent hotels, a popular outdoor café, a movie theater, and a Jewish community center.

Three days of of siege and mayhem followed. As the world watched live on television, these 10 terrorists paralyzed a great metropolis of twelve million people and murdered nearly 200 people. The victims were Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and Jews; they were citizens of many nations, including six Americans. Senior U.S. intelligence officials have placed responsibility for the attacks on Lashkar-e-Taiba, a terrorist group known as LET for short, and based in Pakistan.

I know that I speak for all of my colleagues in expressing sympathy for the families of the victims of this attack and to express our solidarity with the people of India and their government in the wake of the attack.

I traveled to New Delhi just a few days after the Mumbai attack, where I met with Prime Minister Singh, Foreign Minister Mukherjee, and National Security Adviser Narayanan.

The Indian people and their leaders were understandably and justifiably angry, and intent on demanding justice. Prime Minister Singh has acted firmly and responsibly in response to this attack. The terrorists wanted to divide and radicalize the Indian people, and to provoke a war with Pakistan. But India's people have been stronger and wiser than that and have insisted on bringing these people to justice.

I also had the opportunity to visit Pakistan, where I met with Prime Minister Gillani, General Kayani, and other senior officials, with whom I discussed Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Mumbai attacks.

I was encouraged that the democratically-elected leaders of Pakistan understand the threat of Islamist extremism to themselves and their neighbors, and that the Pakistani government has taken steps to crack down on Lashkar-e-Taiba, including abiding by the sanctions imposed last December at the UN.

But much more is needed – and quickly. It is absolutely imperative that Lashkar's leaders are not just detained by Pakistani

authorities, but that they are prosecuted for the terrorist acts they are accused of planning and carrying out.

The purpose of this hearing is to examine the attacks in Mumbai – their perpetrators, tactics, and targets – and determine what lessons can be drawn from them for America’s homeland security.

First, we need to understand who carried out these attacks. In other words, what is Lashkar-e-Taiba? What are its ideology and its history? What is its relationship to al Qaeda and other Islamist terrorist groups? Does it threaten the U.S. in any way? And what are its ties, both past and present, to the Pakistani Army and its intelligence agency, the ISI?

Second, we need to understand how the men who carried out these attacks were recruited, trained, funded, indoctrinated, and radicalized—a process onto which the one surviving terrorist, Ajmal Amir, in Indian custody, has already cast some light.

The process of radicalization is one this Committee has closely examined in the last two and a half years, and one that the three governmental agencies represented by our three witnesses have also closely studied.

It bears particular importance in Pakistan, given that many of the attacks against the United States and our allies—both blocked and successful—have links to Pakistani groups, particularly Pakistani training camps.

Third, we need to understand the implications of some of the tactics used successfully in these attacks. For example, we know that the attackers traveled undetected from Karachi to Mumbai by boat. What are the implications of this attack from the water for our own homeland security here in the United States?

We also know that leading-edge technologies were used to facilitate these attacks. The terrorists, apparently, used Google Earth to surveil their targets, and communicated with each other and with their controllers back in Pakistan using Blackberries and Skype. How does the use of such tools impact our own efforts to prevent terrorism here at home?

Fourth, we need to look at the targets of this attack – and determine whether we are doing as much as we should be doing to appropriately protect our own “soft” targets, a term given to facilities that are not traditionally subject to a high level of security, such as

nuclear power plants and defense installations, and that would include hotels, sports arenas, and shopping malls.

While there are practical limits to protecting soft targets in an open society, it is imperative that we take smart, cost-effective security measures, through means such as security awareness training, exercises focused on soft targets, and improved information-sharing about potential threats.

Fifth, we need to examine how we can strengthen our homeland security cooperation with the Government of India and other allied governments in the wake of this attack.

Over the past few years, we have literally transformed our relationship with India, which is emerging as one of America's most important strategic partnerships in the 21st century.

When I was in New Delhi, I discussed with Prime Minister Singh his administration's plans to overhaul the way the Indian government is organized to protect homeland security in the wake of Mumbai. I hope this hearing can provide a forum to discuss how we can assist our Indian friends in this effort, and how, in turn, they can assist us in protecting our homeland from terrorism.

I'm very grateful we have as witnesses today three of

the leading authorities in government today on matters of terrorism – Charlie Allen from DHS, Ray Kelly from the New York Police Department and Donald Van Duyn from the FBI.

Your willingness to testify before this Committee today attests to the seriousness with which you – and the men and women in your agencies – take the ongoing terrorist challenge his issue, and I appreciate that each of you taking the time to be with us today.

Senator Collins.