

Since its formation, the Partnership for Progress has steadfastly dedicated their time and resources to create a projected 1,500 new jobs and negotiated over \$1.2 million worth of investments into Aroostook County. These numbers indicate the ability of empowerment zone incentives to drive investment and strengthen local businesses in the area.

Through the Aroostook Partnership for Progress, and the businesses working in the empowerment zone, are making significant progress—the factors causing poverty in this rural part of Maine can not be eradicated quickly. Aroostook County's strategic plan will take time to implement as infrastructure, industry, and other projects create greater economic capabilities and diversification. Though Aroostook County is working valiantly to overcome the factors causing their economic decline they will need more than 9 years to overcome 40 years of difficulties. I know that there are many other struggling Round II and Round III empowerment zone communities, like Aroostook, who need the maximum order to reverse the poverty and underdevelopment also plaguing those areas.

I urge my colleagues to recognize the importance of making a long-term commitment to communities using empowerment zone incentives to work their way out of long-term poverty. I hope that each Senator will support the communities in their States, currently undertaking the painful process of economic transformation, by supporting passage of this economic development bill.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 382—RECOGNIZING KENNETH M. MEAD'S SERVICE AS THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Mr. STEVENS (for himself, Mr. INOUE, Mr. BURNS, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. LOTT, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. NELSON of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 382

Whereas Kenneth M. Mead has announced his retirement as the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation after nearly 9 years of service in that position;

Whereas, Kenneth M. Mead and his staff conducted investigations independently, impartially, and with rigorous professionalism into myriad issues affecting transportation and transportation policy;

Whereas, Kenneth M. Mead and his staff provided independent, thorough, and relevant commentary and recommendations on a wide-range of Federal transportation policies and programs, including aviation operations and safety, highway, auto and truck operations and safety, transportation security, rail operations and safety, and pipeline and hazardous materials transportation safety;

Whereas, during Kenneth M. Mead's tenure as Inspector General, the events of Sep-

tember 11, 2001, had a dramatic impact on the Federal government's relationship with the aviation industry and posed significant challenges for ensuring the safety and security of public transportation in general and the United States aviation industry in particular;

Whereas Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta recognized Kenneth M. Mead's contributions by describing him as "a tireless advocate for setting the highest possible standards of integrity, accountability, and performance" in the Department's efforts to make the Nation's transportation system as safe and efficient as possible: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the United States Senate commends Kenneth M. Mead for his more than 8 years of faithful and exemplary service to the Nation as the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation, and expresses its deep appreciation and gratitude for his long and outstanding service.

SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit a copy of this resolution to Kenneth M. Mead.

SENATE RESOLUTION 383—CALLING ON THE PRESIDENT TO TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO HELP IMPROVE THE SECURITY SITUATION IN DARFUR, SUDAN, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON CIVILIAN PROTECTION

Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mr. DODD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 383

Whereas, the April 8, 2004, N'Djamena Ceasefire Agreement, calling for an end to hostilities in Darfur, Sudan, has been flagrantly violated by all parties to the agreement;

Whereas the Government of Sudan continues to commit crimes against humanity and engage in genocidal acts in Darfur;

Whereas the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLM/SPLA) on January 9, 2005, has not resulted in an improvement of the security situation in Darfur;

Whereas United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has indicated that, "People in many parts of Darfur continue to be killed, raped, and driven from their homes by the thousands";

Whereas United Nations officials have stated that at least 70,000 people have died due to violence and insecurity in Darfur, but that the total may be as high as 400,000 people;

Whereas nearly 2,000,000 people have been internally displaced, 3,000,000 people are dependant on international assistance to survive, and over 200,000 people are refugees in neighboring Chad due to the conflict in Darfur;

Whereas escalating tensions along the border between Chad and Sudan have increased instability in Darfur;

Whereas neither the mandate nor the troop strength of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) is adequate to protect civilians in Darfur;

Whereas the United States has demonstrated leadership on the Sudan issue by having United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations John Bolton, in his first action as President of the United Nations Security Council, request in February 2006 that Secretary-General Annan ini-

tiate contingency planning for a transition from AMIS to a United Nations peacekeeping operation;

Whereas, although the United Nations Security Council has concurred with this recommendation and taken steps toward establishing a United Nations peacekeeping mission for Darfur, it could take up to a year for such a mission to deploy fully;

Whereas, as the deteriorating security situation in Darfur indicates, the people of Darfur cannot wait that long for security to be reestablished;

Whereas the international community currently has no plan to address the immediate security needs of the people of Darfur; and

Whereas all members of the international community must participate in efforts to stop genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity in Darfur:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns—

(A) the continued attacks on civilians in Darfur by the Government of Sudan and Government-sponsored militias; and

(B) the continued violations of the N'Djamena Ceasefire Agreement by the Government of Sudan and rebels in Darfur, particularly the Sudan Liberation Army;

(2) commends the Africa Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) for its actions in monitoring the N'Djamena Ceasefire Agreement in Darfur and its role in diminishing some acts of violence;

(3) calls upon all parties to the N'Djamena Ceasefire Agreement—

(A) to abide by the terms of the N'Djamena Ceasefire Agreement; and

(B) to engage in good-faith negotiations to end the conflict in Darfur;

(4) calls upon the Government of Sudan immediately—

(A) to withdraw all military aircraft from the region;

(B) to cease all support for the Janjaweed militia and rebels from Chad; and

(C) to disarm the Janjaweed;

(5) calls on the African Union to request assistance from the United Nations and NATO to strengthen its capacity to deter violence and instability until a United Nations peacekeeping force is fully deployed in Darfur;

(6) calls upon the United Nations Security Council to approve as soon as possible, pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, a peacekeeping force for Darfur that is well trained and equipped and has an adequate troop strength;

(7) urges the President to take steps immediately to help improve the security situation in Darfur, including by—

(A) proposing that NATO—

(i) consider how to implement and enforce a declared no-fly zone in Darfur; and

(ii) deploy troops to Darfur to support the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) until a United Nations peacekeeping mission is fully deployed in the region; and

(B) requesting supplemental funding to support a NATO mission in Darfur and the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS);

(8) calls upon NATO allies, led by the United States, to support such a mission; and

(9) calls upon NATO headquarters staff to begin prudent planning in advance of such a mission.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, today, with my friend from Kansas, Senator BROWNBACK, I am submitting a resolution urging the President to help stop genocide in Sudan. The killing in Darfur has gone on way too long.

In July of 2004, Congress declared the actions that were taking place in Darfur, Sudan genocide. Two months later, the administration issued a report which reached the same conclusion. In the 17 months since then, little has changed for the people of Darfur. Two million people have been chased from their homes, 3 million rely on international aid, and over 200,000 are refugees in Chad.

The security situation in Darfur remains dire. The Secretary General and other United Nations officials have warned that the region is on the verge of chaos. In parts of Darfur, the U.N. and other aid agencies have had to pull back staff.

The U.N., led by the United States, has taken the first step towards authorizing a peacekeeping force, but it could be a year from now—a year—before such a force completely deploys.

What are the men, women and children of Darfur supposed to do in the meantime? Hope for the best? Keep their fingers crossed that they are not attacked by the janjaweed, or caught in the cross-fire between the government and rebel forces?

Some believe that the crisis in Darfur is over. All the violence, these folks argue, is small scale, and residual in nature. They argue that the African Union successfully halted the killing of innocent civilians. Maybe that is why the administration has no concrete plan to improve the security situation in Darfur until the U.N. can get on the ground.

What I would say to those who argue that the worst is over is this: over the course of the last 2 years, the government of Sudan and its surrogates killed as many as 400,000 people and drove one third of the population of Darfur off their land. Two million people remain in internally displaced or refugee camps. Attacks continue. It may be true that they are not as systematic as they were 6 months or a year ago, but I submit to you that it is not because the African Union stopped the attacks. It is because systematic attacks are no longer necessary for the government to continue to terrorize civilians. It is because as many as 400,000 people already are dead, and hundreds if not thousands of villages have already been destroyed. The attacks may be less systematic, but they are not over. And it does not make them less horrific.

I traveled to the Chad-Sudan border in May of 2005. One of the sector commanders from the African Union force came across the border to meet with me. He told me point blank, that he had neither the manpower, the equipment nor the mandate to stop attacks on civilians. But we in the west have the manpower and the equipment—and, if the political will is there, we can secure the right mandate. And that is why we must help.

This resolution calls for the President to provide such help through NATO. It calls on the President to propose that NATO get involved by send-

ing troops to Darfur to support the African Union until the United Nations can get on the ground, and considering how NATO can enforce a no-fly zone in Darfur. The resolution calls on NATO to begin planning in anticipation of such a mission.

Let me be clear about what I am not proposing in this resolution. I am not proposing a third peacekeeping mission be sent to Darfur. I am suggesting that NATO increase the support it is already lending to the African Union with a small number of fully equipped troops to help with command and control, communications, and dissemination of intelligence, on the ground. And I am proposing that these troops stay in Darfur only until the U.N. force has deployed all of its troops. My colleagues should also note that the resolution urges the Security Council to authorize a Chapter VII mission for Darfur—one with an adequate number of well-trained and equipped soldiers—as quickly as possible, so that NATO troops are not engaged in an open ended mission.

The world watched nearly a million people get slaughtered in Rwanda 12 years ago this April. We did nothing. But I'd like to think that we learned from that mistake. We did act in Bosnia, and then in Kosovo, to stop ethnic cleansing. Neither mission was popular. But President Bill Clinton took decisive action because the consequences of inaction were simply too high: We could not stand by and allow Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic and his thugs to fill up more mass graves. We cannot fail to take action in Darfur as well.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2320

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

The clerk will read the bill for a second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2320) to make available funds included in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program for fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes.

Mr. FRIST. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceeding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be placed on the calendar.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATIONS DISCHARGED

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session; provided

further that the Commerce Committee and the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of the following nominations: from the Commerce Committee, Coast Guard nominations PN 1299; and from the Foreign Relations Committee, Richard Boucher, PN 1167; further that the Senate proceed to their consideration en bloc.

Finally, I ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed, with the motions to reconsider laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

IN THE COAST GUARD

The following named officers for appointment to the grades indicated in the United States Coast Guard under title 14, U.S.C., section 211:

To be lieutenant

Michael W. Albert, 0000
David J. Aldous, 0000
Leonard H. Allen, 0000
David M. Alvarez, 0000
Samuel L. Alvord, 0000
David F. Ambos, 0000
Jason K. Appleberry, 0000
Segundo J. Argudo, 0000
Reginald I. Baird, 0000
Ryan A. Barone, 0000
Scott P. Barton, 0000
Anne M. Becker, 0000
Robert W. Bilbo, 0000
Michael L. Bowman, 0000
Lance J. Brant, 0000
Richard J. Burke, 0000
Victor G. Buskirk, 0000
Andres Camargo, 0000
Donald B. Campbell, 0000
James D. Cannon, 0000
Christy S. Casey, 0000
Justin M. Cassell, 0000
John T. Catanzaro, 0000
Robert S. Clarke, 0000
Paul J. Coleman, 0000
Jeffrey M. Collins, 0000
Ross E. Comer, 0000
Carlos M. Crespo, 0000
Paul J. Crookshank, 0000
Martin J. Dietsch, 0000
Brian J. Donahue, 0000
William R. Dunbar, 0000
Bryan L. Dunlap, 0000
Charles Engbring, 0000
Tom Engbring, 0000
Jay S. Fair, 0000
Paul A. Fawcett, 0000
Kryston N. Finch, 0000
Jason F. Frank, 0000
Frank A. Fusco, 0000
Carlos F. Gavilanes, 0000
Greg S. Gedemer, 0000
Aaron G. Green, 0000
Catharine D. Gross, 0000
Anthony D. Guild, 0000
Mark A. Haag, 0000
Christopher E. Haley, 0000
Joy E. Hall, 0000
Robert P. Hill, 0000
Frank L. Hinson, 0000
Giles C. Hoback III, 0000
Matthew M. Hobbie, 0000
Robert E. Hollinger, 0000
Timothy D. Howard, 0000
Thomas P. Hrynshyn, 0000
Donald K. Isom, 0000
Jack W. Jackson, 0000