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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 27, 2011 6:01 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: "New era" for Pakistan, India relations, say ministers (Reuters)

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Wednesday, July 27, 2011 05:52 AM
To: NEWS-Pakistan; NEWS-SCA; NEWS-Mahogany
Cc: SES-O
Subject: "New era" for Pakistan, India relations, say ministers (Reuters)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - Indian and Pakistani foreign ministers hailed a new era in ties between the nuclear-armed rivals on Wednesday and agreed to fight militancy and boost trade and travel, a step forward in reducing tension in the world's most dangerous region.

The comments from Indian Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna and his Pakistani counterpart, Hina Rabbani Khar, were unexpectedly positive and may be a small step towards improving regional stability, made more urgent with a U.S. troop drawdown in Afghanistan looming.

"This is indeed a new era of bilateral cooperation between the two countries," Khar, Pakistan's first female and youngest-ever foreign minister, told the media after two and a half hours of talks, standing next to Krishna.

"(It) is our desire, and I believe after having spoken to you, Mr Foreign Minister, that it is the desire of both the governments, to make it an uninterrupted and an uninteruptable process."

Expectations of a breakthrough in peace talks have been low, but the fact the South Asian rivals are talking was a sign that neither side wants to slide back towards conflict.

The countries have fought three full-scale wars since winning independence in 1947, two of them over Kashmir, the disputed Himalayan region both claim in full but rule in part.

India and Pakistan in February resumed a formal peace process broken off after the 2008 attack on India's financial capital of Mumbai by Pakistan-based militants, which killed 166 people.

"We have some distance to travel, but with an open mind and consistent approach, which has been demonstrated in this round of dialogue, I am sure we can reach our desired destination of having a friendly and cooperative relation between our two countries," Krishna said.

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