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VICE-CHAIRMAN DAN BURTON RETURNS FROM INDIA AND PAKISTAN

Stresses the need to assist those devastated by the recent earthquake

(Washington, D.C.) – Congressman Dan Burton [R-IN-05], Vice Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, and Co-Chairman of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, has returned from a 9-day-long, bi-partisan Congressional delegation trip that he led to India and Pakistan.

"I am very optimistic about the progress I observed in India and Pakistan. There were growing signs of mutual trust, admiration and respect between the governments and people of India and Pakistan; and I felt that both Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and President General Pervez Musharraf hold firm commitments to peace and reconciliation" stated Burton.

Vice-Chairman Dan Burton led a 7-Member Congressional delegation tour to South Asia from November 26, 2005, to December 4, 2005. The aim of the trip was to improve U.S. relations in the region, as well as encourage the recent peaceful dialogue between India and Pakistan. The delegation toured several areas, and visited with those devastated by the October 8, 2005, earthquake, which killed 75,000 people and displaced nearly 3,000,000.

"Our delegation visited the Mehra Tent Camp in Pakistan's Allai Valley, as well as the III Marine Expeditionary Force medical element in Skinkiari. We visited with children left family-less and homeless by the earthquake, met with local government officials and volunteers, and discussed the on-going humanitarian relief efforts and assistance operations" continued Burton.

The United States has pledged over $527 million in earthquake assistance as of December 1, 2005, making the United States the leading bilateral donor.

"As the people of Pakistan attempt to rebuild their homes, livelihoods, and communities, I implore my fellow Americans to remember the children of the Mehra Tent Camp and ask them do anything they can to improve the lives of their fellow man during this holiday season" concluded Burton.

For more information, please visit Congressman Burton's website at http://www.house.gov/burton.

-- 30 --