

Now, importantly, this resolution commends the Government of South Africa for taking some steps because it has tried to combat this problem. It has brought to justice, it has successfully convicted its human traffickers here in a trial that has gotten some attention. So it is important to note such improvements.

But at the same time, it's important for us to realize how much remains to be done, how much the international community needs to work and come together to go after these criminal syndicates that are involved in this kind of activity.

And I only wish we could be celebrating the achievement of countries like Vietnam; but, unfortunately, we've read the report. Some countries are actually being downgraded in this report. In Vietnam, women and children are routinely misled by fraudulent job opportunities where they find themselves, instead, sold into brothels. Sadly, while some conditions are improving, other states, like Vietnam, are falling far, far behind.

And it is also our hope that the release of this report will do much in the international community, along with the help by NGOs that have come forward, in order to try to put a spotlight on this issue, in order to try to get every government involved and moving in the correct direction and prosecuting those who are involved in the criminal syndicates for trying to advance this kind of inhumanity across this planet.

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I again commend all of the cosponsors of this legislation, including my colleague, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. ROYCE and thank Mr. SMITH, the author of this resolution.

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, 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. 1412, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PERMANENT RADIO FREE ASIA AUTHORIZATION ACT

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3104) to permanently authorize Radio Free Asia, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3104

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Radio Free Asia (referred to in this Act as "RFA")—

(A) was authorized under section 309 of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6208);

(B) was incorporated as a private, non-profit corporation in March 1996 in the hope that its operations would soon be obviated by the global advancement of democracy; and

(C) is headquartered in Washington, DC, with additional offices in Bangkok, Hong Kong, Phnom Penh, Seoul, Ankara, and Taipei.

(2) RFA broadcasts serve as substitutes for indigenous free media in regions lacking free media outlets.

(3) The mission of RFA is "to provide accurate and timely news and information to Asian countries whose governments prohibit access to a free press" in order to enable informed decisionmaking by the people within Asia.

(4) RFA provides daily broadcasts of news, commentary, analysis, and cultural programming to Asian countries in several languages, including—

(A) 12 hours per day in Mandarin;

(B) 8 hours per day in 3 Tibetan dialects, Uke, Kham, and Amdo;

(C) 4 hours per day in Korean and Burmese;

(D) 2 hours per day in Cantonese, Vietnamese, Laotian, Khmer (Cambodian), and Uyghur; and

(E) 1½ hours per week in Wu (local Shanghai dialect).

(5) The governments of the countries targeted for these broadcasts have consistently denied and blocked attempts at Medium Wave and FM transmissions into their countries, forcing RFA to rely on Shortwave broadcasts and the Internet.

(6) RFA has provided continuous online news to its Asian audiences since 2004, although some countries—

(A) routinely and aggressively block RFA's website;

(B) monitor access to RFA's website; and

(C) discourage online users by making it illegal to access RFA's website.

(7) Despite these attempts, RFA has successfully managed to reach its online audiences through proxies, cutting-edge software, and active republication and repostings by its audience.

(8) RFA also provides forums for local opinions and experiences through message boards, podcasts, web logs (blogs), cell phone-distributed newscasts, and new media, including Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and YouTube.

(9) Freedom House has documented that freedom of the press is in decline in nearly every region of the world, particularly in Asia, where none of the countries served by RFA have increased their freedom of the press during the past 5 years.

(10) In fiscal year 2010, RFA is operating on a \$37,000,000 budget, less than \$400,000 of which is available to fund Internet censorship circumvention.

(11) Congress currently provides grant funding for RFA's operations on a fiscal year basis.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) public access to timely, uncensored, and accurate information is imperative for promoting government accountability and the protection of human rights;

(2) Radio Free Asia provides a vital voice to people in Asia;

(3) some of the governments in Asia spend millions of dollars each year to jam RFA's shortwave, block its Internet sites;

(4) Congress should provide additional funding to RFA and the other entities overseen by the Broadcasting Board of Governors for—

(A) Internet censorship circumvention; and

(B) enhancement of their cyber security efforts; and

(5) permanently authorizing funding for Radio Free Asia would—

(A) reflect the concern that media censorship and press restrictions in the countries served by RFA have increased since RFA was established; and

(B) send a powerful signal of our Nation's support for free press in Asia and throughout the world.

SEC. 3. PERMANENT AUTHORIZATION FOR RADIO FREE ASIA.

Section 309 of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6208) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)(2), by striking "and shall further specify that funds to carry out the activities of Radio Free Asia may not be available after September 30, 2010";

(2) by striking subsection (f);

(3) by redesignating subsections (g) and (h) as subsection (f) and (g), respectively; and

(4) in subsection (f), as redesignated—

(A) by striking "The Board" and inserting the following:

"(1) NOTIFICATION.—The Board";

(B) by striking "before entering" and inserting the following: "before—

"(A) entering";

(C) by striking "Radio Free Asia." and inserting the following: "Radio Free Asia; or

"(B) entering into any agreements in regard to the utilization of Radio Free Asia transmitters, equipment, or other resources that will significantly reduce the broadcasting activities of Radio Free Asia.";

(D) by striking "The Chairman" and inserting the following:

"(2) CONSULTATION.—The Chairman"; and

(E) by inserting "or Radio Free Asia broadcasting activities" before the period at the end.

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, this bill, which passed the Senate last week by unanimous consent, would amend the International Broadcasting Act of 1994

to permanently authorize Radio Free Asia. Radio Free Asia, or RFA, was established by Congress in 1994 and began its operations in 1996. As a private, nonprofit corporation, its mission is to provide accurate and timely news to Asian countries whose governments prohibit access to a free press.

Today, RFA broadcasts news and information in nine languages: Burmese, Cantonese, Mandarin Chinese, Korean, Khmer, Laotian, Tibetan, Uyghur, and Vietnamese. RFA also maintains a vibrant Internet presence, providing information through podcasts, blogs, message boards, and YouTube.

Because RFA is guided by the principles of free expression and opinion and serves its Asian listeners by providing information critical for informed decisionmaking, the governments of the countries that RFA targets have actively sought to block RFA's transmissions and access to its Web site. These repressive governments are clearly concerned that public access to the timely, uncensored, and accurate information provided by RFA will lead to greater demands for democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, and government accountability.

A winner of numerous human rights and broadcast journalism awards, RFA has played a vital role in providing information in some of the most oppressed societies in Asia. For example, RFA broke the news of the peaceful protest by Tibetan monks in the capital of Tibet in 2008 and provided extensive coverage, used by major international media outlets, of the Chinese crackdown on the monks.

By permanently authorizing RFA, we will enhance the efficiency of the RFA's operations and send a powerful signal of our country's support for a free press in Asia and throughout the world.

According to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

RFA's mission is to do just that, to bring news and information about their own countries to populations denied the benefits of freedom of information by their governments. RFA's broadcasts, through the radio and the Internet, are devoted to that very idea, to that notion of enlightenment.

Radio Free Asia provides a vital voice to hundreds of millions of people in Asia, and I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the ranking member on the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade, and the author of the House companion to this bill.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, this program, Radio Free Asia, was due to expire, under existing law, in September. And I am delighted here, for several reasons, that the legislation is before us. One is because, on a strategic level, if you have this sunset and you have authoritarian regimes presuming that at the end of the year RFA's broadcasts are going to be discontinued, it implies that it does not have the full support of the U.S. Government or our people here in the United States. And in some countries there's even been talk of RFA going out of business. This sends the message that that just isn't so because now RFA will permanently be in business.

And from a practical standpoint, what does that mean? If you're running a station, it means that you've got the ability now to contract effectively in long-range leases. You get the capital agreements that you need. You are better able, less expensively, to run these operations.

It's not that these operations are expensive. As my friend, John Kasich, former chairman of the Budget Committee once said, the price of this is the price of a fuel cap on a B-52. But, oh, how effective, oh, how effective this strategy has been over the years, because what we provide here is surrogate news. We provide the kind of information that people would be hearing if they actually had a free radio station, if they could actually listen to the voice of a news reporter on issues such as the corruption of a local official, let's say, or what is actually happening in their city, what is happening in their country. That is provided now through RFA.

And I wanted to share with you just a couple of observations. Many of us have heard the words of Vaclav Havel and Lech Walesa, Eastern Europeans who were very moved by the broadcasts into their own countries by Radio Free Europe. And whether it's a crackdown on workers at a local factory or news and information about ideas like tolerance, political pluralism, the fact is these messages were heard.

And I remember in the former Yugoslavia talking to a Croatian journalist who had tears in his eyes, and he said there was one country in Eastern Europe where we did not broadcast with Radio Free Europe. That was Yugoslavia.

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And as a result, he told me, we watched what happened in Czechoslovakia as Vaclav Havel was able to do a plebiscite, and the Czech Republic went one way and Slovakia went the other. And the reason he was crying was because he said not one human life was lost in that, and Vaclav Havel had said he had listened to those broadcasts about the importance of political pluralism and self-determination and tolerance, whereas he as a Croatian was listening to Croatian hate radio and Serbian hate radio, and indeed

hate radio from every single ethnic group in that country.

And during his time as a reporter covering those wars, he watched the war with Slovenia spin out of control, and then Croatia, and Bosnia, and the Kosovo war. He watched each of these tragedies, with their tens of thousands of human lives lost. And he said to me something I will never forget. "If only we had had the broadcasts here to better prepare us for what was to come." That is why this work is so important.

And today we do this work in Burma, we do this work in North Korea, in Vietnam, and in China, in all the major dialects. And many of these governments actively work, of course, to try to block RFA transmissions and information into their society. But still the information manages to get in. Maybe not into the main cities at times, but into the rural areas and into the suburban areas.

And frankly, Freedom House, which ranks all of these countries not free, attests to the ability of this information to get through. As one observer has noted, this type of broadcasting irritates authoritarian regimes, inspires democrats, and creates greater space for civil society. So it's no wonder that China attempts to block RFA transmissions, or that Vietnam has heavily jammed the station since its first day.

But RFA has been chipping away at authoritarian regimes. And I will just mention Kim Jong Il and his grip on information in North Korea. I mention it because Congresswoman DIANE WATSON and I went into North Korea. And according to experts today, that grip is not as strong as it once was. And this is one of the reasons. The information cordon that once encircled North Korea, I am going to quote this observer, is now in tatters as information is getting in. And that is backed up by a survey by a prominent think tank which interviews hundreds of North Korean refugees every year. And it finds an ever-increasing percentage, now more than half who fled since 2006, had listened to foreign news regularly, including RFA.

I remember a report we had of one of the Politburo members who said in debate, "If you are not listening to the radio broadcasts, you are like a frog in the well who does not know what is going on in the outside world." And so the harsher the regime, the more the attempt to control information, the more diligent we find our reporters and stringers are at RFA in trying to counter the propaganda that comes from the state.

And with this legislation, Radio Free Asia can better focus its long-term mission of bringing its message of some modicum of humanity, freedom, democracy, respect for the rule of law, creating a space for civil society where it can flourish under the Asian continent's oppressive regimes such as China. And I think if we continue this good effort, and I have listened in and participated in some of the broadcasts

into China, we have a tremendous opportunity to reach a young generation of people who are in desperate need of another side of the story. And those reporters are providing it with RFA.

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

I thank my good friend from California (Mr. ROYCE), the author of the House companion of this bill, for his leadership on this issue.

Today I rise in strong support of the Senate bill, S. 3104, a bipartisan bill that deserves our prompt approval. I want to thank the gentleman from California, who has been working on this issue for a number of years. And as we know, Mr. Speaker, an unfettered and independent press is so vital to the maintenance of liberty that its protection was enshrined in the First Amendment of our Constitution.

Tyranny cannot abide dissent. And the repressive regimes know that they cannot afford to allow the unregulated dissemination of information and ideas. People accustomed to thinking freely and speaking freely cannot be deterred from also living freely. These are the realities that drive our Nation's longstanding commitment to surrogate broadcasting, providing to oppressed societies the kind of news and information that local journalists would supply if they were allowed to operate freely.

We can all recall the important role that Radio Free Europe played in helping us to end the Cold War. For the past 14 years, its younger sibling, Radio Free Asia, has provided critical broadcasting in a neighborhood that contains some of the world's most anti-democratic regimes: North Korea, Burma, China, Vietnam, and Laos. It also broadcasts in important minority languages such as Uyghur, Cantonese, Wu, and dialects of Tibet.

Among all of the freedom broadcasting services of the United States, RFA, Radio Free Asia, is the only one whose authorizing legislation contained a sunset date, which Congress has repeatedly extended. It is high time to remove that sunset and make Radio Free Asia's authorization permanent.

Sadly, the need for Radio Free Asia is not going to end any time soon, Mr. Speaker. Making the authorization permanent, therefore, is an important signal of the United States' commitment, putting those regimes who try so extremely hard to block the Radio Free Asia broadcasts on notice that they cannot wait out our resolve to support freedom of the press in Asia.

In addition, permanent authority makes operational sense, as the recurring sunset has complicated Radio Free Asia's ability to hire long-term staff, to negotiate cost-effective leases and capital agreements. For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, this measure before us deserves our unanimous support.

Let us stand today with the long-suffering people of China, of Tibet, of

North Korea, of Burma, of Vietnam, of Cambodia, and Laos, and against regime-sponsored attempts to restrict the information they receive.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 3140, a bill to permanently authorize Radio Free Asia, and for other purposes. I thank my colleague Senator LUGAR for introducing this important bill that reasserts our commitment to a free press and freedom of speech in Asia and throughout the world.

Freedom of the press is one of our most cherished values and enshrined in our first amendment. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." I believe it is one of the most valuable and fundamental rights written in the Constitution, as it grants us as people the ability to speak truth to tyranny. In the United States we often take this freedom for granted, but in many countries throughout the world it does not exist at all, or exists only on paper and not in practice.

Thus the United States has long sought to expand this freedom throughout the world, promoting free speech and freedom of information in places where governments have strangled their people's ability to speak their minds. Most notably during the Cold War, Radio Free Europe was one of the many tools the United States used to try and reach out to those behind the Iron Curtain, who were deprived of information and whose right to speak their minds freely was severely curtailed. Radio Free Asia, RFA, attempts to do the same for the people of Asia whose freedom of speech and press, particularly in China and North Korea, has been stifled by increasingly restrictive government policies.

The consistent and continued attempts on behalf of these governments to block and jam RFA's broadcasts are a testament to their value and effectiveness. Like a cool breeze drafting through a hot, stifled room, RFA is a breath of fresh air to those who are deprived of information and afraid to speak freely. Creatively using shortwave broadcasts and the Internet, RFA has been able to circumvent many of the restrictive tactics of oppressive governments, often relying on the ingenuity and intelligence of local listeners themselves to spread the word.

But RFA needs more time and more resources to do its job right. It is of paramount importance that Radio Free Asia continue its broadcasts in the future, until its implementation is made obsolete by its own success in promoting freedom of information in the countries it currently serves. According to Freedom House, freedom of the press is in decline almost everywhere in the world, making Radio Free Asia's services that much more vital in reaffirming this Congress' concern for the freedom of people around the globe. I am glad that the Congress has decided to continue the important work of the RFA and to promote freedom to our oppressed brethren in Asia.

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, 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 pass the bill, S. 3104.

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.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE OF GUATEMALA, HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR AFTER TROPICAL STORM AGATHA

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1462) expressing support for the people of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador as they persevere through the aftermath of Tropical Storm Agatha which swept across Central America causing deadly floods and mudslides, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1462

Whereas, on May 29, 2010, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador experienced devastating floods and mudslides brought on by Tropical Storm Agatha;

Whereas Tropical Storm Agatha has left 174 dead and 62,827 families were directly affected in Guatemala;

Whereas Tropical Storm Agatha has left 22 dead and 7,998 in shelters in Honduras;

Whereas Tropical Storm Agatha has left 11 dead and 12,000 in shelters in El Salvador;

Whereas over 2,000 Guatemalans were displaced with little forewarning following the eruption of the Pacaya volcano;

Whereas the combination of Tropical Storm Agatha and the eruption of the Pacaya volcano have devastated Guatemala's landscape leaving behind sinkholes and mudslides across the country;

Whereas, due to recent droughts, erratic rainfall, high food prices, and a sharp drop in remittances, Guatemala has suffered severe food insecurity that will increase in the wake of Tropical Storm Agatha;

Whereas Guatemalan officials are estimating that damages will surpass \$475,000,000;

Whereas the loss in the agriculture sector could be close to \$18,500,000 in Honduras;

Whereas 380 schools have been affected in El Salvador;

Whereas critical infrastructure relating to water and sanitation has been destroyed;

Whereas the United States has provided relief for the victims of Tropical Storm Agatha by deploying United States Southern Command support helicopters and frigates for assistance with the transport of food, water, and emergency supplies;

Whereas countries and organizations around the world have contributed millions of dollars in medicines and aid, and humanitarian aid agencies in the United States and around the world are mobilizing to provide much needed assistance to the relief and recovery efforts; and

Whereas Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador have begun the process of recovering from these natural disasters: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) mourns the loss of life and expresses solidarity with all people affected by Tropical Storm Agatha;