

CELEBRATING THE LEAGUE OF
BLACK WOMEN'S ANNUAL LEAD-
ERSHIP CONFERENCE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the League of Black Women on their annual leadership conference which commences today.

The League of Black Women, founded in the 1970's by Dr. Arnita Young Boswell, works today to provide successful, strategic and sustaining leadership experiences for minority professionals and students. With nearly 10,000 members worldwide, the League provides continuing executive-level education. It also provides professional leadership coaching, mentor outreach to school-age students, support of small businesses, and with this conference, exposure of attendees to new relationships in the global corporate community.

More than 200 attendees from major corporations are expected to participate in five days of leadership development forums and executive presentations.

This year's conference theme is "Black Women 2010: Global Ready." As a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, I was honored to receive an invitation to participate in this year's forum titled "Women of Color in the U.S. Intelligence Community" and share insight on the prospects of women in Intelligence rising to higher leadership ranks.

Madam Speaker, the importance of diversity in the intelligence community cannot be overstated. It is one of our greatest strengths, as it is essential to addressing increasingly complex national security threats. We must continue to acquire and maintain an intelligence workforce that mirrors our nation and the world within which we operate.

With the hard work of the League of Black Women and other organizations committed to innovative diversity education and leadership research, we can create and sustain a diverse intelligence workforce.

Again, congratulations to the League of Black Women on this year's conference and look forward to celebrating another successful conference next year.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I was absent from votes which occurred on June 14, 2010. Listed below is how I would have voted if I had been present.

Roll No. 355—H. Res. 1368—supporting the goals of National Dairy Month—"aye";

Roll No. 356—H. Res. 1409—expressing support for designation of June 20, 2010, as "American Eagle Day", and celebrating the recovery and restoration of the bald eagle, the national symbol of the United States—"aye";

Roll No. 357—H.R. 5502—to amend the effective date of the gift card provisions of the Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure Act of 2009—"aye."

THE ISRAELI BLOCKADE AND THE
FLOTILLA

SPEECH OF

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 2010

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for our ally and friend Israel. Israel is a country that has always backed the United States in its efforts to combat extremism, and that has proven throughout its short history that democratic ideals can take root in the most challenging of international neighborhoods.

Mr. Speaker, I, like so many of my colleagues here in the House of Representatives and like so many of my constituents in Sacramento, believe in Israel's right to defend itself. The people of Israel deserve to live without fear of being attacked by a terrorist organization— Hamas—that refuses both to recognize Israel's right to exist and to renounce the use of violence to achieve its objectives. For a number of years, both Israel and Egypt have enforced a blockade of Gaza to keep Hamas from acquiring material to launch rockets into Israel.

The recent tragedy aboard the Mavi Marmara could have been avoided, and should serve as a reminder to us all that our Nation must lead the international community in efforts to forge a lasting peace in the Middle East. My heart goes out to the families of those whose lives were lost, and to those Israeli soldiers who were seriously injured.

Prior to what took place on the Mavi Marmara, five previous ships in the flotilla bound for Gaza were redirected without incident. These five ships were sent to an Israeli port so that the goods they were carrying could be screened for material that could be used to make weapons. Much of their cargo has since been sent to Gaza.

Israel redirected five of the flotilla ships because it has the right—and the responsibility—to prevent Hamas from acquiring materials it uses to fire rockets at Israeli towns. At the same time, Israel must continue doing what it can to ensure that the people of Gaza have access to food and supplies needed to live. Much of the humanitarian material the flotilla was carrying will make it into the hands of innocent civilians in Gaza, just as millions of tons of humanitarian aid have been delivered to Gaza through Israel since the start of the blockade.

Mr. Speaker, what this incident demonstrates more than anything else is that a lasting Middle East peace is needed. For a peace settlement to be reached, the first step is for Hamas to meet a very simple set of preconditions established by the Quartet (the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and Russia).

The Quartet's demands are not complicated: Hamas must join the rest of the international community by recognizing Israel's right to exist, renounce the use of violence, and abide by previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinian people. If Hamas were to do so, the Gaza blockade would end, Israel's security would improve, and peace negotiations could begin in earnest.

In the end, we should use this most recent tragedy as a catalyst to redouble our inter-

national efforts to achieve peace and security in the Middle East. Our objective must not change: we must create a peace that dismantles Hamas's terrorist infrastructure, improves the situation in Gaza, and guarantees the safety and security of innocent Israelis and Palestinians alike. The United States has been attempting to broker just such an agreement via proximity talks for months now.

Furthermore, the United States' goodwill toward the people who live in Gaza is clear. The President's announcement of a \$400 million initiative to improve Gazans' access to drinking water, create jobs, build schools, make affordable housing more accessible, and address critical health and infrastructure needs is just the kind of thing we need to change direction in the Middle East. I strongly support the President's initiative because I want the living conditions for the people of Gaza to improve just as I want living conditions for all people around the world to improve.

As an international community, we all need to examine our various approaches to achieving peace in the Middle East, to see if any calibrations can be made in our strategies that will increase the chances of success. The tragedy on the Mavi Marmara only underscores how urgent it is for the international system to do everything it can to protect the security of Israelis, meet the humanitarian and economic needs of the people in Gaza, and create a permanent peace in this critical part of the world.

I will continue to support Israel's right to defend itself and its citizens. At the same time, I long for the day when Israel and the Palestinians can live peacefully with one another, because that will mean that our efforts to achieve a viable peace agreement in the Middle East have been successful.

AMERICAN JOBS, CLOSING TAX
LOOPHOLES AND PREVENTING
OUTSOURCING ACT

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4213, the American Jobs, Closing Tax Loopholes and Preventing Outsourcing Act. This legislation accelerates our economic recovery by creating or saving over 1 million jobs and by providing emergency aid to American families.

Our economic recovery is thankfully underway. The private sector is working again. Jobs are being added. The task before Congress is finding the right balance between addressing the federal budget deficits and debt and supporting American families still struggling with the lingering effects of the recession.

This bill is a life-preserver for the millions of Americans who are still looking for work. For our youth experiencing record-high unemployment and looking for work this summer, this bill allocates funding that will support 350,000 jobs. It also provides emergency funding for a much-needed unemployment insurance extension through the end of November 2010. In addition to assisting those Americans hardest hit by the recession, these resources will stimulate the economy—every \$1 spent in unemployment benefits generates at least \$1.63 in