

Dimension of Security along with DENNIS MOORE, JOHN SHIMKUS, JEFF MILLER, JOHN BOOZMAN, BEN CHANDLER, and CAROLYN MCCARTHY who were all re-elected as Vice-Chairpersons of their respective Committees. Our colleague MIKE ROSS was also re-elected as the Rapporteur for the Political Committee's subcommittee on Transatlantic Relations. Our newest additions to the officer list include MIKE TURNER who was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Science and Technology Committee and DAVID SCOTT who was elected as a Rapporteur also on the Science and Technology Committee.

In sum, Madam Speaker, the fall session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Edinburgh was a success and as President of the Assembly, I took pride in the deliberations and participation of the delegates from all 28 member nations and our associate and observer members. For Members of the House or Senate interested in reading the Committee reports or presentations mentioned in this statement, they are all available on the NPA web site at [www.nato-pa.int](http://www.nato-pa.int). I also want to take this opportunity to thank Dana Linnet, and Don Pena and all of the fine men and women of our embassy in London and Consulate in Edinburgh for the wonderful job they did assisting the delegation.

#### BELFAST

Prior to the NATO PA plenary, the U.S. delegation traveled to Belfast, Northern Ireland. The delegation received a country briefing, which included a general overview of the history and the current political and economic situation in North Ireland, from our Consul General Kamala Lakhdir and Deputy Consul General Kevin Roland. One of the main issues discussed was the need to resolve remaining challenges related to policing and justice. The briefers expressed the hope that more progress will be made on those fronts in the next few months. The delegation held bilateral meetings in Belfast in order to demonstrate support for the fragile peace process and assess growing economic development opportunities. At the Northern Ireland Policing Board, the delegation spoke with senior officials, police officers, and politicians regarding its work overseeing the Police Service of Northern Ireland. We discussed the increasing participation of Catholic police officers, efforts to improve community policing as a means of building trust within all neighborhoods, and remaining challenges regarding the contentious issue of devolving policing and justice issues from London to Belfast.

The delegation spent several hours at the Stormont Assembly holding discussions with First Minister Peter Robinson, Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, and Speaker William Hay. These political leaders were frank about the challenges still facing Northern Ireland, particularly as regards policing matters. However, they also stressed the importance of economic development, jobs and infrastructure for enabling future progress. The delegation then observed a plenary debate in the Assembly.

Members saw first-hand efforts to stimulate economic development, including the attraction of foreign direct investment, in Northern Ireland. They visited Titanic Quarter, the largest commercial development site in Europe. The 186 acres will be developed as a blue-chip technology district, including apartments, a film studio, an entertainment section, and an

exhibition of the ship's history. The delegation also spoke with officials at the Northern Ireland Science Park who are working to bring together venture capitalists and entrepreneurs.

In addition, the delegation observed a community event which included a basketball game between Catholic and Protestant teenage girls organized by an American NGO called Peace Players. Sponsored by the Belfast Lord Mayor on the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the event was held at the Peace Walls that still divide the communities of Belfast. The Members also visited a cultural center in West Belfast (Catholic/Nationalist area), where Gerry Adams (MP-Sinn Fein party) stopped by and made brief remarks. Normandy

Madam Speaker, as has been a tradition with the U.S. delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly when we travel to Europe over either Veteran's Day or Memorial Day, the delegation makes an effort to visit a U.S. cemetery to pay our respects to our service men and women. On this occasion, we visited Normandy, holding a solemn commemorative ceremony and laying a wreath at the memorial in the American Cemetery. These visits are perhaps the most memorable and poignant moments of the delegation's trip. As our colleagues know, the critical WWII European campaign was launched on the bloody beaches of Normandy and eventually resulted in the defeat of the Nazi regime. The delegation visited the resting place of almost 9,400 U.S. soldiers, sailors, and airman who died in the liberation of France, and Europe, on Omaha and Utah beaches. The beautiful cemetery and visitors' facility overlooking Omaha Beach and the Ranger monument at Pointe du Hoc are managed by the U.S. American Battle Monuments Commission. We were deeply honored to visit the cemetery and want to thank Mr. Dan Neese, the Cemetery Superintendent, for his hospitality and the fine job he and his staff do to preserve the memory of those U.S. servicemen who gave their lives in such a noble cause. We also wish to recognize and thank Anaëlle Ferrand, our Control Officer, and Walter Frankland, Deputy Chief of Staff, European region of the American Battle Monuments Commission for their fine assistance during our brief stay.

#### SCOTLAND

The delegation was pleased to receive a briefing by U.S. Consul General Dana Linnet (Principal Officer). Linnet gave a brief overview of some of the economic and political issues relating to Scotland, including the issue of devolution. The delegation also held several bilateral meetings in Edinburgh. We met with Scottish Justice Minister Kenny MacAskill to discuss his decision to grant compassionate release to Abdel Basset al-Megrahi, the convicted bomber of Pan Am flight 103 that exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland. We expressed our deep disappointment regarding the Minister's decision, raising numerous issues regarding his handling of the case. We discussed U.S.-Scottish trade and cultural links with officials from the Scottish government, and we spoke about current political developments with the Scottish Parliament's Presiding Officer Alex Fergusson. The delegation was particularly interested to learn about the legislation that called for a referendum on Scotland's independence from the U.K. In addition, the delegation met senior Scottish military officials to discuss challenges facing the

NATO alliance in Afghanistan including public support for the mission in Afghanistan which is low in the U.K. and for which more must be done to strengthen public support for the efforts there.

Madam Speaker, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly provides a unique opportunity for Members of Congress to engage in serious discussions on critical issues with our colleagues from other NATO member states, associate and observer states. I believe our delegation, and thus this Congress, benefits greatly from the information we exchange and the personalities we meet during these meetings. I look forward to our next NATO PA session in February in Brussels, Belgium.

In conclusion, I would like to again acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our Consular staffs in both Belfast and Edinburgh, for their hard work and dedication. I especially want to thank our entire military escort group from the United States Air Force, and Air Force Reserves, including our very fine pilots. Our diplomatic corps and military personnel provide a quiet but invaluable service in ensuring our safety and the success of our delegation business. This group of diplomats, service men and women was no exception. I thank them for their hard work and their dedication to duty.

#### REMEMBERING JODI ESQUIVEL

#### HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 14, 2009*

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, on Friday October 30, 2009 Jodi Esquivel passed away after a two-year long battle with kidney cancer.

Jodi, a middle school English teacher in Nederland, Texas touched many lives in her short 27 years of life. Her smile was infectious and her unwavering strength and endless faith touched all those she met.

In 2007, after suffering months of back pain, Jodi was diagnosed with kidney cancer. She was in the early stages of her second pregnancy when results of an MRI showed a cancerous tumor in her kidney that had spread to her spine in three places.

Jodi leaves behind husband Justin and three year old daughter Hallie. Her family and friends celebrate Jodi for the love she shared with them and the lessons she taught them throughout her life.

#### IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF ADA MARIE HAGAN

#### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 14, 2009*

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Ada Marie Hagan, beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend, whose lived her life with grace, wit, love and passionate commitment to family, community and social justice issues.

The matriarch of her family, Mrs. Hagan grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, the daughter of