

The Compacts of Free Association commenced in 1986 between the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the United States. In brief, the United States agrees to provide federal funding to the FSM and RMI and in turn both agree to provide the U.S. with certain defense rights now including use of eleven defense sites on Kwajalein Atoll where the U.S. Department of Defense has established a multi-billion dollar anti-ballistic missile testing facility.

In October 2001, portions of the Compact expired and representatives from the FSM, RMI and the Department of the Interior began negotiating an extension of these provisions. Earlier this year, DOI sent Congress the negotiated product to be considered as the re-authorization of the Compacts of Free Association. However, key provisions, including funding for Pell Grants and FEMA assistance were excluded from the agreement and, over the last several months, my colleagues and I have been working closely with representatives from both the FSM and RMI to address these concerns.

Mr. Chairman, the good people of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands are in need of and, indeed, deserve U.S. support and assistance in building local capacity. As you know, education is invaluable to building self-sufficiency and local capacity and ultimately will contribute to bolstering the economy of these developing nations. This is why I am pleased that the bill before us today now provides the Freely Associated States with Pell Grants assistance and also recognizes the importance of FEMA assistance to these islands.

The truth is, the Freely Associated States have made many sacrifices and contributions on behalf of the United States. In fact, the U.S. used the Marshall Islands as a nuclear testing ground and detonated more than 67 nuclear bombs, including the first hydrogen bomb which was 1,000 times more powerful than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II. The results were and continue to be devastating.

As a Pacific Islander, I am pleased that H.J. Res 63 acknowledges the contributions and sacrifices made by the FAS and also addresses the needs and concerns of the people of the FSM and RMI. I am also pleased that my colleagues have worked closely with me to make sure that American Samoa's tuna industry was protected in the process of these negotiations. The outcome of H.J. Res 63 will determine our relationship with the FSM and RMI for the next twenty years and will also affect American Samoa's tuna industry for generations to come.

I urge my colleagues to honor our pledge to the people of the FAS to assist them in maintaining a democratic government and supporting the principles that contribute to economic development and self-sufficiency. I also urge my colleagues to support American Samoa's interests by voting yes for H.J. Res 63.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 63.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted 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 motion will be postponed.

COMMENDING THE SIGNING OF THE UNITED STATES-ADRIATIC CHARTER

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 209) commending the signing of the United States-Adriatic Charter, a charter of partnership among the United States, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

(1) Page 3, line 4, after "and" the second time it appears insert: *The Former Yugoslav Republic of*

(2) Page 3, line 8, after "and" insert: *The Former Yugoslav Republic of*

(3) Page 3, line 14, after "and" insert: *The Former Yugoslav Republic of*

(4) Page 3, line 16, after "and" insert: *The Former Yugoslav Republic of*

Amend the preamble as follows:

(5) Page 1, unnumbered line 6, after "and" insert: *The Former Yugoslav Republic of*

(6) Page 2, unnumbered line 4, after "and" insert: *The Former Yugoslav Republic of*

(7) Page 2, unnumbered line 11, strike out all after "Powell," down to an including "Minister" in unnumbered line 13 and insert: *Albania Foreign Minister Ilir Meta, Croatia Foreign Minister Tonino Picula, and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Foreign Minister*

(8) Page 2, unnumbered line 15, after "and" the first time it appears insert: *The Former Yugoslav Republic of*

(9) Page 2, unnumbered line 29, strike out all after "Whereas" over to an including "Macedonia" in unnumbered line 2 on page 3 and insert: *75 special forces troops of Albania were sent to Iraq as part of the coalition forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom, 29 special forces troops of The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were sent to Iraq as part of the post-war stabilization force, and Albania, Croatia, and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*

Amend the title so as to read: "Concurrent resolution commending the signing of the United States-Adriatic Charter, a charter of partnership among the United States, Albania, Croatia, and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their re-

marks on the concurrent resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

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

The resolution before the House expresses the support of the Congress for the Adriatic Charter. The charter was signed on May 2 in the Albanian capital of Tirana by Secretary of State Powell and the foreign ministers of Albania, Croatia, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the three currently remaining NATO aspirant countries which have not yet been accepted for NATO membership.

The resolution, introduced by the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), is virtually identical to the one that was agreed to in this Chamber on June 23 by a 381 to 1 vote. When the Senate passed this concurrent resolution in July, it made a minor change in the name of one of the countries being recognized, changing the word "Macedonia," which was used in the Adriatic Charter itself, to "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia," which is the name by which this country is internationally recognized by most countries.

The Adriatic Charter pledges the United States to support efforts by Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join Euro-Atlantic institutions like NATO and the European Union.

In this agreement, the three aspirant nations commit themselves to accelerate their democratic reforms, protect human rights, implement market-oriented economic policies, and enhance their mutual cooperation. Also very importantly, under the Adriatic Charter, the United States and these three countries pledge to consult whenever the security of one of them is threatened. For their part, the aspirant countries promise to continue defense reforms and to undertake steps to enhance border security so they can contribute to regional stability.

Mr. Speaker, this Member urges the House to agree to this resolution.

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

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

I rise in strong support of this resolution. First, Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER) for their leadership on this important resolution and the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) for moving it forward so expeditiously.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution celebrates cooperation and forward thinking among the nations of the Balkans, a region that just a few years ago was engulfed in bloody ethnic violence and strife. The United States has an enduring interest in the independence, territorial integrity, and security of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia. We must

make every effort to support their full integration into the community of democratic Euro-Atlantic states.

The Adriatic Charter affirms the commitment of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to the values and principles of NATO and to joining the alliance at the earliest possible time. Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia have taken positive steps to advance their integration into Europe and have already contributed to European security and to the peace and security of southeast Europe through the resolution of conflicts in the region. Croatia has announced its intention to join the European Union and is moving steadily in that direction. Albania has been making important progress in its transition to democracy and as a candidate for NATO membership. Both Macedonia and Croatia are also candidates for NATO membership, and all three nations are fully committed to the Membership Action Plan agreed upon by NATO.

Mr. Speaker, the Adriatic Charter is a milestone in this region, where very recently people were skeptical about the fate of democracy and human rights. Many argue that the American emphasis upon democracy in the region was misplaced and that our Nation's efforts would fail. We proved the skeptics wrong.

If the Speaker will allow a personal word, it was not too many years ago that my wife and I were the first American officials to visit Albania, at the time still a communist dictatorship; and the head of Albania asked me to carry a letter to our President asking for the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Albania and the United States of America. I did so and the rest is history.

Mr. Speaker, I again commend all of my colleagues who have worked so hard on this legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), who has played such a pivotal role in bringing peace and democracy to this whole region.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from California for his kind words, and I thank him as always for his help on matters such as these. We all look to him for guidance. I want to thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), as well, for really being with me every step of the way in bringing this to fruition and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER), as well, for working with me on this.

I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 209, which commends the signing of the U.S.-Adriatic Charter. As the author of H. Con. Res. 209, I am honored that the Senate has passed this measure and the House is now considering this important resolution for final passage.

On May 2, 2003, the U.S.-Adriatic Charter was signed in Tirana, Albania, by Secretary of State Colin Powell and the Foreign Ministers of Albania, Croatia, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. As Secretary Powell noted when he signed the document, it is remarkable that the agreement was signed in Albania, a country once known only for its isolation and distance from Western principles.

I can say, Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the Albanian Issues Caucus in this Congress, I am absolutely delighted that Albania and the United States continue to work closely together and look at this charter as an important step in bringing Albania and the United States even closer together. Today, Tirana is a capital filled with energy as it continues its opening to Europe. Macedonia and Croatia have seen similar changes as well.

Mr. Speaker, as NATO has expanded through other countries of Europe, several Balkan nations in South Central Europe were excluded. They just were not ready for membership at that time. Today, three of those nations, Albania, Croatia, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, are now moving to make the needed changes in reforms so that they can join the North Atlantic structures including NATO. I have long been a strong supporter of Albanian membership in NATO.

The U.S.-Adriatic Charter embodies a commitment by Albania, Croatia, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the values and principles of NATO and a declaration of their intent to join NATO as soon as they meet alliance standards. I certainly support all of their efforts to advance toward NATO membership, and having Secretary Powell sign the charter puts the United States firmly in support of their efforts to join NATO when they are ready, and as far as I am concerned, sooner rather than later.

By passing this resolution today, as amended in the Senate, and it is a House resolution, Congress adds its voice by "urging NATO to invite Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join NATO as soon as these countries demonstrate the ability to assume the responsibilities of NATO membership."

H. Con. Res. 209 also welcomes and supports the aspirations of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join the European Union at the earliest opportunity and recognizes that the three countries are making important strides to bring their economic, military, and political institutions into conformance with the standards of NATO and other Euro-Atlantic institutions. Finally, our resolution also commends Secretary Powell for his strong personal support of the resolution, as demonstrated by his travel to the region to sign the document.

Mr. Speaker, as a sponsor of H. Con. Res. 209, I think this is an appropriate forum to publicly thank Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for sending forces to fight

alongside our troops in Afghanistan. It is my hope that Albania, one of only three European countries to send ground troops to fight in the war, would be high on the Defense Department's list when it considers the realignment of, and new bases for, American forces around the world. I have often thought that Albania is a perfect country for the United States to put new bases into.

Finally, again I would like to thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe, and his staff for the cooperation and support as we drafted this concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 209. I would like to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER), the ranking member of the subcommittee, for his support; and the Senate for its adoption of the measure; the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), our chairman; and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), our ranking member. All played important roles, and I strongly support this resolution and urge my colleagues to also support it.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, we 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.

I have just a couple of concluding remarks. I would begin by first thanking the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for his initiative in introducing this legislation in the first place and for working with us to ensure its final action here today.

During the past several weeks, I have had the occasion to have Foreign Ministry leaders of these three countries in my office. No doubt that has happened with a number of us, and I must say that the progress that they are making is very dramatic. And in part that progress is driven by the fact that both the European Union and NATO have formal and informal criteria for membership, and it is pushing them along to make some of the important changes that mean we are going to have peace and stability, economic progress, civilian control of the military, transparency in military budgets, and so on. Those kinds of things that are extremely important.

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Most importantly, to move these countries along towards a rule of law and towards democratic institutions.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think we can take some pleasure in their accomplishments and continue to urge them to make all the efforts necessary for membership, because I certainly want to see these three countries become members of the European Union, and especially NATO, as soon as possible.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) that the House

suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 209.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted 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 motion will be postponed.

SYRIAN ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY RESTORATION ACT OF 2003

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 1828) to halt Syrian support for terrorism, end its occupation of Lebanon, and stop its development of weapons of mass destruction, and by so doing hold Syria accountable for the serious international security problems it has caused in the Middle East.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

- (1)Page 2, strike out lines 8 through 15
- (2)Page 2, line 16 strike out [(2)] and insert: (1)
- (3)Page 2, line 20 strike out [(3)] and insert: (2)
- (4)Page 3, line 3 strike out [(4)] and insert: (3)
- (5)Page 3, line 11 strike out [(5)] and insert: (4)
- (6)Page 3, line 18 strike out [(6)] and insert: (5)
- (7)Page 4, line 1 strike out [(7)] and insert: (6)
- (8)Page 4, line 7 strike out [(8)] and insert: (7)
- (9)Page 4, line 12 strike out [(9)] and insert: (8)
- (10)Page 4, line 16 strike out [(10)] and insert: (9)
- (11)Page 4, line 21 strike out [(11)] and insert: (10)
- (12)Page 5, line 1 strike out [(12)] and insert: (11)
- (13)Page 5, line 6 strike out [(13)] and insert: (12)
- (14)Page 5, line 16 strike out [(14)] and insert: (13)
- (15)Page 5, line 20 strike out [(15)] and insert: (14)
- (16)Page 6, line 3 strike out [(16)] and insert: (15)
- (17)Page 6, line 14 strike out [(17)] and insert: (16)
- (18)Page 6, line 20 strike out [(18)] and insert: (17)
- (19)Page 6, line 23 strike out [(19)] and insert: (18)
- (20)Page 7, line 6 strike out [(20)] and insert: (19)
- (21)Page 7, line 10 strike out [(21)] and insert: (20)
- (22)Page 7, line 23 strike out [(22)] and insert: (21)
- (23)Page 8, line 9 strike out [(23)] and insert: (22)

(24)Page 8, line 19 strike out [(24)] and insert: (23)

(25)Page 9, line 3 strike out [(25)] and insert: (24)

(26)Page 9, line 7 strike out [(26)] and insert: (25)

(27)Page 9, line 14 strike out [(27)] and insert: (26)

(28)Page 9, line 18 strike out [(28)] and insert: (27)

(29)Page 9, strike out lines 21 through 24

(30)Page 10, line 1 strike out [(30)] and insert: (28)

(31)Page 10, line 10 strike out [(31)] and insert: (29)

(32)Page 10, line 18 strike out [(32)] and insert: (30)

(33)Page 10, line 24 strike out [(33)] and insert: (31)

(34)Page 11, line 4 strike out [(34)] and insert: (32)

(35)Page 11, line 9 strike out [(35)] and insert: (33)

(36)Page 12, line 1 strike out [(36)] and insert: (34)

(37)Page 15, line 1 strike out [will be held responsible] and insert: *should bear responsibility*

(38)Page 15, line 6, strike out all after "States" down to and including "ity" in line 7 and insert: *will work to deny Syria the ability*

(39)Page 15, strike out lines 18 through 20

(40)Page 15, line 21 strike out [(5)] and insert: (4)

(41)Page 16, line 1 strike out [(6)] and insert: (5)

(42)Page 16, line 6 strike out [(7)] and insert: (6)

(43)Page 16, line 11 strike out [(8)] and insert: (7)

(44)Page 16, line 15 strike out [(9)] and insert: (8)

(45)Page 16, line 17, after "Iraq" insert: *if the Government of Syria is found to be responsible*

(46)Page 16, line 20 strike out [(10)] and insert: (9)

(47)Page 18, strike lines 15 through 20 and insert:

(b) *WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of subsection (a)(1), (a)(2), or both if the President determines that it is in the national security interest of the United States to do so and submits to the appropriate congressional committees a report containing the reasons for the determination.*

(48)Page 20, line 6, strike out all after "has" down to and including "Lebanon" in line 8 and insert: *ended its occupation of Lebanon described in section 2(7) of this Act*

(49)Page 21, line 15, strike out all after "and" down to and including "other" in line 17

(50)Page 21, line 20, strike out all after "Hizballah" down to and including "al Qaeda" in line 21 and insert: *and other terrorist organizations supported by Syria*

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 the bill under consideration.

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.

Mr. Speaker, just 2 weeks ago, the Senate amended and overwhelmingly passed H.R. 1828, the Syria Accountability and the Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act.

The overwhelming support that the House-passed Syria bill received in the Senate and in the House clearly demonstrates a unity of purpose and an approach to the terrorist regime in Damascus. Even antisansctions advocates in the Senate recognize the serious threat that Syria poses to U.S. national security and to our interests and allies in the region.

This bill seeks to hold Syria accountable for its weapons program, its continued illegal occupation of Lebanon, and its terrorist activities, including its facilitation of attacks against Americans in Iraq.

The Syrian Foreign Minister has been quoted as saying that the requirements of this bill and of the U.S. in general for Syria to cease and desist on these three fronts are "unreasonable and unrealistic" demands. In fact, the Syrian Foreign Minister believes that "America has too many demands."

Meanwhile, just a few days ago, on Tuesday of this week, a French news source published an interview with a former member of Saddam Hussein's nefarious Secret Service. This former Saddam agent and current leader of the militias inside Iraq said that Syria is "definitely" working alongside Iraqi intelligence and other Saddam loyalists. He said that there is cooperation between Syria and his forces inside Iraq, and that "It began before the war, through trade, which was only a cover."

"Armed Syrians," he added, "even joined our Iraqi militia groups. And well before the war, we had forged passports that enabled us to go to that country," meaning Syria. He added that this coordination continues to this day.

Thus, regardless of how some will spin it, the Syrian regime has the blood of Americans on its hands, and they must be held responsible for their deaths, as well as those of scores of innocent human beings murdered by Syrian-sponsored terrorists.

Fully implemented, H.R. 1828 would help deny Syria the resources to continue its deplorable activities and will help prevent U.S. complicity in them. It seeks to do so by prohibiting U.S. exports of military, dual-use, and other items, as well as by prohibiting investments in key sectors that provide an economic windfall for the Syrian economy. We have every faith and confidence in President Bush's commitment to use the range of U.S. policy