

Madam Speaker, we would now know that at least seven Iranian government officials, including the former Iranian Ambassador to Argentina, planned and orchestrated this vicious attack. There is little doubt that these Iranian officials called upon their Hezbollah stooges to execute their nefarious plans.

We also know that the Hezbollah terrorist cell that carried out the attack received financial and logistical support from sympathizers in the tri-border region between Paraguay, Argentina and Brazil. The suicide bomber himself probably entered South America and transited to the Argentine capital through this lawless frontier.

The varied nationalities of those who were murdered in the bombing also reflect the international character of this shameful terrorist attack. Among the 85 victims there were six Bolivians, two Poles, and a Chilean.

Although the modus operandi of the terrorists in the bombing has not been replicated since 1994, supporters and facilitators of Islamic terrorist organizations have gathered in scattered outposts throughout the Western Hemisphere. Operating from hard to reach areas in Chile, Colombia, Venezuela and Panama, these individuals lend financial and logistical assistance to terrorists organizations in the Middle East.

□ 1530

Although these isolated communities have yet to metastasize into operational cells of Islamic terrorists, the threat to regional security remains strong and requires our constant vigilance.

We must redouble our efforts to root out the fundraising networks in the Western Hemisphere of Islamic terrorists and to disperse the growing web of links between terrorist financiers and narcotics traffickers.

Our important resolution furthers both of these goals. It promotes the establishment of a special task force in the Organization of American States to assist regional governments in investigating and combating the proliferation of Islamic terrorists within our hemisphere.

Our resolution urges all Latin American and Caribbean countries to designate al Qaeda, Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad as terrorist organizations.

Madam Speaker, international terrorists have demonstrated that they will not rest in pursuit of their villainy. Our resolution once again puts them on notice that they will fail, whether they are in the Middle East or here in the Americas.

I strongly urge all of my colleagues to support this important measure.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, because Islamist terrorism anywhere is a threat to free people everywhere, I ask my colleagues to render their strong support of H. Con. Res. 338.

This resolution which I drafted with the distinguished Ranking Member of the House

International Relations Committee, and which enjoys the support of both Chairman BURTON and Ranking Member ENGEL of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, calls for a preventive approach to rising threats in our hemisphere. Islamist terrorist activity in our Hemisphere has been increasing and becoming more prominent for at least 15 years.

Reports document that Hezbollah is active in the tri-border area of Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina, raising money to support its murderous acts and recruiting people to carry them out.

Hamas and the Egyptian Islamic Group also reportedly maintain a presence in Latin America, and al-Qaeda is active there, too. Although such activity is dominated by financing and money laundering, these Islamist extremists have not hesitated in launching direct attacks as well.

In 1992, the Israeli Embassy in Argentina was bombed, killing 29 people and wounding almost 250. In 1994, terrorists linked to Hezbollah and the Iranian regime, bombed the MIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, killing 85 and wounding over 300.

Islamist jihadists often use countries in the Western Hemisphere as staging areas for entry into the United States.

Before Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was eliminated as a threat last week, it has been reported that he instructed members of Al-Qaeda in Iraq to go to Brazil, with the goal of entering the U.S. through Mexico and carrying out acts of terror.

Just 10 days ago, on June 2nd, 14 suspects in an Islamist terror cell in Canada were arrested. The cell possessed 3 tons of ammonium nitrate, 3 times the amount used in the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995. They planned to blow-up buildings and take politicians hostage. Such terrorists, with such explosives, were only two hours away from the U.S. border.

This cell was captured. Others, however, remain free and growing—both to our north and to our south.

Islamist terrorists are ready, willing, and able to strike in this hemisphere. What should our nation and our allies do about this threat?

After September 11th, our Nation has vigorously combated terrorists and their state sponsors. We removed the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, and have captured and eliminated numerous members of al-Qaeda.

We have refused to wait for terrorists to again strike at our homeland by taking the battle to them and denying them sanctuaries throughout the world.

We must proactively identify and address emerging problems before they can threaten our homeland, our allies, and our interests—particularly, in the Western Hemisphere; our neighborhood.

This resolution acknowledges the threat that Islamist terrorist groups and their sympathizers, operating in this hemisphere, pose to America and her allies.

Many governments in the hemisphere have cooperated with us on counterterrorism and have committed to denying the use of their territory for such fundraising, recruitment and operations. Despite these efforts, the Islamist terrorist presence in our hemisphere is growing. We must do more.

This resolution encourages the President to direct the U.S. Representative to the OAS to

seek support from OAS member countries to create a special task force of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism. This task force would assist governments, and coordinate efforts between nations, in investigating and combating the proliferation of Islamist terrorist activities in this hemisphere.

The measure further calls for the U.S. Representative to the OAS to work with OAS member nations to designate groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and al-Qaeda as terrorist groups, if they have not already done so.

Madam Speaker, if we are to one day realize a more secure and peaceful world, we must address all threats, starting with those closest to our shores.

We see the growth of Islamist terrorist groups in the Western Hemisphere. The resolution before us provides us with a roadmap on efforts we should undertake to begin to eradicate the threat before it festers and strengthens.

I ask for a "yes" vote on this resolution.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my 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. 338.

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. Madam 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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 338.

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

There was no objection.

COMMENDING THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA FOR ITS RENEWED COMMITMENT TO THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 408) commending the Government of Canada for its renewed commitment to the Global War on Terror, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 408

Whereas twenty-four Canadian citizens were killed as a result of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States;

Whereas the people of Gander, Newfoundland, provided food, clothing, and shelter to thousands of stranded passengers and temporary aircraft parking to thirty-nine planes diverted from United States airspace as a result of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States;

Whereas the Government of Canada, as led by former Prime Ministers Jean Jacques Ch rien and Paul Martin and continued by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, has provided humanitarian, diplomatic, and security personnel on the invitation of the Government of Afghanistan since 2001;

Whereas Canada has pledged \$650,000,000 in development aid to Afghanistan;

Whereas Afghanistan is Canada's largest recipient of bilateral development aid;

Whereas Canada has stationed approximately 2,300 defense personnel who comprise Task Force Afghanistan, in order to improve security in southern Afghanistan, particularly in the province of Kandahar;

Whereas Canada has over 70 diplomatic officers worldwide who are dedicated to growing democracy and equality in Afghanistan;

Whereas at least seventeen Canadians have given the ultimate sacrifice in the Global War on Terror;

Whereas Canada's commitment to the Government of Afghanistan, under the leadership of Prime Minister Hamid Karzai, was due to expire in February 2007;

Whereas on May 17, 2006, the Canadian Government led by Prime Minister Stephen Harper requested that the Canadian House of Commons extend Canada's commitment in the Global War on Terror;

Whereas on May 17, 2006, the Canadian Parliament voted to extend peace and security operations in Afghanistan until 2009, to increase its development assistance by \$310 million, and to build a permanent and secure embassy in Afghanistan to replace its current facility; and

Whereas this was the latest sign of the renewed commitment of numerous United States allies in the Global War on Terror: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) commends the Government of Canada for its renewed and long-term commitment to the Global War on Terror;

(2) commends the leadership of former Canadian Prime Ministers Jean Jacques Ch rien and Paul Martin and current Prime Minister Stephen Harper for their steadfast commitment to democracy, human rights, and freedom throughout the world;

(3) commends the Government of Canada for working to secure a democratic and equal Afghanistan;

(4) commends the Government of Canada's commitment to reducing poverty, aiding the counternarcotics efforts through counterterrorism and counterinsurgency campaigns, and ensuring a peaceful and terror-free Afghanistan;

(5) commends the Government of Canada for its three-pronged commitment to Afghanistan: diplomacy, development, and defense; and

(6) expresses the gratitude and appreciation of the United States for Canada's enduring friendship and leadership in the Global War on Terror in Afghanistan.

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.

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

Madam Speaker, this resolution properly recognizes the government of Canada for its commitment to the global war on terror.

As you know, Madam Speaker, we have forged strong relations with our neighbor to the north, and we are united by common ideals and shared interests. Relations between the U.S. and Canada are strong, and our cooperation in the global war on terrorism is productive and robust.

The arrest of 17 alleged homegrown Islamic jihadists in Canada last week was a vivid reminder that we are in this war together. Canadian prosecutors claim the men plotted to storm the Canadian Parliament building in Ottawa, take hostages, and behead Prime Minister Stephen Harper if the Canadian Government refused to withdraw its 2,300 troops now stationed in Afghanistan. The group also considered bombing a nuclear power plant, the Toronto Stock Exchange, and other targets in Toronto or Ottawa. I praise Canadian law enforcement and their security forces for their excellent work in closing down that terror cell.

Last month, Madam Speaker, the Canadian Parliament voted to extend Canada's peace and security mission in Afghanistan for another 2 years, until 2009. Canada is a steadfast partner in the global war on terror. Canada has roughly 2,300 defense personnel in Afghanistan and is leading the efforts against a resurgent Taliban and al Qaeda force in southern Afghanistan and is working to combat narcotics trafficking there.

Canada has also pledged \$650 million in developmental aid to Afghanistan; and Afghanistan, as it turns out, is Canada's largest recipient of bilateral development aid.

Madam Speaker, it is worth remembering that 24 Canadian citizens were killed as a result of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States. Seventeen Canadian military personnel have been killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan. Last month Canadian Captain Nichola Goddard was killed in the line of duty in Kandahar, Afghanistan. This is the ultimate sacrifice, and we certainly mourn her loss and the sacrifices made by her fellow soldiers.

We appreciate in America the role Canada plays in hemispheric and global peacekeeping and humanitarian operations in Afghanistan, in Haiti, in Darfur, and in other conflict areas.

Madam Speaker, President Bush met with Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada and President Vicente Fox of Mexico 2 months ago to move ahead with new initiatives to promote competitiveness and security. The Security and Prosperity Partnership, or SPP, for North America is a bold set of activities to strengthen our borders, promote free and secure commerce and air transportation, and to harmonize the regulatory process.

Canada is taking actions on flashpoints around the world. After

Hamas' election victory and refusal to repudiate violence, Canada was the first nation in the world to cut off contacts and suspend assistance to the Palestinian Authority, while preserving humanitarian support for the Palestinian people. Canada listed in like manner the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or the LTTE, as a terrorist group under their criminal code, impeding terrorist financing of the LTTE and other forms of support.

Prime Minister Harper intervened personally with Afghan President Karzai to insist that the religious and civil rights of a Christian convert, Abdul Rahman, be fully protected and to convey Canada's concern that his treatment not undermine Afghanistan's international rehabilitation. At the U.N., Canada is, and hopefully will always be, a steadfast supporter for Israel.

In sum, though we may not always be in lock-step in our policies and our approach, Canada remains a steadfast ally on the war on terrorism and a promoter of democracy and freedom throughout the world.

I urge support for the concurrent resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Since the Taliban's ouster in Afghanistan, great strides have been made on the path towards democracy in that country. A freely elected president and parliament, a nascent professional national army, and the beginnings of economic development were all accomplished through nearly 5 years of development assistance and military commitments by our country and the international community.

But the future of a stable, peaceful, and democratic Afghanistan is still gravely threatened. A resurgent Taliban with increasing terrorist attacks, the slow pace of reconstruction, and the scourge of opium poppies are reversing the tide of success. We may be nearing the point where we can lose Afghanistan again.

It is in times like these when we learn who our true friends are in our global war against the enemies of democracy and freedom. During these critical moments, we come to appreciate more fully those countries that are willing to place their soldiers in harm's way in the international fight against terrorism, extremism, and tyranny.

In the case of the international efforts in Afghanistan, Canada is one such country. Our neighbor Canada has 2,200 troops serving in Afghanistan. Canada has also assumed responsibility for the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kandahar, which was originally established by our own military.

In Kandahar, Canadian men and women are at the forefront of the coalition effort to combat the resurgent

Taliban and other terrorist forces in the lawless southern portion of the country. Since 2002, the Canadian people have lost 16 soldiers and one diplomat in this struggle. Last month on the same day that the Canadian Parliament voted to extend its mission in Afghanistan, Canada suffered its first-ever female combat death. We honor the ultimate sacrifice that Captain Nichola Goddard made in service to her country and salute the brave efforts of all the men and women in uniform, Canadian and American, who fight shoulder to shoulder in Afghanistan.

Madam Speaker, I urge all NATO members to follow Canada's example and commit troops to even the most violent areas of Afghanistan.

I strongly support our resolution and ask all of my colleagues to do so as well.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, but I do want to thank Chairman BURTON for sponsoring this very important resolution. We often forget just how important our friend is to the north. Canada is a reliable ally, a good friend in thick and thin; so, again, I want to thank Chairman BURTON for sponsoring this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my 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. 408, 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. Madam 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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 408.

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

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE OF GUYANA

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 792) recognizing the 40th anniversary of the independence of Guyana and ex-

tending best wishes to Guyana for peace and further progress, development, and prosperity.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 792

Whereas Guyana gained independence from the United Kingdom on May 26, 1966;

Whereas since Guyana became an independent country, the interests of Guyana and the United States have been closely aligned;

Whereas Guyana is a supporter and ally of the United States in the Global War on Terror, and joins the United States in promoting political and economic freedoms, combating poverty, crime, disease, and drugs, and promoting security, stability, and prosperity;

Whereas the bonds of association and friendship between the peoples of the two countries have been strengthened by the large number of Guyanese who have migrated to the United States, where they make significant contributions to both the United States and Guyana; and

Whereas Guyana is an integral member of the Caribbean region and a constructive partner of the United States in fulfilling the agenda of the Western Hemisphere: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes the 40th anniversary of the independence of Guyana and extends best wishes to Guyana for peace and further progress, development, and prosperity.

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.

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

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 792. The resolution, offered by my good friend from New York, Mr. MEEKS, congratulates the Co-operative Republic of Guyana for reaching its 40th anniversary as an independent nation.

H. Res. 792 is a timely and appropriate measure to let our friends in Guyana know that we support them as they pursue a strong and sustainable democracy. The resolution recognizes the 40th anniversary of Guyana's independence and extends best wishes to that nation for peace and further progress, development, and prosperity.

Guyana has been a real friend, Madam Speaker, to the U.S. and an ally in the fight against terror. The friendship between our two nations has been strengthened by large numbers of folks who have migrated to the United States. Here the Guyanese diaspora makes significant contributions to both the U.S. and Guyana. Guyana Americans are law-abiding people who contribute to American society as good citizens while respecting the values of our society.

Guyana joins the United States in promoting political and economic freedoms; combating poverty, crime, disease, and drugs; and promoting security, regional stability, and prosperity.

The government of Guyana is, as we speak, placing emphasis on every sector of society to ensure improved effi-

ciency, competitiveness, and sustainable development. These policies will therefore focus on strategies for development which expand and promote employment opportunities, increase foreign exchange earnings and private investment into the nation.

Guyana is an integral member of the Caribbean region and constructive partner of the United States in fulfilling the agenda of the Western Hemisphere, that is, promoting peace, security, democracy, and development throughout the hemisphere.

I urge all of our Members to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1545

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, let me first thank the sponsor of the this resolution, my good friend and colleague on the International Relations Committee, Congressman MEEKS. He is a strong advocate, both for the Caribbean Basin and for people of African ancestry. I commend his dedication to these matters.

Madam Speaker, the short but significant history of Guyana illustrates the benefits that accrue to a nation that respects human rights and the rule of law, rejects the empty promises of Marxism-Leninism, and works closely with other democratic nations.

For the first 25 years after independence, successive Guyanese governments attempted to institute a socialist economy and closely coordinated their foreign policies with the so-called Non-Aligned Movement. The political rights of average Guyanese were systematically denied.

And the jungles of Guyana served as the home of the infamous Jonestown cult that took the life of our colleague, Congressman Leo Ryan, my friend and distinguished predecessor.

Spurred by frustration with increasing political repression and poor economic performance, hundreds of thousands of Guyanese sought freedom by immigrating to our shores and to Canada. In the last decade, Guyana has begun to turn itself around. The country has held several free and fair elections, it has generally respected human rights, and it has adopted market-friendly economic policies.

Guyana is becoming one of our trusted allies and is cooperating with us against narcotics trafficking and in the global war on terror.

Madam Speaker, as a result of Guyana's reorientation toward the principles that we hold dear, Guyana was one of only nine threshold countries under the Millennium Challenge Account when the first Millennium Challenge Account beneficiaries were chosen in 2004.

The designation as a threshold country recognizes Guyana's commitment to promoting democratic freedoms, investing in its people, providing economic opportunities for its citizenry.