

# Asia Foundation Urges Increased Role for U.S. in Asia

By **RICHARD SPRINGER**  
India-West Staff Reporter

SAN FRANCISCO – The Asia Foundation issued its blueprint for the next U.S. administration's Asia policy at a panel discussion at the Four Seasons Hotel here Sept. 11.

One key bilateral recommendation in the 310-page report, "America's Role in Asia: Asian and American Views," is that the next administration complete "implementation of the historic civil nuclear initiative between (India and the U.S.) and consolidate the strategic partnership with New Delhi."

Another recommendation urges the U.S. to "help Pakistan and Afghanistan resolve their long-standing border issues in a diplomatic and nuanced way."

The U.S., the report continues, "must undertake a significant effort to win political support among the Pashtun tribes, separate them from al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and make them stakeholders in the war against terror."

The South Asia regional chair of the Asia Foundation task force, C. Raja Mohan, professor at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, told a high-powered audience of more than 150 people at the luncheon that U.S.-India relations "have never been as good" and India-Pakistan relations "have



*C. Raja Mohan, professor at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, was South Asia regional chair of the Asia Foundation task force that made recommendations for the next U.S. administration on America's role in Asia. (Richard Springer photo)*

improved."

A former member of India's National Security Advisory Board from 1998-2000 and 2004-06 and a former strategic affairs editor at the Indian Express newspaper, Mohan emphasized that the U.S. should be prepared for a "new self-assurance" in India and other South Asian nations.

One recommendation in the report urges the U.S. to redefine its strategic doctrine and refrain from seeking "unchallengeable international supremacy." Instead, it should come to terms with the rise of countries like India and China.

"America need not feel threatened by stronger or more prosperous Asian powers, so long as they behave responsibly. The goal then can be to encourage moderate external conduct through the cultivation of balanced ties with all the emerging powers," the report recommends.

Mohan, in his remarks in the panel discussion, echoed the report's recommendation that the U.S. shift its focus away from Iraq to Afghanistan.

"The stability of the region and the secure future of the U.S. and South Asia are linked as never before" to the war against al-Qa-

eda, he emphasized, adding that the terrorists' capacity to hurt the U.S., "as they did seven years ago to this day, has not changed."

Pakistan, Afghanistan and India, linked by a historical trade route that existed before arbitrary borders were formed, "all have a stake in the stability of the region," Mohan pointed out.

Asia Foundation U.S. task force chairman Michael Armacost, former U.S. ambassador to the Philippines and Japan and Shorestein Distinguished fellow at Stanford University, said the U.S. should put more emphasis on multinational diplomacy.

The report recommends that the U.S. sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, "which, at a minimum would allow the United States to be an effective dialogue partner with members of the East Asian Summit."

After the forum, Mohan told **India-West** that the U.S. should extend as much as \$10 billion in economic support to Pakistan to help make the country "more stable and secure" and more likely to curb terrorism.

He also said he feels there will be major pressure put on the U.S. Congress to approve the U.S.-India nuclear deal before the November election, because countries in Western Europe and elsewhere are waiting in the wings to sell India nuclear technology for peaceful uses. The U.S. could lose out on these deals if it dawdles.

If the U.S. pushes debate on the nuclear deal to the next Congress, India will be free to cut its own deals, now that the Nuclear Suppliers Group has given India a waiver on civilian nuclear trade (**I-W**, Sept. 12).

## ***GiveIndia.org Announces 'Voices of Children' Essay Contest***

By a Staff Reporter

The San Francisco Bay Area chapter of GiveIndia.org, a non-profit online donation platform for Indian charities, recently announced its "Voices of Children" essay contest for children ages 6-12 on the theme "How Kids Can Help Others."

Winners of the contest will get a pre-paid gift card that they can use to support any children's char-

ity on the GiveIndia.org Web site, according to a release.

Entries must be submitted by Oct. 31.

GiveIndia.org currently supports some 100 charities selected from over 1,000 non-governmental organizations. There are also over 500 ways to give.

For more information, go to [giveindiaba.org](http://giveindiaba.org) or email the GiveIndia.org team at [sfbayarea@giveindia.org](mailto:sfbayarea@giveindia.org).