

long. It has exploited a weak Lebanese Government and has used the façade of public service and charity work to buy favor amongst the people of southern Lebanon. Efforts now must be focused on helping to create the conditions within which the Lebanese Government can build the legitimacy and capacity it will need to establish peace within its borders. This will make Israel safer and will contribute to longer term peace efforts throughout the region. That won't happen unless the international community, led by the United States, helps create the conditions within which the Lebanese Government can do its job.

#### AFRICAN UNION

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, the African Union is essential to the political and economic development of Africa's diverse community of States. It has become clear that the AU represents a real commitment by its members to establishing a forum for political dialogue and to address the challenges and seize opportunities that are arising throughout the continent.

The AU plays three very specific roles that I will highlight as we consider the nomination of the United States' first ambassador and as we renew our efforts to strengthen our relationship with the AU.

The AU is primed to serve as the primary forum for establishing peace and preventing conflict throughout the continent. I applaud the efforts of the leaders of the AU to establish a true capacity to prevent and end conflict that has devastated many parts of the continent for too long. The creation of the Peace and Security Council, PSC, within the AU is particularly valuable, and I hope this organ within the AU develops sufficient capacity to deal with the full range of conflict throughout the continent. It is essential that the PSC complete its work in developing a series of early warning systems and indicators so that it can be effective in preventing conflict. It also must develop a real capacity to respond to conflict should one occur. The Panel of the Wise, too, is an important source of moral authority and opportunity for prominent African leaders to engage in country-specific conflicts without sacrificing neutrality or threatening the sovereignty of a nation.

As we have learned from recent years in places such as Sudan and Somalia, it is critical that there be a way to identify, understand, and respond to the conditions that breed instability. The United States should support this conflict prevention and resolution capacity and work closely with the AU to identify weaknesses or shortfalls that exist in maximizing the AU's ability to fulfill these important functions.

The United States must also support the AU's efforts to establish an African Standby Force that can participate in peace operations, intervention, and conflict monitoring. The AU and its

members have proven a willingness and commitment to contributing military forces to AU-flagged missions throughout the continent. AU forces are operational in Darfur and in Burundi and have proven that they are willing to take on challenging assignments in nonpermissive environments. Unfortunately, the AU still does not have the capacity to fully implement the vision for the African Standby Force, nor to effectively complete its mission in Darfur. The United States should assist the AU in developing a professional, deployment-ready standby force that can respond to conflict and that can participate in interventions to establish peace in areas already facing conflict. We must continue our efforts to help African militaries develop their capacity, while also urging the importance of the respect for human rights, civilian leadership, and fighting corruption.

Finally, the AU is playing an increasingly important role in defeating terrorist networks throughout the African continent. As terrorist networks exploit undergoverned or unstable areas throughout Africa, the AU can play an important role in helping member States develop internal capacity to defeat the conditions that allow terrorists to take root. The AU also can strengthen member-State networks to share information, best practices, and even capacity as it relates to understanding, and ultimately defeating, terrorist networks. The African Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism, ACSRT, a joint AU Commission/PSC structure, was launched in 2004 but lacks sufficient capacity to carry out its broad mission. It is a good first step, but it will need assistance from the United States, the European Union, and other members of the international community. Establishing this capacity must also be a priority for the AU's member states.

There are a range of other challenges facing the AU, and there is no doubt a long list of priorities to be addressed. And while the United States has and will continue to support a range of AU efforts, it is essential that the U.S. Government structure its assistance to the AU to help empower it as an organization, support its priorities, and help to develop an internal capacity to plan for its growth and role in the coming years. I hope that the fact that we are sending our first ambassador to the AU will represent a heightened level of engagement with the AU and a renewed commitment to helping the AU, its member states, and the people of the African continent address the challenges of the 21st century.

#### FOREIGN SERVICE FAMILY LOSSES

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, Monday, August 7, was the eighth anniversary of the bombings of our Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam of August 7, 1998. On that dreadful day, the lives of 12 Americans, 11 Tanzanians, and 212

Kenyans were tragically taken; more than 4,000 injured. The names of 56 killed U.S. Government employees—Americans, Kenyans, and Tanzanians—are memorialized on a plaque on a wall in the State Department. I want to take this opportunity to extend my deepest sympathies and condolences to the families and friends of those who died and to those who were injured. We continue to mourn their loss. Their memories will remain eternal. And we pray for strength for those who are still suffering.

At this time, I also want to express my heartfelt sympathy for another great loss in the Foreign Service family, the matriarch of America's diplomats, Ambassador Mary Ryan. I, as well as all those who knew her, was deeply saddened to hear of Mary's passing on April 25.

During my days with the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Mary and I worked closely together in response to the 1993 World Trade Center bombings by aggressively introducing technology data systems, such as the TIPOFF lookout system, and strengthening interagency information sharing to identify potential terrorists as they applied for visas to our great Nation. In the aftermath of the August 7 bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, and then after 9/11, our paths crossed again, as we, together, tackled the visa and border security challenges of our day. Mary's dedication to and love for her nation was always very evident during these trying times.

As the longest-serving diplomat at the time of her departure from the State Department, Mary served 36 years in her distinguished public service career. Mary entered the Foreign Service in 1966 serving in Naples, Tegucigalpa, Monterrey, Washington, Abidjan, and Khartoum before being appointed ambassador to Swaziland in 1988. In 1993, she became the Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs and in 1999 she was named career ambassador, only the second woman to hold the rank in the history of the State Department.

A mentor to generations in the Foreign Service, particularly women, Mary Ryan was truly an outstanding American diplomat and public servant. Mary donated much of her time to those in need, extending a uniquely kind, generous and warm spirit that will be missed by all.

The Nation owes a deep debt of gratitude to these fine men and women who serve our Nation's interests overseas and their families. And I want to thank them for their public service and dedication to our fine Nation.

#### PENSION PROTECTION ACT OF 2006

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I would like to begin by commending Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Chairman ENZI, Senate HELP Committee Ranking Member KENNEDY, and the rest of my