

H.R. 2293 is a major step in the right direction, and I am proud to have co-sponsored it. For their leadership in introducing this bill, I thank my good friends and colleagues, the chairman and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, Mr. ACKERMAN and Mr. PENCE. I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this critical legislation.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2293, which requires the Secretary of the State to submit to Congress a report on efforts to bring to justice the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde. This bill requires the Secretary of State to submit a report—classified, if necessary—within 30 days and every 120 days thereafter to the appropriate committees until the attackers have been brought to justice.

The bill also warns of potential restrictions on privileges extended to the Palestinian Authority by our government in the case of continued noncompliance, although I hope it will never come to that.

I commend my colleague Mr. ACKERMAN of New York for introducing this important measure. This resolution lends the full support of the United States Congress to bringing to justice the Palestinian terrorists who murdered three contractors providing security to American diplomatic personnel in Gaza on October 15, 2003. The Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde have still not been brought to justice.

John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde were slain by terrorists who assaulted a clearly marked convoy of American diplomats. Ironically, the diplomats were on a mission to help the Palestinians by identifying Gazan candidates for the Fulbright exchange program.

In February 2005, Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas, assured Secretary of State Rice that the perpetrators would be brought to justice. Further, senior Palestinian officials asserted that the Palestinian Authority knew the identities of the assailants. Yet inexplicably, these terrorists have not been named; they have not been questioned; and they have not been arrested, charged, prosecuted, and punished. No way is that justice. Justice delayed is justice denied.

It is imperative that the legitimate leaders of the Palestinian Authority show their willingness to confront the scourge of terrorism if they are to be considered a reliable partner for peace.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this piece of legislation, and I ask that my colleagues do the same.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. 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 York (Mr. ACKERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2293.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1515

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Madam 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 California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I would like to thank our colleague, Congresswoman THELMA DRAKE, for sponsoring this important resolution and for her leadership on this issue.

Twenty-five years ago, William and Kathleen Magee of Virginia traveled with other medical professionals to the Philippines to treat children with facial deformities. Little did they know it was a trip that would change their lives and the lives of thousands of children around the world.

Inspired by the Filipino children, the Magees decided to start their own organization designed specifically to address cleft palates and cleft lips in countries where medical care leaves those afflicted with few options.

They called it Operation Smile, and the Magees were the perfect couple to start it. William is a plastic surgeon, and Kathleen is a nurse and social worker. Since 1982, operating out of their headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia, they have led a dedicated coalition of medical services workers to address facial deformities around the world.

Aside from appearance and comfort level, these are serious conditions that can cause problems with feeding and speech, as well as ear disease.

In the past 25 years, Operation Smile has provided corrective reconstructive surgery to some 100,000 children and young adults in 25 countries.

Operation Smile adeptly recognizes the differences in these countries and brings together medical professionals to tailor their care depending on the setting. The organization coordinates training activities, as well as fellowships and professorships, to further both its own mission and the medical system in these countries overall.

Operation Smile provides a network of resources to assist families in the United States with children born with facial deformities. It runs an annual international student leadership conference and student leadership program, and it trains surgeons in certain advanced skills.

We can all learn from Operation Smile and the model it provides to medical professionals and organizations around the world, and we can all learn from the Magees that public service can go far beyond one's chosen profession.

That is why I urge my colleagues to support this resolution to honor Operation Smile and William and Kathleen

#### HONORING OPERATION SMILE ON ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 208) honoring Operation Smile in the 25th Anniversary year of its founding, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 208

Whereas Operation Smile is a private, not-for-profit volunteer medical services organization providing reconstructive surgery and related health care to indigent children and young adults in developing countries and the United States;

Whereas in 1982, Dr. William P. Magee Jr., a plastic surgeon, and his wife, Kathleen S. Magee, a nurse and clinical social worker, traveled to the Philippines with a group of medical volunteers to repair children's cleft lips and cleft palates;

Whereas there they discovered hundreds of children ravaged by deformities, and although they helped many children, the volunteers were forced to turn away the majority of those who sought help;

Whereas Operation Smile headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia, was founded in 1982 by Dr. William Magee Jr. and his wife Kathleen S. Magee to address this need;

Whereas since 1982, Operation Smile's volunteers have provided free reconstructive surgery to more than 100,000 children and young adults with facial deformities in 25 countries;

Whereas Operation Smile provides education and training to thousands of healthcare professionals globally, and is implementing a plan for a Global Standard of Care to ensure that every child treated will receive the same high standard of care every time;

Whereas Operation Smile provides a network of resources to assist families in the United States with children born with facial deformities;

Whereas more than 450 Operation Smile Student Associations in the United States and around the world build awareness, raise funds, and educate students about values of commitment, leadership, and volunteerism; and

Whereas in 2007, in commemoration of its 25th anniversary, Operation Smile has announced a year-long series of initiatives to include implementing global standards of care for all its medical programs, opening comprehensive care centers in seven countries, hosting international forums on medical diplomacy, and launching the World Journey of Smiles, which consists of 40 simultaneous missions in 25 countries with the goal of treating an estimated 5,000 children living with facial deformities: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives recognizes the 25th anniversary of the founding of Operation Smile as its volunteer medical professionals continue to travel around the world to treat children suffering from facial deformities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Magee on the 25th anniversary of their organization.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 208, which recognizes the 25th anniversary of the founding of Operation Smile, a private nonprofit founded by Dr. and Mrs. William Magee of Virginia in 1982.

Madam Speaker, the volunteers for Operation Smile provide reconstructive surgery and other health care to needy children in the United States, as well as in developing countries. They particularly help children with a cleft lip or cleft palate, congenital birth defects that occur as frequently as one in every 600 births.

Clefts can cause multiple physical and mental health problems for children and adults, including feeding and speech difficulties, ear infections that can lead to deafness, and low self-esteem, as well as alienation from others.

Children worldwide need not, and must not, suffer from these health problems simply because they were born with clefts. Surgery in infancy, adolescence or young adulthood can correct clefts and avert resulting medical and psychological difficulties.

Sadly, many families who seek medical care and surgery for children born with clefts are turned away, both in the United States and abroad, due to lack of funds or shortages of medically trained professionals who can provide the care that these children urgently need.

Fortunately, the outstanding medical professionals at Operation Smile have, for a quarter of a century, volunteered their time and effort to help save these children and their families. They have provided free reconstructive surgeries to over 100,000 children and young adults in this country and worldwide. They educate and train thousands of health care professionals across the globe. Just as importantly, they are developing future generations of volunteers for this noble cause.

Young men and women at more than 450 Operation Smile student associations in the United States and abroad are fund-raising, building awareness and encouraging their fellow students to take charge, to lead and to volunteer their time to help others. In all of these ways, these volunteers demonstrate the potential that volunteers and nonprofits have to change lives, to tackle global problems and to significantly improve the world around them.

Because of their 25 years of service, many children and young adults who were born with cleft lip or palate can look at themselves in the mirror with pride, and so can volunteers at Operation Smile.

This resolution, offered by my good friend and colleague from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE) sends the right message by recognizing and encouraging out-

standing volunteers and achievements in the private and the nonprofit sector.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I urge the House to adopt this resolution, H. Res. 208.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to commend the efforts of Operation Smile during their 25 years of service to the United States and to the world. I would like to thank my distinguished colleague, Congresswoman DRAKE, for sponsoring this resolution and bringing it to the floor. As we both represent the city of Norfolk, VA, the home of Operation Smile, I would just like to say a few words about Operation Smile and its efforts to help children around the world.

What Operation Smile has accomplished since its inception is truly remarkable. Since its first mission in the Philippines in 1982, Operation Smile volunteers have treated more than 100,000 children and young adults and have trained thousands of health professionals around the world. In addition, through pure determination, Operation Smile has built bridges and built trust. As a result, it has created a presence, earned the respect of governments and ministries of health, and united cultures in over 25 developing countries.

Operation Smile consists of a diverse group of volunteers from various countries and cultures, who come together with the common goal of repairing childhood facial deformities. Through these missions, the strongest bonds of friendships are forged as people who have very little in common work together to change a life. Operation Smile has demonstrated an ability to find working partnerships amid unstable and controversial conditions. Through diplomacy and leadership, coupled with medical aid and technology, it is able to heal and inspire cross-cultural cooperation.

While promoting medical diplomacy, Operation Smile continues to cross borders, bridge cultural and ethnic divides, and encourage collaboration and commitment. Its success has been astounding and as a result, Operation Smile has become the largest volunteer charity of its kind. Its efforts go beyond children and their families—Operation Smile changes communities, students, medical professionals, and healthcare systems.

Just this past year, Operation Smile traveled to Jordan on two separate occasions in order to provide life-changing surgeries to 138 Iraqi children who were transported to Amman from Baghdad, and it worked with the Mercy ships to treat 54 children in Bangladesh. These missions consisted of volunteers from over a dozen countries who worked together side by side to help these children. In this time of war, the volunteers of Operation Smile managed to bring a bright light to the lives of these children that will last a lifetime.

In the war against terrorism, hatred of Americans by other populations is a significant problem. The work of Operation Smile is immeasurable in developing good will to counteract that hatred. The doctors and other volunteers who work with Operation Smile and the children who have been helped by Operation Smile will serve as perpetual evidence of our good will and the best America has to offer. I cannot think of better ambassadors for the United States than the founders of Operation Smile, Dr. Bill and Kathleen Magee.

In 1982, Bill and Kathleen saw a need both abroad and here at home to help children with

deformities live a better and happier life. Because of their diligence, and that of the many volunteers and donors that have worked with Operation Smile over the past 25 years, Operation Smile has not only created smiles, but has changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of children across the globe.

I would like to once again commend Operation Smile on the occasion of their 25th anniversary, and I wish them continued success bringing smiles to the faces of children and families worldwide.

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 25th Anniversary of Operation Smile, a worldwide children's medical charity that repairs cleft lips and cleft palates for children and young adults in developing countries. Operation Smile, which is headquartered in Norfolk, VA, was founded by Dr. William Magee, Jr., a plastic surgeon, and his wife, Kathleen, a nurse and clinical social worker.

In 1982, the Magees traveled to the Philippines with a group of medical volunteers to repair children's cleft lips and cleft palates. While many children were treated, the inundated volunteers, lacking in resources and manpower, were forced to turn away the majority of those who sought help.

The Magees were heartbroken to see such an overwhelming need. Yet, instead of being discouraged, the Magees were inspired by their experience. As they prepared to leave the Philippines the Magees made a promise to return to the Philippines to help more children and Operation Smile was born.

The Magees returned to Norfolk and began to solicit the donations of surgical equipment and supplies, began grassroots fundraising, and assembled a volunteer team of doctors, nurses and technicians. Just as they promised, the Magees returned to the Philippines to treat even more patients.

Since those humble beginnings in 1982, Operation Smile has grown into a worldwide children's medical charity whose network of medical volunteers are dedicated to helping improve the health and lives of children and young adults worldwide. Operation Smile has helped more than 100,000 children and young adults in 30 developing countries overcome their physical irregularities. The organization now operates one of the world's largest volunteer networks, utilizing more than 5,000 medical and non-medical professionals around the world.

During their medical missions, credentialed medical professionals volunteer to repair facial deformities while building public and private partnerships that advocate for sustainable healthcare systems for children and families. Furthermore, Operation Smile trains and educates local medical professionals and leaves behind necessary equipment to lay the groundwork for long-term self-sufficiency.

I commend the Magees for their passion to improve the health and lives of children and young adults worldwide. Through Operation Smile, their efforts over the past 25 years have offered new life and new hope to those suffering from facial deformities and their families. In recognition of Operation Smile's 25th Anniversary, I am truly honored to commend their noble work here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 208, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title was amended so as to read: "Resolution recognizing the 25th anniversary of the founding of Operation Smile."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**COMMENDING THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO FOR ENACTMENT OF A LAW TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF MARRIED WOMEN**

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 294) commending the Kingdom of Lesotho, on the occasion of International Women's Day, for the enactment of a law to improve the status of married women and ensure the access of married women to property rights, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 294

Whereas the Kingdom of Lesotho is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy that has been an independent country since 1966;

Whereas Lesotho is a low-income country with a gross national income per capita of \$960 and 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty line;

Whereas, in Lesotho, the HIV prevalence is estimated at 23 percent for the total adult population and 56 percent for pregnant women between the ages of 25 and 29, and the current average life expectancy at birth is estimated to be 34.4 years;

Whereas the Kingdom of Lesotho, referred to by some as the "Kingdom in the Sky", was a strong public supporter of the end of apartheid in South Africa, and the Government of Lesotho granted political asylum to a number of refugees from South Africa during the apartheid era;

Whereas the Government of Lesotho has demonstrated a strong commitment to ruling justly, investing in people, ensuring economic freedom, and controlling corruption;

Whereas the Government of Lesotho has been named eligible by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) for a Compact of financial assistance that, as currently proposed, would strongly focus on improving and safeguarding the health of the people of Lesotho, in addition to supporting projects for sustainable water resource management and private sector development;

Whereas, historically, a married woman in Lesotho was considered a legal minor during the lifetime of her husband, was severely restricted in economic activities, was unable to enter into legally binding contracts without her husband's consent, and had no standing in civil court;

Whereas legislation elevating the legal status of married women and providing property and inheritance rights to women in Lesotho was introduced as early as 1992;

Whereas for years women's groups, non-governmental organizations, the Federation of Women Lawyers, officials of the Government of Lesotho, and others in Lesotho have pushed for passage of legislation strengthening rights of married women;

Whereas in a letter to the Government of Lesotho in September 2006, the chief executive officer of the MCC stated that gender inequality is a constraint on economic growth and poverty reduction and is related to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, and that inattention to issues of gender inequality could undermine the potential impact of the Compact proposed to be entered into between the MCC and the Government of Lesotho;

Whereas the MCC's advocacy of gender equity played a supportive role in the enactment of the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act in the Kingdom of Lesotho, which effectively eliminated "de jure" discrimination against women in the customary law system;

Whereas the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act was passed by the Parliament of Lesotho and enacted into law in November 2006;

Whereas the MCC has already provided assistance to further full and meaningful implementation of the new law; and

Whereas the MCC has promulgated and is currently implementing a new gender policy to integrate gender into all phases of the development and implementation of the Compact between the MCC and the Government of Lesotho: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) applauds the enactment of the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act by the Kingdom of Lesotho;

(2) lauds the Kingdom of Lesotho for demonstrating its commitment to improve gender equity;

(3) encourages the Kingdom of Lesotho to continue its effort to ensure gender equity; and

(4) commends the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) for developing and implementing policies to advance gender equity in the Kingdom of Lesotho and other countries eligible for financial assistance from the MCC.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROSELEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Ms. WATSON. Madam 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 California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

H. Res. 294, as amended, commends the government of Lesotho for changing its laws to effectively eliminate legal discrimination against women in Lesotho's legal system.

In many parts of the world, women's rights are extremely limited, or barely exist, compared to the rights of men.

While women and girls constitute 51 percent of the world's population and make up 70 percent of all agricultural workers, they continue to suffer more from poverty, chronic hunger, HIV/AIDS, and lack of access to education. Women often constitute the highest percentage of those dispossessed of their land, disadvantaged by customary law and traditions which privilege men. Women are often subject to discriminatory laws that restrict their civil, economic and property rights.

Until the passage of this law in Lesotho, women were defined as legal in Lesotho after marriage. Lesotho women had no rights to enter into economic transactions without the consent of their husbands. They could not purchase or inherit property and had no standing in the courts.

Customary law in Lesotho ensured that property belonged to the husband, or was entrusted to a male relative. In many instances, after the death of a parent or spouse, or in the event of a divorce or after an out-of-court settlement, many married women got nothing other than their personal effects.

In November of 2006, His Majesty King Letsie III and the government of Lesotho took a major step towards correcting this grave injustice against women citizens by enacting the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act, giving Lesotho women many of the rights they have long been denied.

If faithfully implemented, the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act will be an important vehicle for gender equality in Lesotho. It will certainly go a long way towards reducing the risk of women, particularly widows, divorcees and their children from falling into extreme poverty, which will increase their risk of exposure to the HIV/AIDS pandemic which has devastated the country's poorest population.

In a country where nearly 25 percent of adults are infected with HIV/AIDS and the life expectancy of women is 44 years, this new law is crucial to removing barriers to access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services for women and girls.

There is still progress that needs to be made on gender equity in Lesotho. According to the State Department, "a woman married under customary law has no standing in civil court. Under the country's dual legal system, marriages which occur under customary law must be legalized in the civil system to have legal standing."

But I believe the efforts of the government of Lesotho are showing real progress in the area of promoting equal rights for women, and I believe it's our responsibility to acknowledge the efforts of those people seeking to empower individuals from all walks of society. As right and overdue as it might be to make these changes, that does not make them easy changes in a society that has done things a certain way for so long a time. Hence, if we wish to see more political leaders around the