

the post of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. She is a fearless leader, an advocate for democracy around the world, and a steadfast friend of the United States.

This resolution recognizes the 30th anniversary of her election as the first female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Margaret Thatcher served as Prime Minister of Great Britain for 11 years, from 1979 to 1990. At the time of her resignation, she was the longest continuously serving Prime Minister of the United Kingdom since 1827.

This resolution pays tribute to her remarkable professional achievements. In addition to being the only woman to have ever held the post of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, she was also leader of the Conservative Party for 15 years, from 1975 to 1990, and was the only woman to ever hold that post.

In the 20th century, she was the only Prime Minister to win three consecutive terms, a testament to her bold and tenacious leadership. This resolution also recognizes Prime Minister Thatcher's dedicated work in promoting individual rights and free markets throughout the world.

□ 1645

During her time in office, Prime Minister Thatcher fostered the dawning of a new distinctive type of politics called "Thatcherism," which emphasized individual responsibility and fiscal and social policies.

When she came into office, the state of the United Kingdom's economy was in deep despair. There were pickets; there were strikes; there were food shortages; pregnant women were denied medical services and the country had double-digit inflation. Margaret Thatcher represented a literal end to socialized government and the re-institution of the free market philosophy.

Through plain speaking and sheer determination, she persuaded city after city to contract out public services to private companies, saving taxpayers \$30 billion every year. Company by company, she denationalized the entire economy. Family by family, she taught the nation the importance of living within their means. What a novel concept.

During her tenure, 3 million families moved from public housing and became homeowners under her Right-to-Buy program. Homeownership under her administration jumped from 53 percent to 71 percent.

This resolution also recognizes Margaret Thatcher's robust and principled approach to foreign policy during the long Cold War. Prime Minister Thatcher and President Ronald Reagan were key forces in the collapse of communism under the former Soviet Union. As a matter of fact, in 1976, Prime Minister Thatcher delivered such a bold speech against communism in the Soviet Union that the Soviet Union Army's newspaper started calling her the "Iron Lady," and it stuck.

The Iron Lady helped bring down the Iron Curtain, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, this resolution acknowledges the special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom fostered by Prime Minister Thatcher. Under her direction, the United States and the United Kingdom worked to overcome communism, encourage free markets around the world, curb terrorism, and promote democratic and individualistic values.

My grandmother used to tell me that "there was nothing more powerful than a woman who had made up her mind," and my grandmother was right. Margaret Thatcher is one of those remarkable women who has led a remarkable life, characterized by courage, determination, intellectual integrity, and she had made up her mind.

She has not only inspired women all over the world to aspire towards positions of leadership, she has inspired an entire generation to promote policies that value economic freedom and individual responsibility.

I am proud to be the sponsor of this resolution today.

And that's just the way it is.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LYNCH). 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. 378, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. POE of Texas. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXPRESSING NEED FOR CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN BOSNIA

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 171) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives on the need for constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the importance of sustained United States engagement in partnership with the European Union (EU), as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 171

Whereas a brutal conflict marked by aggression and ethnic cleansing, including the commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, was brought to an end by the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (commonly referred to as the "Dayton Peace Accords"), which was agreed to at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio, on November 21, 1995, and signed in Paris, France, on December 14, 1995;

Whereas in the 13 years since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have worked in partnership with the international community to achieve considerable progress in building a peaceful and democratic society based on the rule of law, respect for human rights, and a free market economy;

Whereas political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina have agreed to significant reforms of public administration and broadcasting, the creation of state-level law enforcement and judicial institutions, the establishment of a unified armed services and Ministry of Defense, and the creation of an Indirect Taxation Authority;

Whereas the United States has continued to support the sovereignty, legal continuity, and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina within its internationally recognized borders as well as the equality of the three constituent peoples and others within a united, multi-ethnic country in accordance with the Dayton Peace Accords;

Whereas the full incorporation of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Euro-Atlantic community is in the national interest of the United States and important for the stabilization of southeastern Europe;

Whereas Bosnia and Herzegovina committed to the shared values of democracy, security, and stability by joining the Partnership for Peace program of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in December 2006;

Whereas NATO recognized Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress in achieving political and defense reforms by inviting the country to begin an Intensified Dialogue at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008;

Whereas Bosnia and Herzegovina took the first step on the road toward European Union (EU) membership by signing a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) in June 2008;

Whereas NATO successfully preserved peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords through its Stabilization Force (SFOR), which was succeeded by a European Union Force (EUFOR) in December 2004;

Whereas the Office of the High Representative (OHR) has similarly promoted peace and stability by facilitating implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Peace Accords, including through use of the extensive powers given it by the international Peace Implementation Council (PIC), with the goal of transitioning to a European Union Special Representative (EUSR) at the appropriate time;

Whereas, these notable accomplishments notwithstanding, the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to face significant challenges in their efforts to progress toward Euro-Atlantic integration;

Whereas the Dayton Peace Accords included many compromises imposed by the need for quick action to preserve human life that have hindered efforts to develop efficient and effective political institutions;

Whereas the Council of Europe's Venice Commission has concluded that the current constitutional arrangements of Bosnia and Herzegovina are neither efficient nor rational, and that the state-level institutions need to become more effective and democratic if the country is to move toward EU membership;

Whereas the "April package" of reforms, agreed upon by five major political parties in 2006, failed to achieve the requisite two-thirds majority in parliament;

Whereas in February 2008, the PIC stipulated five objectives (resolution of state property, resolution of defense property,

completion of Brcko Final Award, fiscal sustainability, and entrenchment of rule of law) and two conditions (signing of SAA with the EU and a "positive assessment" by the PIC) that must be met before the OHR is closed; and

Whereas in March 2009, the PIC determined that Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet met the five objectives and two conditions that will determine when the OHR should be closed and oversight power transferred to the EUSR: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) it is increasingly urgent that Bosnia and Herzegovina work toward the creation of an efficient and effective state able to meet its domestic and international obligations with more functional institutions, including a state government capable of making self-sustaining reforms and fulfilling European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) requirements;

(2) any agreement on constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina should take as its basis the Dayton Peace Accords, advance the principles of democracy and tolerance, rectify provisions that conflict with the European Charter of Human Rights, include the general public in the process, provide the conditions to enable economic development and the creation of a single economic space, and be consistent with the goal of EU membership;

(3) continued efforts should be made domestically and at the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY) to achieve justice for victims of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, as well as to promote reconciliation among ethnic groups;

(4) the United States should continue to provide assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina to build effective state-level law enforcement and judicial institutions that can combat and investigate international terrorism, organized crime, and corruption;

(5) the United States should appoint a Special Envoy to the Balkans who can work in partnership with the EU and political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina to facilitate reforms at all levels of government and society, while also assisting the political development of other countries in the region;

(6) the Office of the High Representative (OHR) should not be closed until the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) can definitively determine that Bosnia and Herzegovina has met the five objectives and two conditions;

(7) the EU should carefully consider any future plans for the reduction or redeployment of the European Union Force (EUFOR) given the psychological reassurance of security and deterrence of violence provided by its continued presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and

(8) the United States should work closely with and support the EU in the transition to a European Union Special Representative (EUSR) to ensure that the EUSR has the authority and tools to manage effectively post-OHR Bosnia and Herzegovina, including a clear set of EU candidacy and membership conditions with explicit and objective yardsticks and a precise list of benchmarks to increase the functionality of the Bosnian state to be achieved by constitutional reform.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. 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 gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 171, which calls for constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as sustained American engagement in partnership with the European Union.

In the 13 years since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords brought an end to a brutal conflict, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have worked closely with the international community to make considerable progress in building a peaceful and democratic society that is built upon the rule of law, respect for human rights, and a free market economy.

Within the last year, the country has taken important steps along the path to Euro-Atlantic integration, beginning an intensified dialogue with NATO and signing a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union.

Notwithstanding these notable milestones, there are troubling signs of backsliding as political rhetoric grows confrontational, reforms unravel, and ethnic tensions increase. Bosnia seemingly faces the prospect of stagnation at best, and a return to violent conflict at worst.

While Bosnia's future clearly lies in the Euro-Atlantic community, the country must first develop an efficient and effective state with functioning institutions that are capable of making self-sustaining reforms and managing the responsibilities of EU and NATO membership. H. Res. 171 does not prescribe the types of constitutional reforms that are required. Indeed, such decisions can only be made by the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the United States and the European Union can help create conditions that are conducive to efforts by Bosnian citizens to develop a functional political system.

First, the Peace Implementation Council should remain firm in its commitment to maintain the Office of the High Representative until Bosnia has definitively met the five conditions and two principles. Only then should the office be closed and responsibility transitioned to the EU Special Representative. The recent dialogue among some political leaders that led to the adoption of an agreement on the status of Brcko District was a helpful development. Hopefully, similar progress can be made on state property and other issues.

Second, the European Union should provide Bosnia with a clear set of EU candidacy and membership conditions.

These should include explicit and objective benchmarks regarding constitutional reforms that will increase the functionality of the Bosnian state. The EU should also carefully reconsider its plans for the drawdown or redeployment of its 2,500 European Union force, as the continued presence of those troops deters violence and provides citizens with a psychological reassurance of security.

And, finally, there is a need for sustained, high-level U.S. engagement with the EU on the development and implementation of common policies that will stabilize and strengthen Bosnia and Herzegovina. H. Res. 171 advocates the appointment of a Special Envoy for the Balkans which would signal American commitment to the region. In addition to working directly with political leaders on the ground, this official could seek to develop a consensus among the EU and its member states about the way forward in southeastern Europe.

The visit by Vice President BIDEN to Bosnia, Serbia, and Kosovo next week is an encouraging sign of renewed American interest in the Balkans. As he and other senior officials in the Obama administration were personally involved in efforts to establish peace in the Balkans 13 years ago, they know firsthand the importance of preserving this hard-won stability and the considerable cost of letting it slip away.

Although the United States and the European Union are consumed by other foreign policy priorities, we must not lose sight of our unfinished business in the Balkans or waiver from our commitment to consolidating peaceful progress across Europe.

I strongly support this resolution. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank Chairman BERMAN and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN for bringing House Resolution 171 to the floor. This resolution expresses support for the progress made by the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina toward stability and greater international cohesion.

Bosnia has come a long way in the 14 years since the signing of the so-called "Dayton Accords" that ended the terrible ethnic-based conflict there.

While this short resolution speaks to much that has been accomplished in Bosnia, much work needs to still be done. Some would suggest, for example, that greater constitutional reform within Bosnia is necessary for its future growth and its stability for the progress of democracy and tolerance in that country.

Another important issue confronting the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the burden placed on its economic progress by its extensive bureaucracy that is now in place in that country. That bureaucracy reportedly consumes

a great deal of that small country's revenues, confronting its economy with serious obstacles to growth.

This measure, as considered on the floor today, does include a short statement that was added after agreement by the majority and the minority that I believe makes an important point. Among its resolved clauses, H. Res. 171 now specifically calls for continued assistance to Bosnia to help it investigate al Qaeda activities and those of related networks. That is an important point when we consider the reported increase of Islamic militant extremism in the broader Balkan region. Such reports should serve as a warning that Islamic extremists may be looking at the Balkan region as a potential launching platform for future attacks somewhere else.

I am pleased that the Bosnian Government is working to address important issues such as the reports of the use of Bosnian passports by Islamic militants. I am also pleased by reports that some leaders within the Bosnian Muslim community are combating Islamic extremism and have been strong advocates for peace and reconciliation.

The call for continued support for Bosnia and such important efforts enhances the other important statements this resolution makes with regard to our policy toward Bosnia.

Mr. Speaker, many of us would like to ensure that Bosnia becomes a greater anchor for stability in the Balkans region. This resolution is an important message of encouragement and support for all the people of Bosnia as they seek to promote stability, peace, and prosperity. I support its adoption by the House.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN) will control the time of the gentleman from California.

There was no objection.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 171. I, too, want to thank Chairman BERMAN and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN and their staffs for their time and efforts in bringing this bill to the floor.

I have advocated for increased attention in the Balkans, and especially to the needs of Bosnia Herzegovina, a country with a long, rich tradition of multiethnic communities living and working together. I asked Secretary Clinton about this just a few weeks ago when she appeared before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and I think she, too, agrees that there needs to be renewed attention to this country. I hope this resolution is another step toward U.S. reengagement in the region and offering Bosnia the support that it needs.

This resolution recognizes the need for constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina and highlights the importance of sustained U.S. engagement in partnership with the European Union.

As a founding member and co-chairman of the Congressional Caucus on Bosnia with my colleague, CHRIS SMITH from New Jersey, and having the distinct pleasure of representing a growing, vibrant community of Bosnian-Americans in the St. Louis, Missouri, region, one of the largest communities of Bosnian-Americans in the country, I am pleased to support this resolution.

I especially want to highlight two clauses in this resolution that I think are of particular importance. First, we need to continue our efforts, both here and at the ICTY, to achieve justice for victims of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, as well as to promote reconciliation among ethnic groups.

Secondly, that the appointment of a Special Envoy to the Balkans who can work in partnership with the EU, Bosnia, and other leaders will help redirect the U.S. commitment to the region.

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), ranking member of the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health of the Helsinki Commission and co-Chair of the House Bosnia Caucus.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank my good friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 171, a powerful statement calling for meaningful constitutional reform and strengthened U.S. engagement in Bosnia. I want to thank Chairman BERMAN for authoring this legislation, and I am very proud to be one of the cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution makes all the important points on the need for real constitutional reform. It notes that the Dayton Accords, notwithstanding their merits in stopping the war and the genocide, "included many compromises imposed by the need for quick action to preserve human life that have hindered efforts to develop efficient and effective political institutions."

Everyone involved in the Dayton Accords understood that they were not intended to be more than a tourniquet designed to halt the genocide and to act as a bridge towards good governance and a workable constitution. And the time for meaningful, sustainable and just reform has come.

Importantly the resolution notes the progress Bosnia has made since 1995. And by almost all accounts, that progress is truly remarkable. I visited Bosnia again in July of 2007 and was deeply impressed by the economic and social recovery that has taken place within the past 12 years.

□ 1700

On the constitutional arrangements, Mr. Speaker, the resolution points to the history of strong U.S. support for the "legal continuity and territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina" and notes that the current Dayton-based

constitutional arrangements are "neither efficient nor rational." The resolution praises the value of a "united multiethnic country" and "full incorporation into the Euro-Atlantic community" in stabilizing the Balkans.

Mr. Speaker, efficient and rational arrangements to unite the multiethnic country and enable it to be fully incorporated into NATO and the EU can only mean a major reform that abolishes the "entity" voting system so that the vote of every Bosnian citizen will be of equal weight. Under the current Dayton-based system, only 22 percent of the deputies can block any proposed legislation. And, in fact, this happens all the time. In the past 13 years such a "super-minority" has blocked over 260 bills. To put this number in context, in the same period, the national legislature passed less than 150 laws. Mr. Speaker, this is a serious problem. It is the reason that we are here today talking about constitutional reform in Bosnia.

Mr. Speaker, as chairman or co-chairman for 12 years of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, known around here as the Helsinki Commission, and co-chairman of the Bosnia Caucus with my friend and colleague from Missouri, and chairman of the House Human Rights Committee for 8 years, I've had the opportunity to chair numerous Bosnia hearings and author congressional resolutions on Bosnia, including H. Res. 199 on the Srebrenica genocide.

My most recent trip to Bosnia was in July of 2007, and I joined relatives of those killed, murdered—massacred—in the Srebrenica genocide in a ceremony interring hundreds of the approximately 8,000 Bosnian Muslims who were killed in what the U.N. euphemistically designated to be a "safe haven." It wasn't. The ceremony was solemn, it was holy, and it was numbing. Reis Ceric, the Grand Mufti, gave a very powerful talk, a sermon, to all of those who had gathered. Reis Ceric is a great man of peace and faith, and, I'm honored to say, a good friend. Dr. Haris Silajdzic, the President of Bosnia, is likewise a good friend, and spoke very eloquently about the huge loss of life, the importance of justice as well as about the future. Seeing hundreds of caskets with exhumed victims left an indelible impression on me.

During that visit and after meeting here as well as in Europe with members of the Bosnian community, it has become abundantly clear that while Bosnia needs to move forward, that there needs to be an accounting for the atrocities committed. And to move ahead they need constitutional reform.

Sometimes we get reports or hear that ethnic tensions are rising in Bosnia and that, therefore, the constitutional reform process has to be slowed for a while—put on the back burner. That would be a big mistake. Bosnia is in a position similar to that of Poland,

Romania, and other countries of Eastern Europe in the 1990s. When we debated their admission to NATO, for example, some said that their admission would destabilize the region. They were flat wrong. What could have dangerously destabilized Eastern Europe was continuing uncertainty about whether these countries would join the West or whether they might remain in the Russian sphere of influence. We resolved that uncertainty and further stabilized Eastern Europe by welcoming them to the West.

Likewise, with Bosnia, it's long past time to send a strong, unambiguous signal that Bosnia does not have to remain a country forever preserved in the amber of the Dayton Accords. With this resolution, we invite the Bosnians to reform their constitution, become a one-person, one-vote democracy, and join the Euro-Atlantic community.

Mr. Speaker, our country has played a constructive role in Bosnia through both Democrat and Republican administrations, and I know the Bosnians appreciate that very much. The great majority of them will welcome strengthening our engagement to complete the American legacy of spreading democracy and security in Bosnia.

This is a good resolution, and I urge its passage by all Members of the House.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to state my strong support for House Resolution 171, expressing our support for constitutional reform in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as for U.S. engagement in the Western Balkans region. I want to thank our colleague from California and the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. BERMAN, for introducing this resolution, inviting me to be an original co-sponsor, and working the text through the committee.

This resolution is timely and important. The international community, under U.S. leadership, has invested heavily in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We did so not just for that country's sake, nor just to end the tremendous suffering faced by its people. We did so because the threat it faced in the mid-1990s constituted war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. To have acquiesced to the realities presented on the ground in 1995 would have been to abandon the very principles on which the world is expected to operate. We had the ability to stop that from happening in the Balkans and to make a difference, so we did, through NATO intervention and the negotiation of the Dayton Agreement.

Bosnia's considerable recovery a decade after the conflict has been stalled in recent years, as the additional reforms necessary for Bosnia's European integration are perceived to be a threat to the outdated notions of ethnic exclusivity which were resurrected during the war. It is also a threat to some who currently rely on these notions as the basis for their power and authority.

I believe this resolution makes clear that all the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina—Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats and others—must find a common agreement on how to move forward, but it opposes efforts to block a broad consensus

in order to maintain the status quo. The reforms supported by this resolution are critical to making Bosnia a functional, modern, European state.

This resolution also calls for greater U.S. engagement in Bosnia and throughout the Balkans. European integration is the goal for Bosnia and all the countries of the region. It is not enough, however, to say "here's your goal now find your own way to it." The European Union has done tremendous work in the Balkans, but its own lack of decisiveness leads to mixed signals in the region and undercuts more vigorous efforts to resolve outstanding issues. The United States has a high degree of credibility in the Balkans that can help influence developments in the region but we also must make sure the EU itself stays on course.

This does not mean going back to the days of a heavy U.S. troop presence in the Balkans and significant aid to the countries of the region. The resolution does not call for going back to the 1990s. Instead, the resolution reflects what seems to be an obvious piece of wisdom—namely that a bit more attention now can actually preclude a situation where greater involvement might become a necessity later. This will allow the United States to maintain its strong focus on other regions of the world, as it should, while Europe and its full integration moves forward.

I think the Vice President's current plans to visit Sarajevo, Pristina and Belgrade reflect this wisdom, and I wish his trip to be a successful one that will lead to additional efforts in the future.

As the Co-Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, I have continued to follow the situation in the Western Balkans closely. In early April, the Commission held a hearing on the challenges to the United States and Europe in the region. I would commend to my colleagues the transcript of that hearing, which can be found on the Commission's website, because it makes clear the challenges we face in the Balkans today. While there is little chance of going back to the days of horrific conflict in the Balkans that we saw in the 1990s, there continues to be a need for the peoples of the region to find a way to put the 1990s behind them. That's easier said than done, and we cannot expect people to erase what was obviously such a traumatic period in their lives just because we tell them to do so. With U.S. and European support, however, we can give them the confidence and hope that will enable them to move forward. That benefits everyone. For this reason, I support this resolution.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution.

Over 13 years ago, the U.S. brought an end to Bosnia's war through the Dayton Peace Agreement. This conflict lasted over three years, and was marked by brutal ethnic cleansing and genocide. As a result of this tragic conflict, at least 97,000 people perished, and over 2.3 million people were driven from their homes, creating the greatest flow of refugees in Europe since World War II.

Since this time, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have painstakingly worked with the international community to make progress towards building a peaceful, democratic, and multi-ethnic society based on the rule of law and respect for human rights.

I congratulate Bosnia for joining the Partnership for Peace program of the North Atlantic

Treaty Organization (NATO) in December 2006 and for taking the first step on the road toward European Union (EU) membership by signing a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) in June 2008.

However, despite these important steps forward, challenges remain. The Dayton agreement did its job by ending the war, but left a governmental structure in place that is bloated with bureaucracy and multiple layers of government. To be a functioning state, Bosnia needs to build functional institutions, including state-level institutions that are capable of self-sustaining reforms and fulfilling European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) requirements.

The success of Bosnia is essential to the stability of the region, and the United States cannot afford to ignore this strategically important country. This work must be done in concert with the international community, who should continue to play a role in Bosnia. To this end, the international body charged with implementing the Dayton Peace agreements, known as the Peace Implementation Council or the "PIC", should ensure that the Office of the High Representative (OHR) remains open until the objectives and the conditions set forth by the PIC are met.

As in 1995, resolve and U.S. and European Union involvement are needed in Bosnia and Herzegovina if we are to ensure that we do not get involved in another crisis in the Balkans. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). 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. 171, 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.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. TAUSCHER) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.