

out snail gathering with his son-in-law when he was gunned down as he assumed a position of surrender. Petros' only mistake was that he had wandered across the green line into the occupied area.

Our country must take an active role in stopping these abuses. The illegal occupation of Cyprus must end. The island must be demilitarized. Turkish troops must be forced off the island. The island must be unified, justice must be served, and the President of the United States must make it a foreign policy priority. I urge a vote in support of this resolution and in support of this island in crisis.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. MENENDEZ].

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong support as cosponsor for this resolution and commend the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] for their leadership in bringing it before the House.

On Sunday we commemorated the unhappy anniversary and tragic circumstances of 23 years of division on the island of Cyprus, which has been artificially divided following an invasion by Turkish troops on July 20, 1974. On that date, over 200,000 Greek Cypriots became refugees in their own country and to this date are denied return to their homes. Today, a full 37 percent of the island remains under occupation by Turkish troops which in defiance of United Nations resolutions, now number 35,000, making Cyprus one of the most militarized places in the world.

After 23 years, the people of Cyprus in both communities deserve a solution which will reunite the island, its communities, and its people. As Secretary of State Albright recently pointed out, "U.S.-Cyprus relations extend far beyond the so-called Cyprus problem. *** Cyprus is a valued partner against new global threats." A resolution would strengthen peace and stability in the volatile eastern Mediterranean and significantly advance U.S. national security interests in the region and beyond.

I recently sent a letter to President Clinton with 67 of my colleagues in the House. The letter outlines what we believe should be the parameters of any Cyprus solution. They are that Cyprus should be reunited with a strong federal government in which the federated states derive their powers from the federal constitution, a democratic constitution which would ensure the rights of all of its citizens and communities and which would guarantee the right to private property and free travel to all parts of the country. If Turkey is serious about its commitment to a permanent solution, then it must bring its views into conformity with the United Nations framework on issues of

sovereignty and political equality which they have refused to do.

Cyprus should not be a prisoner to Turkey's objections or threats. This is an opportunity for us to make a difference and the swift passage of this resolution sends a message of Congress' deep desire to see a settlement and the reunification of Cyprus for all of its people.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as an original cosponsor of House Concurrent Resolution 81 to express my strong support for this resolution and to thank my friend from New York, the chairman of the International Relations Committee, for his leadership in bringing this important issue before the House.

For too long, the beautiful Mediterranean country of Cyprus has been politically and physically divided. Last week, a number of my colleagues, led by my good friend Mr. BILIRAKIS, marked the 23d anniversary of the division of Cyprus with a special order. The remarks which were delivered last Thursday clearly showed the commitment and interest that this body has in bringing an end to this deplorable situation. While we welcome the recent efforts undertaken by the Clinton administration, including the appointment of Richard Holbrooke as special envoy, we hope that this will not be just the latest in a long line of failed efforts which lacked the political will to find a just solution to the Cyprus problem. Over the past 20 years, there have been almost continual efforts by the United States and the international community, none of which has achieved the result we hope for.

In our efforts to resolve this problem, we must not forget the history of this issue and the strong feelings that it evokes. By the same token, we must realize that the world has changed dramatically in the past 23 years and the situation that created this division simply no longer exists. The legitimate Government of Cyprus is a thriving democracy with a robust economy and growing international prestige. Cyprus is a candidate to join the European Union in the near future.

Yet this prosperous, democratic country remains, in the north, occupied by 35,000 Turkish troops and divided by U.N. peacekeepers. In the past year, there have been tragic episodes of violence along the Green Line that divides Cyprus, resulting in needless loss of life and heightening of tensions. As you walk the streets of Nicosia, just steps from the pleasant pedestrian square filled with quaint shops and happy tourists you are confronted with U.N. peacekeepers, and beyond them, the forlorn-looking abandoned section of the city located in the buffer zone. This situation seems absurd on its face, and this should be the year that it ends. I hope that this resolution and the attention of the House to the matter will prompt a complete and far-reaching effort by the United States and the international community to demilitarize Cyprus and bring peace to this island once again.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for House Concurrent Resolution 81, a resolution calling for an early initiative to resolve the longstanding conflict on Cyprus.

Twenty-two years ago, Turkey invaded the sovereign Republic of Cyprus, capturing almost 40 percent of the island and driving more than 200,000 Cypriots from their land. Today, in one of the most heavily armed areas on Earth, more than 30,000 Turkish troops continue to occupy the northern part of the island.

Congress, further, still awaits a report by the President on the fate of 5 Americans and more than 1,500 others missing in the wake of the Turkish invasion. The Presidential investigation and upcoming report are being prepared pursuant to a bill I authored in the 103d Congress. Clearly, the status quo on Cyprus is unacceptable.

In 1995, the House of Representatives took an important step in the effort to promote a resolution of the long-standing Cypriot conflict. By passing a resolution which I sponsored calling for the demilitarization of Cyprus, Congress presented an option which would reduce tensions and help remove the oppressive Turkish troops.

Today, Congress is again taking a leading role. In the important resolution now under consideration, Congress urges the President to launch an initiative, in coordination with the United Nations, the European Union, and interested governments to promote a speedy resolution of the Cyprus problem.

President Clinton has already taken the first steps in this regard. By appointing former Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, who negotiated the Dayton Accord on Bosnia, to the post of Special Envoy for Cyprus, the President has selected one of the most able negotiators to handle one of the world's most difficult disputes. With the hopeful entry of Cyprus into the European Union and the recent meeting in New York between Republic of Cyprus President Glafcos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, it is my hope that a new, sustained effort to solve the Cyprus dispute will now help to bring this sad conflict to a just resolution.

I commend Chairman BEN GILMAN and Ranking Minority Member LEE HAMILTON of the International Relations Committee for their fine work on House Concurrent Resolution 81 and urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. SNOWBARGER]. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 81, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

CONGRATULATING EL SALVADOR ON SUCCESSFUL ELECTIONS

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 88) congratulating the Government and the people of the Republic of El Salvador on successfully completing free

and democratic elections on March 16, 1997.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 88

Whereas on March 16, 1997, the Republic of El Salvador successfully completed democratic, multiparty elections for 84 national legislative assembly seats and 262 mayoral and municipal council posts;

Whereas the elections were deemed by international and domestic observers to be free and fair and a legitimate non-violent 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 promotes confidence that all political parties can work cooperatively in the new assembly and at the municipal level; and

Whereas these open, fair, and democratic elections of the new assembly and at the municipal level should be broadly commended: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) congratulates the Government and the people of the Republic of El Salvador for the successful completion of democratic, multiparty elections held on March 16, 1997, for 84 national legislative assembly seats and 262 mayoral and municipal council posts;

(2) 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;

(3) commends all Salvadorans 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 democratic traditions in El Salvador;

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

(5) 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 gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. LUTHER] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN].

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

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BALLENGER] for this bipartisan resolution commending the people of El Salvador. The gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BALLENGER] is a senior member of our Committee on International Relations and we consider him our leading expert on events in Central America. His long-term commitment to that important region gives him unique insight that is a valuable resource to our committee's work.

Mr. Speaker, House Concurrent Resolution 88 congratulates the people and

the Government of El Salvador for taking yet another step on the path to democracy. As a result of the peaceful and fair elections of March 1997, a broader cross section of Salvadoran society has a voice in local government and the national assembly. Because of the March 1997 elections, people who may have felt shut out of the democratic process now have a stake in making democratic government work for them. That is the essence of democracy, which the American people have supported for decades in El Salvador.

Some observers may be disappointed that participation in these elections was down sharply from the 1994 elections, around 37 percent, down from 54 percent 3 years ago. We hope that the more vigorous policy debates taking place today in the more pluralistic national assembly will restore the interest of more Salvadorans in the democratic process.

I would like to especially commend all of the political leaders across the political spectrum who took part in these elections and who have respected the results. We also congratulate President Armando Calderón and all of the officials of his government who conducted these transparent and honest elections.

Mr. Speaker, our Government has supported the cause of representative democracy for several decades in El Salvador. I am pleased to stand with my colleagues today to applaud the people of that great country for showing the world that democracy does work. Once again, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BALLENGER] for bringing this bipartisan resolution before us. I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 88.

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

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of the concurrent resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I first want to commend the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BALLENGER] for introducing this resolution and also the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], chairman of the committee, for pursuing this resolution.

As all of us know, Central America has come a long way in the last several years. Until recently, the region was beset by civil wars and insurgencies. The peace accords were signed just 5 years ago in El Salvador after a very bloody civil war. Today we are commending that country for an election wherein the opposition party, the FMLN, freely and fairly won the second most powerful position in the country, the mayorship of San Salvador.

All sides in El Salvador can now see that change occurs most effectively through the ballot box. That is a clear triumph for democracy, and it is also a remarkable transformation for El Salvador. I am pleased that the U.S. Con-

gress through this resolution is now congratulating the Salvadoran people for making such a transformation.

Yet Central America has a long way to go. The region still struggles with devastating poverty, corruption, common crime, and weak educational institutions. I think, therefore, it is highly appropriate for the United States through this resolution to also pledge our continued commitment to help El Salvador overcome those challenges. I therefore urge adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] who, as we all know, has a long-standing and very distinguished history of involvement on this and other Central America issues.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota for his kind words.

Mr. Speaker, today I am very proud to rise in support of this resolution to recognize El Salvador for its fair and free elections. The people and the leaders of that nation have made a commitment toward peace and justice that just a few years ago seemed impossible. On behalf of the people in this country who feel a great affinity for El Salvador, I rise to thank and also to congratulate them.

As many Members know, I have been in El Salvador many times. Unfortunately, it was not always under the best set of circumstances. The gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MCGOVERN] and I went down to try to solve the murders of the six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter. During those times we met Salvadorans from all walks of life. We met the military leaders, guerrillas, and the everyday working people. I have looked into the scared and often sad faces of the Salvadoran people during their brutal civil war. But I have also seen them since. I have been to El Salvador during peacetime and seen their fear replaced by hope.

Over the last few years, I have developed a great fondness and a great respect for the Salvadoran people, and their most recent democratic election is cause for great celebration.

Mr. Speaker, the results of the March 16 elections literally changed the face of the government in El Salvador. In this very historic election, the Salvadoran people went out and voted without fear of persecution. That may not sound like much here but, believe me, in El Salvador, that is a big, big change.

After the Salvadorans voted, their votes were collected and calculated without widespread claims of fraud, and the once-feared military did not play any role in the elections. In fact, the military is now doing its job of protecting the people, and that, Mr. Speaker, is great cause for hope.

The results of these elections have created the pluralism in El Salvador that we have never seen before. Several opposition parties now control many of

the municipal governments, including several of the most populous municipalities. Opposition party candidates also have made many gains in the assembly. Now the challenge is in the hands of the various parties to work together, build coalitions, and do what is best for all of the people of El Salvador.

Mr. Speaker, they have their work cut out for them. As the country takes on the tremendous challenges of a struggling economy, horrible poverty, a frighteningly high crime rate, and the need for widespread judicial reform, we have to encourage Salvadoran leaders to continue to work together for what is best for all of its citizens. The difference is that today there is hope and political room for positive change.

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Mr. Speaker, it was a pleasure getting to know the people of El Salvador, and I am very honored to have been given that opportunity, and I want to congratulate my friends for their tremendous accomplishment. Today's democratic elections means tomorrow's prosperity.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BALLENGER], the sponsor of this resolution.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, in 1962, 35 years ago, my wife and I went to El Salvador to help in developing their economy. It was peaceful and quiet then, the war had not started, and we have been working ever since to continue that growth and the growth in the democracy.

On June 25, 1997, the Committee on International Relations unanimously passed a resolution that I introduced, House Concurrent Resolution 88, congratulating the government and the people of the Republic of El Salvador on successfully completing free and democratic elections for the fourth time. On March 16, 1997, El Salvador held free and fair elections for 84 national legislative assembly seats, 262 mayoral and municipal council posts. This was yet another milestone in the normalization of the democratic process in El Salvador, and I wish to commend that 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 my colleagues will recall that that war cost the lives of tens of thousands of El Salvadorans and left the country in shambles. Now the Salvadorans have replaced bullets with ballots. It was a strong leadership and guidance coupled with the courage demonstrated by former President Alfredo Cristiani that rescued the country and paved the way for El Salvador's future. He continued to seek peace in spite of the fact that the war continued. His successor, the new President Armando Calderon Sol, elected in a free and fair contest, had the same commitment to democracy and will strive to keep this nation

moving forward in the next century. The stark contrast between war-torn El Salvador and the El Salvador of today is a tribute to its people and its leaders.

In addition to holding successful elections, we see the Salvadoran Government's effort to foster free-market enterprise and privatization of certain industries as part of its move toward a free and fair society. Most importantly, we continue to witness the successful implementation of the 1992 peace accords. I believe the Americans must continue to show support for our Salvadoran neighbors through this long and fragile process, and I hope my colleagues will join me and congratulate El Salvador in this latest and most remarkable accomplishment.

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

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

Again I want to commend the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BALLENGER] for his outstanding leadership on this issue and certainly want to thank him on behalf of the minority caucus for his outstanding leadership and for his understanding of the speakers here today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. MENENDEZ].

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have had the opportunity to work with my colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BALLENGER], to introduce this resolution. El Salvador means "the Savior" in Spanish, and I believe that El Salvador represents hope and salvation for all of Central America.

During the civil war in the 1980's, about 75,000 Salvadorans lost their lives in this country, a small country of 5 million people, but they have managed to find peace, democracy, and a market economy, and today El Salvador leads the region economically with an average annual growth rate of 6 percent in this decade.

This resolution is an expression of good will toward the people of El Salvador and toward President Armando Calderon del Sol who was just recently here, and we have had discussions with him and as he faces the challenges that are still present before El Salvador. But we are confident that El Salvador, as has been mentioned here, will continue to progress, building democratic institutions and improving the lives of the Salvadoran people.

We can do our part by making sure that the seeds of democracy which are taking root in El Salvador are fully cemented, and that is why I want to hail the Attorney General's decision not to deport, not to deport Salvadorans who came to the United States, fleeing from civil war, as a result of our foreign policy in part, and now would

have made a dramatic economic impact on El Salvador if, in fact, they were massively deported. These are people who I believe had rights under the law which were eviscerated under the Immigration Reform Act of last year, and whose rights retroactively should never have been abolished in that manner. In essence, by preserving their opportunity to go ahead and make their case before the Immigration Court of Appeals, this provides an opportunity for El Salvador also to flourish in the process.

So I want to commend all of those and also the Congressional Hispanic Caucus who worked very hard on this with the administration. For our part we want to make sure that the United States Congress and administration provide El Salvador with the necessary resources and the type of policy that continues stability and growth, stability which is clearly in the national interests of the United States in a region that is so close to our borders.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 88.

The question was taken.

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule 1, and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

RESOLUTION REGARDING THE CONGO

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 175) expressing concern over the outbreak of violence in the Republic of Congo and the resulting threat to scheduled elections and constitutional government in that country, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 175

Whereas President Pascal Lissouba defeated former President Denis Sassou-Nguesso in a 1992 election that was determined to be free and fair;

Whereas losing candidates raised questions concerning the results of the 1993 legislative election and used those concerns to cast doubt on the entire democratic process in the Republic of Congo and as the rationale for creating private militias;

Whereas thousands of citizens of the Republic of Congo have been killed in intermittent fighting between Government soldiers and private militiamen since 1993;

Whereas there are concerns about the unfinished census and resulting electoral list to be used in the scheduled July 27 election;

Whereas the recent fighting resulted from the Government's attempt to disarm former