

Poverty, corrupt police forces, gang violence, political corruption, and economic instability exacerbate living conditions in the Northern Triangle.

Homicide rates are extremely high for Central American countries; El Salvador is leading the way with a rate of 82.84 per 100,000 persons.

Salvadorans, Hondurans, and Guatemalans leave their homes in search of physical security, democracy, freedom, and civil liberties.

They look toward the U.S. as a beacon of hope and prosperity, often traveling miles while battling hardships and risks to pursue the American Dream.

This bill seeks to combat corruption among political institutions in the region to reinforce security and lead to the development of civil society.

We must address the origins and the structural causes of migration to address the issues that lead to mass migration to our southern borders.

Our agencies are unequipped and are incapable of meeting the demand of sheltering and processing immigrants who arrive at our ports of entry.

Our nation's security depends on the stability of the Northern Triangle.

We must act to ensure that the countries in this region return to a functioning democracy, free of corruption and violence.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2615 to assist in reestablishing a democratic and peaceful societies in the countries of the Northern Triangle.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2615, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1500

USAID BRANDING MODERNIZATION ACT

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2744) to authorize the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to prescribe the manner in which programs of the agency are identified overseas, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2744

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “USAID Branding Modernization Act”.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION FOR BRANDING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is authorized to prescribe, as appropriate, the use of logos or other insignia of the USAID Identity, or the use of additional or substitute markings including the United States flag, to appro-

priately identify, including as required by section 641 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2401), overseas programs administered by the Agency.

(b) AUDIT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the United States Agency for International Development shall submit to Congress an audit of compliance with relevant branding and marketing requirements of the Agency by implementing partners funded by the USAID, including any requirements prescribed pursuant to the authorization under subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. McCaul) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2744.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me start by thanking my friend from Texas once again, the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. McCaul, for his hard work on this measure. I am glad to be a cosponsor.

Mr. Speaker, our development efforts around the world accomplish so much.

Whether it is helping build a road that links a small village to a trade hub, working with governments to make their justice systems more transparent and accountable, assisting communities to get clean drinking water, or expanding access to broadband internet in rural areas, American development work is making differences you can see in people's lives. It is also projecting our country's character of compassion and generosity.

So when I travel around the world and I see the USAID logo—it is that recognizable seal of two hands clasped in friendship—on the front door of a new school or a wastewater treatment facility or a pallet of food on its way to refugees, it makes me proud. It really does.

The people benefiting from that assistance should know where it is coming from, too. We should signal to the world our commitment to development is a core pillar of America's global engagement.

This legislation reaffirms the obligation to brand our foreign assistance while continuing to provide needed flexibility to ensure we are not putting our partners or aid recipients at risk. It requires a long overdue audit to ensure that USAID projects are appropriately branded in the field.

This is something Mr. McCaul and I have been working on closely together.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter on this issue that Mr. McCaul

and I wrote to the USAID administrator, our former House colleague, MARK GREEN.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, July 15, 2019.

Mr. MARK GREEN,
Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington, DC.

DEAR ADMINISTRATOR GREEN: We write to you today to reiterate the Congressional intent behind HR 2744, the USAID Branding Modernization Act, which we have introduced in the 116th Congress.

Providing foreign assistance around the world demonstrates the generosity of Americans, and furthers our foreign policy objectives. Branding foreign assistance is always the first preference, to ensure that those receiving assistance know that support comes from the American people. As such, the Congress believes, and has affirmed, that in general, foreign assistance provided using U.S. taxpayer dollars should be branded, as appropriate. This demonstrates U.S. commitment to assisting those in need, be it through food aid after a drought, job training to empower women entrepreneurs, or life-saving vaccines to eradicate polio.

That said, Congress acknowledges the need for discretion and flexibility in branding in some instances to ensure the safety and security of both implementing partners and beneficiaries. This bill in no way amends that understanding, or any authorities, which would impact the ability or need for USAID to provide branding waivers or exemptions as appropriate, with input from and ongoing communication with implementing partners. As referenced in the legislation, 22 USC 2401 asserts that programs “shall be identified appropriately overseas”. Federal Register rules and regulations under 2 CFR Part 700 provide waivers to ensure that branding does not put partners or beneficiaries at risk, and USAID internal guidance regarding marking and branding policies remain at the discretion of the Agency.

Finally, this bill requires an audit, conducted by the Inspector General for USAID, on the compliance with relevant branding and marking requirements. This is not intended to re-litigate branding decisions regarding waivers or exemptions that are already in place. Rather, this audit is intended to provide a more comprehensive picture for USAID, its implementing partners, and Congress, of the challenges to successful branding and marking, and how to better communicate, provide guidance, and implement branding and marking requirements.

We appreciate USAID's ongoing efforts to save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises, to advance a free, peaceful, and prosperous world. We look forward to continuing to work with USAID on effective foreign assistance.

Sincerely,

ELIOT L. ENGEL,

Chairman.

MICHAEL T. McCaul,

Ranking Member.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am glad we will be moving ahead with this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCaul. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Agency for International Development does an incredible job of providing life-saving humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people all around the globe.

I want to take this opportunity to commend our former colleague, Administrator Mark Green, for his hard work at USAID. I have had many constructive conversations with him since becoming the lead Republican on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and I look forward to many more. This bill is actually his idea.

While the primary goal of such assistance is to save the lives of people in desperate need, we also want to ensure the recipients know that it is a gift from the people of the United States of America.

We hear a lot about the need to maximize America's "soft power." There is no better way to win hearts and minds than by saving lives, feeding hungry children, and helping impoverished populations.

This is why I introduced the Branding Modernization Act, together with Chairman ENGEL.

While this bill places no mandates on USAID and maintains the Administrator's flexibility, it does empower him to brand all of our humanitarian assistance.

It also expands the tools and logos available to the Administrator for implementing a comprehensive branding strategy.

Finally, it requires an audit by the agency's inspector general to ensure that our personnel are complying with branding regulations.

This bill represents smart diplomacy, good governance, and the true compassion of the American people. I believe it deserves our unanimous support.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ENGEL again for working with me, as usual, on this bill as well as many others, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, let me again thank my friend, Ranking Member McCaul, for his leadership on this bill.

One of the things that makes American foreign policy unique is that when we are at our best, our values are at the center of everything we do. I think one of the most important American values is that we are a generous and big-hearted country. We invest in development because development and security go hand-in-hand, but also because it is the right thing to do. It allows more people to live fuller, healthier, more prosperous lives.

We should take credit for that. We should let people know it is the United States extending a hand of friendship and assistance. That is the goal that this bill is pursuing.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to support this bill, I encourage all Members to do the same, and 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. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2744.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CONDEMNING ATTACK ON THE AMIA JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER IN BUENOS AIRES IN JULY 1994

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 441) a resolution condemning the attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in July 1994 and expressing the concern of the United States regarding the continuing, 25-year-long delay in the resolution of this case and encouraging accountability for the attack.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 441

Whereas, 25 years ago, on July 18, 1994, 85 innocent people were killed and 300 were wounded when the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA) was bombed in Buenos Aires, Argentina;

Whereas, 2 years earlier, Hezbollah operatives also blew up the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, killing 29 civilians;

Whereas it is reported that considerable evidence links the attack to the terrorist group Hezbollah, which is based in Lebanon, supported by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, and sponsored by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran;

Whereas the 25 years since the bombing have been marked by a failure to bring those responsible, including Iranian officials and their Hezbollah proxies, to justice;

Whereas, in September 2004, Alberto Nisman was appointed as the Special Prosecutor in charge of the 1994 AMIA bombing investigation;

Whereas, on October 25, 2006, Argentine prosecutors Alberto Nisman and Marcelo Martínez Burgos formally accused the Government of Iran of directing the bombing, and the Hezbollah militia of carrying it out;

Whereas Ibrahim Hussein Berro, a member of the terrorist group Hezbollah, was identified as the AMIA bomber;

Whereas, in November 2006, an Argentine judge issued arrest warrants for Iranian nationals Ali Fallahijan (former Iranian intelligence minister), Mohsen Rabbani (former Iranian cultural attaché), Ahmad Reza Asghari (former Iranian diplomat), Ahmad Vahidi (former Iranian defense minister), Ali Akbar Velayati (former Iranian foreign minister), Mohsen Rezaee (former chief commander of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps), Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (former President of Iran), Hadi Soleimanpour (former Iranian Ambassador to Argentina), and Lebanese national Imad Fayez Moughnieh who were named as suspects in the AMIA bombing;

Whereas, in November 2007, INTERPOL voted to put the following suspects in the 1994 AMIA attack on its most wanted list—Ali Fallahijan, Mohsen Rabbani, Ahmad

Reza Asghari, Ahmad Vahidi, and Mohsen Razaee from Iran and Imad Fayez Moughnieh from Lebanon;

Whereas Interpol currently has 4 red alerts in place in relation to the AMIA attack;

Whereas, on January 13, 2015, prosecutor Alberto Nisman alleged in a complaint that then-Argentinian President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner and then-Minister of Foreign Relations Hector Timerman conspired to cover up Iranian involvement in the 1994 terrorist bombing, and reportedly agreed to negotiate immunity for Iranian suspects and help get their names removed from the INTERPOL list;

Whereas prosecutor Alberto Nisman was scheduled to present his new findings to the Argentinian Congress on January 19, 2015;

Whereas prosecutor Alberto Nisman was found shot in the head in his apartment in Buenos Aires on January 18, 2015;

Whereas the investigation of the AMIA bombing has been marked by judicial misconduct;

Whereas, in March 2019, an Argentine court handed down convictions and sentences, finding that the judge, prosecutors, and head of the Argentina's secret services—the individuals responsible for investigating the AMIA bombing, Argentina's deadliest terrorist attack—had interfered with the inquiry, diverting the investigation away from the truth;

Whereas former Federal judge Juan José Galeano was handed down a 6-year conviction by the court, which will not be enforced until the sentence is confirmed by a higher tribunal;

Whereas former State Intelligence Secretariat (SIDE) intelligence head Hugo Anzorreguy was handed a prison sentence of 54 months;

Whereas Carlos Telleldín, a used car dealer who sold the van that contained the bomb used to attack AMIA and received a bribe to incriminate police officers falsely, was sentenced to 42 months in jail; and

Whereas no Iranian suspects for the AMIA bombing have yet faced prosecution: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reiterates its strongest condemnation of the 1994 attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and honors the victims of this heinous act;

(2) expresses its sympathy to the relatives of the victims, who have waited a quarter of a century without justice for the loss of their loved ones, and may have to wait even longer for justice to be served;

(3) underscores the concern of the United States regarding the continuing, 25-year-long delay in the proper resolution of this case; and

(4) expresses strong support for accountability for this attack, including against those Iranian and Hezbollah operatives who were responsible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 441, a resolution condemning the attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in July 1994, 25 years ago this month.

I have been to that community center. It is a vibrant community center.