

action: the immediate end to violence, rebuilding confidence in the Palestinian Authority by focusing on their ability to prevent terrorism while the Israelis froze settlement activity, and then the resumption of direct negotiations. It took eight years to get this process moving, but look where we are today.

Senator Mitchell has also had a long and storied career, including bringing peace to Ireland. He did not take this job to be one for two. You can bet that he is confident that an answer is within reach, and within reach soon. He is not preparing an eight-year plan.

My third reason for optimism is the Israeli and Palestinian leadership, particularly Bibi and Abu Mazan. Much has been made of Prime Minister Netanyahu's unwieldy coalition and the multitude of small conservative parties which each have vested interests that could sink a peace deal. But after numerous meetings with him, I am convinced that he wants peace.

I have no doubt that Bibi has wanted peace his whole life, as so many do, because the security of his country and his family depends on it. But, like with the Arab leaders, current events have provided an added realpolitik impetus right now. In my last trip, Defense Minister Ehud Barak sketched out why achieving a solution based on two states, living side-by-side in peace and security, is an existential issue for the unique Jewish democracy that exists in Israel. The alternative to lasting security through two states, he said, is the complete annexation of the West Bank and Gaza. The resulting state would either be non-Jewish, because of the size of the Israeli Arab and Palestinian population, or non-democratic, if Palestinians are disenfranchised. I believe Abu Mazan also really wants peace. Like Bibi, though, current conditions give him an unprecedented flexibility for achieving it. The Arab states that have awoken to the danger of Iran now give Abu Mazan, perhaps for the first time, a true green light to come to a negotiated settlement with the Israelis.

The Arab League in the past has acted as a break on negotiations, but now its members appear more eager for a conclusion to the long-running crisis. I am hopeful that when they meet on October 4 to consider what to do about the end of the settlement moratorium, amidst a great deal of angry rhetoric will be a go-ahead for Abu Mazan to continue talks. It is that important to both him and Arab leaders to achieve peace, and time is of the essence.

So those are three good reasons for optimism, but now the bad news: those that benefit from opposing peace will do everything they can to try to destroy the process. We know that both Hamas and Hezbollah will lose a major reason for their existence, if not the only reason for their existence, if peace is achieved. We should expect them to do everything in their power to stoke violence and provoke a reaction they can turn to their benefit.

After all, they do not need to defeat the peace process, they only need to delay it long enough that Abu Mazan follows through on his announced retirement or loses credibility, leaving a leadership vacuum for Palestinians—and in all my travels, briefings, meetings, and hearings not a single person has been able to suggest a Palestinian leader who can effectively replace him. Or they only need to delay the peace process long enough that President Obama's dream team breaks up. Or delay it long enough that more Arab states follow the path of Syria and increasingly Lebanon and decide that the benefit of kowtowing to Iran outweighs the cost of being in their crosshairs.

As I said at the beginning, the Middle East will break your heart. Whenever you are

most optimistic things are most dangerous. But the focus of Arab states on Iran as the true threat, the United States peace process team, and the leadership of Palestinians and Israelis are each new features in this long story. Well aware of the pitfalls, I remain optimistic. Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

TAIWAN'S DOUBLE TEN DAY

Mr. BURRIS. Mr. President, on October 10, 2010, Taiwan—ROC—our good friend and our partner in peace and economic development will celebrate "Double Ten Day," its national day. I call upon my colleagues in the U.S. Senate to stand with Taiwan and to celebrate this important holiday.

The people on Taiwan have a vibrant democracy which sustains one of the region's most important and dynamic economies. Taiwan's economy has become an attractive base for international investment, and it has achieved economic growth of over 6 percent at a time when many world economies are faltering. Taiwan's economic strength has enabled it to become a major international investor, promoting economic development throughout the region. Clearly, Taiwan has much to offer on the world stage, and much to be proud of as they celebrate their Double Ten Day.

My good friend Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou deserves both recognition and congratulations for his leadership in negotiating and signing the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement, ECFA, this summer which is helping to expand trade between Taiwan and mainland China, reducing regional tensions and encouraging regional prosperity.

Taiwan has been a strong partner to the United States in our collective work with the World Health Organization, WHO, and I feel strongly that Taiwan should play a similarly valuable role in the work of global aviation safety and security initiated by International Civil Aviation Organization, ICAO. I hope my colleagues will join me in urging that important international body to welcome the participation of Taiwan.

I ask my colleagues to join with me today in standing to salute Taiwan, as a partner and friend on the world stage, on its Double Ten Day and to reaffirm our friendship, support, and continued progress together and for many years ahead.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO LES MEYER

• Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize an outstanding education leader from my home State of Montana. Les Meyer, principal of Fairfield High School in Fairfield, MT, has been recognized by the Montana Association of Secondary School Principals as the Montana Principal of the Year for 2010.

Les has served in the Fairfield school system for over 13 years, beginning as an English teacher in 1997 and since 2002 as the principal of Fairfield High School. Under his leadership the school has seen test scores and student achievement rise every year, while the dropout rate has fallen to almost zero. Les has expanded professional development opportunities to help his teachers do an even better job of educating our children. He is well liked and admired by the staff and students alike.

When Les was recognized as the Montana Principal of the Year, he humbly accepted the award and praised his teachers, staff, students, parents, and community members who have all contributed to the success of the young people in Fairfield schools. He noted how fortunate he is to be working in a community where folks take the education of their children seriously—a trait in communities across Montana both large and small.

There is nothing more important to Montanans than giving children the best opportunities to succeed in life. Providing our young people with a solid education is the best thing we can give them. The investments we make in our education system today will provide our children with the skills and knowledge to be successful in the 21st-century economy. Montana has some of the best teachers and principals in the country, and I look forward to working with Les and other education leaders across the State to make sure that we continue to keep the promise of a good education to our children.

Les also knows that life's lessons extend beyond the classroom. Since 2004, in addition to being principal, Les has served as the football coach for Fairfield High. Under his leadership, the team has advanced to four Class B State Championship games in the past 5 years. This season the Eagles are off to a 4 to 0 start and are ranked No. 1 in the State. Les works to instill in the young men on his team the importance of teamwork, being role models and good citizens in the community, and giving it their all both on the field and in the classroom. I wish Coach Meyer and the team the best of luck.

Les is in Washington, DC, this week along with other award winning principals from across the country who are being recognized for their achievements and are sharing their insights on how to make our education system even better. I congratulate Les on being chosen as the Montana Principal of the Year, and I applaud all our teachers, principals, and school administrators across Big Sky Country and thank them for their dedication to making our schools the best they can be. •

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF HOLY FAMILY HOSPITAL

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 20-year anniversary of the Holy Family Hospital in