

Opening Statement of  
Senator Susan M. Collins

## Lessons from the Mumbai Terrorist Attacks

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
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**Let me begin by thanking the Chairman for holding this follow-up hearing on the terrorist attacks in Mumbai. The witnesses appearing today represent two important, additional perspectives on these attacks: non-governmental organizations and private businesses. These two hearings provide valuable insights that can be used to shape security policies in the United States.**

**With approximately 85 percent of our country's critical infrastructure in private hands, a strong public-private partnership is essential to preventing attacks and promoting resiliency when disaster strikes. Through the**

**National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP), DHS and the private sector have cooperatively developed best practices that will improve the private sector's ability to deter attacks and to respond and recover in a crisis. By bringing together representatives from the 18 infrastructure sectors, the NIPP process also builds relationships between public and private-sector officials that promote better information sharing.**

**The plans developed through the NIPP must not be allowed to gather dust on shelves in Washington. It is critical that the Department and its private-sector partners translate these planning documents into real world action. If this link is not made, then even the best-laid plans will provide little security benefit and the full promise of the NIPP will never be realized.**

**The relationships fostered between the Department and the private sector are absolutely critical. The government, working alone, simply does not have the resources to protect all critical infrastructure from attack or to rebuild and recover after a disaster. Effective preparedness and resiliency relies on the vigilance and cooperation of the owners and operators of these facilities and the general public. As was discussed at our January 8 hearing, such vigilance may be undermined if the good-faith reporting of information to the proper authorities is not protected from lawsuits.**

**In the 2007 homeland security law, Chairman Lieberman and I included legislation to promote the reporting of potential terrorist threats directed against our transportation system. Reports of suspicious activity by alert citizens have already helped to thwart an attack**

**on Fort Dix, New Jersey. The reports of other diligent, honest citizens could be equally important in detecting terrorist plans to attack critical infrastructure or “soft targets” like the hotels, restaurants, and religious institutions targeted in Mumbai. To protect these citizens, we should consider expanding the protections in our prior law to cover other good- faith reports of suspicious activity.**

**As the analysis of the response to the Mumbai attacks continues to crystallize, it is also becoming increasingly apparent that the Indian government failed to get valuable intelligence information into the hands of local law enforcement and the owners of the facilities targeted by the Mumbai terrorists.**

**Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, the U.S. government has made great strides to improve information sharing on terrorist threats against the United States. Despite these improvements, information sharing between the federal government and state and local officials and the private sector relies too heavily on ad hoc relationships instead of well- established, coordinated lines of communication. And the Mumbai attacks demonstrate the perils of ad hoc communication.**

**Finally, the instigation of the Mumbai attacks by the Pakistan- based terrorist organization underscores the importance of this Committee's work in seeking to understand and counter the process of violent radicalization. The United States must look for ways to support and encourage the Pakistani government in taking effective measures to eliminate safe havens and so**

**starve LeT and similar groups of new recruits for their deadly operations.**

**I intend to explore aspects of each of these three topics with the witnesses appearing here today.**

**Specifically:**

- **How can the NIPP process be improved to ensure that a useful product is developed and implemented?**
- **What incentives and programs should be employed to encourage the private sector to adopt the security and resiliency best practices developed through this process?**
- **Does the private sector routinely and systematically receive useful intelligence information on terrorist threats from the U.S. government?**

- **How can the United States and the international community encourage Pakistan to address the underlying factors that lead some down the path of violent radicalization?**

**I welcome our witnesses, and I look forward to their answers to these and other questions.**

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman.**

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