

that were interned, and he would direct her to draw their pictures. And she would draw the picture. He didn't want to take a photograph because he couldn't get the color of the skin right, and she would draw the picture. After she drew the picture he would kill the inmate. Now Dina says she learned to draw very slowly at that time.

She was liberated, and she and her mother fled Auschwitz. She eventually came to the United States of America where she worked at Disney Studios for well over 30 years of her life.

She received a telephone call 25 years ago from the Polish Government. They said they had found artwork that they believe she had created and would she come to Poland to authenticate it. She became so thrilled that she could have something to give to her children and her grandchildren so that they would have a piece of her.

She is convinced, and I believe this, too, that the artwork is the only thing that saved her and her mother. She was a Czechoslovakian Jew; 3,600 Czechoslovakian Jews were interned in Auschwitz, only 22 survived. Dina and her mother were two of the 22 Czechoslovakian Jews that survived their time in Auschwitz.

She went to Poland. She authenticated that those are my pictures, and they refused to give them to her. To this day, the Polish Government has not negotiated with Dina Babbitt one bit so she could get one or two or three of her pictures. There are seven that currently exist.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. I yield the gentlelady 1 additional minute.

Ms. BERKLEY. I thank the gentleman very much.

I tell you this with all the passion that I could muster, that this woman should be able to get her property, her rightful property. This isn't even a purchase that she made that has been stolen from her. This came from her own hands, and I think it is time. That is why I so strongly support this resolution that people like Dina Babbitt, it is time, the time is long since past for Dina Babbitt and so many others to receive their just compensation.

I urge support for this resolution. I look forward to the time that the Polish government and the Lithuanian government actually take positive steps to restore the treasure and the possessions of these people who have suffered so much.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, if the gentleman also has no further requests for time.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. I'd like to just add this one point in closing, that it is so important that we take this opportunity as a United States Congress to put pressure on Poland and Lithuania and other countries to adopt meaningful legislation ensuring prompt return and/or compensation for the property seized during the Nazi and Communist eras.

This is the height of injustice. We have an opportunity to right a terrible wrong, and it is important that we pass this legislation and send a very strong message to these countries to finally, finally restore the property and/or the compensation to these individuals.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 371, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING CAMPAIGN BY ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE TO DIVERT UNITED DURBAN REVIEW CONFERENCE

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1361) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should lead a high-level diplomatic effort to defeat the campaign by some members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to divert the United Nation's Durban Review Conference from a review of problems in their own and other countries by attacking Israel, promoting anti-Semitism, and undermining the Universal Charter of Human Rights and to ensure that the Durban Review Conference serves as a forum to review commitments to combat all forms of racism, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1361

Whereas the United Nations is undertaking preparations for a 2009 Durban Review Conference on the implementation of commitments made as part of the 2001 World Conference Against Racism held in Durban, South Africa;

Whereas the 2001 World Conference Against Racism marked an important recognition of the historic wounds caused by slavery, colonialism, and related ongoing racism and racial discrimination, including the recognition of the transatlantic slave trade as a crime against humanity, and that people of African descent, people of Asian descent, and indigenous peoples who were victims of these acts continue to face discrimination and marginalization as a direct consequence;

Whereas the 2001 World Conference Against Racism also undertook historic efforts to recognize and address ongoing racism and racial discrimination against persons of African descent and members of Jewish, Muslim, caste, indigenous, Roma and Sinti, and other communities, as well as anti-migrant xenophobia and incitement to racial and religious hatred;

Whereas the 2001 World Conference Against Racism and its achievements were overshadowed and diminished as some participants in the conference, in particular during the Non-Governmental Organization Forum, called the "NGO Forum Against Racism" (NGO Forum), misused human rights language to promote hate, anti-Semitism, incitement, and divert the focus of the conference from problems within their own countries to a focus on Israel;

Whereas the NGO Forum produced a document called the "NGO Declaration" that contained abusive language, branding Israel an "apartheid state" that is guilty of "racist crimes against humanity";

Whereas the United States withdrew its delegation from the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, a decision that Secretary of State Colin Powell explained by stating that "you do not combat racism by conferences that produce declarations containing hateful language, some of which is a throwback to the days of 'Zionism equals racism'; or supports the idea that we have made too much of the Holocaust; or suggests that apartheid exists in Israel; or that singles out only one country in the world—Israel—for censure and abuse";

Whereas the atmosphere of anti-Semitism at the NGO Forum was described as "hateful, even racist" by former High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson and as "disgraceful" by Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad, of South Africa, who also stated that parts of the 2001 World Conference Against Racism were "hijacked and used by some with an anti-Israeli agenda to turn it into an anti-Semitic event";

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who served as Secretary General of the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, refused to accept the NGO Declaration, and some leading civil and human rights organizations and activists criticized the repugnant anti-Semitism and demonization of Israel in the NGO Forum, and the harassment of Jewish participants it engendered;

Whereas despite recognizing the Holocaust and increased anti-Semitism, the official government declaration adopted by the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, the "Durban Declaration and Program of Action", highlighted the "plight of the Palestinian people under foreign occupation", and in so doing singled out one regional conflict for discussion in a biased way, and wrongly implied that Israeli Government policies towards the Palestinians are motivated by racism;

Whereas the Human Rights Council agreed in Resolution 3/2 on December 8, 2006, that the 2009 Durban Review Conference would, like other United Nations review conferences, focus on countries' implementation of the many commitments to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance contained in the official government Durban Declaration and Program of Action and that there will be "no renegotiation of the existing agreements contained therein";

Whereas at the first organizing session of the Durban Review Conference on August 27, 2007, in Geneva, Switzerland, Ambassador Masood Khan of Pakistan, speaking "on behalf of the OIC", described the concerns being expressed about the Durban Review Conference as a "smear campaign", and made it clear that the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) intends to make so-called "contemporary" forms of racism a centerpiece of the conference agenda, urging also that "[t]he Conference should move the spotlight on the continued plight of Palestinian people and non-recognition of their inalienable right to self-determination";

Whereas several OIC member states have also made clear their determination to go beyond the comprehensive list of items covered by the Durban Declaration and Program of Action to force consideration by the Durban Review Conference of a global blasphemy code that would legitimize arbitrary restrictions of freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and the freedoms of expression and opinion, all in the name of protecting religions from “defamation” and “blasphemy”;

Whereas following the August 27, 2007, preparatory meeting for the Durban Review Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, several countries, including the United States, France, and Israel, stated that the Conference would not be worthwhile or worthy of support if it were not limited to a discussion of country commitments to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance contained in the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action;

Whereas the High Commissioner for Human Rights was named Secretary-General of the 2009 Durban Review Conference;

Whereas in advance of determining the modalities, format, duration, and venue of the 2009 Durban Review Conference, the OIC and G-77 member states requested the United Nations General Assembly to fund a \$7.2 million preparatory process of international, regional, and national meetings;

Whereas on November 28, 2007, 45 United Nations Member States, including the United States, joined together in the Third Committee (Resolution A/C.3/62/L.65/Rev.) to vote against a resolution that contradicted the 2009 Durban Review Conference preparatory committee consensus agreements about the framework of the Durban Review Conference, its scope, and sources of funding;

Whereas on December 21, 2007, 40 United Nations Member States, including the United States, joined together in the Fifth Committee (Resolution A/C.5/62/21) to vote against a resolution that authorized up to \$6.8 million to fund the 2009 Durban Review Conference preparatory process;

Whereas the United States has decided to withhold from its 2008 funding for the United Nations share of the United Nations Human Rights Council-administered preparatory process for the 2009 Durban Review Conference; and

Whereas since the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, the need for a credible global forum to review United Nations Member States' efforts to combat racism remains urgent given the continuing scourge of racism, discrimination and related violence, including against persons of African descent, Jewish, Muslim, caste, indigenous, Roma and Sinti, and other communities, anti-migrant xenophobia, and incitement to racial and religious hatred: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) acknowledges that the 2001 World Conference Against Racism marked an important recognition of the historic wounds caused by slavery, colonialism, and related ongoing racism and racial discrimination, including the recognition of the transatlantic slave trade as a crime against humanity, and that people of African descent, people of Asian descent, and indigenous peoples who were victims of these acts continue to face discrimination and marginalization as a direct consequence;

(2) reaffirms its abiding commitment to the cause of combating continuing racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance in all its forms;

(3) calls on the President and the Secretary of State to lead a high-level diplomatic effort to ensure that the Durban Review Con-

ference focuses on the implementation by states of their commitments to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and to defeat any effort by states to use the forum to promote anti-Semitism or hatred against members of any group or to call into question the legitimacy of any state;

(4) calls on the President to urge other heads of state to condition participation in the 2009 Durban Review Conference on concrete action by the United Nations and United Nations Member States to ensure that it is not a forum to demonize any group, or incite anti-Semitism, hatred, or violence against members of any group or to call into question the existence of any state;

(5) calls on the Secretary of State to—

(A) initiate United States policy into action by calling on counterparts, including the Government of Pakistan as the chair of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Government of Egypt as the head of the African Group, to insist that they take prompt and effective measures to ensure that the Durban Review Conference does not become a forum for anti-Semitism, incitement or hatred against members of any group or to call into question the existence of any state; and

(B) demarche foreign capitals raising the concerns of Congress and to report to Congress on what steps the United States and its allies have taken to address these concerns;

(6) commends all governments, including those of the United States, France, Canada, Israel, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands that have declared their intentions not to participate in any United Nations Durban Review Conference that sidesteps scrutiny of country commitments to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, and that promotes hate, undermines human rights standards, and damages the credibility of the United Nations itself;

(7) commends the countries that joined the United States, including the member states of the European Union, Albania, Andorra, Australia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Israel, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, San Marino, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, Canada, and the Republic of Korea, in voting to uphold earlier United Nations consensus agreements that established the scope and funding of the 2009 Durban Review Conference process;

(8) urges all United Nations Member States not to support a 2009 Durban Review Conference process that fails to adhere to established human rights standards and to reject an agenda that incites hatred against any group in the guise of criticism of a particular government or that seeks to forge a global blasphemy code;

(9) commends the diverse civil society organizations that have joined together to learn from the shortcomings of the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, and to work together in a spirit of solidarity and mutual respect toward a 2009 Durban Review Conference that rejects hatred in all its forms;

(10) reaffirms that, as recognized by Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, [and] to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance”;

(11) urges all states to implement their commitments to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance to secure just treatment and the realization of universal human rights for all as

enshrined in international human rights instruments, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

(12) notes that the Human Rights Council agreed in Resolution 3/2 on December 8, 2006, that the 2009 Durban Review Conference would, like other United Nations review conferences, focus on countries' implementation of the many commitments to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance contained in the official government Durban Declaration and Program of Action and that there will be “no renegotiation of the existing agreements contained therein”;

(13) recognizes the purposeful attempts of some countries to prevent a focus on ongoing racism by utilizing inflammatory language, employing divisive tactics and strategies, fostering an atmosphere of anti-Semitism and otherwise deviating from the commitments made at the 2001 World Conference Against Racism in order to divert the 2009 Durban Review Conference from the important goal of eradicating global racism;

(14) calls on United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon to publicly urge the Human Rights Council to adhere to its mandate and to the high responsibility and expectations placed on it, and asks him to personally intervene to refocus the 2009 Durban Review Conference efforts on the review of what United Nations Member States have done to fulfill their commitments to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and on concrete action to fight racism, anti-Semitism, and all forms of hatred, intolerance, and violence; and

(15) calls on the High Commissioner for Human Rights to urge United Nations Member States to adhere to the agreed framework of the 2009 Durban Review Conference and its previously agreed upon goals and parameters and to urge Member States of the preparatory committee to return to decision making by consensus.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. 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 gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

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

First, I want to express my appreciation to the ranking member of our Foreign Affairs Committee, Ms. ROSELEHTINEN, along with the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, Mr. PAYNE, and my colleague from California, Ms. BARBARA LEE, for their hard work on this resolution aimed at preventing a repeat of the tragic outcome of the 2001 World Conference Against Racism.

As my colleagues know, the convening of the first World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, in 2001 marked an important recognition of the historic wounds caused by slavery, colonialism, and ongoing racism and racial discrimination.

The Durban conference's explicit recognition of the transatlantic slave trade as "a crime against humanity" was a watershed event in the global community's effort to begin confronting this indelible stain in human history.

Tragically, the seminal achievements of this conference were overshadowed and diminished when some conference participants diverted the focus of the conference from problems in their own countries to a pathological focus on Israel and Jews.

The worse abuses took place in and around the NGO forum that took place on the margins of the conference. This forum devolved into a hate-filled circus, as anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic rallies spilled onto Durban's streets.

The official document produced by the NGO forum contained abusive language branding Israel an "apartheid state" that is guilty of "racist crimes against humanity."

The government document, while not as inflammatory as the NGO document, singled out one and only one regional conflict in a biased way by highlighting the "plight of the Palestinian people under foreign occupation," and in so doing, wrongly branded Israel's treatment of Palestinians as racist.

The U.N. is now preparing a Durban Review Conference set to take place in Geneva in 2009. Despite the fact that the U.N. Human Rights Council agreed in Resolution 3/2 on December 8, 2006, that the review conference would be limited in its scope to a focus on countries' implementation of commitments to fight racism and discrimination, the same actors that hijacked the initial Durban conference are threatening to do so once again.

In preparatory meetings for the Durban Review Conference in Geneva, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, led by Pakistan, and the African Group, led by Egypt, have boldly stated—and that's the governments of both Pakistan and Egypt here—have boldly stated their determination to go beyond the boundaries established for the Durban Review Conference to attack Israel and to make so-called new forms of racism a centerpiece of the review conference agenda.

Our government and the governments of France, Canada, the United Kingdom, The Netherlands, and Israel have stated that unless the direction of the conference is refocused, the review process will not be credible or worthy of support.

I strongly support these "redlines" and will urge the next administration not to participate in the Durban review process if it continues on its current path.

But up to this point, neither the State Department nor the White House

has undertaken any kind of sustained diplomatic effort to ensure that this outcome is not a forgone conclusion.

Our resolution confronts the diplomatic inaction by calling on the Secretary of State to convey in the strongest possible terms to the governments of Pakistan and Egypt that their campaign to hijack Durban II is completely unacceptable to us.

It also calls on the State Department to undertake a worldwide demarche of foreign capitals to seek support for refocusing the conference on its agreed-upon purpose.

A focused high-level diplomatic effort on the part of the State Department and the White House could force the OIC and the Arab League to stand down in their campaign to usurp the Durban review and to further unravel global adherence to human rights norms.

Unlike in the run-up to the original Durban Conference in 2001, many key U.S. allies have spoken out forcefully and resolutely in opposition to the campaign to hijack Durban II.

President Sarkozy of France, for example, has stated that the Government of France will not tolerate "a repeat of the digression and extremes of 2001."

It is time for the administration to end any diplomatic retreat from U.N. human rights mechanisms. We have ceded far too much space to human rights abusers by sitting on the sidelines in Geneva. We must confront the fact that among the key spoilers of U.N. human rights bodies are governments we should be in a position to influence, such as Pakistan and Egypt.

The United States is in a position to lead. We need the will to do so.

Our European allies feel far more threatened than they have been in the past by the intense OIC campaign to unravel key global human rights standards such as the right to freedom of expression.

□ 1730

They would certainly respond to the re-emergence of the United States as the leading advocate for universal standards of human rights.

The need for a credible global forum to review United Nations member states' efforts to combat racism remains urgent. The scourge of racism and related intolerance has not abated. If anything, discrimination against people of African, Jewish and Muslim descent has increased. We have also seen recently alarming outbreaks of violence against refugees and migrants. It makes no sense, therefore, to cede this critical forum provided by the Durban Review to a group of countries who are hostile to democratic principles and human rights standards.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support the resolution.

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 today in support of House Resolution 1361—but, but, but, but with great reservations, particularly with respect to changes made to the text after the resolution had been adopted by our Foreign Affairs Committee.

Madam Speaker, in 2001, a number of anti-democratic governments hijacked the planning and implementation of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa.

Instead of representing a bold step forward by devoting its attention to fighting racism and other bigotry, the event was dominated by attacks on America, on Israel, and on Jews at every turn.

At the conference's NGO forum, groups distributed literature expressing sorrow that Adolf Hitler did not fully exterminate the Jewish people. The anti-Israel and anti-American rhetoric at Durban so discredited the conference that our U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, withdrew our delegation, stating, "I know that you do not combat racism by conferences that produce declarations containing hateful language or that singles out any one country alone in the world, Israel, for censure and abuse."

Our late friend and colleague, Tom Lantos, the former Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, also walked out on Durban, stating that the conference "provided the world with a glimpse into the abyss of international hate, discrimination and, indeed, racism."

Today, Madam Speaker, we are confronted with the forthcoming 2009 Durban Review Conference, also known as Durban II. The version of this resolution that passed our committee was a compromise that was worked out between our Republican and Democratic Members. Having introduced several resolutions in this Congress addressing Durban II, I felt at the time that even that compromise text did not go far enough in portraying the problems plaguing this conference. That compromise text, however, focused on defeating the campaigns by some countries, particularly members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to divert Durban II away from reviewing human rights concerns and, instead, focus it on attacking Israel and promoting anti-Semitism.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, the text before us today has a different focus. This text places the emphasis on higher level U.S. diplomatic efforts on ensuring that Durban II follows up on the commitments made at the last conference, an effort that could be interpreted as legitimizing the first Durban meeting, and as such the efforts by Israel and America haters.

Indeed, Madam Speaker, responsible nations must work to fight against racism and other forms of intolerance. And therefore, we appreciate that the 2001 Durban Declaration declared slavery to be a crime against humanity and

noted that the Holocaust should never be forgotten.

We all wish that Durban I were a symbol of success in the struggle against racism, and that Durban II would build on that success. However, Madam Speaker, the Durban Conference ultimately did not represent progress against racism. Until this very day, Durban is a symbol of the powerful, pervasive menace of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel hate.

Indeed, the conference's own Durban Declaration, which could have been a stirring, unequivocal call to stop racism and hate, was tarnished by a number of irrelevant provisions, including several clauses that singled out Israel while ignoring the plight of Israelis under siege from violent extremists.

Therefore, it is imperative that we not imply, in hindsight, that Durban I was more positive than it actually was; neither should we pretend that Durban II will be less disastrous than it actually will be.

The planning committee for Durban II, Madam Speaker, is led by the regimes of Libya, Iran and Cuba. And that committee has already expressed its intent to focus the conference on Israel bashing, anti-Semitism, and establishing a global blasphemy code that could stifle our freedom of speech and religion.

Just a few days ago, on September 19, the Algerian Ambassador to the U.N. Missions in Geneva, within the context of discussions concerning Durban II, redefined anti-Semitism and referred to "traditional anti-Semitism" as having become "politically incorrect in many rich nations." What? Translation, Madam Speaker: Anti-Israel and anti-Semitism is objectionable in rich nations of the West, but acceptable everywhere else.

The fix is in, Madam Speaker. After extensive diplomatic efforts by the U.S. to prevent Durban II from following in the dark path of its predecessor, we joined our allies, Canada and Israel, in declaring that we will not fund and we will not participate in a conference that promotes hate.

As former Assistant Secretary of State Kristen Silverberg noted while testifying before our Foreign Affairs Subcommittee this past April, "There is absolutely no case to be made for participating in something that is going to be a repeat of Durban I. We don't have any confidence that this will be any better than Durban I."

It is clear, Madam Speaker, that any further U.S. involvement in Durban II in the planning process, whether by an Undersecretary, by the Secretary of State, or even by the President, will not avert the looming train wreck that is Durban II. It will only waste precious U.S. time, legitimacy, and political capital on a doomed venture.

However, the text before us today, while it contains some positive clauses as it has been amended after committee action, could be misconstrued as urging America to further partici-

pate in the Durban II planning process in order to attempt to ensure that Durban II follows up on the commitments made at Durban I.

Making sure that we don't send a mixed signal is especially important this week, Madam Speaker, as the United Nations General Assembly meets in New York and as Ahmadinejad prepares today to spew his anti-American, anti-Israel, anti-Semitic venom on the world stage.

I will vote for this resolution, Madam Speaker, with the intent that it does not call for the U.S. to participate in Durban II or its planning process in any way, shape or form. Moreover, Madam Speaker, I will continue my efforts to work with my colleagues, the executive branch, and our allies to discuss an alternative to Durban, one rooted in freedom, in tolerance, and in democratic values.

I thank Chairman HOWARD BERMAN for introducing this resolution. I intend to vote for it with all of these reservations.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, before I yield to my colleague from California, I would like to yield myself 1 minute.

The gentlelady and I, my ranking member, we're coming from the same place in the sense that we do not want the United States participating in a conference which produces the kind of statements and the kinds of activities that happened the last time. Perhaps in this case I'm a little more of an optimist than the gentlelady from Florida because I can't think of anything better, that, before the last preparatory meeting, the House speaks on what our red lines are—yes, we want the conference to succeed, it's an incredibly important purpose, as the gentlelady has agreed to and acknowledged and has always been supportive of. But we know what's happened before, we know what's being set up to happen this time. But I want to see delegations from the kinds of organizations that are supporting this resolution that plan to go to Geneva for that preparatory meeting to say, in the United States, we speak with one voice, and that includes not simply the American Jewish Committee and APAC and the other Jewish community organizations that support this resolution—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BERMAN. I yield myself 1 additional minute.

But it also includes the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Human Rights First—one of the preeminent human rights organizations—the NAACP, and all the other organizations that are going to Geneva, supporting this resolution and telling them that we're not going to stand for another hijacking. And this resolution creates the framework, with the support of those kinds of organizations, to make that last effort. While I can't tell

you what's going to happen there, let's give it our best shot.

Passing this resolution, allowing these organizations to go with a statement from the House of Representatives that is clear on the red lines, is very important.

I now yield 4 minutes to my friend and colleague, who has been very involved in this process from the very beginning and has helped us to fashion the final product with a tremendous contribution, the gentlelady from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding and for your patience and for your understanding and for your really very skillful way in bringing us all together to make sure that there is a resolution that we all can support.

I do support H. Res. 1361, putting the House, first of all, on record in support of the United States leading a high-level diplomatic effort to ensure that the Durban Review Conference, better known as Durban II, serves as a forum to review commitments to combat all forms of racism.

The resolution also directs the United States to strongly oppose any effort by any party to use the forum as a platform for attacking Israel, for promoting anti-Semitism, or undermining the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Madam Speaker, in 2006, the United Nations General Assembly voted to hold a conference to review the process and progress made by member nations in implementing the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. This declaration was the signal achievement of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, which was held August 31 through September 7, 2001 in Durban, South Africa. The conference known as the "Durban Conference" was attended by more than 10,000 persons from all corners of the globe. The Review Conference, or Durban II, is scheduled to convene in Geneva, Switzerland, in April 2009.

This resolution is an important resolution warranting the support of all Members. But it's also important for my colleagues to know that, once again, without the leadership of Chairman BERMAN and Chairman PAYNE and Ranking Member ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, we really wouldn't have this opportunity to put the House on record directing the United States to exercise the strong leadership that we've all talked about at the Durban II Conference, and to resist any attempt by any party to launch anti-Semitic attacks on Israel.

So let me just say it has been a privilege working with all of you over these past several months in crafting this language that reflects our shared commitment to combating racism in all forms and condemning anti-Semitism.

I want to say also that I was part of the Durban Conference. Actually, we wrote a letter to the Secretary of

State, then Secretary Colin Powell, under the leadership of our Congressional Black Caucus Chair then, Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON. And we told the Secretary of State and the State Department then that in no way did we believe Durban I should turn into a forum to attack Israel or become an anti-Semitic forum, and that, in fact, we believe this Durban Conference was so important to African Americans and to all minorities in America that we thought then that it was even important on Durban I to try to stop all of the things that the NGO forum allowed to happen.

□ 1745

But I want to clarify that that was the forum; that was not the full Durban conference. We were there. The United States did not send an official delegation. And in fact there was some delegates there who actually left the conference. But Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, myself and others, we said we would end up just being the official delegation. I think there were seven or eight of us at Durban because we felt it was so important to first stay there to make sure that we could try to ensure that it was focused on combating racism.

And, secondly, there were hundreds and hundreds of African Americans at that conference. This is one of the first conferences where African Americans could go abroad and talk about all forms of racism; what had happened, what the trans-Atlantic slave trade really was all about, its legacies and its vestiges. So this is an important conference.

Let me just mention what this resolution is and summarize some of the provisions of this resolution. First, to review the progress and assess implementation of the declaration by all stakeholders.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman from California has expired.

Mr. BERMAN. I yield the gentlelady an additional 2 minutes.

Ms. LEE. To review the progress and assess the implementation of the Durban Declaration, to assess the effectiveness of the existing Durban follow-up mechanisms and other relevant United Nations mechanisms dealing with racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, to promote the universal ratification and implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and to identify and share good practices in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

We should support this resolution because it says very explicitly that we will not allow, impugn and support behavior at any of these conferences, including we condemn what happened at the 2001 NGO forum as it relates to anti-Semitism and attacks on Israel. And this is important because it really

does encourage this active participation by the United States in this conference, because I can guarantee you, just as the seven or eight of us members of the Black Caucus who went to Durban the first time tried to beat back any type of anti-Semitism we saw bubbling, we will do that this time. And we want an official, high-level delegation along with us to go to Durban so that we can do the business and move forward to participate in a world forum to combat racism and discrimination.

I'm proud of the fact that the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights supports this. Mr. BERMAN laid out who all is involved in that conference. It's a good resolution. It's a resolution that deserves our support on both sides of the aisle.

Thank you, again, Mr. BERMAN, for your leadership.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I continue to reserve our time until the speakers are done on their side.

Mr. BERMAN. I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

Ms. BERKLEY. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his strong and very important leadership on this issue.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this important resolution stating our position on the Durban Conference. Seven years ago, we watched in disgust as a conference on racism, a very important issue which demands the world's attention, was diverted into a hate fest against Israel and Jews everywhere where participants and outside groups attempted to paint Israel as an "apartheid state" guilty of "crimes against humanity." This kind of inflammatory speech does nothing to help the Palestinians. And it certainly does nothing to help those who are truly oppressed by racist regimes.

We now hear of new attempts to hijack the review conference to be held next year. The Organization of Islamic Conference says they want to highlight "new forms of racism" such as blasphemy against Islam while continuing to focus on spewing anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist hatred. We must stop these cynical attempts to divert attention away from the human rights abuses in places like Iran and Saudi Arabia and put the spotlight squarely where it belongs, on real forms of racism, slavery and xenophobia, which is what this conference is supposed to be about and which it should be about.

I urge support for this resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I have no further requests for time, and I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. I have one additional speaker. I'm very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Texas, a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and a participant in the last conference, Ms. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I too want to add my appreciation to the chairman of the full committee, Mr. BERMAN of California, and the ranking member, Ms. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, who was obviously here during that first Durban Conference in 2001.

Interestingly enough, that conference preceded the horrific tragedy that occurred in this country. I might venture to say that the contempt and hatred that was expressed there certainly did not help in adding to the idea that we are all part of the human family. But I will say to you that this is a characterization of relief.

And I do thank my colleague from California, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE. Both of us were on that early delegation. But more importantly we worked extensively to pressure, if you will, the Bush administration to actually send a high level delegation. In fact I believe that if we had sent a high-level delegation, many of us many times will argue for boycotting. In this instance, we worked with Secretary Powell and begged him to go so that he could put a face of America, and that face of America will be in conjunction with the basis of this particular conference, and that is for the first time to be able to hold a conference that marked an important recognition of the historic wounds raised or caused by slavery, colonialism and related ongoing racism, racial discrimination, including the recognition of trans-Atlantic slave trade as a crime against humanity and the people of African descent, people of Asian descent, and indigenous people, and as well to stamp out racial discrimination against persons of African descent, members of Jewish, Muslim, castes, indigenous Roma and Sinti and other communities. That is what we were supposed to be doing. But because I believe we did not send a high-level delegation, it was hijacked. We were hoodwinked. But I can assure you that as I can recount the actions of those of us who went unofficially claiming we were official, we were running from one meeting to the next to be able to argue for the purpose of this particular conference, putting the message of America forward, suggesting that we want to stamp out racism and anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination. We were there on the front line.

This is an important statement. And that statement says that America does recognize the sins of the past, that we do embrace those around the world who have suffered injustices, and we reject the anti-Semitism or creating an opportunity for this to be a cause of bashing Israel. But I believe that as we go as a full delegation, which I hope that many of us will again be able to attend the Durban review in 2009, you will see the opportunity for African Americans and those descendants of slaves around the world, those who are presently abused, you will see a standing up for the cause of eliminating and eradicating racism wherever it is and

scapegoating any people, which includes as well the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

Madam Speaker, I believe that this is a right step. I wish we had had this document. I wish we had had a high-level delegation some years ago. And if I might quickly acknowledge Mary Robinson.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman from Texas has expired.

Mr. BERMAN. I yield the gentlelady an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I acknowledge the then Human Rights Commissioner, Mary Robinson, who was the architect somewhat of this idea. Her heart was in the right place. She was there. She wanted us to speak on the issues that this conference needed to grapple.

Racism, Madam Speaker, is intrinsic. It is deep. It is in the souls of many. It covers ethnicities and language. It is difficult to deal with. This is an important conference. This legislation should craft it, design it and stand for it in the right way.

Let me thank the NAACP for its support of this legislation. And I understand Wade Henderson, who was one of the architects of working with this, this is the right direction to go. I'm looking forward to a conference that speaks to the issues and embraces all of those who have been victims of racism and discrimination and to end it forever and ever.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to support H. Res. 1361, a resolution that urges the U.S. government to prevent the upcoming U.N. World Conference on Racism from being hijacked by those seeking to spread anti-Semitism and hate. The theory behind a conference on racism, where members of all nations come together to fight hate and promote diversity, is an important goal. Unfortunately, just as they have in the past, the organizers of this U.N. conference on Racism seem to have buried the task at hand.

In 2001, the conference was held in Durban, South Africa, and was hijacked and transformed into an anti-Israel tirade. While racism and the promotion of hate are taught in many classrooms around the world, the organizers of this U.N. conference unfairly chose to single out Israel. This must stop.

The United States must take a leadership role now, while the conference is still in planning stages, to ensure that such a despicable charade will not be repeated. The administration must work with our allies and use its leverage to ensure that this conference lives up to its name. And, if it seems that the conference is going to mock the world's fight against racism and it becomes clear that the conference will become a forum to promote hate and anti-Israel sentiment, then I urge the administration to pull U.S. support and work with our allies to show the conference for what it is: a sham.

Finally, I join the sponsors of this legislation in commending the efforts of our allies, France, Canada, and Israel for declaring their intentions not to participate in Durban II if its agenda is diverted.

It is imperative that the United States not stand idly by while countries around the world

belittle the fight against racism. I look forward to working with my colleagues, the administration and countries around the world until we get this right.

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

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield back our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1361, 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 of the resolution was amended so as to read: "Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should lead a high-level diplomatic effort to ensure that the Durban Review Conference serves as a forum to review implementation of commitments made at the 2001 Durban Conference to combat all forms of racism by defeating the campaign by some members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to divert the United Nation's Durban Review Conference from a review of problems in their own and other countries by attacking Israel, promoting anti-Semitism, and undermining the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 643

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered as the first sponsor of H.R. 643, a bill originally introduced by Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones of Ohio, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprints pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Nevada?

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING NGO WORK ON ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1369) recognizing nongovernmental organizations working to bring just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1369

Whereas the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has cost many innocent lives and continues to bring terrible suffering to both peoples;

Whereas despite the ongoing conflict, Israeli and Palestinian individuals and nongovernmental organizations have been work-

ing for decades to build bridges between the two peoples, to address humanitarian concerns, and to further the cause of peace;

Whereas such individuals and nongovernmental organizations that are committed to nonviolence, recognize Israel's right to exist, and are dedicated to achieving a two-state solution deserve recognition and encouragement to continue their important work;

Whereas the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is currently at a critical juncture, and sustained progress towards peace depends on the commitment of individuals and organizations that choose dialogue, friendship, and openness;

Whereas the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-446) permits the provision of United States assistance to nongovernmental organizations to provide for basic human needs, the protection of basic human freedoms, and the promotion of human rights, nonviolence, and for a just and peaceful reconciliation, provided that such assistance does not knowingly and directly benefit any terrorist organization;

Whereas the initiatives of these individuals and nongovernmental organizations reflect the tenacity of those with a true commitment to peace, mutual respect, and coexistence, and demonstrate the real impact that such people can make on the lives of individuals and communities; and

Whereas such initiatives build hope and trust among both peoples and can help pave a path to peace; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the vital role of nongovernmental organizations in peace-building efforts between Israel and Palestinians, and encourages them to remain steadfast in their commitment to nonviolence, recognition of Israel's right to exist, dedication to achieving a two-state solution, and work toward building trust and cooperation between the two peoples;

(2) applauds the tireless work of these individuals and nongovernmental organizations, and urges them to continue their efforts;

(3) acknowledges and encourages the important efforts and support that these nongovernmental organizations, religious organizations, and individuals committed to peace and nonviolence contribute to these initiatives;

(4) affirms the importance of United States support to nongovernmental organizations that provide humanitarian aid and work for democracy, human rights, and peace and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians; and

(5) urges Israeli and Palestinian leaders to embrace the spirit of nongovernmental peace builders toward achieving a just and lasting peace.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. 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 gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself 3 minutes.