

more are being monitored. Across the globe, more than 90,000 are sick and 3,000 have died.

Rhode Islanders and all Americans deserve a strong, effective, and fully funded response to this health crisis. That is why the House will vote this week on an emergency appropriations bill that addresses the scale and seriousness of the coronavirus epidemic. This bill will ensure public health officials have the resources they need right now.

It is critical that the Senate send it to the President's desk as soon as the House acts, and, for his part, the President needs to stop calling this situation a hoax. This isn't about him; it is about protecting the American people. When the bill gets to his desk, he should sign it and then step aside and let the scientists, the doctors, and the public health experts do their jobs.

This is no time for politics. It is about keeping the American people safe. The House will do our job. The President should start doing his.

AMERICA WILL ADAPT TO MEET CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH CORONAVIRUS

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, as compared to other historic viruses and outbreaks in recent years, the coronavirus, so far, is a lesser threat.

Let's compare it to H1N1, also known as the swine flu of 2009. The CDC has estimated that approximately 60 million people in the U.S. contracted H1N1 during that 2009 outbreak, leading to the death of around 12,000 Americans.

Even more alarming, during this current 2019-2020 flu season, approximately 18,000 people, unfortunately, have died as a result of the more conventional flu. Currently, in the U.S., there are 105 confirmed cases of coronavirus, resulting in the unfortunate death of six people so far. We expect these numbers will go up.

While this outbreak is, indeed, a problem, the CDC, not politicians, continue to claim that the American public are unlikely to be exposed to coronavirus.

During the Republican majority in Congress, we made several strategic investments in key health resources to prevent the spread of a virus like this one, including a 24 percent increase in CDC funding and a 70 percent increase in infectious disease response.

So, instead of sounding an alarm, I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to continue to remind Americans that our country will adapt to the challenges coming.

For people, individually: Work on limiting your own risk by washing your hands frequently.

HONORING KATY CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, with Easter around the corner, I rise to heap praise on an icon in Katy, Texas, in Fort Bend County. Her name is Deysi Crespo. She is the CEO of Katy Christian Ministries, otherwise known as KCM.

KCM has one holy mission: transforming life through God's grace and generosity of the community.

KCM has 52 member churches, partners. Deysi started there as a volunteer in the resale shop in 2007.

Deysi is a living, breathing example that the American Dream comes through faith. At 7 years old, she left rampant poverty in Central America for Katy, Texas. After a few months, she no longer hungered for food.

Deysi had a building hunger inside of her body to end poverty for others and intervene in crisis with God's love. The rest is history. Under Deysi's leadership, KCM earned a four-star rating from Charity Navigator and the Hurricane Harvey Response Award from the Houston Food Bank.

If you are in Katy this March, say hola, or hello, to Deysi. She will be at the Katy Charity Bubble Run. That is set on March 28 in Katy, Texas, and Deysi guarantees the love of Christ will be waiting for all who come to the Bubble Run.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 3, 2020.

HON. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 3, 2020, at 9:21 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 5671.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

CONDEMNING CONTINUED VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS BY ARMED GROUPS IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 387) condemning continued violence against civilians by armed groups in the Central African Republic and supporting efforts to achieve a lasting political solution to the conflict, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 387

Whereas the overthrow of the Government of the Central African Republic in March 2013 and subsequent violence has led to the proliferation of multiple armed groups, which have been responsible for widespread atrocities based on perceived or actual religious or ethnic identities;

Whereas the United Nations (UN) concluded in 2014 that the Central African Republic's minority Muslim community had been the target of ethnic cleansing, and multiple UN officials have warned of a risk of genocide;

Whereas, according to the United Nations, an estimated 2,900,000 people are in need of humanitarian assistance, over 590,000 Central Africans are refugees in neighboring countries, and over 640,000 people are displaced, most of whom are women and children;

Whereas armed groups continue to engage in gross human rights abuses, violence, pillaging, and the illicit trafficking of natural resources such as ivory, gold, cattle, and diamonds;

Whereas armed groups have intentionally targeted personnel from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), aid workers, and journalists, making the Central African Republic one of the world's most dangerous operating environments for humanitarian actors;

Whereas the Central African Republic has made significant progress toward democracy by conducting democratic elections despite the lack of security around electoral polling stations and some irregularities, and inaugurated President Faustin-Archange Touadéra in March 2016;

Whereas the establishment of the Special Criminal Court in June 2017 and the creation of more than 1,000 peace committees across the country demonstrate a genuine commitment to justice and accountability on the part of the people of the Central African Republic; and

Whereas, since 2013, the United States has been the largest single donor to the humanitarian response in the Central African Republic, promoted peace and social cohesion, supported the deployment of MINUSCA, enacted sanctions against senior leaders of armed groups, and provided life-saving assistance to communities in the Central African Republic affected by the crisis: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes that strong United States leadership and support for the stability of the Central African Republic is necessary for the security and future stability of the region;

(2) condemns violence against civilians, humanitarian workers, journalists, faith leaders, and United Nations peacekeepers by all armed actors operating within the Central African Republic;

(3) welcomes the signing of the Khartoum Peace Agreement in February 2019 and urges all parties to adhere to the terms of the agreement, including participating in efforts to disarm and demobilize combatants, to advance long-term sustainable peace for the citizens of the Central African Republic;

(4) supports continued efforts by the Government of the Central African Republic, with support from the African Union and United Nations, to combat the threat posed by armed groups;

(5) calls on the international community, including all members of the United Nations Security Council as well as neighboring countries, to support constructive efforts toward peace in the Central African Republic;

(6) calls on the Government of the Central African Republic to ensure that all state security forces adhere to civilian command, refrain from human rights abuses, and sever any and all links to armed groups except in the framework of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration under the Khartoum Agreement; and

(7) urges the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in coordination with other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to—

(A) provide life-saving humanitarian and development assistance to support vulnerable populations and build local capacity to support sustainable agricultural production in the Central African Republic;

(B) support the efforts of local communities, nongovernmental organizations, and the Government of the Central African Republic to prevent atrocities along religious and ethnic lines, including through programs that focus on peacebuilding, reconciliation, human rights, good and inclusive governance, justice, security sector reform, and the implementation of the Khartoum Agreement;

(C) work with the United Nations, African Union, and regional governments and organizations to enforce existing sanctions related to the Central African Republic and address cross-border flows of illicit arms, natural resources, and armed groups;

(D) ensure that United States assistance is well-coordinated among agencies and with other donors to maximize diplomatic, development, and defense resources to support peace, stability, and the Central African Republic's journey to self-reliance;

(E) undertake efforts to prioritize mutual interests between the United States and the Central African Republic and take steps to position the United States as a leader working with the Government of the Central African Republic in the areas of reconstruction, postconflict remediation, and institution building, as well as taking steps to combat Russian influence in the country and region;

(F) support rehabilitation and reintegration programs led by the Central African Republic Government, nongovernmental organizations, and regional government partners for children, youth, and adults that have been demobilized from armed groups, including the Lord's Resistance Army;

(G) ensure that the United States Embassy in Bangui, including USAID presence, and the Department of State Africa Bureau have adequate staffing and funding to carry out their programs and objectives; and

(H) ensure that the United Nations Multi-dimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic has adequate resources, including personnel, temporary forward operating bases, and force enabling equipment, to carry out its civilian protection mandate and more effectively project the presence of the United Nations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CURTIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CICILLINE. 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. Res. 387.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Rhode Island?

There was no objection.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 387 and thank my colleagues for their support of this bipartisan resolution.

As the gentleman knows, the destabilizing overthrow of the Government of the Central African Republic, or CAR, in March 2013 has led to a proliferation of armed rebel groups which have been responsible for widespread atrocities based on religious or ethnic identities during this bloody conflict. In 2014, the U.N. concluded that CAR's minority Muslim community had been the target of ethnic cleansing, and multiple U.N. officials have warned of a risk of genocide.

These armed groups continue to engage in gross human rights abuses, including violence, pillaging, and the illicit trafficking of natural resources such as ivory, gold, cattle, and diamonds.

However, despite the lack of security around electoral polling stations, CAR has made significant progress toward democracy by conducting democratic elections, ultimately inaugurating President Touadera in March of 2016. Yet, armed groups still control much of the country's territory, ethnic and religious violence occurs frequently, and the central government still struggles with basic security and governance.

Despite these challenges, the central government and armed groups signed a landmark peace deal in February of 2019 that lays out a path toward a unity government, demobilization of nonstate combatants, and the creation of interim-mixed security units compromising security forces and former rebels.

The United States has a long history supporting CAR, establishing diplomatic relations in 1960 following their independence from France. U.S. bilateral aid to CAR totaled \$34 million in fiscal year 2018, including \$18 million in food aid, \$13 million in security aid, and \$3 million in development aid.

Despite this, the United Nations estimates 2.9 million people need humanitarian assistance, and over 640,000 people have been displaced due to this conflict, most of whom are children and women.

The United States has played an important role in brokering peace in

CAR, and is currently the largest international donor, helping to strengthen the central government, increase security, and maintain peace.

Actors, such as Russia, have engaged in CAR in ways that are detrimental to American interests; therefore, it is vital that we continue to support the people of CAR in achieving peace and a democratic transition. That is why I am proud to sponsor this legislation, to reiterate that Congress and the United States Government is committed to achieving peace in CAR.

Specifically, this resolution condemns violence against civilians, humanitarian workers, journalists, faith leaders, and United Nations peacekeepers by all armed groups operating within the Central African Republic.

It welcomes the signing of the Khartoum Peace Agreement in February 2019 and urges all parties to adhere to the terms of the agreement.

It calls on the international community, including all members of the United Nations Security Council as well as neighboring countries, to continually reassess and implement strategies that demonstrate clear progress in achieving peace in the Central African Republic.

It calls on the Government of the Central African Republic to ensure that all state security forces adhere to civilian command, refrain from human rights abuses, and sever any and all links to armed groups, except in the framework of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration under the peace agreement.

It urges the State Department and USAID to take steps to ensure that American assistance programs support local sustainable agriculture, other development efforts to create human well-being, and peace in CAR.

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

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution to condemn continued violence against civilians by armed groups in the Central African Republic and supporting efforts to achieve lasting peace in the country.

I want to thank my colleagues, Congressman CICILLINE and Congressman FORTENBERRY, for introducing this resolution and for their commitment to this important issue.

Since the fighting began in 2013, thousands of civilians have been killed. Over half of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance, and more than 1 million people have been displaced from their homes.

Still, today, most of the country remains under armed group control, and the democratically elected government continues to struggle to project any state authority. The humanitarian suffering is dire.

I am also deeply concerned with the rapid increase in Russian activity across the country. AFRICOM Commander General Townsend testified

last month that Russia is deploying paramilitary contractors, extracting minerals, and attempting to buy influence in the Central African Republic. This includes the notorious Wagner Group mercenaries responsible for horrible atrocities in Libya and Syria. Russian malign activity in Central African Republic is further destabilizing this fragile and war-torn country.

This resolution urges all parties to fully adhere to the terms of the February 2019 peace agreement and cease attacks on civilians. It also calls on the international community to increase engagement to support efforts to implement the peace agreement and combat Russian malign influence. I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan resolution.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I again want to thank my colleagues for their hard work to highlight the situation in the Central African Republic.

The U.S. is both the largest donor of humanitarian assistance and largest contributor to U.N. peacekeeping operations in the Central African Republic. Our assistance provides critical food and medicine to vulnerable and remote populations. However, the critical needs remain, and we must urge our partners to do more. Supporting lasting peace and efforts to stabilize the Central African Republic is in the U.S. interest.

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, I once again thank the chairman and ranking member for their support and urge passage of this resolution.

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

□ 1230

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 387, 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.

Mr. CICILLINE. 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.

MALALA YOUSAFZAI SCHOLARSHIP ACT

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4508) to expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4508

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 “Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) In late 2008, Malala Yousafzai began making the case for access to education for women and girls despite objections from the Pakistani Taliban. On October 9, 2012, Malala was shot in the head by Pakistani Taliban on her way home from school.

(2) In 2013, Malala Yousafzai and her father Ziauddin Yousafzai co-founded the Malala Fund. The Malala Fund works to secure twelve years of free, safe, and quality education for all girls. Completion of a full twelve-year cycle of primary and secondary education ensures a pipeline of girls able to pursue higher education.

(3) On July 12, 2013, Malala delivered a speech before the United Nations General Assembly calling for expanded access to education for women and girls across the globe. She said, “[L]et us wage a glorious struggle against illiteracy, poverty, and terrorism. Let us pick up our books and our pens. They are the most powerful weapons . . . Education is the only solution.”

(4) On October 10, 2014, Malala Yousafzai became the co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for her “struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education”.

(5) According to the United Nations 2016 Global Education Monitoring Report, more than 130 million girls worldwide are out of school. 15 million girls of primary-school age will never enter a classroom. As of 2016, at least 500 million adult women across the globe are illiterate.

(6) According to the World Bank, “Girls’ education is a strategic development priority. Better educated women tend to be healthier, participate more in the formal labor market, earn higher incomes, . . . marry at a later age, and enable better health care and education for their children, should they choose to become mothers. All these factors combined can help lift households, communities, and nations out of poverty.”

(7) In 2015, all United Nations Member States, including the United States, adopted quality education, including access to higher education, and gender equality as sustainable development goals to be attained by 2030. One of the education goal targets is to “ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university”.

(8) In January 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton stated, “We will open the doors of education to all citizens, but especially to girls and women . . . We are doing all of these things because we have seen that when women and girls have the tools to stay healthy and the opportunity to contribute to their families’ well-being, they flourish and so do the people around them.”

(9) In February 2019, the White House launched the Women’s Global Development and Prosperity Initiative to advance women’s economic empowerment across the globe and reach more than 100,000 women.

(10) The World Economic Forum ranks Pakistan the second lowest among all countries in the world evaluated for gender equality. On educational attainment for women, Pakistan is ranked the tenth lowest.

(11) In Pakistan, the rate of higher education enrollment beyond high school for girls and women is just 9 percent as reported by the World Bank. The global rate is 40 percent. Less than 6 percent of women 25 and older in Pakistan attain a bachelor’s degree or equivalent as of 2016.

(12) Factors such as poverty, early marriage, disability, ethnicity, and religion can contribute to the lack of educational opportunities for women in marginalized communities.

(13) According to the World Bank, “Higher education benefits both individuals and society. Economic returns for college graduates are the highest in the entire educational system—an average 17 percent increase in earnings per year of schooling as compared with 10 percent for primary school.”

(14) The United States provides critical foreign assistance to Pakistan’s education sector to improve access to and the quality of basic and higher education. Since 2010, the United States Agency for International Development (referred to in this Act as “USAID”) has awarded more than 6,000 scholarships for young women to receive higher education in Pakistan.

(15) The Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program administered by USAID awards scholarships to academically talented, financially needy Pakistani students from all regions, including female students from rural areas of the country, to pursue bachelor’s or master’s degrees at participating Pakistani universities.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) every individual should have the opportunity to pursue a full cycle of primary, secondary, and higher education;

(2) every individual, regardless of gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, or religion should have the opportunity to pursue an education without fear of discrimination;

(3) educational exchanges promote institutional linkages between the United States and Pakistan; and

(4) recipients of scholarships referred to in section 4 should commit to improving their local communities.

(b) CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES IN PAKISTAN.—Congress encourages the Department of State and USAID to continue their support for initiatives led by the Government of Pakistan and civil society that promote education in Pakistan, especially education for women, in accordance with USAID’s 2018 Education Policy.

SEC. 4. MERIT AND NEEDS-BASED SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The USAID Administrator shall award at least 50 percent of the number of scholarships under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program (referred to in this Act as the “Program”) to women for each of the calendar years 2020 through 2022.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—

(1) CRITERIA.—The scholarships available under subsection (a) may only be awarded in accordance with other scholarship eligibility criteria already established by USAID.

(2) ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES.—Scholarships authorized under subsection (a) shall be awarded for a range of disciplines to improve the employability of graduates and to meet the needs of the scholarship recipients.

(3) OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS.—The USAID Administrator shall make every effort to award 50 percent of the scholarships available under the Program to Pakistani women.

(c) LEVERAGING INVESTMENT.—The USAID Administrator shall, to the greatest extent practicable, consult with and leverage investments by the Pakistani private sector