

As section 102 of this act points out, since 1998 40,000 women and children have been brutally raped in large part by those involved in security for the country. I believe that it is essential for us to take this very small amount of money and do everything that we can in our quest to make sure that that four-decade history is history and that it never repeats itself at all. I believe that this measure which enjoys strong bipartisan support can send a signal.

I am very pleased to work closely with my colleague from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) with our House Democracy Assistance Commission. I am going to be speaking about that on the next measure we bring forward, but I happen to believe as we look at the House Democracy Assistance Commission in its effort to build up parliaments in emerging, new and reemerging democracies, it is important for us to look at countries that will be natural partners of ours in this quest to build these parliaments. I think that the Democratic Republic of the Congo, along with Kenya, which we are working with on the continent of Africa, and Liberia will potentially be a prime candidate for us to partner with in building that, and I know I will be working with Mr. PRICE on that in the coming months.

This measure is a very important first step, and I join in congratulating the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo for taking that step towards free and fair elections and look forward to their continued success and obviously this multilateral approach which the act calls for, getting other countries involved, will I believe go a long way towards helping them.

I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 2125, the "Democratic Republic of the Congo Relief, Security, and Democracy Promotion Act of 2006."

Three years after the end of "Africa's World War" and having conducted the most logistically complicated election in history, the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC, faces its best chance for peace and progress since independence. However, credible mortality studies estimate that over 1,000 people continue to die each day from conflict-related causes, mostly disease and malnutrition, and pervasive state weakness threatens backsliding and a return to wide-spread violence. The international community has played a critical role in supporting the DRC until this point, and with the inauguration of the new democratically elected government, such support will be even more important going forward.

I am particularly proud of the role played by Lisa Shannon, a constituent of mine and the founder of Run for Congo Women. After learning about the Congo on Oprah, Lisa decided to do a solo, 31 mile run on Portland's Wildwood Trail to raise money for Women for Women International's work in Congo. Just over a year later, Run for Congo Women has blossomed into a global effort to raise awareness and support the women of the DRC. Lisa has tirelessly walked the halls of Congress to promote the bill we're passing today and is a shining example of the difference that one committed individual can make.

□ 1945

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, we have no additional requests for time. We yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, we likewise yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WAMP). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 2125, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR LEBANON'S DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1088) expressing support for Lebanon's democratic institutions and condemning the recent terrorist assassination of Lebanese parliamentarian and Industry Minister Pierre Amin Gemayel.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 1088

Whereas on November 21, 2006 Pierre Gemayel, a Member of the March 14 parliamentary coalition, was assassinated in New Jdeidé, north of Beirut, Lebanon;

Whereas a series of targeted attacks and killings of public leaders working to promote democracy and autonomy in Lebanon has placed a heavy toll on Lebanon's intellectual and democratic freedoms;

Whereas the prosecution by the proposed International Independent Investigation Commission of persons accused in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri could deter future assassinations;

Whereas Pierre Gemayel was born on September 24, 1972 into a prominent Lebanese family;

Whereas Pierre Gemayel was first elected to the Lebanese Parliament in 2000;

Whereas Pierre Gemayel was named Minister of Industry in the Lebanese Government in 2005;

Whereas Amine Gemayel, the father of Pierre Gemayel and former President of Lebanon, has urged the Phalange party supporters and all Lebanese citizens to promote cooperation and solidarity and hamper attempts to instigate civil strife;

Whereas, on November 21, 2006, following Pierre Gemayel's assassination, President George W. Bush stated that "the United States remains fully committed to supporting Lebanon's independence and democracy in the face of attempts by Syria, Iran, and their allies within Lebanon to foment instability and violence";

Whereas supporting the development of democratic institutions in Lebanon is critical to promoting the interests of the United States in the Middle East region, building upon the momentum of the March 14, 2005 "Cedar Revolution," fighting terrorism, and supporting negotiations for peace in the region; and

Whereas the House Democracy Assistance Commission has worked in partnership with the Lebanese Parliament to strengthen its

institutional capacity, and met with Pierre Gemayel during the Commission's delegation to Lebanon in July 2006: Now, therefore be it Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) Expresses its condolences for this heinous crime to the people of Lebanon and to the members of Lebanon's Cabinet in which Pierre Gemayel served with distinction;

(2) Affirms its support for the international tribunal to try suspects in the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri;

(3) Urges that the perpetrators of the assassination of Pierre Gemayel be brought to justice;

(4) Conveys concern regarding the increasing polarization of Lebanon's religious sects and calls on the Government of Lebanon to actively pursue electoral reform as a first step in reducing confessional tensions;

(5) Recognizes that a regional peace in the Middle East will greatly contribute to Lebanon's long-term security and stability; and

(6) Reaffirms the commitment of the United States to support and promote the development of autonomous, effective democratic institutions in Lebanon, including an independent Parliament and a strong central government that represent and serve the interests of the Lebanese people.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 1088, expressing support for Lebanon's democratic institutions and condemning the recent assassinations of Lebanese parliamentarian and Industry Minister Pierre Amin Gemayel.

Mr. Gemayel's brutal murder serves as yet another example of the Syria regime's pattern of assassinations of Lebanese dissidents and political figures who seek full Lebanese sovereignty and independence from nefarious outside forces as Syria and Iran.

This resolution appropriately urges those responsible for Mr. Gemayel's murder to be brought to justice and expresses condolences to the people of Lebanon for his death.

The resolution reiterates our commitment for a fully sovereign independent Lebanon, and calls on the Lebanese Government to implement the necessary electoral reforms for Lebanon to achieve such autonomy, develop its democratic institutions, and help reduce the increasing sectarian divisions.

Mr. Gemayel's murder was a deplorable act of cowardice aimed at undermining Lebanon's sovereignty and destroying its democratic institutions. It should move the United Nations to once and for all hold Syria accountable for the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Responsible nations must realize that Syria and Iran kill, destroy, and seek instability in places like Lebanon so that they may gain yet more power and influence in the region. We must not allow this to continue.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution reflects our sorrow, our anguish, and our resolve following the recent assassination of Lebanese Minister of Industry, Pierre Gemayel.

I felt this loss personally. Pierre was the son of former Lebanese President Amin Gemayel and the grandson of one of the most significant figures of modern Lebanese history, his namesake, Pierre Gemayel, our friends.

Mr. Speaker, it is a coincidence that we are considering this resolution on the day when the Iraq Study Group has released its much anticipated report. As we all know, the Iraq Study Group calls for the United States to engage with all regional parties, including Syria and Iran. I have been in the forefront of those urging that we engage even with our enemies. That is why I have met repeatedly with the leaders of Syria and North Korea, and that is why I have consistently, if unsuccessfully, sought a visa to visit Iran, and that is why I applauded the successful example of our engagement that resulted in Libya's peaceful divestment of its weapons of mass destruction materials.

As former Secretary of State James Baker said in a briefing for our leadership this morning, the policy of isolating states like Syria, and I quote, "has brought us nothing."

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, Damascus and Tehran should not misunderstand the intentions of those of us who support dialogue. We are not going to stray one iota from our core commitments. There will be no compromise on terrorism or nuclear arms, or the security of the State of Israel or on Lebanese sovereignty and democracy, or on the international tribunal to investigate the shameful assassinations of Hariri, Gemayel, and other Lebanese patriots in recent years.

For those of us who support dialogue, the message of this resolution is that dialogue does not mean capitulation. By passing this resolution, Mr. Speaker, our body will make clear that we staunchly oppose the sinister designs of Iran and Syria to destabilize Lebanon, particularly through the blood-thirsty instrument of Hezbollah.

Syria will pay a heavy price if it does not cease its relentless campaign of intimidation and destabilization in Lebanon and if it refuses to cooperate with the Hariri investigation and the international tribunal.

This most recent Gemayel assassination was a crime against a man and his family, but most of all against the Lebanese nation. As our resolution makes clear, the perpetrators must be brought to justice. We don't know who pulled the trigger, but we have the strongest of suspicions about who gave the orders.

The Gemayel murder is one of more than a half a dozen political assassinations or attempted assassinations in

Lebanon since the tragic killing of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri along with his compatriots last year. All the victims, Mr. Speaker, share a common profile: They supported democracy, and they outspokenly opposed Syrian and Iranian designs on their nation.

Mr. Speaker, I visited Lebanon just some weeks ago. I met with Prime Minister Fuad Siniora and many of his colleagues who are members of the March 14th Movement, which forms the core of his government. While we did not agree about every issue regarding Lebanon and the region, this much I can tell you: These people have made a courageous commitment to the sovereignty of their nation. They have done so in the face of threats to their lives and the loss of their comrades, and they are stalwart democrats. I came away convinced that this government deserves our strongest support.

Mr. Speaker, by adopting this resolution, we can firmly declare support for the democratically elected Lebanese Government and for all democratically thinking Lebanese. I urge that we do so. I urge all of my colleagues to support our resolution.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the author of this resolution, Mr. DREIER of California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my appreciation to the very distinguished subcommittee chairman as well as to my friend from California (Mr. LANTOS) again, as soon-to-be chairman of the International Relations Committee.

This resolution I am very pleased to have introduced along with my colleague DAVID PRICE with whom I serve as cochair of the House Democracy Assistance Commission.

As I look across the aisle, I see my friend ALCEE HASTINGS with whom I sit on the Rules Committee, and I am reminded of the first trip that we made to Beirut. It was a year ago this past spring, shortly after the March 14th Movement and the Cedar Revolution began. We had the chance to visit the widow of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and Mr. HASTINGS and the rest of our delegation placed a wreath at the grave of Rafik Hariri in Martyr Square in Beirut, a spot that has gotten a great deal of attention on television just in the past few weeks, very tragically. And as has been pointed out, we have seen now the 16th assassination take place with the tragic murder of Pierre Gemayel, and that is in the last 2 years.

Mr. Speaker, as we look at this challenge, it underscores the fact that the United States of America must, as Mr. LANTOS has just said, reaffirm its strong commitment to the future of Lebanon.

One of the greatest challenges that the Lebanese people have faced in its

relationship with the United States of America has been the issue of uncertainty. In 1983, when we saw the tragic bombing of the Marine barracks, the United States of America withdrew from Lebanon. They have gone through a quarter century of civil war, and they have great challenges in the region. As Mr. LANTOS correctly said, we don't agree with every single policy in Lebanon, and obviously there have been real challenges on their southern border as we know very well. But at the same time, it is absolutely essential that we remember that this is a re-emerging democracy.

This past July, Mr. PRICE and I had the privilege of leading a delegation of our Members representing the House Democracy Assistance Commission. This is a commission that I am very proud was put together by Speaker DENNIS HASTERT and soon-to-be Speaker NANCY PELOSI, and it was established a year ago this past March, and the goal was to take new and re-emerging democracies and work directly with those parliaments that have just been elected.

Now, we all have the privilege of participating in important work in inter-parliamentary exchanges, the European Union, the Bundestag, the DIAG in Japan. I have been part of the U.S.-Mexico interparliamentary conference. But the unique thing about the House Democracy Assistance Commission, we now have a dozen countries with which we are working very closely on this. We have been able to take these newly elected parliamentarians and do as Mr. PRICE and I and our delegation did in Lebanon for 2 days: work with them on the building of their committee structure, their very important oversight of the executive branch, the building of their libraries, putting into place a budget process.

And that is exactly what we were doing this past July in Lebanon. And we, of course, since our trip in July, have seen a very tragic time in Lebanon. In fact, it was just days after we left that we saw Hezbollah engage in the kidnapping of those Israeli defense forces troops in southern Lebanon, and we all know what happened after that. And there was a sense that a degree of stability was coming to Lebanon within the past several weeks and the last couple of months; and then, of course, we got the tragic news that led to Mr. PRICE and my authoring this very important measure, underscoring how important it is as we look at the tragic assassination of Minister Gemayel that we need to do all that we can, all that we can, to make sure that Lebanon's future is a bright one.

□ 2000

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure. I thank again Mr. PRICE and all of the Members of our Democracy Assistance Commission for the fine work and effort that they put into this, and to say again that we

are going to reaffirm with this resolution our commitment to the future of Lebanon.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield to my distinguished friend from North Carolina, Mr. DAVID PRICE, who serves as the ranking member of the Democracy Assistance Commission, as much time as he may consume.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and am proud to add my voice of commendation in support of House Resolution 1088, which I have cosponsored with the gentleman from California, chairman of the House Democracy Assistance Commission.

In July, I traveled with the commission to Beirut to initiate a partnership with the Lebanese Parliament. While there, I had an opportunity to have lunch with Pierre Gemayel. I was struck then by his charismatic personality and his enthusiasm over the prospects for real reform in Lebanon.

In many ways, Pierre Gemayel represented the promise of Lebanon's future. A strong advocate of democratic governance in Lebanon, he shook off the constraints of confessionalism to battle side by side with Christians, Sunni and Shia Muslims to guarantee Lebanon's sovereignty against the persisting threat of Syrian domination.

Pierre Gemayel was named to lead the Industry Ministry in the wake of the Cedar Revolution demonstrations of March 14, 2005 and the subsequent national elections which brought to power a cross-sectarian coalition of pro-democracy politicians, determined to reform the Lebanese Government to make it strong and effective and to resist foreign domination.

Our Nation celebrated the courage of the Lebanese people in registering their demand for democratic government in these elections, but we have not done enough since the elections to support the democratic institutions and leaders like Pierre Gemayel have worked to strengthen.

This resolution before us sends a clear signal that the United States must do more to support these institutions if we hope to help the Lebanese people achieve their dreams.

I thank my colleague, DAVID DRIER of California, for his strong leadership as chairman of our House Democracy Assistance Commission. This commission, as he has stated, has allowed Members of this body to work colleague to colleague to strengthen the Lebanese Parliament and other parliaments in emerging democracies. I look forward to joining with him in the next Congress to continue this important work.

And I join my colleagues in expressing condolences to the Gemayel family and the people of Lebanon on their tragic loss. We must also acknowledge that Mr. Gemayel is but the latest in a succession of leaders recently martyred in Lebanon because of their fight for democracy, beginning with former

Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. We must fight to bring justice to the perpetrators of these crimes and to bring fulfillment to the goals these pro-democracy leaders have sought.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the resolution and to support efforts to strengthen democratic institutions in Lebanon.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, 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. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H. Res. 1088.

The question was taken. The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those voting have responded in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. 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 question will be postponed.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 5385. An act making appropriations for the military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendments to the bill (H.R. 5385) "An Act making appropriations for military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes", requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints

Mr. HUTCHISON, Mr. BURNS, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. BROWNBAC, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. STEVENS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. INOUE, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BYRD, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. HARKIN, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

CONDEMNING IRAN'S COMMITMENT TO HOLD INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST DENIAL CONFERENCE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1091) con-

demning in the strongest terms Iran's commitment to hold an international Holocaust denial conference on December 11-12, 2006, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 1091

Whereas Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has expressed his intention to hold an international Holocaust denial conference entitled "Study of Holocaust: A Global Perspective", to begin on December 11, 2006, in Tehran;

Whereas in August 2006, Iran staged an international contest of cartoons on the Holocaust, endorsing and promoting prevailing anti-Semitic and anti-Israeli stereotypes and Holocaust denial;

Whereas Mahmoud Ahmadinejad wrote in a letter in July 2006 to German Chancellor Angela Merkel, "Is it not a reasonable possibility that some countries that had won the war (World War II) made up this excuse to constantly embarrass the defeated people . . . to bar their progress.;"

Whereas on October 26, 2005, in a conference entitled, "The World without Zionism", President Ahmadinejad stated in a speech that "Israel must be wiped off the map.;"

Whereas thereafter, these anti-Semitic comments were broadly condemned by the United Nations and others, including in a measure passed by a unanimous vote of the United States House of Representatives on October 28, 2005;

Whereas Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's current intent to host an international Holocaust denial conference is only the latest in a series of threatening, anti-Semitic, Holocaust denial statements and actions he has undertaken since assuming power;

Whereas to deny the Holocaust's occurrence is in itself an act of anti-Semitism;

Whereas one who denies the Holocaust, denies the greatest modern tragedy of the Jewish people and the most extreme act of anti-Semitism in modern history;

Whereas Ahmadinejad's statements and actions occur in the midst of Iran's relentless defiance of the international community by rejecting nuclear nonproliferation standards and the latest United Nations Security Council demand that Iran immediately halt its efforts to enrich uranium; and

Whereas the longstanding policy of the Iranian regime aimed at destroying the democratic State of Israel, highlighted by statements made by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, underscores the threat posed by a nuclear Iran: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns in the strongest terms Iran's commitment to hold an international Holocaust denial conference on December 11-12, 2006, and any and all anti-Semitic statements made by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and other Iranian leaders;

(2) reaffirms the United States commitment to prevent a nuclear Iran;

(3) calls on the United Nations to officially and publicly repudiate all of Iran's anti-Semitic statements made at such conference and hold accountable United Nations member states that encourage or echo such statements;

(4) calls on the United Nations Security Council to strengthen its commitment to taking measures necessary to prevent Iran from possessing nuclear power;

(5) reaffirms the United States longstanding friendship with and support for the State of Israel; and

(6) vows to never forget the murder of millions in the Holocaust and affirms its commitment to ensuring that such genocide never happen again.