

Not only Christian lives, but also Christian holy sites have been destroyed by the Islamic State.

And not only Christians, but anyone who opposed their ruthless war on peace.

In many places, Christians must practice their faith in secrecy because churches are not allowed, and makeshift churches in homes are raided.

A loud example of this persecution is aimed at the Coptic Christians in Egypt that have faced persecution for over 50 years, and on April 9, 2017, Palm Sunday, 44 people were killed in bomb attacks by the Islamic State on Coptic churches.

The Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the attack on a bus on May 26, 2017, in which 29 Coptic Christians were killed while traveling to a monastery in Minya, Egypt;

This important resolution describes numerous instances where Christians have been attacked by terrorist groups, groups that hide behind religion as a pretext to destroy minority groups and to recklessly and harmfully seek power.

Religious minority persecution has been on the rise in Asia, primarily due to religious nationalism.

Recently, in Bangladesh, hundreds of Christians are being forced off their property, and legal action rarely results in the favor of a Christian party.

In Burma/Myanmar, since late August 2017, more than 645 thousand ethnic Rohingya have fled a campaign of ethnic cleansing by Burma's security forces and sought asylum in Bangladesh.

The Rohingya massacre is another example of religious minority persecution, overlooked and disregarded by a government that, as some may surmise, values power over people.

Not surprisingly, Christians and other dissidents of the government in North Korea are forced into harsh labor camps, where approximately 70,000 Christians are imprisoned in 2017.

All that is to say that religious discrimination is a global human rights problem and the right to religious freedom is a universal right recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In the 114th Congress, I introduced and continue to support legislation by my colleagues that seek to protect religious freedom and democracy which are the very bedrock of the United States Constitution.

Fighting for human rights across the globe is one of my passions and I have sought to promote and protect religious freedom such as H. Res. 290, a resolution I introduced in the last Congress condemning blasphemy laws that serve as a pretext to persecute religious minorities; that resolution was co-sponsored by our former colleague, Joseph Pitts of Pennsylvania.

Within the context of H. Res. 407 and other legislation addressing human rights, some of the issues we continue to grapple with include:

Expanding the Country of Particular Concern (CPC) list to include more countries who have not improved in their treatment of religious minorities or upholding religious freedoms;

The need for an Annual Countries of Particular Concerns Designations;

Double hatting of sanctions and indefinite waivers;

The need to designate non-state actors as violators of religious freedom;

Prosecuting Islamic state militants; and

The need to have a high functioning Department of State with appropriate leadership for both senior and junior staff, and sufficient funding.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 407, 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.

REAFFIRMING A STRONG COMMITMENT TO THE UNITED STATES-MEXICO PARTNERSHIP

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 336) reaffirming a strong commitment to the United States-Mexico partnership.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 336

Whereas shared cultural ties, values, and beliefs connect the citizens of the United States and Mexico and have long been the foundation from which the friendly, bilateral relationship has flourished;

Whereas the United States and Mexico have benefited from a bilateral, mutually beneficial partnership focused on advancing the economic and security interests of both countries;

Whereas it is in the national interests of the United States and Mexico to continue deepening economic cooperation and security cooperation;

Whereas consecutive United States and Mexican administrations have increased bilateral defense and law enforcement cooperation on counterterrorism and counter-narcotics issues, including the illicit trafficking of weapons, money, people, and drugs across the United States southern border;

Whereas cooperation with Mexico during the administration of President Peña Nieto has led to the extradition of more than 270 individuals facing criminal charges in the United States;

Whereas, the January 19, 2017, extradition of drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman to New York was a major victory for both countries that would not have been possible without a robust United States-Mexico security partnership;

Whereas the Mérida Initiative was established in 2007 and enabled a new level of security cooperation between the United States and Mexico on a range of issues including efforts to combat transnational organized crime and promote justice reform;

Whereas the United States and Mexico have begun cooperation to address the trafficking and production of heroin and fentanyl threatening the lives of citizens in both countries;

Whereas the United States has provided almost \$2.8 billion in security assistance to Mexico through the Mérida Initiative between fiscal year 2008 and fiscal year 2017;

Whereas the United States and Mexico enjoy close diplomatic cooperation and Mexico has consistently voted with the United States at the United Nations on challenges related to Syria, North Korea, and Ukraine;

Whereas the United States and Mexico have closely collaborated at the Organization of American States (OAS) on issues related to Venezuela, where Mexico has played a leading role;

Whereas Mexico is an important security and defense partner to the United States, and regularly participates in training activities in coordination with United States Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD); and

Whereas the United States and Mexico launched the High Level Economic Dialogue on September 20, 2013, to help advance United States-Mexico economic and commercial priorities to promote mutual economic growth, job creation, educational exchanges and innovation, and global competitiveness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms its strong commitment to a United States-Mexico partnership based on mutual respect and the promotion of shared democratic values and principles;

(2) supports continued bilateral cooperation through the High Level Economic Dialogue on issues related to the economic well-being and security of both countries;

(3) encourages continued security cooperation between the United States and Mexican law enforcement agencies and militaries, including on violence reduction in Mexico, counterterrorism and the increased trafficking of heroin and fentanyl;

(4) supports continued engagement with Mexico to tackle regional issues and work together in international fora, including the United Nations and the Organization of American States; and

(5) supports efforts by the Government of Mexico to strengthen the rule of law, reduce corruption, and advance civil and human rights.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. ENGEL. This is his bill. Let me also say that the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, MIKE MCCAUL, who was his primary cosponsor for this, has worked hard on this resolution. It represents a broad, bipartisan acknowledgment of the importance of the relationship between the United States of America and the country of Mexico.

The United States and Mexico share strong ties. Passage of this resolution will signal this body's commitment to strengthening our bilateral relationship with Mexico, a relationship that impacts Americans on a daily basis.

Today, the United States is grappling with challenges, just as Mexico is grappling with some challenges. We have a deadly drug crisis where more than 1,000 people a week die from opioid-related overdoses. This is a crisis that started with overprescribed pain medication here in the United States but is now fueled by heroin and fentanyl supplied by drug cartels.

We have got to strengthen our partnership with Mexico and continue working with Mexican security forces to stem the tide of these illegal drugs entering into our communities and to harden our shared border against terrorism and criminality.

This resolution also affirms the strong commercial relationship between our two countries. Mexico was the second largest export market for U.S. goods last year. It affirms our long history of cooperation on environmental and natural resource issues.

For example, this past September, our two countries signed an agreement to improve reservoir levels in Lake Mead and in the Colorado River Basin that will help prevent water shortages currently affecting Americans in the Southwest United States.

□ 1545

There are, of course, areas that I think we can improve the U.S.-Mexico relationship. Mexico needs to do more to combat the corruption that has taken its toll on its citizens' trust.

But this resolution comes at an important time in the U.S. with our relationship with Mexico and should signal to the people of Mexico that the people of the United States want to continue to work with Mexico on matters of mutual concern, from security to combating the illegal drug trade, to strengthening our respective economies.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, for working with me to bring this measure to the floor, and I thank Congressman MCCAUL, the lead Republican sponsor of this resolution, as well. I am pleased to be the lead sponsor on this resolution.

After more than a decade of good progress in the U.S.-Mexico partnership, this year we have seen some things change course in a troubling way. It is a problem, and it needs to be stopped. That is why I offer this measure reaffirming our strong commitment to our relationship with Mexico. We don't want anyone there to have any kinds of questions. We believe in a strong U.S.-Mexico relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank our ranking member on the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. CASTRO for their efforts on this resolution and their support day in and

day out for a robust U.S.-Mexico partnership.

Mr. Speaker, it is hard to overstate how important the U.S.-Mexico relationship is and the tremendous impact it has on Americans every single day. Mexico is a friend and ally. Mexico is our third largest trading partner. It is a country with which we share deep person-to-person, family, and cultural ties, and it is a country where we have painstakingly cultivated a vibrant, critical relationship between our two countries.

Over the past century, there have been many highs and lows in the U.S.-Mexico relationship. Unfortunately, sometimes, recently, we have had a lot of lows with talk about building walls and other derogatory talk about Mexicans. We don't want that to continue. We want to establish and reaffirm the strong U.S.-Mexico relationship.

In 2007, I became chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. That was the same day that the Merida Initiative was announced by Presidents Bush and Calderon, which led to a new level of security cooperation between the United States and Mexico.

That effort wasn't perfect then and it isn't today. The civilian toll of Mexico's drug war is still far too high, and human rights violations at the federal, state, and local level in Mexico remain a serious problem. But what we gained from the Merida Initiative was an entirely new way of collaborating with the Mexican Government on a wide range of security issues.

Presidents Obama and Pena Nieto built on Merida's foundation, and one of the results was a remarkable achievement in the last hours of the Obama administration, which was the extradition of drug kingpin "El Chapo" Guzman to my hometown of New York City to stand trial. Without a strong U.S.-Mexico partnership, that would not have been possible. A decade ago, it probably would not have happened at all.

And while we absolutely don't need to waste billions of taxpayer dollars on a 2,000-mile-long wall against our southern border, what we do need is to maintain our partnership on security matters with the Mexican Government.

We want the Mexican Government to continue to reach out to us with information regarding suspected terrorists. We want to say that the Mexican Government will cooperate with us and extradite the next drug kingpin to the United States, and it goes on and on. So we cannot overemphasize just how important the U.S.-Mexico partnership is and how it keeps Americans safe on a day-to-day basis.

H. Res. 336 underscores the importance of a U.S.-Mexico relationship built on mutual respect. Mutual respect means building bridges, not walls, between our two countries; it means recognizing the vast contributions of Mexican Americans to our country and not classifying an entire

population as drug dealers and rapists; it means not singling out an esteemed judge based solely on his race.

Congress has an important opportunity today to be the adult in the room and let the Mexican Government and the Mexican people know that our relationship with them is very, very important and will continue to be important. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure. I am pleased that we have support for this on both sides of the aisle.

I thank Chairman ROYCE, as always, for his cooperation and his partnership, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES), my good friend and colleague on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and a very valued member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 336, which reaffirms our strong commitment to the United States-Mexico partnership.

Mexico is our neighbor and one of our most important strategic allies. Under NAFTA and the Merida Initiative, our countries have expanded our economic and security cooperation in ways that involve almost every aspect of our lives. Our work with Mexico goes beyond the Federal Government. It is in our State and local governments. It is in our businesses and in our churches.

H. Res. 336 holds up the idea that working with Mexico has been good for our security and our economy. No one is saying that our relationship is perfect. We still have real security problems to address, especially the smuggling of guns, drugs, and money across our borders, and we need to do more—a lot more—to lift up those communities that have not benefited from NAFTA; but, on the whole, we are better off when we work together.

Working together is what makes it possible to have those tough conversations about those issues where we disagree, so we shouldn't even need to pass a resolution like this. It should be assumed. It should be common sense. But the rhetoric across this administration has made it necessary for Congress to speak out in defense of our neighbor and our ally, and we are here today speaking out.

I thank Representative ENGEL and Representative MCCAUL for their leadership, and I thank Chairman ROYCE for his ongoing work in bringing this resolution forward and ongoing work in the committee to ensure that we work on a bipartisan level.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, let me close on a positive note. I believe that it is not too

late to reverse course on this latest direction of U.S.-Mexico ties. At a difficult moment in our bilateral relationship, I am heartened to stand here on the House floor and listen to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle offer such robust support for the U.S.-Mexico relationship.

I again thank Chairman ROYCE and Mr. MCCAUL for their help and support of this resolution. What we need is to maintain and even strengthen our cooperation on security and economic matters with the Mexican Government. Passage of H. Res. 336 today is an excellent step. Congress really needs to lead the way.

So I thank, again, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for supporting this resolution, and I pledge to do everything I can to continue to enhance the very important U.S.-Mexico relationship.

I think it is important to state that this relationship is not only important to Mexico, but it is important to the United States for so many different reasons. That is why I think it is important for Congress to reaffirm its support, strong support, for the U.S.-Mexico relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for supporting this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the author, the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. ENGEL, and I thank Congresswoman NORMA TORRES, as well, and the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, MIKE MCCAUL, for their work on this important resolution recognizing the U.S.-Mexico partnership and recognizing our important economic relationship. As our countries continue to work together, this resolution signals our commitment to strengthen our ties with our Mexican neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 336.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REAFFIRMING THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 357) reaffirming the strategic partnership between the United States and Canada, recognizing bilateral cooperation that advances United States national inter-

ests, and urging increased bilateral cooperation on security, economic issues, and energy, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 357

Whereas history, proximity, commerce, security, and shared democratic values underpin a close relationship between the United States and Canada;

Whereas this year marks 150 years of the Canadian Confederation;

Whereas Americans and Canadians have the longest international border and one of the largest commercial relationships in the world, with \$1.7 billion of trade and nearly 400,000 people crossing the shared border daily;

Whereas Canada is the United States second-largest trading partner and the largest export destination for United States goods and services, and a majority of States of the United States consider Canada their top export destination, with 15 States counting Canada as their top point of origin for imports;

Whereas the United States and Canada cooperate extensively within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and through a "Tri-Command Framework" with United States Northern Command (NORTHCOM), Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC), and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD);

Whereas Canada has been a critical ally of the United States in the global war on terror, deploying approximately 2,800 Canadian troops in the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan from 2006-2011, the fifth-largest national contingent in the ISAF;

Whereas 158 Canadian Armed Forces personnel bravely gave their lives while participating in the ISAF in Afghanistan;

Whereas Canada has 830 Canadian Armed Forces personnel currently serving in the Middle East in support of the United States-led coalition to counter the Islamic State;

Whereas longstanding bilateral border security cooperation between the United States and Canada protects vital United States security interests while promoting trade and travel;

Whereas the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, Beyond the Border Initiative, United States-Canada NEXUS Trusted Traveler Program, Border Enforcement Security Taskforces (BEST), Shiprider Integrated Cross Border Maritime Law Enforcement program, Cross Border Crime Forum, Integrated Border Enforcement Teams, and United States preclearance operations conducted at eight Canadian airports enhance United States-Canadian border security efforts;

Whereas Canada is the world's sixth-largest petroleum producer in the world and is the United States largest foreign supplier of energy, including oil, uranium, natural gas, and electricity;

Whereas Canada is the largest source of imported oil for United States refineries and while the United States produces 90 percent of the natural gas it uses, of the remaining natural gas that the United States imports, 97 percent comes from Canada;

Whereas Canada is a net exporter of electricity to the United States, with more than 30 active electricity transmission connectors between the two countries;

Whereas Canada is a strategic leader in international affairs, a member of the G7 and G20, and an important voice for democratic

principles, market-oriented policies, and human rights in the United Nations, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Organization of American States; and

Whereas, on February 13, 2017, President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada held their first official meeting and reaffirmed the importance of the United States-Canadian relationship: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms its robust commitment to the critical importance of the United States-Canadian partnership;

(2) supports stronger trade relations with the Government of Canada and the creation of more American jobs;

(3) encourages greater security collaboration in the areas of defense, border security, cyber-security, and Arctic security; and

(4) supports an increased focus on energy security through greater energy infrastructure integration, including oil and natural gas and renewable sources, planning, and coordination.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to recognize the leadership of Mr. DUNCAN, who, until recently, served as the chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, and Mr. GREGORY MEEKS, the ranking member, in bringing this important resolution forward.

I also want to recognize Mr. HUIZENGA, chairman of the Capital Markets, Securities, and Investments Subcommittee of the Financial Services Committee, who led the delegation this past fall with the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group in Windsor, Canada.

This resolution affirms the already strong partnership we enjoy with our neighbors to the north, while recognizing that this bilateral relationship has advanced U.S. national interests.

Canada and the U.S. share the longest international border of any countries in the world. Canada is one of the largest trading partners with the U.S., and our largest agricultural export market. U.S. exports of goods and services to Canada supported 1.6 million jobs in the United States last year.

In addition, the U.S. and Canada enjoy a very close and vital security