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Opening Statement of the Honorable **Ed Royce (R-CA)**, Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing:
The Future of U.S.-Pakistan Relations
December 16, 2015

(As prepared for delivery)

This hearing will come to order. This Committee has repeatedly urged Pakistan to take meaningful action against key Islamist terrorist groups operating within its territory. Unfortunately Pakistan, which is now home to the world's fastest growing nuclear weapons program, has remained a fount of radical Islamist thought. I doubt that anyone who follows Pakistan closely was surprised to learn that one of the San Bernardino attackers – Tashfeen Malik – studied at a Pakistani school spreading a particularly conservative message.

Looking back, the 9/11 terrorist attacks transformed U.S.-Pakistan relations overnight. After more than a decade under sanctions for its nuclear proliferation, Pakistan was to be a key ally in combatting Islamist militancy, becoming a leading recipient of U.S. aid in the nearly 15 years since.

But while the U.S. was quick to embrace Pakistan—Pakistan has hardly reciprocated. Pakistani governments have come and gone, but Pakistan has remained a terrorist haven, with its security services supporting what it considers to be "good" Islamist terrorist groups. These "good" groups – under Pakistan's calculus – destabilize Afghanistan and threaten neighboring India.

Today, Pakistan maintains an infrastructure of hate. Thousands of Deobandi madrassas, funded with Gulf state money, teach intolerant, hate-filled rhetoric that inspires the foot soldiers of jihadist terrorism. I've made three trips to Islamabad to press this issue. Pakistan must do the work to register schools, and close those creating new generations of radicals.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's nuclear arsenal is on track to be the third largest. Its addition of small tactical nuclear weapons and longer-range missiles in recent years is even more troubling. This is a country which spends a fifth of its budget on the military, but under two and a half percent on education.

Through all of Pakistan's double-dealing, U.S. policy has essentially stood still. Security assistance – cash and arms – has continued to flow after the occasional temporary delays. Indeed, despite some Department of Defense assistance for Pakistan being held because of inadequate efforts against the Haqqani network, the State Department is currently seeking more arms for Islamabad.

Pakistan itself has been devastated by terrorism, with thousands of its soldiers and citizens killed in terrorist attacks. We want a strong partnership with the country. But a new policy is long overdue. One option, as Ranking Member Engel and I proposed earlier this year, would be to target those officials who maintain relationships with designated terrorist groups with travel and

financial sanctions. This would make it clear: the U.S. and Pakistan cannot have a true strategic partnership until Pakistan cuts ties with terrorist organizations.

Recently, senior U.S. officials – including National Security Advisor Susan Rice and Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken- have travelled to Islamabad, reportedly to press on the Pakistani government. We look forward to hearing from our witness today whether there is reason for hope, or if our policy stuck in the same rut.

I now turn to the Ranking Member for any opening comments he may have.