

well as my very good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to thank the gentleman for his remarks earlier, and also the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), as I said, for his leadership and his outstanding statement.

I take particular pleasure in being able to manage this legislation. Not only do we have a significant Lithuanian community in both Lincoln and Omaha, and a small Estonian one in Lincoln; but we have a relatively larger community of Latvians in Lincoln. They came to Nebraska in the early part of the 20th century for freedom, to escape religious persecution, and for economic benefits.

As a part of that immigration, shortly following that was a young dissident from Latvia. His name was Karlis Ulmanis. After receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska, he worked for some time in Nebraska and Texas before returning to Latvia. There he became the president of Latvia between World War I and World War II.

He was long-tenured, and an outstanding and benevolent leader of Latvia during that period of time. When the Soviets came in, they seized him; and that is the last the world knew of what happened to Karlis Ulmanis.

Later, it was only justice that his grandnephew became the recent president of Latvia. For a period of time, his mother and he had to change their name in order to escape persecution from the Soviets. But the second Ulmanis did become a very distinguished and able president, and the Lincoln community is very pleased and proud of both the Ulmanises for their outstanding leadership of Latvia.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I thank my Latvian-American constituents for their outstanding support for the cause of freedom over the years for the Baltic states.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support this resolution and to commend the success the Republic of Latvia has achieved since the May 4, 1990 reestablishment of its full sovereignty and independence from the former Soviet Union.

Since the declaration of its independence, Latvia has established a democratic government, passed legislation on human and minority rights, ensured the rule of law and sustained the development of its free market economy.

Latvia has also consistently pursued a course of integration into the community of free and democratic nations by seeking membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). I support admitting the Baltic states into NATO and I hope my colleagues here in the House will support their entry also in the next round of NATO expansion.

Latvia has made great strides over the last ten years and this resolution helps to highlight

this success. I thank Representative SHIMKUS for his efforts to bring House Concurrent Resolution 319 to the floor and the opportunity to congratulate Latvia on the last ten years of progress.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 319, which congratulates the Republic of Latvia on the 10th anniversary of its independence from the rule of the former Soviet regime.

I am certain that all of us in this Congress appreciate how difficult it has been for countries such as Latvia to move forward with badly-needed political and economic reforms over the last decade.

But, many of us can also recall the terrific challenges the Latvian people and their neighbors in Lithuania and Estonia had to overcome to regain their independence ten years ago.

This Resolution congratulates the Latvian people for their success—against all odds—in regaining their rightful independence, and commends them for carrying forward since then with the reforms that should lay the foundation for their full integration into European and Western institutions.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Resolution and urge my colleagues to join in its adoption.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 319.

The question was taken.

Mr. BEREUTER. 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.

#### CONDEMNING 1994 ATTACK ON AMIA JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER IN BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 531) condemning the 1994 attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, urging the Argentine Government to punish those responsible, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

##### H. RES. 531

Whereas on July 18, 1994, 86 innocent human beings were killed and 300 were wounded when the AMIA Jewish Community Center was bombed in Buenos Aires, Argentina;

Whereas the United States welcomes Argentine President Fernando de la Rúa's political will to pursue the investigation of the bombing of the AMIA Jewish Community Center to its ultimate conclusion;

Whereas circumstantial evidence attributes the attack to the terrorist group Hezbollah, based in Lebanon and sponsored by Iran;

Whereas evidence indicates that this bombing could not have been carried out

without local assistance from elements of the Argentine security forces, some of which are reported to be sympathetic to anti-Semitic positions and to have participated in the desecration of Jewish cemeteries in recent years;

Whereas additional evidence indicates that the tri-border area where Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil meet, and which is known to be rife with terrorist activity as well as drug and arms smuggling, was used to channel resources for the purpose of carrying out the bombing attack;

Whereas the 6 years since the bombing have been marked by efforts to minimize the involvement of these Argentine security elements;

Whereas Argentine officials have acknowledged that there was negligence in the initial phases of the investigation and that the institutional and political conditions must be created to advance the investigation of this terrorist attack;

Whereas failure to duly punish the culprits of this act serves merely to reward these terrorists and help spread the scourge of terrorism throughout the Western Hemisphere;

Whereas the democratic leaders of the Western Hemisphere issued mandates at the 1994 and 1998 Summits of the Americas that they condemn terrorism in all its forms and that they will, using all legal means, combat terrorist acts anywhere in the Americas with unity and vigor;

Whereas the Government of Argentina supports the 1996 Declaration of Lima To Prevent, Combat and Eliminate Terrorism, which refers to terrorism as a serious form of organized and systematic violence that is intended to generate chaos and fear among the population, results in death and destruction, and is a reprehensible criminal activity, as well as the 1998 Commitment of Mar del Plata which calls terrorist acts serious common crimes that erode peaceful and civilized coexistence, affect the rule of law and the exercise of democracy, and endanger the stability of democratically elected constitutional governments and the socioeconomic development of our countries;

Whereas the Government of Argentina was successful in enacting a law on cooperation from defendants in terrorist matters, a law that will be helpful in pursuing full prosecution in this and other terrorist cases; and

Whereas it is the long-standing policy of the United States to stand firm against terrorist attacks wherever and whenever they occur and to work with its allies to ensure that justice is done: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reiterates its condemnation of the attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in July 1994, and honors the victims of this heinous act;

(2) strongly urges the Government of Argentina to fulfill its international obligations and its promise to the Argentine people by pursuing the local and international connections to this act of terrorism, wherever they may lead, and to duly punish all those who were involved;

(3) calls on the President to continue to raise this issue in bilateral discussions with Argentine officials and to underscore the United States concern regarding the 6-year delay in the resolution of this case;

(4) recommends that the United States Representative to the Organization of American States seek support from the countries comprising the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism to assist, if required by the Government of Argentina, in the investigation of this terrorist attack;

(5) encourages the President to direct United States law enforcement agencies to

provide support and cooperation to the Government of Argentina, if requested, for purposes of the investigation into this bombing and terrorist activities in the tri-border area; and

(6) desires a lasting, warm relationship between the United States and Argentina built on mutual abhorrence of terrorism and commitments to peace, stability, and democracy in the Western Hemisphere.

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).

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 House Resolution 531.

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, tomorrow marks the sixth anniversary of the heinous terrorist act against the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Six years ago, on July 18, 1994, a dark cloud of fear and anguish enveloped this South American city when 86 innocent human beings, including frail little girls and boys, were killed, and 300 were wounded as a result of the bombing.

However, 6 years later, Mr. Speaker, sorrow, despair and frustration still permeate the air. Six years later, justice, peace, and security continue to be elusive abstract concepts. But as Argentina's current president, Fernando de la Rúa, has stated, it is imperative to keep the memory alive, because forgetfulness is a shelter for impunity.

This leads to the primary reason why I introduced this resolution, to renew and redirect international attention in order to ensure that justice will be finally served. Further, this resolution serves to honor and remember the victims; to outline the evidence supporting the international and local connections to the bombing; to bring to the forefront reported attempts by elements of the Argentine security forces to derail the main investigation by hiding evidence and creating false leads.

The need to effectively address the alleged Argentine participation for this terrorist act was underscored by the de la Rúa administration in April of this year when it established a task force to look into the corrupt police officers and their possible role in the financing of the attack, in providing the vehicle used in the bombing. This task force will also pursue undeveloped leads and information regarding the inter-

national Iranian terrorist network which has orchestrated and carried out horrific acts against defenseless human beings.

□ 1630

It was clear from the onset that this attack and the earlier one on the Israeli Embassy were part of a campaign of violence targeted at the Jewish community in Argentina and throughout the world by radical militant groups in the Middle East. Circumstantial evidence would later support this connection, attributing the bombing to the terrorist group Hezbollah based in Lebanon and sponsored by Iran.

Additional evidence indicates that the tri-border area, where Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil meet, were used to channel resources for the purpose of carrying out this terrorist attack. Other circumstantial data indicates that this bombing could not have been carried out without local assistance from elements of the Argentine security forces. This link was supported by the indictment of 15 military and police officers, with five described as "necessary parties to the bombing" charged with multiple counts of murder, conspiracy and corruption.

The wounds will not begin to heal until the investigation into the AMIA bombing is pursued with vigor and determination and until effective action is taken by all to ensure that justice is served. The scars will serve as a constant reminder of the need for vigilance in our hemisphere, of the need for democratic countries to unite in condemning such horrid acts and work together to protect the right of every citizen in every society to live in peace and liberty free from the threat of terrorism.

This resolution is an important first step toward achieving that goal. It is a call to action. It sends an unequivocal message to all that the United States considers the resolution of this case to be a priority, that it is prepared to take the necessary steps to ensure this end, working both with regional neighbors as well as with the Argentine government, providing them with assistance when requested.

Six years have passed. We cannot wait any longer. It is time for the rule of law to be seen and to be heard in this important case. We cannot allow justice to be held captive by inaction.

For the sake of the victims, for the sake of hemispheric and global security, and for the sake of justice, I ask our colleagues to support this resolution today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, first I want to commend my very good friend and distinguished colleague from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for crafting a very important, very powerful, and very eloquent resolution. And, of course, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, a dark cloud hangs over the honor of Argentina. This neighbor of ours in this hemisphere has tolerated now two heinous terrorist acts, a terrorist act against the Embassy of Israel and the terrorist act against the Jewish Community Center in Argentina, to go unpunished for years.

The evidence is clear. Although the direct perpetrators are most likely to have been members of the terrorist group Hezbollah, supported by the Government of Iran, the complicity and participation of Argentinian police and security forces is beyond any doubt. This corrupt, far right-wing partnership with Islamic terrorism in our hemisphere cannot be tolerated.

I welcome the statement of the new president of Argentina assuring us that he will do his utmost at this late stage to bring the perpetrators to justice and to attempt to clean and clear the honor and reputation of Argentina. But we will not rest until these things happen.

Eighty-six innocent men, women and children lost their lives. Over 300 innocent men, women and children were wounded for no reason except their religious affiliation. There is no room in this hemisphere for terrorist acts of any kind, certainly for terrorist acts as hate crimes directed against various religious groups. It is long overdue for the authorities in Argentina to close this chapter, which is a chapter that has brought infamy to that nation.

Following the bombing of the Israeli Embassy, this bombing of a community center in the heart of Argentina brings back memories of the darkest days of the Second World War when innocent men, women and children, for no reason whatsoever, were massacred and murdered.

Argentina must come clean. The new President of Argentina now has an opportunity to instruct all authorities to pursue this case with diligence and determination. Until the perpetrators are brought to justice, a question mark will hang over the relationship of Argentina to all other civilized nations.

I commend my colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), and I call on all of my colleagues to approve this resolution.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 531, for it properly places the U.S. Congress on record in marking the tragic occasion of the sixth anniversary of the July 18, 1994, terrorist bombing of the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires. Eighty-seven people lost their lives, and 200 to 300 people were injured in that attack.

This Member thanks his colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms.

ROS-LEHTINEN), from the Committee on International Relations, the distinguished chairwoman of the Subcommittee on International Policy and Trade, for introducing this resolution.

Last year, the Argentine Congress passed important legislation that allows Investigating Judge Juan Jose Galeano to engage in plea bargaining. Nonetheless, the trial of the Argentinian citizens charged with complicity in this terrorist bombing has, regrettably, been much delayed.

During a recent visit to the United States, Argentina's president, Fernando de la Rúa, made a point of visiting the Holocaust museum and issuing a public apology for the role Argentina played in harboring Nazis during World War II.

President De la Rúa said, "Today, before you and before the world, I want to express my most sincere pain and to ask forgiveness that this happened, that Nazis were hidden among us."

Solving this terrible crime and bringing those responsible to justice is the proper way to bring healing to the still open wounds in Argentina.

Mr. Speaker, this Member urges his colleagues to join in unanimously supporting this resolution. Again, I commend my colleague the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for his outstanding statement and especially the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for her eloquent statement and for her introduction and able movement of this legislation to the House floor.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BERUTER) for his powerful and eloquent statement. I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for her diligent and outstanding work on this issue.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for his eloquent words, for his skilled leadership, and for his deep knowledge of history that has helped us to pass this resolution today. I also thank our colleague the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BERUTER) for his constant support of all items worthy of support, and certainly our fight against terrorism is on that list. I thank the gentleman for that.

I also thank the gentleman from California (Chairman GILMAN) for his assistance in allowing this resolution to be brought up to the floor so rapidly.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would like to quote from Ambassador Aviran of Israel, whom I believe encapsulated the need for this resolution and for jus-

tice. He said, "Crimes that go unpunished are crimes that get repeated."

The time to act is now. Six years more should not be allowed to pass before the guilty are brought to justice.

I would like to especially commend the organization B'nai B'rith for its efforts on behalf of the Argentine Jewish community and on behalf of justice in this case. May that day of justice come quickly.

Therefore, I ask my colleagues to support House Resolution 531.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, this resolution properly places the U.S. Congress on record in marking the tragic occasion of the sixth anniversary of the July 18, 1994 terrorist bombing of the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Eight-seven people lost their lives and two hundred people were injured in this attack.

I thank my colleague from our International Relations Committee, the distinguished chairwoman of the Subcommittee on International Economic Policy and Trade, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, for introducing this resolution.

I have long been interested in seeing that this heinous crime is resolved and those responsible are brought to justice.

Last year, the Argentine Congress passed important legislation that allows Investigating Judge Juan Jose Galeano to engage in plea bargaining. Nonetheless, the trial of the Argentinian citizens charged with complicity in this terrorist bombing has, regrettably, been unduly delayed. Six years is too long a time to let pass without justice.

When the local trial does finally get underway, I urge Argentina's authorities to invite and permit international observers to witness the trial proceedings.

During a recent visit to the United States, Argentina's president, Fernando de la Rúa, made a point of visiting the Holocaust museum and issuing a public apology for the role Argentina played in harboring Nazis after World War II.

President De La Rúa said, "Today, before you and before the world, I want to express my most sincere pain and to ask forgiveness that this happened, that Nazis were hidden among us."

I believe in President De La Rúa's sincerity and thank him for his important statement.

Solving this terrible crime and bringing those responsible to justice is the proper way to bring healing to the still open wounds in Argentina.

I urge my colleagues to join me in adopting this important resolution.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 531 and would like to add my voice to those marking the sixth anniversary of the cowardly bombing of the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This searing event horrified the world and has, unfortunately, become a barometer for the political culture of Argentina.

While we commend the statements of interest and commitment made by President Fernando de la Rúa, I, along with many in this House, remain wary, in light of the six years of stumbling, ineffectual investigation and the reality of justice denied. The truth in this matter points unmistakably to elements within the Argentine state and unfortunately, this reality

has been a source of delay and obfuscation rather than a catalyst for action by Argentine investigators.

In addition to this disturbing procrastination on the part of investigators to dig deep into the roots of official involvement, the search for justice in Argentina has also skipped lightly over the possible involvement of Hizbollah, Iran and Syria. Notwithstanding the myriad statements pledging an absolute commitment to the search for truth and justice, the reality of the Argentine investigation has been a half-hearted, poorly funded, undermanned, uninspired, slow-motion search for answers.

Mr. Speaker, six years ago in Buenos Aires, 86 people were killed and hundreds more were injured by a car bomb created and delivered by an unknown group of conspirators, who targeted their victims because of their Jewish faith. Cowardly and offensive, the bombing of the AMIA Jewish Community Center came little more than two years after the bombing of the Israeli embassy in the same city. By all accounts, Argentina's response to these two horrific crimes has been lackadaisical and disappointing. The victims of these crimes, old and young, male and female, deserve better than to have their quest for justice fade in a bureaucratic haze.

I want to commend my colleagues Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN and Congressman LANTOS for their excellent leadership on this important resolution, which I strongly urge this House to adopt. Putting the House on record on this matter is a vital step toward ensuring a genuine and effective investigation, and ultimately, a fair trial which provides just punishment for the guilty parties.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). 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, H. Res. 531, as amended.

The question was taken.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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.

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#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 7 p.m.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 7 p.m.

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□ 1900

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS) at 7 p.m.