

had been executed, hundreds of thousands more were victims of starvation and malnutrition.

Some Cambodians were fortunate enough to escape the madness and brutality of the Cambodian Genocide, making their way as refugees to various Southeast Asian nations. Nearly 150,000 Cambodians ultimately resettled in the United States, and today, there are more than 200,000 Americans of Cambodian descent.

As Cambodians build new lives in the United States, it is appropriate and timely for the Congress to recognize the victims of the Cambodian Genocide, and to welcome the establishment of an international criminal tribunal to bring long-overdue justice to the perpetrators of the Cambodian genocide.

Mr. Speaker, the international tribunal established for Cambodia is not a perfect institution, and only time will tell if those who carried out the genocide will be brought to justice. It remains our profound hope that the work of the tribunal will be carried out according to international standards of justice.

Mr. Speaker, nearly 1 in 7 Cambodians lost their lives during the horrible 4 years of Khmer Rouge rule. With passage of this resolution, we remember the innocent victims of the genocide, and hope that justice prevails.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as she might consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD), my dear friend and distinguished colleague, the author of this important piece of legislation.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the chairman, for his dedication and commitment to this issue, along with my friend the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member, for his ongoing support of this piece of legislation, and Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to address this issue that is incredibly important to all Cambodian Americans.

The tragic history of over 1.7 million Cambodian men, women and children who died during the Khmer Rouge rule in Cambodia from 1975 to 1979 is unconscionable. The inhumanity of the Khmer Rouge regime and the harrowing events of the killing fields there still touch every Cambodian American family. They live each day with the indelible scars of lost mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, and other loved ones.

While the tragedy can never be reversed, America's recognition of the 1.7 million lives lost is important to the hundred of thousands of survivors that now call America home.

My legislation, H. Con. Res. 238, commemorates the victims of the Khmer Rouge genocide.

In 1975, a large-scale insurgency took place, resulting in the forced removal of local Cambodians from their villages and into labor camps in an attempt by the Khmer Rouge to restructure society.

The Khmer Rouge maintained control by mass public tortures and execu-

tions. Families were separated by sending men, women and children into various labor camps, scattered throughout that country. Famine and disease were epidemic between April of 1975 and January of 1979. Cambodians watched hundreds of thousands of their loved ones die by starvation and thousands more by torture.

When the Khmer Rouge was overthrown in 1979 by Vietnamese troops, thousands of Cambodians fled to nearby refugee camps in Thailand and to camps in the Philippines and Indonesia. As many as 145,000-plus courageous Cambodians made their way to the United States.

With the assistance of the Federal Government, State, local and voluntary agencies, Cambodians were resettled in communities across America. Despite the tremendous loss of family members, homes and parts of their heritage, Cambodians have shown enormous resiliency.

Their culture and contributions to America continue each day to enrich our society, and I am immensely proud that the largest Cambodian presence in the United States resides in my district.

Cambodians have been awaiting justice for over a quarter of a century, and it now seems that the opportunity will soon arise. The United Nations has taken steps to establish an international tribunal in 2007 to bring justice to the perpetrators of the Cambodian genocide. The government of Cambodia seems poised to proceed.

It is my sincere hope that the Cambodian tribunal, once it is up and running, will ensure that justice is finally served, and that those who perpetrated the genocide against innocent Cambodians will finally be punished for their heinous acts. Mr. Speaker, the 10s of thousands of Cambodian Americans who lost loved ones to the killing fields deserve no less.

So I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution, and again, I thank both the chairman and the ranking member.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I again want to commend my friend from California for taking up this most important issue. We have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 238, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE'S "OPERATION MURAMBATSVINA"

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 409) condemning the Government of Zimbabwe's

"Operation Murambatsvina" under which homes, businesses, religious structures, and other buildings and facilities were demolished in an effort characterized by the Government of Zimbabwe as an operation to "restore order" to the country, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 409

Whereas on May 19, 2005, the Government of Zimbabwe launched "Operation Murambatsvina", translated from the Shona language as "Operation Drive Out the Trash", in major cities and suburbs throughout Zimbabwe in an effort that it characterized as an operation to "restore order" to the country;

Whereas hours after the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe called for an end to the parallel market, Operation Murambatsvina began in the city of Harare and subsequently in other urban areas, such as the city of Bulawayo, ostensibly to oust illegal vendors and eliminate illegal structures;

Whereas Operation Murambatsvina was carried out as an indiscriminate demolition of the homes and livelihood of thousands of Zimbabwean citizens already suffering from a protracted economic and political crisis brought on by poor policy directives by the Government of Zimbabwe that forced masses of rural dwellers to urban areas of the country for survival;

Whereas in some communities that were victimized by the forced demolitions, including Cheru Farm and Killarney Farm where more than 20,000 people lived, Zimbabweans had lived in residences for over 20 years and had well-functioning schools, health and HIV/AIDS clinics, orphanages for AIDS-affected children, viable businesses, places of worship, and other amenities;

Whereas in 1993, the Government of Zimbabwe moved families from Cheru Farms to a new location, Porto Farm, which during Operation Murambatsvina was demolished by Zimbabwean Government forces;

Whereas government security forces carried out Operation Murambatsvina, and in doing so, beat residents and forced them to destroy their own homes and places of business, though many residents provided permits from municipal authorities granting permission to build their structures;

Whereas Operation Murambatsvina resulted in the demolition throughout the country of homes, businesses, and religious structures, including a mosque, and an AIDS orphanage and in the intimidation, harassment, and arrest of tens of thousands of people;

Whereas Operation Murambatsvina cut off many AIDS patients from anti-retroviral medicines which will likely lead to a reversal of their health, resistance to the drugs, and a more virulent form of AIDS in Zimbabwe with potential for spreading throughout the region and worldwide;

Whereas churches and private citizens sheltering the victims of Operation Murambatsvina were also intimidated, harassed, and arrested for their efforts to provide a safe haven for the victims during Zimbabwe's harsh winter;

Whereas armed soldiers and police forcibly removed hundreds of homeless people from

churches in the city of Bulawayo and banned religious groups from providing humanitarian assistance to those seeking shelter at Hellensvale, a transit camp north of Zimbabwe's second city, and where police arrested and detained religious leaders;

Whereas a strongly worded statement issued by the Bulawayo clergy stated: "The removal of the poor, innocent, weak, voiceless and vulnerable members of society by riot police in the middle of the night was uncalled for and unnecessary. It is inhumane, brutal and insensitive, and in total disregard of human rights and dignity. These people are not criminals but bona fide citizens of this nation. It seems the crime they committed is that they are poor.";

Whereas the African Commission for Peoples' and Human Rights dispatched an African Union envoy, Bahame Tom Nyanduga, Special Rapporteur on Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons, and Asylum Seekers in Africa to investigate the ongoing demolitions;

Whereas the Government of Zimbabwe refused to allow the African Union envoy an opportunity to conduct his mission after being accused by the Government of Zimbabwe through its government-controlled media of "following the agenda of western countries";

Whereas the decision to block access to the African Union envoy is representative of a larger pattern of behavior, whereby the Government of Zimbabwe uses violence, intimidation, and demagoguery to subjugate its people, relies on scapegoats to justify the economic, political, and social crises in Zimbabwe, and detains and slanders United States diplomats who challenge the ruinous policies of that government;

Whereas in response to the crisis, the Secretary-General of the United Nations dispatched a special envoy, Ms. Anna Kajumulo Tibajuka, Deputy Secretary General, United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT), on a factfinding mission to assess the scope and impact of Operation Murambatsvina on the people of Zimbabwe and its consequences for the Zimbabwean Government;

Whereas the mission of the United Nations special envoy was undertaken between June 26 and July 8, 2005, where she visited the cities of Harare, Headlands, Rusape, Mutare, Gweru, Bulawayo, Hwange, and Victoria Falls and met with victims of Operation Murambatsvina, heard personal testimony from victims, and met with members of the diplomatic community, the Government of Zimbabwe, and international nongovernmental organizations;

Whereas the United Nations special envoy estimated that approximately 700,000 people in cities across the country have lost either their homes, their source of livelihood, or both, and that a total of 2.4 million people or 18 percent of the population was directly or indirectly affected by Operation Murambatsvina and that the operation would have considerable short-term and long-term impact on social and economic conditions in the country;

Whereas 40,800 families directly affected by Operation Murambatsvina were headed by women, and 83,530 children under the age of four and 26,600 people age 60 and older were directly affected;

Whereas President Robert Mugabe described this sudden and extensive operation against thousands of families and business persons in the dead of winter as necessary "to eliminate hideouts of crime and grime";

Whereas the United Nations special envoy is quoted as saying "the poor are not criminals . . . [t]hey work hard to obtain the little which they have and they should not thus be treated like criminals";

Whereas the United Nations special envoy assessed the negative impact of Operation Murambatsvina on shelter, water and sanitation, food and nutrition, basic health services, HIV/AIDS, education, women and girls, refugees and other vulnerable groups;

Whereas the special envoy concluded that Operation Murambatsvina "has rendered people homeless and economically destitute on an unprecedented scale; most of the victims were already among the most economically disadvantaged groups in society; and they have now been pushed deeper into poverty and have become even more vulnerable; and the scale of suffering is immense, particularly among widows, single mothers, children, orphans, the elderly and the disabled persons";

Whereas at the time of independence, President Robert Mugabe was hailed as a liberator and Zimbabwe showed bright prospects for democracy, economic development, domestic reconciliation, and prosperity;

Whereas President Mugabe and his ZANU-PF party in recent years have turned away from the promises of liberation and become a party that uses state power to deny the people of Zimbabwe the freedoms and prosperity for which they fought and deserve;

Whereas the rise of urbanization and the informal sector in Zimbabwe has been the direct result of failed economic policies, a bitterly disputed fast track land reform program, unplanned cash handouts to appease war veterans, the costly military intervention in Congo, and persistent drought;

Whereas before Operation Murambatsvina, unemployment in Zimbabwe was between 70 and 80 percent, the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate was 24 percent, and the inflation rate was 164.4 percent (but was as high as 522.8 percent), and currently Zimbabwe has the world's fastest shrinking economy, there is an ongoing fuel crisis in the country, and the Zimbabwean economy had contracted 7 percent; and

Whereas the staggering suffering brought on by Operation Murambatsvina has been added to the already large-scale humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(A) through Operation Murambatsvina, the Government of Zimbabwe has created a humanitarian disaster that has compounded the already existing humanitarian food and economic crises in the country, and the Government of Zimbabwe has insufficient resources to address such crises;

(B) the Government of Zimbabwe has a duty to protect the economic, social, and political rights of its citizens as guaranteed by the Constitution of Zimbabwe and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights; and

(C) the Government of Zimbabwe also is subject to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to which Zimbabwe is a party, which states in part that "forced evictions are prima facie incompatible with the provisions of the Covenant and can only be carried out under specific circumstances"; and

(2) the House of Representatives—

(A) condemns Operation Murambatsvina as a major humanitarian catastrophe caused by the Government of Zimbabwe's callousness toward its own people, disregard for the rule of law, and lack of planning to move families and businesses to more desirable locations;

(B) calls on the United Nations, the African Commission for Peoples' and Human Rights, and the African Union to continue efforts to investigate the impact of the demolitions of housing structures and premises from which informal businesses operated

and to provide the international community with a viable strategy to address the problems;

(C) calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to allow international humanitarian organizations access to those affected by the operation who are in need of food, medicine, shelter, sanitation, and water;

(D) calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to hold accountable those responsible for this egregious injury to the Zimbabwean people, both the decisionmakers of the operation and those who carried out the operation;

(E) calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to immediately and aggressively implement policies to promote the private sector and create jobs and build housing to accommodate those displaced by the operation;

(F) calls on the United Nations and the international community to stand by the people of Zimbabwe who have been victimized by their government in this operation and to help them with relief and reconstruction of their lives;

(G) calls on the Secretary of the Treasury to instruct the United States Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to continue to advocate for further action at the IMF should the Government of Zimbabwe continue to fail to meet its obligations to the IMF;

(H) condemns President Mugabe's harassment of the United States Ambassador to Zimbabwe, including by threatening the Ambassador's expulsion from the country and asserting that he could "go to Hell"; and

(I) calls on President Mugabe to recognize that absent meaningful corrective actions on his part, President Mugabe's legacy will be defined by his responsibility for the ruinous policies and draconian laws that brought untold suffering of his people and the near collapse of Zimbabwe as a nation.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

□ 2245

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I begin by commending the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for crafting and authoring this resolution. It is very timely and extremely important, given the events in Zimbabwe. I would like to point out that H. Res. 409 condemns the government of Zimbabwe for its horrendous abuses of civil and human rights of its citizens.

Zimbabwe is a Nation that even recently was an economic success, an example to other nations in Africa. However, the serious mismanagement of that country's economy has reduced the gross national income to levels last seen in 1953. Inflation in Zimbabwe today exceeds 500 percent.

When the government of Zimbabwe began its so-called Operation Murambatsvina on May 19, it was supposed to be a limited operation to end the parallel market but developed into the most destructive campaign that country has seen in its post-independence history. Months after this vicious

campaign, there are estimates of as many as 700,000 displaced persons, many of whom are living without food, water or shelter.

By all accounts, this operation has made existing social problems much worse. Nongovernmental organization representatives have told us that now there are 2 million widows, 1.5 million orphans, 500,000 children with only one surviving parent and 8,000 households headed by children.

While many still recall Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe's critical role in winning independence for his country, we must hold him accountable for the devastation he has more recently brought upon his country's citizens, serious, serious crimes and human rights abuses. Whatever he has achieved in the past, he is furiously undoing his legacy in the present.

House Resolution 409, which received its due consideration by the House International Relations Committee, seeks to shed light on the profound suffering that this operation has brought and inflicted upon the people of Zimbabwe. It notes that, through this operation, the government of Mugabe has created a manmade humanitarian disaster of epic proportions, which has only compounded the existing human rights and economic crises in Zimbabwe.

It condemns President Mugabe's harassment of the United States Ambassador to Zimbabwe most recently by threatening his expulsion from the country and asserting that he could "go to hell" in response to the Ambassador's efforts to draw attention to the crisis in Zimbabwe.

H. Con. Res. 409 also states that the government of Zimbabwe has a duty to protect its people and calls on that government to immediately and aggressively implement policies to promote private sector development, create jobs and build housing to benefit those displaced by this operation.

It further asserts that, absent such meaningful corrective measures, President Mugabe's legacy will be defined by his responsibility for the ruinous policies and draconian laws that have brought untold suffering to his people and the near collapse of Zimbabwe as a nation.

Finally, the resolution calls on the International Monetary Fund to take further action against the government of Zimbabwe should it continue to fail to meet its obligations to the international community.

My subcommittee held a hearing on Zimbabwe's situation and the U.S. policy toward that country last April. We were dissatisfied with the state of U.S. engagement. Despite diligent State Department efforts, we still lack creative ways to address and resolve this crisis.

One of the problems in engaging the government is the failure to speak with a consistent voice. This resolution may seem harsh to some, but it does not even begin to touch what is really going on in that once prosperous nation.

Mr. Speaker, Greg Simpkins is the leader on the subcommittee of our Professional Staff, and he led a staff CODEL to Zimbabwe on July 1 through the 10th. He was joined by Dr. Pearl-Alice Marsh, Senior Professional Staff Member for the Committee, and they did an extraordinary job in gathering a tremendous amount of information about what has really gone on and what the crisis is all about. I submit herewith their staff report for inclusion in the RECORD.

STAFFDEL SIMPKINS TRIP REPORT: ZIMBABWE AND SOUTH AFRICA

(By Gregory Simpkins)

SUMMARY

Staff delegation Simpkins, consisting of myself and Dr. Pearl-Alice Marsh, Senior Professional Staff Member for the House Committee on International Relations, traveled to Zimbabwe and South Africa from 1-10 July 2005. The purpose of this mission was to investigate the situation on the ground in Zimbabwe, especially in light of the recent government actions to destroy allegedly illegal housing and vending operations. The visit to South Africa was to examine programs involving Zimbabwe refugees, speak with members of the Zimbabwe expatriate community and discuss Zimbabwe with members of the South African government, the ruling African National Congress, the Congress of South African Trade Unions and think tanks.

We thank Ambassador Christopher Dell and his staff in Harare and Ambassador Jendayi Frazer and her staff in Pretoria for their assistance in making our visit productive.

The report on this operation is the result of our discussions with a wide variety of people in and around Harare and Bulawayo in Zimbabwe and in Pretoria and Johannesburg in South Africa (see appendix for list); a 27 June 2005 report by the Solidarity Peace Trust, a non-governmental organization registered in South Africa, and various published reports and subsequent contacts with sources in Zimbabwe.

OPERATION MURAMBATSVINA

On 19 May 2005, the Government of Zimbabwe commenced Operation Murambatsvina. While the Zimbabwean government refers to it as "Operation Restore Order," a literal translation from the Shona language reveals that "Murambatsvina" more closely means "discarding the filth." This places the operation in a more accurate context.

Gideon Gono, Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, called for an end to the parallel market, and hours later the operation began in Harare and subsequently other urban areas, such as Bulawayo, ostensibly to oust illegal vendors and eliminate illegal structures. Very early on, it became clear that this operation would clean out all vendors and non-standard and additional structures whether legal or not. In locations where dozens of vendors had populated long-standing markets that attracted tourists and local people alike, we saw empty spaces. But Operation Murambatsvina did not stop with its urban renewal objective. The operation spread to so-called squatters' camps and other rural areas, tearing down structures in which residents had in some cases invested their life savings in order to construct a substantial house with electricity and water.

Spreading from central business districts to suburbs to farms, this operation eventually evicted even supporters of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union—Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) who had seized white-

owned commercial farms since 2000. Not even membership in the ruling party could save homes from destruction, as police took down houses despite the pleas of residents wearing ZANU-PF t-shirts. As for the veterans of the liberation war, who had claimed credit for assisting the government's land reform process that has so transformed Zimbabwe's economy, they appear to have been wiped out. Now landless and homeless, they apparently have outlived their usefulness to the ruling party. One war veteran reportedly stood in front of a police bulldozer that had torn down his home and pleaded for police to take his life.

A Zimbabwean employee at the U.S. embassy in Harare told us his supplementary dwelling in the backyard of his property had been built to house some of his children to relieve overcrowding in the main house. Nevertheless, authorities forced him to tear the structure down, despite his holding a legal permit from local authorities. His experience apparently was shared by many other homeowners whose homes were not shacks or shanties and who had locally-provided permits for their construction.

On June 2nd, BBC News quoted a cobbler (who identified himself as "Edson") on his encounter with police who arrived to force him and his fellow vendors from their standard locations in Harare. He told the BBC that the authorities were uninterested in his legal status as a vendor: "They were very firm and just kept saying: 'We don't want you; we don't want you here; we want you to go from this place.'"

Clearly, this operation was not restricted to illegal vendors or dwellings. We were told that police and supporting forces from youth militias and soldiers were not interested in differentiating between what was legal or illegal. One opposition politician showed us a truck load of youth militia and explained that they had been in government camps and prepared to take actions such as those associated with Operation Murambatsvina. Eyewitnesses reported seeing police looting stalls from which vendors were evicted. Others reported to us that police confiscated property for which residents of homes or shops could not produce satisfactory receipts, even if the goods were personal property and not for sale.

This operation was cruelly executed. In Bulawayo, Ms. Shingirai Mmpa told us she had been a vendor for nearly 20 years in the same location. She recounted how police one day suddenly seized the vegetables she and other women were selling as usual. Police came to her home and tried to make her tear it down. She protested unsuccessfully that she was a renter and did not own the house, and when she proved unable to tear the house down, police got her neighbors to help her do so. They then threatened to fine her 1.5 million Zimbabwe dollars if she didn't dispose of the rubble. Her experience was not unique.

In Harare, we were told about a grandmother who had been taking care of her grandchildren and other orphans. They lived in a cottage that had been declared illegal and was destroyed. She now faces a bill of five million Zimbabwe dollars for back rent for a cottage that no longer exists and another substantial bill for removing the rubble from the destroyed cottage.

We witnessed families at the Porta Farms camp whose homes had been utterly destroyed, leaving them to seek refuge, first in the bushes surrounding their former dwellings and then in the ruins on which their homes had stood. We saw beds and furniture sitting in the open, and families living with no food, running water or sanitation facilities. We saw a baby who had been born since the demolition, who had to survive in temperatures that might reach 32° at night. The

baby's mother, who had an obvious infection, had to manage without medication from the local clinic that had been managed by New Life Church. It was destroyed along with the other structures.

The evictions at Porta Farms involved more than a little irony. Most residents of Porta Farms had been moved from Chiuru Farm to keep them out of sight of Queen Elizabeth and other world leaders who attended the 1991 Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Harare. Some reportedly had been told that if they paid to install electricity and water that they would be given permits for their homes. Operation Murambatsvina abrogated whatever agreement they may have had with the government.

We witnessed a similar situation at Kilarney squatters' camp outside Bulawayo. The camp had been established by the white minority Rhodesian government to move poor blacks out of Bulawayo during colonial times. More residents of the camp had been moved by the government of Robert Mugabe in the 1980s in the aftermath of the government massacre of Ndebele people in Matabeleland. Now residents were on the move again. This time, the camp was completely razed. Where once thousands of people lived in houses often made of brick and mortar, only ruins remained.

Porta Farm residents told us that four people died in the destruction of that camp: a child who was run over by a bulldozer, a pregnant woman who died after being thrown into a truck for transport elsewhere and two critically ill people whose treatment was interrupted by the destruction. They were not the only people who did not survive this operation. A policeman was killed in Bulawayo when the wall of a building he was helping to tear down fell on him. He died in the United Bulawayo Hospital. An unknown number of people have died of exposure or starvation or succumbed to untreated medical conditions since Operation Murambatsvina began.

Estimates range from 300,000 (U.S. embassy) to 700,000 (United Nations) displaced persons. An estimated 46,000 people have been arrested. More than 300,000 children are unable to attend school due to being displaced or because they have to care for siblings or older relatives in distress. By all accounts, Operation Murambatsvina has exacerbated existing social problems. Non-governmental organization representatives told us there are now two million widows, 1.5 million orphans, 500,000 children with only one surviving parent and 8,000 households headed by children.

The official rate of HIV-AIDS in Zimbabwe is 25%, although it could actually be much higher. The way in which Operation Murambatsvina has been applied is certain to ratchet that percentage up much higher. Some women vendors have reported being required to give sexual favors to get licenses to sell goods. Moreover, with so many women vendors now unable to get a license due to being arrested for having an illegal vending operation, prostitution is likely to soar in coming weeks and months. Heretofore, prostitution was not seen as a major contributor to the rate of HIV-AIDS in Zimbabwe. A higher HIV-AIDS rate also will affect those countries to which Zimbabweans are fleeing.

The threat of hunger, estimated by the U.S. embassy to be greater than at any time in Zimbabwe's history, will be exacerbated by Operation Murambatsvina. The food deficit was believed to be 1.6 million metric tons prior to the removals and now will rise dramatically. In the face of rising hunger, the government outlawed "urban farming" and destroyed gardens in and around cities, despite the fact that many people were growing crops to make up for the lack of available produce in Zimbabwe markets.

This operation especially is having an ill effect on Zimbabwe's economy. Early into Operation Murambatsvina, the International Monetary Fund was predicting that Zimbabwe's Gross Domestic Product would fall by 7% this year and that inflation would rise to 200%. The country's Central Statistical Office reported in mid-July that inflation had risen nearly 20 percentage points in June to 164.3%. With the almost utter destruction of the informal economy in this operation and no coherent plan on how to restore the thousands of microenterprises that were shut down, the contraction of GDP could more than double. In fact, Center for Global Development researcher Todd Moss is estimating that Zimbabwe's Gross National Income is now down to its 1953 level.

THE DESTRUCTION'S AFTERMATH

When we spoke to Didymus Mutasa, Minister of National Security, he virtually bragged of having been part of the decision to commence Operation Murambatsvina. He echoed the government position that there were a lot of robberies, prostitution and illegal money changing involved in the informal markets that needed to be curbed. Minister Mutasa added that crime was down significantly (20% by some government estimates) since the operation began. He was adamant that only 40,000 people were involved and that they did not deserve sympathy.

In fact, the government has told diplomatic missions who had been providing food, blankets and medicines to displaced people to stop. In a June 17th article in the Zimbabwe Independent, senior officials at Zimbabwe's Ministry of Social Welfare were reported to have ordered governors of provinces to block donor groups from distributing food and clothing to displaced people since the article noted that it would "expose the shortcomings of the controversial campaign."

There is opposition within the government to requesting food assistance, despite the estimated 4.5 million Zimbabweans believed to need food this year. Discussions with the World Food Program revolved around the government allowing assistance while not requesting it and limiting the supply of food resources to school feeding programs or through the Grain Marketing Board, which has in the past distributed food using political considerations.

The government was said to be formulating its own response. One such response is the establishment of several transit camps, such as the one at Caledonia Farm. The conditions at these camps are widely considered to be squalid. According to a July 3rd report in the Times of London, aid workers say an epidemic of diarrhea has broken out at the camp. Conditions were so poor that church leaders we met with refused to allow the displaced people they were caring for to be taken to the camp.

This concern was confirmed by Lucy Mwanza, a former resident of the Harare suburb of Mbare now living at Caledonia Farm, who told the United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks, as reported on June 14th: "All they (the government) did was just to come and dump us here, and we have not heard from them since then. Just like the other families that were brought here, my five children and I were forced to set up two shacks using plastic and cardboard boxes, but the cold is unbearable at night."

Father Barnabas Nqindi of the Church of the Ascension in Bulawayo told us he was keeping the more than 100 displaced persons at his church where the community has been generous in helping to provide food and other supplies. Father Nqindi said the transit camps, were too open, lacking proper shelter

and the necessary infrastructure to care for residents. He said they were established hastily and remain unorganized. He believes churches will play a major role in ensuring that such camps are ready before people are transferred. Father Nqindi said the churches are concerned about maintaining access to the people once transferred so that they can continue to ensure the necessary services are provided and that eventual settlement of people in the camps is handled humanely.

Subsequent to our visit to Zimbabwe, baton wielding police in full anti-riot gear reportedly stormed Father Nqindi's church and other Bulawayo area churches, rounded up about 500 displaced people and took them to a transit camp about 35 kilometers outside the city. According to various reports, the next morning, the people were dispersed, and the camp was dismantled. WorldVision staff members were prevented from distributing food. Only the Red Cross was allowed to provide any assistance. Father Nqindi was briefly arrested, but has been released for now.

It is the government's intention to transfer many of the people displaced from urban areas to their rural home, if they have one. We saw many trucks carrying furniture leaving cities, presumably on the way back to the original family home. This exodus has been stymied, however, by the lack of fuel in the country. Lacking foreign exchange with which to buy sufficient fuel, the government has been unable to prevent the rapid increase in gasoline prices, which have risen 300% just due to higher world oil prices. In cities, suburbs and more rural areas, lines of empty cars are parked at gasoline stations awaiting word that fuel has arrived.

The government also intends to build housing for the displaced persons more consistent with reasonable urban planning. Governor Gono told us he is confident that the government can find one trillion Zimbabwe dollars to add to three trillion in funding already identified to begin construction of housing soon. However, the shortage of foreign exchange currently is forcing the government to choose between importing food or fuel, and the level of funding necessary for such a major construction project is far beyond known government revenues. Furthermore, to adequately meet the needs of the many displaced people in a timely manner, the rate of construction would have to exceed any known rate for such a project anywhere in the world.

The lack of housing, already a problem even for middle-class Zimbabweans, is now more acute. Housing prices have now doubled and tripled, outpacing the ability to pay of working families, even households headed by professionals. Some middle-class people were among those whose homes were demolished, and with this worsened housing crisis, the homeless in Zimbabwe now include those who make a good living, but who had the misfortune of losing their homes at the worst possible time.

One Zimbabwe businessman, who allegedly has a source within President Robert Mugabe's inner circle, told us that the Zimbabwe president, commenting on the results of Operation Murambatsvina reportedly said: "What a mess!"

Indeed, many of his countrymen would agree, as they are calling this situation "the Mugabe tsunami."

RATIONALE FOR OPERATION MURAMBATSVINA

With such devastation to the Zimbabwe population and to the country's economy, one wonders why Operation Murambatsvina was undertaken in the first place. Of the many reasons offered by sources to whom we spoke, opposition party Member of Parliament David Coltart offered four reasons

that encompass what others have suggested as well.

The ZANU-PF government used Operation Murambatsvina as a tool to punish its political opponents. There certainly seems to be some truth to this contention since this operation began in urban areas that had not traditionally voted for President Mugabe or his party. In the March 2005 elections, ZANU-PF won only one urban seat. Mr. Coltart and others see the government's actions as purely retribution for the communities that did not vote for the ruling party. However, as mentioned earlier, this operation spread from the urban to the suburban to the rural areas and punished even ZANU-PF supporters. Whatever the initial rationale for this operation, it seems to have gotten out of hand and fallen victim to a melange of agendas. Some ZANU-PF communities apparently didn't vote in appropriate numbers in March, and the so-called war veterans had served their purpose. Still, the response of many ZANU-PF officials indicated that whoever was targeted by this operation was not to be pitied or helped.

The ZANU-PF government feared an urban uprising and used Operation Murambatsvina to clean out potential armed opponents. Mr. Coltart and others pointed out that the ZANU-PF government has mishandled the economy so badly that unrest is growing, especially with a 70% unemployment rate. The financial crisis is deep and becoming insurmountable without outside help that may not be forthcoming. Some sources reported that youth, whose unemployment is near universal, were becoming particularly restive, and some have said there were efforts to obtain weapons by urban youth. I must emphasize that this report is not broadly corroborated. Nevertheless, the Central Intelligence Organization is aware of sentiments, and due to their widespread infiltration of organizations and movements throughout Zimbabwe, they are aware of the so-called "pub talk." Depopulating urban poor areas and destroying the dissatisfied war veterans likely does provide some protection against those willing and able to rise up in armed opposition to the government.

The ZANU-PF government was convinced that a vast pool of foreign exchange was tied up in the parallel market and used Operation Murambatsvina to obtain this currency. As discussed earlier, the government has mishandled the economy to a disastrous extent, and according to Dr. Tony Hawkins, economics professor at the University of Zimbabwe's School of Business, there is no turnaround in sight. Dr. Hawkins said the central bank is printing money and distributing it, but this is only exacerbating the inflationary spiral the country is experiencing. The government was widely reported to have raided hotels in search of significant amounts of foreign currency, which was not found in the expected amounts. Businesspeople confirmed that their successful Indian colleagues had their homes and businesses raided—again in search of supposed foreign exchange pools that for the most part were not found. The effort to locate and seize large amounts of foreign exchange from the informal sector also has generally failed to turn up enough foreign exchange to justify the raids.

The ZANU-PF government used Operation Murambatsvina as a tool of social engineering to turn the country into a feudal society that is easier to control. With its continual call for displaced people to return to their rural roots, the government seems to want to bring people back to the rural areas where they rule through appointed headmen. Many of the dispersed people no longer have a home in the rural area, never came from the rural areas or are foreign-born. Given the control headmen have in these areas, the dis-

placed who relocate to rural areas will have to be "vetted," meaning that they will have to pass a political litmus test to get land, work or food assistance until they can get established. At the Fountain of Hope Church we visited in Harare, young men were told to keep all the necessary identification on them because if they got picked up by police without it, they could be shipped off to work on a farm. If the commercial farming industry is to be revived, Zimbabwe will need an infusion of farm workers, and the displaced (and possibly forced) could provide a pliable rural workforce.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FORCES

In considering how to deal with this complex and troubling situation in Zimbabwe, it is useful to consider those actors who could be of use in addressing this crisis. They consist of internal and external forces.

Internal Forces

There are four primary domestic actors in Zimbabwe:

ZANU-PF: The ruling party is home to competing interests that are becoming increasingly restive. There are the loyalists, such as Didymus Mutasa; the pragmatists, such as Vice President Joyce Mujuru and her influential husband Simon, and the potential reformers, such as Speaker of Parliament John Nkomo and Gideon Gono. Make no mistake about it: all these figures and those allied with them arrive at decisions based on how they are personally affected. Independent Member of Parliament Jonathan Moyo was once a member of Mugabe's inner circle, but he is now a proclaimed reformer, likely based on his ouster from the ruling party as much as his natural pragmatism.

The hardliners in ZANU-PF are just about unreachable. However, there are elements within the ruling party who might be amenable to working toward a better path for Zimbabwe's future if discussions were initiated through all available channels. ZANU-PF central committee member and former Member of Parliament Pearson Mbalekwa publicly split from the party, and at least 10 other party MPs are said to be considering a similar move. Of course, the rapid seizure of Mbalekwa's assets is a reminder to potential defectors of what is in store if they leave the party. Mr. Moyo has managed to survive life after ZANU-PF, so it is not impossible to carry on successfully after leaving the party if one is as clever as he is. One also must keep in mind that those loyal ZANU-PF leaders involved in business ventures know they cannot withstand the growing isolationism Mugabe's policies are bringing on Zimbabwe.

MDC: The opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) has been almost absent from the fray involving Operation Murambatsvina. When we spoke with top officials from the party, they seemed not to fully understand the political necessity of identifying with their constituents by spending time with them in their misery, helping to bring shelter or food or just helping them clean up the rubble that had been their homes. While thousands were suffering the after-effects of Operation Murambatsvina, MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai was in South Africa for the release of his autobiography.

This party also is in some turmoil. Mr. Tsvangirai has been quoted as wanting to get rid of his fellow top party leaders, although he has denied this. He would have some reason to question their loyalty, though, since party Vice President Gibson Sibanda and Secretary-General Welshman Ncube met with Mugabe while Mr. Tsvangirai was in Nigeria meeting with Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo. There are some who believe this party could split between the so-called activist wing, led by former labor

leader Tsvangirai and the parliamentary wing, led by Mr. Ncube and Mr. Sibanda. The party lacks a strong base among civil society, labor or the churches because of its failure to bring all these stakeholders into their political calculations, and MDC has not adequately supported those civil actions that have taken place. With a tarnished reputation abroad caused by their past linkages to white farmers providing their funding, this party needs to reconceptualize its approach if it is to live up to its potential and plays significant role in Zimbabwe.

Civil society: We met with a number of NGOs, and the most impressive was Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA). While much of the population seems unwilling or unable to respond pro actively to the crisis in their country, the members of WOZA put themselves on the line by protesting peacefully against government repression. Other NGOs are trying to respond in their own way, monitoring the political process, providing help for the homeless, offering services to victims of HIV-AIDS and defending the rights of Zimbabweans in court. However, other Africans who have fought for their freedom, particularly in South Africa, look down on Zimbabweans, who are seen as too passive in the struggle for their freedom. WOZA members have suffered beatings and arrests to stand up for the rights of all Zimbabweans.

Despite the fact that the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) reached out to labor in Zimbabwe and even continued to reach out in the face of repeated expulsions from the country, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (formerly headed by Mr. Tsvangirai) has not played a strong role in the battle for Zimbabwe's future. Strikes have fizzled because of a lack of commitment by either civil society leaders or opposition party leaders. The prospect of facing a brutal police reaction seems to have frozen efforts to legally, peacefully oppose government actions.

Churches: I have separated churches out from civil society because until quite recently, most churches have declined to get involved in issues of political rights in favor of sticking with a focus on spiritual needs. Operation Murambatsvina led many churches and church leaders to alter their focus to include feeding and sheltering people. The government's heavy-handed evacuation of displaced people from churches and removal to an uncertain fate may spark a more activist role by churches. The accompanying arrests of ministers merely trying to meet the needs of people may cause more churches to challenge the political status quo and sharpen their criticism in sermons. Even some of the hardliners, such as Minister Mutasa, have demonstrated concerns about their spiritual future, and stronger preaching against cruel and undemocratic government actions could help wear them down as similar tactics began to do with white racists in the American south during the civil rights movement.

External forces

There are four categories of external forces that could impact the situation in Zimbabwe:

International community: Thus far, neither the United States nor the United Kingdom has been effective in making a positive impact on the situation in Zimbabwe since independence. The British, as the former colonial power, have had to work through the resentment of a government to which it ceded power. The United States has had to deal with the resentment of former guerillas who were never supported in the struggle against white minority rule. President Mugabe and his loyalists have a long memory for resentment, and in many ways, they

live in the past, fixated on the wrongs they feel were done to them in the 1960s, 1970s and even since independence.

The European Union and nations such as Australia have placed sanctions on Zimbabwe, but much of the rest of the international community apparently has felt that the problems of Zimbabwe are the responsibility of the former colonial power and have shown little patience for engagement with a difficult Zimbabwe regime that has too often fashioned its own reality in its interactions with the rest of the world. Of late, the Mugabe government has "looked East" to Malaysia and China for salvation from an international community that has pressed that government to respect the rule of law and make governance and economic reforms. Even now, the Zimbabwe government is appealing to China and Malaysia to save it from an international community that has no faith in its willingness to reform and has lost patience with its cavalier attitude toward the rights and welfare of its people.

International institutions: The United Nations has condemned various actions by the Government of Zimbabwe over the years, but has done so seemingly reluctantly and ineffectively. Its most recent efforts in Zimbabwe, however, were handled carefully, and hopefully will be its most important contribution to Zimbabwe ever. By sending an envoy whose portfolio was resettlement, the UN appeared to accept the government's rationale that Operation Murambatsvina was a legitimate, if clumsy, exercise. That allowed Ms. Anna Tibajuka to not only enter the country, but examine the situation at length with few restrictions. Her report accused excoriated Operation Murambatsvina as a "disastrous venture" and accused the ZANU-PF government of creating a "humanitarian crisis of immense proportions."

In contrast, the African Union's initial reaction to the growing Zimbabwe crisis was to reflexively reject calls to pressure the Zimbabwe government to end its evictions, destruction and arrests. AU spokesman Desmond Orjiako told BBC News on June 6th that "If the government that they elected says they are restoring order by their actions, I don't think it would be proper for us to go interfering in their internal legislation." Evidently, the enormity of this operation finally convinced AU leaders to take action, but it was so hastily put together that it failed to appropriately prepare the way for its envoy. As a result, Mr. Bahamas Tom Nyandunga, a member of the AU Commission on Human and People's Rights, was confined to his hotel for several days before being expelled from Zimbabwe during Ms. Tibajuka's mission. Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund will consider expelling Zimbabwe at an August meeting for failing to make any reasonable attempt to honor its loan obligations.

African community: The AU, as of this writing, has not reacted publicly to the rejection of its envoy. The organization's bureaucrats are likely lamenting the failure to follow protocols in dispatching their envoy and accepting Zimbabwe's right to reject an envoy forced on them in violation of the government's sovereignty. African housing ministers, meeting during our visit, accepted Zimbabwe's explanation of the reason or Operation Murambatsvina. Moreover, African government have been known to engage in similar mass evictions, such as Kenya's recent eviction of as many as 30,000 people from homes they constructed in the Mau Forest.

South Africa's quiet diplomacy has failed to move either the Zimbabweans or their fellow Southern African Development Community nations. Tanzania, Namibia and Zambia have even complimented the Zimbabwe gov-

ernment and dismissed criticism. Meanwhile, an African coalition of civil society groups, in five news conferences held across the continent, has appealed to the AU and the UN to stop Operation Murambatsvina. Mr. Reuel Khoza, chairman of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has criticized the AU for "shirking its responsibility" in comments to Business Day on June 29th, calling on the AU to be "more outspoken" in condemning the actions of the Mugabe government. The South Africans seem to have heard the message. In its conditions for funding a financial bailout of the Zimbabwe government, it is requiring a resumption of discussions on cooperation between ZANUPF and MDC, economic and governance reforms and renewed respect for rule of law. South African government officials told us Africans were waiting for the UN report. Now that it has blasted the Zimbabwe government's actions, all eyes are on Africa for its reaction.

African Diaspora: People of African descent throughout the world are often overlooked as regards the influence they could have in bringing to an end the cover under which African despots often operate. By invoking colonialism, neo-colonialism and racism, Zimbabwe and other African nations deflect criticism as efforts by the white international power structure to either diminish their authority or impugn the capability of black leadership. In reality, however, African leaders such as President Mugabe have shown repeatedly that they do not rule in the interest of their countrymen. When Mugabe had the white commercial farms seized, he did not turn the land over to the black farm workers who knew how to till the land. When black professionals merely tried to defend the legal rights of the average Zimbabwean, they were beaten and jailed. When poor black workers tried to create acceptable shelter until they could afford better dwellings, the government destroyed their homes and put their lives in limbo.

African-Americans have a long history of trying to defend the interests of African people. In the 1930s, African-Americans were the leading edge of the movement to save Ethiopia from Italian conquest. Through the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, African-Americans led the liberation struggle for African nations struggling to break free from colonial rule. Many African-Americans, including members of the Congressional Black Caucus, supported Zimbabwe's liberation struggle even when the U.S. government did not. Caucus members and African-American opinion leaders have shown interest in positively intervening in the Zimbabwe crisis to benefit that country's people. This is an untapped resource that should be utilized for the benefit of Zimbabweans and other African people who need all the help they can get.

RECOMMENDATIONS

American policy toward Zimbabwe has been unable to make any significant impact on that country's government and has had a hostile relationship with the Mugabe government since independence. Given the factors as presented earlier, I would suggest the following coordinated strategy to restructure U.S. policy:

(1) Provide humanitarian assistance to the fullest extent possible to the many displaced people. Even though the Mugabe government would be unlikely to receive humanitarian assistance directly from the United States, it is in the interest of the people of Zimbabwe to funnel such help through the World Food Programme or any other available conduit to meet the housing, food, medical and other needs of the people of Zimbabwe. This assistance must be provided as swiftly as possible, and revulsion as bail-

ing the Zimbabwe government out of the crisis it has created must not prevent a rapid response to this crisis.

(2) Maintain civil society throughout the current crisis and enhance their ability to serve the needs of the people. President Mugabe last year declined to sign a restrictive law that would virtually tie the hands of NGOs by restricting their international funding, but the law is expected to be revived. Therefore, all U.S. efforts to maintain Zimbabwe civil society must be undertaken to build their capacity to defend the rights and interests of Zimbabwe's people. This should take the form of increased funding, as possible, for Zimbabwe NGOs, as well as technical assistance. As for labor and the churches, facilitating ongoing contacts with counterparts in other countries will be vital in enhancing their ability to carry out the increasingly necessary task of safeguarding the welfare of Zimbabwe's people. Funding is included in current authorization and appropriations bills.

(3) Provide support for efforts to inform the Zimbabwean people and the world community about events in Zimbabwe. The established media has been hampered in the effort to film and report on what happens in Zimbabwe. To offset this limitation, the U.S. government has funded "guerilla media" to film and report on Operation Murambatsvina and other actions taken against Zimbabwe's people. Such support must not only continue, but be expanded. In addition to equipment and funding to support guerilla media inside Zimbabwe, support must be extended to SW Radio, which has broadcast by short-wave (now medium wave) into Zimbabwe from London. Moreover, the popular and effective Voice of American broadcasts must continue and expand as needed.

(4) Work with the Zimbabwe business community at home and abroad to build their capacity to survive the economic crisis and strive toward improving the country's economic situation. With the dismantling of the formal economy and the recent destruction of the informal sector, efforts to rebuild both the agriculture and manufacturing sectors, as well as a legalized small and micro-business sector, will be vital in enabling Zimbabweans to survive beyond what aid can provide, accumulate wealth sufficient to escape poverty and produce tax revenues for a reformed public sector. That will mean encouraging the legalization of vendors under a rational, equitable policy, in addition to the reform of the country's investment policies so that expatriate Zimbabweans, South Africans and other investors will feel more certain about the commercial environment. Such investment would be an encouragement to reformist and pragmatic elements of ZANU-PF.

(5) Help legislators in the ruling party and the opposition party engage on issues of mutual concern. South Africa is encouraging talks between the ruling and opposition parties. The most likely basis for commonality now is in finding ways to rebuild the country's economy. Rather than tackling controversial political issues initially, working together to save the economy could build a basis for broader cooperation, especially since governance and economic reforms will be inevitable if Zimbabwe's economy is to be revived. U.S. resumption of USAID-funded programs to facilitate such parliamentary working relationships would be a helpful contribution to this process.

(6) Engage African nations, through their governments and people, to stimulate African efforts to help resolve the Zimbabwe crisis. African leaders are loathe to be seen as being forced by the developed world to castigate one of their own. However, with the help of the Diaspora, especially African-

Americans, a successful way forward may be found to support good governance and economic policies that build the capacity of all Zimbabweans to escape poverty and not just make selected citizens wealthy. This effort could include encouragement of a team of respected African elders who could speak with President Mugabe about necessary changes, including his retirement. It also should include an effort to work through the African Union and civil society across the continent to promote a just solution to the current crisis.

(7) Selectively engage government officials and ruling party legislators to find ways to end the current crisis and move the country toward true democracy and economic freedom. By lumping all of Zimbabwe's leaders in the same category, there are no channels for discussions about how to use the levers of power to reverse Zimbabwe's current slide. The Zimbabwe Democracy Economic Recovery Act of 2001 allows for a selective waiver of the visa sanctions such that cooperative elements of ZANU-PF could be allowed into the United States for discussions, or if a visit to the U.S. would pose a problem for such ZANU-PF officials, then meetings could and should be arranged in more neutral settings. However and wherever these talks take place, they must be held if a way forward is to be found. Isolating the entire ruling party and government gives no encouragement for any officials to change their behavior or the direction of the country.

Zimbabwe has been a persistent problem for U.S. policymakers. It is time for the executive and legislative branches to devise a mutually agreeable, coordinated policy to bring Zimbabwe into ranks of African nations who have developed political and economic stability and help that nation avoid the certain fate of becoming a failed state if its course is not changed soon. Such an eventuality will not only have a tragically negative impact on that nation's population, but also will be a tremendous burden for the entire southern African region. It also will represent yet another missed opportunity for Africa to seize available opportunities to make advancements in the global economy.

APPENDIX

The following are the people we met during the staff delegation visit.

Zimbabwe

Hon. Tendai Biti—MDC Member of Parliament

Nikki Blythe-Wood—The Travel Company
Norberto Celestino—International Organization for Migration

Nigel Chanakira—Success Motivation Institute

Hon. David Coltart—MDC Member of Parliament

Lynde Frances—The Centre
Dr. Gideon Gono—Governor, Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe

Valerie Guarnieri—United Nations World Food Programme

Dr. Tony Hawkins—University of Zimbabwe School of Business
Munyaradzi Kereke—Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe

Bishop Trevor Manhanga, Bishop of the Pentacostal Assemblies of Zimbabwe
Isabella Matambandzo—Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

Dr. Reginald Matchaba-Hove—Zimbabwe Election Support Network

Hon. Priscilla Mishairambwi—MDC Member of Parliament

Shingirai Mmpa—Women of Zimbabwe Arise

Hon. Jonathan Moyo—Independent Member of Parliament

Kilton Moyo—WorldVision
Jonah Mudehwe—National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations

Bishop Patrick Mutume, Auxiliary Bishop for the Catholic Diocese of Mutare

Hon. Didymus Mutasa—Minister for State Security

Priscilla Mutembwa—Zimbabwe Allied Banking Group

Welshman Ncube—MDC Secretary General and Member of Parliament

Fr. Barnabas Nqindi—Pastor, Church of the Ascension

Yvonne Nxumalo—Western Union

Florence Sachikonye—Sachara (clothing manufacturer)

Otto Saki—Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights

Dr. Peter Kagwanja—International Crisis Group

Dr. Anna Tibaijuka—UN Habitat—Special Envoy

Daniel Wang'ang'a—WorldVision

Jenny Williams—Women of Zimbabwe Arise

Mari Yamashita—United Nations—Africa Division

South Africa

Simon Boshielo—COSATU

Richard Cornwell—Institute for Security Studies

Ross Herbert—South African Institute of International Affairs

Paul Fagan—International Republican Institute

Tim Hughes—South African Institute of International Affairs

Dr. Peter Kagwanja—International Crisis Group

Dr. Bane Maleke—Development Bank of Southern Africa

Chris Maroleng—Institute for Security Studies

Strive Masiyiwa—ECONET Wireless

Andrew Meldrum—The Guardian/The Observer

Fr. Richard Menatsi—Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference

Kgalema Motlanthe—ANC Secretary General

Piers Pigou—Zimbabwe Torture Victims/Survivors Project

Matshidiso Raphadu—South Africa Department of Foreign Affairs

Dr. Piet Viljoen—Development Bank of Southern Africa

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

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

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, as the sponsor of this resolution, I would first like to express my appreciation to Chairman HENRY HYDE for his strong support for this measure and for his help in getting it to the floor. I also wish to thank my colleagues for their cosponsorship and concerns expressed for the people of Zimbabwe.

Mr. Speaker, for over two decades, the United States has tried to influence the government of Zimbabwe in the right direction. Many in this body supported the liberation of Zimbabwe from the oppressive, colonial rule of Ian Smith's Rhodesia.

And for years after independence, Zimbabwe's political leaders made great progress for their people in education, economic development, and agricultural production. Until a few years ago, Zimbabwe was considered the breadbasket of southern Africa.

But, Mr. Speaker, all of that changed in 2000 when President Robert Mugabe and his

party realized they were losing their monopoly on political power, and changed from being a government of liberation to one of tyranny and ruthless oppression.

In 2001, Congress passed the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act establishing sanctions on specific individuals who had grossly mismanaged the Zimbabwean economy, instituted draconian legislation in opposition to the rule of law, and used violence to suppress civil society and political opponents during their elections.

In that legislation, Mr. Speaker, we also provided incentives for Zimbabwe's leaders to return to the rule of law, to create new political space, and to pursue economic policies that would benefit their citizens.

Instead of responding to our incentives, conditioned only on their respect for the rule of law and economic common sense, Zimbabwe's leadership lashed out even more strongly against its own citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the event this past spring, called "Operation 'Throw Out the Trash,'" by the Mugabe regime, has taken the government of Zimbabwe to a new low. When a government begins to describe its own citizens as "trash," it has lost its sense of purpose and become an enemy to its people.

Mr. Speaker, I have monitored carefully the situation in Zimbabwe and want to share with you some of the devastation documented by the United Nations, our own Agency for International Development, and Zimbabwean human rights organizations.

First, Operation "Throw Out the Trash" occurred as the Zimbabwean economy is in a chronic state of decline. Inflation is well over 300 percent. At a time when 70 percent of Zimbabweans are unemployed, food for a family of six can increase by 160 percent in one month alone. Compounding these economic woes is the HIV/AIDS crisis. Mr. Speaker, one-quarter of Zimbabweans is infected with HIV/AIDS.

With complete disregard for the suffering of its people, the Mugabe's regime launched "Operation Throw Out the Trash" on May 25, 2005, and within a few weeks, displaced 700,000 individuals from their homes or businesses or both, and indirectly affected 2.4 million people. Of the 700,000 directly displaced, an estimated 172,200 were living with HIV/AIDS.

To carry-out the Operation, the government ordered individuals to tear down their own homes and businesses, then loaded men, women and children onto trucks, and dumped them in transit camps outside the cities with no shelter, food, clothing, medicine, or sanitation.

This occurred during the dead of Zimbabwe's winter where night temperatures can fall to freezing. During the Operation, babies were born in the cold winter air and the weak and frail died from exposure.

Mr. Speaker, "Operation Throw Out the Trash" devastated the most vulnerable in Zimbabwean society including the elderly, the mentally ill, the physically challenged, malnourished children, and the chronically ill.

Most devastated, perhaps, were individuals living with HIV/AIDS. The Operation indiscriminately tore down health clinics where individual received voluntary counseling and testing. Patients on antiretroviral treatment were cut off from their doctors and medicines, while home-based care programs for HIV/AIDS patients were decimated.

Most shocking, the Operation destroyed several HIV/AIDS orphanages where the children, who had lost both parents and had no family caretakers, also were living with HIV/AIDS.

In response to an international outcry, the U.N. Secretary General appointed a Special Envoy to assess the situation and report on ways to address the conditions of those affected.

The Special Envoy reported that the Zimbabwe government's purported effort to clamp down on illegal dwellings and illicit activities, was carried out in an indiscriminate and unjustified manner and with disregard for national and international law.

She called for bringing those immediately responsible to account and for immediate reparations to those who had lost property and their livelihood.

Mr. Speaker, on top of this grave injury to his people, Mugabe lashed out recently at U.S. Ambassador Christopher Dell, who simply told the truth about the regime in power. Ambassador Dell stated the simple fact that Zimbabwe's current crisis is due to economic mismanagement and corrupt rule.

Mr. Speaker, we must reinforce Ambassador Dell's message by passing this resolution today.

This resolution sends a clear message to President Mugabe and his tyrannical government that we will speak out against his ruling party's harsh abuse of its citizens and condemn any actions that harm innocent people.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I want to commend our U.S. AID staff members for their efforts to provide emergency shelter, food, clothing, blankets, and medicine to Mugabe's victims of "Operation Throw out the Trash." The Mission Director, Paul Weisenfeld, and his team, worked around the clock with local partners to provide relief for the affected people.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my deep appreciation to my good friend and distinguished colleague, Pearl-Alice Marsh, for the extraordinary job she has done in connection with this issue.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REICHERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 409, as amended.

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 question will be postponed.

PROVIDING THAT HAMAS AND OTHER TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN ELECTIONS HELD BY PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 575), providing that Hamas and other terrorist organizations should not participate in elections held by the Palestinian Authority, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 575

Whereas the foundation for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process was Palestinian recognition of Israel's right to exist and a solemn obligation to end terrorism and violence;

Whereas the removal of all Israeli presence in Gaza signifies an end to Israeli responsibility there and a shift in security responsibility of Gaza to the Palestinian Authority;

Whereas Israel's evacuation of Gaza affords the Palestinian Authority, now the responsible governing authority in Gaza, the opportunity to demonstrate its ability to govern, to establish the rule of law, to end corruption, and thereby to demonstrate that it is a partner for peace;

Whereas Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has repeatedly called for the establishment of "One Authority, One Law, and One Gun";

Whereas since the withdrawal of Israeli military forces, the Palestinian Authority has taken few steps to establish rule of law in Gaza;

Whereas Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, and other terrorist organizations have vowed to continue terrorism against Israeli civilians, seek the destruction of the State of Israel, and employ violence and terror in fulfillment of that aim;

Whereas the inclusion of Hamas, or any other terrorist group on the State Department list of foreign terrorist organizations, into the Palestinian structure could be construed as an implicit endorsement of their anti-American and anti-Israeli terrorist ideology;

Whereas the first provision of the Road Map to Middle East Peace calls for the Palestinians to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure;

Whereas these terrorist organizations, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, operate virtually without interference from the Palestinian Authority;

Whereas Hamas has announced its intention to run in Palestinian legislative elections scheduled for January 2006;

Whereas Abbas has indicated his willingness to see Hamas participate in the elections without first calling for it to disband its militia or for it to renounce its goal of destroying the State of Israel;

Whereas the United States has clearly stated that armed militias attached to political parties are incompatible with democratic societies;

Whereas President Bush has stated that Hamas "seeks to end dissent in every form, to control every aspect of life . . . the terrorists are preparing a future of oppression and misery";

Whereas the forces of freedom must continue to keep an untiring vigil against the enemies of rising democracies; and

Whereas the United States has a long-standing policy of not dealing or negotiating with terrorists: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms its commitment to the safety and security of the democratic State of Israel;

(2) asserts that terrorist organizations, such as Hamas, should not be permitted to participate in Palestinian elections until such organizations recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state, cease incitement, condemn terrorism, and permanently disarm and dismantle their terrorist infrastructure;

(3) calls on the Palestinian Authority President Abbas before the election to declare openly his intention to take action to dismantle the terrorist organizations;

(4) asserts that the inclusion of Hamas, or any other terrorist group on the Department of State's list of foreign terrorist organizations, in the Palestinian Authority's government will inevitably raise serious questions for the United States about the commitment of the Palestinian Authority and its leadership to making peace with Israel and will potentially undermine the ability of the United States to have a constructive relationship with, or provide further assistance to, the Palestinian Authority; and

(5) states its strong belief that, as underlined in every recent Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, progress in the peace process requires sustained Palestinian effort to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure, and that delay in confronting that principal obligation only emboldens the opponents of peace and threatens its realization.

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution 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. I rise in strong support of House Resolution 575, and I commend my distinguished colleague and friend, Congressman CANTOR, for introducing this resolution and Congressman MCCAUL for his efforts on this measure. I thank also the House leadership, Chairman HYDE and Ranking Member LANTOS of the International Relations Committee for helping to bring House Resolution 575 to the House floor today.

This resolution takes a united stand against the attempts of the murderous Islamic extremist organizations to hijack the elections that will be taking place within the Palestinian Authority.

Hamas, in particular, is inserting itself in the political process while fully maintaining and reportedly expanding its militant activities. That organization's continuing violence against Israel and its refusal to disarm has been a constant and incendiary impediment in the U.S. efforts to promote peace and security in the region.