

I want to thank the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Crime, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), for his support in this legislation and his cooperation in quickly moving the bill to the floor. I look forward to working with my friend from Virginia this Congress to find common ground in the battle against crime.

I also want to thank Nicole Nason on the subcommittee staff for her hard work on this bill. Nicole is leaving the subcommittee, and we will certainly miss her service. We wish to thank her for everything she has done in the past and wish her the best in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague from Florida (Mr. MCCOLLUM) in support of H.R. 46. This bill would establish a Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor to be awarded periodically to a selected public safety officer for extraordinary valor above and beyond the call of duty. It provides for the Department of Justice to solicit, review, and screen nominations from the law enforcement community for the award. Final decisions on the award would be made by a board appointed by the President and congressional leadership from both parties.

I am a cosponsor of the bill, along with the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and other members of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. Speaker, this bill passed the Committee on the Judiciary by a unanimous vote. It will not only allow members of the law enforcement community to recognize extraordinary heroism within that profession, but will establish a mechanism for calling that extraordinary valor to the attention of the world.

I urge Members to vote for the bill.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on this important legislation to provide for a national medal for public safety officers who act with extraordinary courage. By passing this legislation, we continue the tradition of honoring those who exhibit great courage and bravery in the line of duty.

I am a proud co-sponsor of this legislation to honor our nation's public safety officers—police officers, firefighters and emergency medical personnel. Each year, the President would award this medal to a worthy public safety officer.

Already in our small towns, counties and cities, local heroes are honored for their acts of bravery. For example in Texas, we honor peace officers and public servants who are injured in the line of duty through the Fleetwood Memorial Foundation.

Here in Congress, we honor the extraordinary heroism and bravery of our citizens through the Congressional Medal of Honor. Members of the armed services are honored with the prestigious Purple Heart and Prisoner of War Medal.

It is important to recognize the public servants of our communities because so often their work is overlooked. We witness the acts of heroism performed by our police officers,

firefighters and emergency medical personnel every day.

These Officers make a choice to serve their communities. While feelings toward Law Enforcement vary with each individual, all citizens must realize that the role of a peace officer is an important and necessary one.

By supporting this bill, we salute the choices and sacrifices made by peace officers. This legislation will positively influence the way we view law enforcement and it will remind us of the everyday heroic acts that take place in our communities.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MCCOLLUM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 46.

The question was taken.

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CONGRATULATING EL SALVADOR ON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF FREE AND DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 110) congratulating the Government and the people of the Republic of El Salvador on successfully completing free and democratic elections on March 7, 1999.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 110

Whereas on March 7, 1999, the Republic of El Salvador successfully completed its second democratic multiparty elections for President and Vice President since the signing of the 1992 peace accords;

Whereas these elections were deemed by international and domestic observers to be free and fair and a legitimate nonviolent expression of the will of the people of the Republic of El Salvador;

Whereas the United States has consistently supported the efforts of the people of El Salvador to consolidate their democracy and to implement the provisions of the 1992 peace accords;

Whereas these elections demonstrate the strength and diversity of El Salvador's democratic expression and promote confidence that all political parties can work cooperatively at every level of government; and

Whereas these open, fair, and democratic elections of the new President and Vice President should be broadly commended: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the House—

(1) congratulates the Government and the people of the Republic of El Salvador for the successful completion of democratic multiparty elections held on March 7, 1999, for President and Vice President;

(2) congratulates President-elect Francisco Guillermo Flores Perez and Vice President-elect Carlos Quintanilla Schmidt on their re-

cent victory and their continued strong commitment to democracy, national reconciliation, and reconstruction;

(3) congratulates El Salvadoran President Armando Calderón Sol for his personal commitment to democracy, which has helped in the building of national unity in the Republic of El Salvador;

(4) commends all Salvadoran citizens and political parties for their efforts to work together to take risks for democracy and to willfully pursue national reconciliation in order to cement a lasting peace and to strengthen democratic traditions in El Salvador;

(5) supports Salvadoran attempts to continue their cooperation in order to ensure democracy, national reconciliation, and economic prosperity; and

(6) reaffirms that the United States is unequivocally committed to encouraging democracy and peaceful development throughout Central America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 110.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read the statement of the chairman of the Committee on International Relations regarding this bill.

"The chairman of our Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY), introduced this resolution congratulating the Salvadoran people on their most recent free elections. I am pleased to see such a positive, bipartisan expression of support for El Salvador. On March 23, the Senate agreed to a similar measure, Senate Resolution 73, which enjoyed strong bipartisan support.

"It is fitting that we should congratulate the president-elect of this country, Guillermo Flores, and vice president-elect Carlos Quintanilla on their electoral victory. The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front and its candidates, who secured 29 percent of the vote, were also present. The transformation of the FMLN into a political party competing for power in open democratic elections is one of El Salvador's key achievements.

"It is equally fitting, Mr. Speaker, that we should recognize outgoing President Armando Calderon Sol. President Calderon Sol's quiet leadership has continued El Salvador's successful implementation of the 1992

peace agreement. Faced with the trials of Hurricane Mitch and an economic downturn, he has ably led El Salvador in binding the wounds of more than a decade of civil conflict. Moreover, President Calderon Sol will certainly be remembered for his achievements in privatizing state-owned enterprises, including the historic privatization of El Salvador's pension system.

"I urge my colleagues," the gentleman from New York says, "to unanimously support H. Res. 110."

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 110 which congratulates the government and the people of El Salvador on the successful completion of its second free and democratic election since the signing of the 1992 peace accords. I strongly commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY) for bringing it forward.

It is appropriate to call attention to the democratic process in El Salvador. Just a decade ago, the situation in El Salvador and all throughout Central America was much different than what we see today. Groups on all sides have dropped arms, formed political parties and given the people a fair and just voice. We are right to pause today and commend El Salvador for the stunning transition in the past decade and their successful completion of transparent free and fair elections in which everyone can participate.

Now, this is not to say that all of the problems that led to the violence of the 1980s are resolved. There is still much need for improvement in El Salvador. Turnout was much lower at this election than in the last several in the country, less than 50 percent, because people had a difficult time getting to the polls or actually voting once they arrived at the polls due to disorganization. Many low-income and poor Salvadorans are also questioning whether democracy works for them because inequality and poverty still dominate. It is the role, then, of President-Elect Flores to lead the way in generating more opportunity for Salvadorans so that the benefits of democracy and the motivation to go to the polls is felt by all citizens. We, the United States, need to maintain our commitment to the people of El Salvador.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY).

(Mr. MOAKLEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the people of El Salvador on their recent election. Since the signing of the peace accords ended their brutal civil war in 1992,

Salvadorans have made great strides toward true democracy, reaching lasting peace, and creating a better life for all Salvadorans.

I am very glad to stand here today and talk about elections and democracy in El Salvador—instead of civil war and death squads. When I first visited El Salvador in the 1980s, political parties only knew how to resolve their problems through war.

Now, instead of firing bullets at one another, political parties argue their differences in the National Assembly, build coalitions with one another, and work together in their common interests.

This election is yet another tremendous accomplishment. I would like to congratulate new President Francisco Flores on his election victory, and congratulate the Salvadoran people for holding a free and fair election. Each election, since the signing of their Peace Accords, has been more open and free—and the recent Presidential election continued in that pattern.

Of course I don't want to paint too rosy a picture here. Many serious problems in El Salvador continue to exist. Crime is at record levels, the tremendous poverty that existed before the war remains alarmingly high, and the judicial system continues to stumble.

Even as we talk about a successful election in El Salvador today, a great deal can be accomplished in that area as well. Better organization, a method of precinct voting, and the establishment of a new election registry are necessary election reforms that must be accomplished.

I challenge the Salvadoran people and their government to work hard to achieve these reforms, erase the poverty and inequality that exists, and continue to work together for the better of the country.

And I believe we should be there to help. I know President Flores has many difficult challenges ahead, and I look forward to working with him to do what I can to help Salvadorans continue to move forward. With that in mind, I also challenge this country—the United States—to remember our role in El Salvador.

As we congratulate Salvadorans on yet another step toward democracy, I believe it is also time we acknowledge some of our errors in the past, and make a stronger commitment to assisting all Salvadoran people in their effort to reach those democratic goals.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, I rise in support of H. Res. 110, a bill which congratulates El Salvador on its recent Presidential elections.

On Sunday, March 7, the people of El Salvador went to the voting polls to choose a new President and Vice-President. This election marked the second successful Presidential election and third general election since the signing of the 1992 Peace Accords which ended 12 years of brutal civil war in that small country.

H. Res. 110, introduced by myself and several members of the Subcommittee, congratulates the government and the people of El Salvador for completing this successful multiparty election which was deemed to be free and fair by an international observer group which included a member of my Subcommittee staff.

This election, in which every registered political party received votes, represented a clear expression of the will of the people of El Salvador; reaffirmed the success of the Peace

Accords; and demonstrated the strength and diversity of the democratic process in El Salvador.

Since 1994, current President Armando Calderon Sol has worked tirelessly to ensure that the peace accords have been properly implemented and that El Salvador progressed both politically and economically out of the post-war era.

For that effort, and for the continued cooperation of the opposition FMLN leadership, El Salvador should be commended.

Now, President-elect Francisco Flores will lead a new government into the new century and I am confident he will continue the progress made thus far in national reconciliation and reconstruction.

We wish him well.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the people of El Salvador have made great strides over the past seven years. This election serves to validate a key element of that progress and reaffirms their strong commitment to the democratic process.

I urge passage of this bill.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 110, a resolution congratulating the Government and the people of the Republic of El Salvador on successfully completing free and democratic elections. On March 7, 1999, El Salvador held free and fair elections for president and vice-president. I would like to take this time to personally congratulate President-elect Francisco Guillermo Flores Perez and Vice President-elect Carlos Quintilla Schmidt on their recent victory and their continued commitment to democracy. This election was yet another milestone in the normalization of the democratic process in El Salvador, and I wish to commend this nation for its efforts.

El Salvador has come a long way since the 1980's, when the nation was in the midst of a terrible civil war. Many of you will recall that the war cost the lives of tens of thousands of Salvadorans and left the country in shambles. Now, the Salvadorans have replaced bullets with ballots. It was the strong leadership and guidance, coupled with courage, demonstrated by former President Alfredo Cristiani that rescued the country and paved the way for El Salvador's future. His successor, President Armando Calderon Sol, elected in a free and fair contest, held the same commitment to democracy and kept this nation moving forward. The stark contrast between war-torn El Salvador and the El Salvador of today is a tribute to its people and its leaders.

In a time where peace and unity are not always the goal of the majority, I believe Americans must continue to show support for our Salvadoran neighbors and their continued progress through this long and fragile process of democratization. I hope you will join me in congratulating El Salvador on this latest and most remarkable accomplishment.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, as one of the original six cosponsors, I come to the floor in strong support of House Resolution 110. I wish to congratulate the Salvadoran people and President-elect Francisco Guillermo Florez Perez and Vice President-elect Carlos Quintanilla Schmidt on the free and fair conduct of the Presidential elections of March 7, 1999.

Since the signing of the 1992 peace accords, the Republic of El Salvador has conducted two democratic elections for President

and Vice President. The peaceful and orderly manner in which these elections have been carried out, with the participation of ten parties representing the entire political spectrum, is proof of El Salvador's commitment to democracy, national reconciliation and reconstruction. Specifically, it demonstrates their ability to implement the provisions of the 1992 peace accords.

The United States must continue to support the efforts of the people of El Salvador to ensure political stability and the strengthening of the democratic process.

This progress however is being threatened in the wake of Hurricane Mitch. It is paramount that the United States take the lead in helping the region recover from the devastation of the hurricane. If it does not, we risk the unraveling of a fragile democracy and a return to the political instability that the region experienced for decades and threatened our national interests.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution congratulating the people and government of El Salvador on the free and democratic elections held last month.

The people of El Salvador know that the transition to democracy is rarely easy. However, in only a few short years, El Salvador has made great progress. Both international and domestic observers agree that the recent multiparty Presidential and Vice Presidential elections were free and fair.

These elections showed the strength and diversity of El Salvador's new democracy. They showed that political parties can engage in the type of substantive, peaceful debate that would have been unheard of only a few years ago.

But the demands of democracy do not stop with free elections. El Salvador has shown a commitment to democratic ideals by embracing a free press, freedom of religion, and freedom of association. Because there is no government in the world today that couldn't benefit from improvement, I encourage the people and government of El Salvador to seize upon their recent success and work toward improving their new democracy and the rule of law.

Mr. Speaker, dozens of nations are at a crossroads today. Because democracies are not always neat and tidy, many will be tempted to take the easy path. But the easy path leads toward authoritarianism and inevitably to exploitation. The path toward democracy is sometimes difficult and it is often unsightly. But El Salvador's success stands out as an example of what can be accomplished by choosing the path toward democracy.

Today we congratulate those who have made democracy possible in El Salvador.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 110.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONGRATULATING QATAR FOR COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC IDEALS AND WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 35) congratulating the State of Qatar and its citizens for their commitment to democratic ideals and women's suffrage on the occasion of Qatar's historic elections of a central municipal council on March 8, 1999, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 35

Whereas His Highness, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, the Emir of Qatar, issued a decree creating a central municipal council, the first of its kind in Qatar;

Whereas on March 8, 1999, the people of the State of Qatar held direct elections for a central municipal council;

Whereas the central municipal council has been structured to have members from 29 election districts serving 4-year terms;

Whereas Qatari women were granted the right to participate in this historic first municipal election, both as candidates and voters;

Whereas this election demonstrates the strength and diversity of the State of Qatar's commitment to democratic expression;

Whereas the United States highly values democracy and women's rights;

Whereas March 8 is recognized as International Women's Day, and is an occasion to assess the progress of the advancement of women and girls throughout the world; and

Whereas this historic event of democratic elections and women's suffrage in the State of Qatar should be honored: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) commends His Highness, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, the Emir of Qatar, for his leadership and commitment to suffrage and the principles of democracy;

(2) congratulates the citizens of the State of Qatar as they celebrate the historic election for a central municipal council; and

(3) reaffirms that the United States is strongly committed to encouraging the suffrage of women, democratic ideals, and peaceful development throughout the Middle East.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter into the RECORD

and say the remarks that the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), were he here, would be delivering. He is at the White House today. I would like to give his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us today is House Concurrent Resolution 35, a concurrent resolution congratulating the State of Qatar and its citizens for their commitment to democratic ideals and women's suffrage on the occasion of Qatar's historic elections of a central municipal council on March 8, 1999.

The gentleman from New York is the primary sponsor of this measure and wanted to particularly thank the co-chairs of the Congressional Women's Caucus, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY), for their support for these elections and their cosponsorship of this resolution.

Qatar is a strong ally of the United States in the Persian Gulf and is moving toward the 21st century under the leadership of His Highness, Sheikh Hamad, the Emir of Qatar. That leadership includes expanding the civic contribution to Qatar's governance.

Our colleagues will agree that the United States highly values democracy and women's rights. So we were more than pleased to learn of the successful municipal elections that Qatar had conducted in which women, as well as men, were granted the right to vote and run as candidates.

House Concurrent Resolution 35 applauds the Emir of Qatar for his leadership and commends the citizens of Qatar for participating in this important civic function. Clearly, this election demonstrates the strength and diversity of the State of Qatar's commitment to democratic expression.

House Concurrent Resolution 35 also reaffirms that the United States is strongly committed to encouraging the suffrage of women, of democratic ideals, and peaceful development throughout the Middle East.

We therefore were pleased to learn that the Qatari Government is in the process of drafting a constitution. This document, once adopted, will cause the creation of a Qatari parliament.

Mr. Speaker, in discussions with Qatari officials, they informed us that the State of Qatar considers the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as their structural model. Congress therefore looks forward to these developments and to maintaining and strengthening its relationship with Qatar.

House Concurrent Resolution 35 celebrates an important milestone in the development of Qatar, and I urge our colleagues to join me in extending our congratulations to all its citizens by lending their support to this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 35, regarding the recent historic