

No one expected the Congress to win in Gujarat. We expected (Narendra) Modi to come back with reduced numbers and the Congress to increase its numbers. So the question of our resolve on the nuclear deal being affected after the setback in the Gujarat elections doesn't arise.

We always knew there would be strong resistance to the deal. Then, in the Rajya Sabha in September 2006, the prime minister detailed nine specific points that India wanted recognised in any deal and CPM leader Sitaram Yechury said he was satisfied with those. The 123 Agreement takes those nine points into account, so we were optimistic.

However, there have been disagreements over the Hyde Act. I think there has been an over-reaction — it is a case of reading too much between the lines. The Act is mandatory on the U.S. administration, not us. But for the IAEA or U.S., it would be difficult to have such an agreement with a government that has lost majority. So we have to try to carry our partners along. Our resolve remains, but let's see how far we can progress.