Statement Following a Meeting With Leaders of the Afghan Resistance Alliance

June 16, 1986

I met this morning with leaders of the Afghan resistance alliance: Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, who is the spokesman of the alliance, and his colleagues. They speak for the many citizens of Afghanistan who are battling Soviet forces in the name of national liberation.

My message to the resistance delegation was simple: In your struggle to regain your nation's independence, the American people stand with you. This policy has broad and deep bipartisan support; it is an unshakable commitment. Your goal is our goal -- the freedom of Afghanistan. We will not let you down.

Like the Afghan people, we hope for a negotiated end to this war. Year after year, U.N. resolutions have called for a total and rapid withdrawal of Soviet troops and for self-determination for the Afghan people. Let us renew that call today. Only an agreement that has the support of the Afghan people can work. This is a fact of life, and it is why the role of the resistance alliance is crucial. The diversity of the alliance, its roots in the faith and traditions of Afghanistan, shows that the alliance is the true representative of the Afghan people.

People everywhere admire the courage of the Afghans, but the people and Government of Pakistan have also borne a large share of the burden of Soviet pressure and intimidation. We are honored to join with them in supporting Afghan freedom.

http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1986/61686b.htm