

Again, I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) for his great leadership on this case.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), and I want to also thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for his eloquent response to this important issue.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I thank both the chairman and the subcommittee chairman for their work in bringing this measure forward; and to my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON), I thank him for his tireless efforts in trying to seek Mr. Pope's release.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge support for H. Con. Res. 404 and make clear our message to the Russian Government. Edmund Pope must be released from prison, and he must be released immediately. Mr. Pope's deteriorating health simply will not wait for the Russian Government to accept what we in this country have long known: that Ed does not deserve his imprisonment and that the Russian Government cannot justify holding him one day longer.

For 191 days, Ed Pope has been denied his freedom. For 191 days, he has been denied regular contact with his wife of 30 years and his children. And for 191 days, he has been denied access to basic medical care, despite grave threats to his health.

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In an age when the access to adequate shelter and medical care is correctly viewed as humanity at its most fundamental level, Ed has been forced to endure deprivations that are downright abysmal.

The prison where Mr. Pope is being held is a grim reminder of a system of government that for too long has subordinated human rights. Ed Pope's harsh imprisonment illustrates Russia's continued hostility to the West, despite its repeated assurances that Russia wants to join the ranks of the world's civilized nations.

I am dismayed by President Putin's squandering of an opportunity to demonstrate to the nations of the world that a new Russia has indeed risen from the ashes of the old Soviet Union, a nation that values human rights and the rule of international law. But until Mr. Pope is released and the judicial system in Russia improves, this transformation will be incomplete.

If the question of Mr. Pope's guilt or innocence is to be debated, it must only be after he is allowed access to the medical care his condition demands. With the release of Ed Pope, President Putin can demonstrate that he is serious about eliminating the distrust and hesitation that has characterized U.S. and Russian relations for decades. Or he can continue to prolong Ed's unjust captivity and reinforce the

negative image of Russia, that of a secretive, enigmatic state whose journey to first world status remains long.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for H.Con.Res. 404 and declare in no uncertain terms that the United States does not tolerate the treatment of its citizens in this manner.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) for their diligent efforts on behalf of Mr. Pope. We are pleased to join with them.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 404.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CALLING FOR LASTING PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STABILITY IN KOSOVO

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 451) calling for lasting peace, justice, and stability in Kosovo, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 451

Whereas on June 10, 1999, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military air operation in the former Yugoslavia victoriously concluded with the withdrawal of all Serbian police, paramilitary, and military forces from Kosovo;

Whereas after the NATO victory, the international community mobilized assistance that helped feed and house more than 1,000,000 Kosova refugees before the first post-war winter;

Whereas nearly 1,000,000 refugees and hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons attempted to return to their homes in Kosovo in the belief that a peaceful, stable, and just society would be created through their diligent efforts, supported by the international community;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (June 10, 1999) established the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) as the sole administration of the province until such time as its political status is decided;

Whereas some 2,000 citizens were illegally detained and kidnapped to Serbia by Serbian forces as they withdrew from Kosovo in violation of the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law;

Whereas an additional 5,000 Kosova citizens are believed to be detained in Serbian prisons;

Whereas the international mission in Kosovo successfully negotiated an agreement with the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) to disband and publicly hand over its weapons;

Whereas hundreds of Kosova Albanian citizens have been prevented from returning to their homes in the divided city of Mitrovica

by Serb Kosova citizens who are believed to be assisted by Serb paramilitaries who have illegally re-entered Kosovo;

Whereas although the initiation of the recent operation between the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo (KFOR) and UNMIK to confirm international authority throughout northern Kosovo is welcomed, KFOR and UNMIK must fully implement their plan and take appropriate action to ensure that all residents are able to return to their homes;

Whereas the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have set the date for local municipal elections in Kosovo for October 28, 2000;

Whereas the assertion of authority over the Trepca mining complex by UNMIK is welcomed and an assessment of its environmental hazards and financial viability should proceed as quickly as possible in order to maximize employment for Kosovar citizens;

Whereas although daily life in Kosovo in the summer of 2000 is significantly improved in comparison to the violence, devastation, and chaos that plagued the region during armed conflict in 1999, more must be done to develop a self-sustaining economy that discourages the rise of criminal elements;

Whereas, in view of the disproportionate share of the military costs borne by the United States during the NATO operation, the European Union has agreed that it will undertake the major share of the costs for economic reconstruction in Kosovo;

Whereas the European Commission and the World Bank have estimated the costs for the reconstruction of Kosovo over the next 4 to 5 years at \$2,300,000,000, with nearly half that amount available to be spent by the end of 2001; and

Whereas the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000 (as enacted by section 1000(a)(2) of Public Law 106-113) capped United States pledges of assistance for Kosovo at the subsequent Kosova donors conference at 15 percent of the total resources pledged by all donors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the European Union should continue to bear the primary responsibility and costs for the economic reconstruction of Kosovo, and take all necessary steps to ensure that its future budgets provide the required resources in a timely fashion;

(2) the administration of all baseline services such as police, sanitation, water, telecommunications, and electrical supply should be put into the hands of the people of Kosovo at the earliest possible date;

(3) the strategy for economic reconstruction in Kosovo should be focused on utilizing private investment and empowerment of the people of Kosovo to take charge of their livelihoods;

(4) the United States Government should make it a priority to promote noncorrupt government and business practices in Kosovo by providing judicial training and technical advice and assistance to police, border police, and customs officers;

(5) the United Nations Security Council should demand the immediate and unconditional return of all Kosova prisoners from Serbia;

(6) the international peacekeeping force in Mitrovica should take immediate measures to ensure that all the residents are able to return in security to their homes;

(7) all the citizens of Kosovo should avail themselves of the opportunity to democratically express their political preferences by participating in the elections on October 28, 2000;

(8) the resolve of the international community to work towards lasting peace, stability, and justice in Kosovo will not be deterred by Slobodan Milosevic's provocations within the region; and

(9) all citizens of Kosovo should adhere to the principles enunciated by community leaders at the Airlie House declaration of July 23, 2000, where all parties agreed to a rigorous Campaign Against Violence, representation of all citizens in municipal councils, surrendering of illegal weapons, a commitment to counter Slobodan Milosevic's influence in Kosovo, and to dissolve any other illegitimate governing and security structures.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.Res. 451.

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

There was no objection.

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

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have brought this measure to the floor of the House in order to call attention to some continuing problems in the international community's efforts to bring about a stable, just, and a lasting peace to the people of Kosovo.

The Committee on International Relations approved this measure without dissent and it represents a bipartisan consensus on the part of our committee members on how to redress some of the difficulties in Kosovo. I ask all our House colleagues to join with us today in supporting H. Res. 451.

Our principal concern is that the international community, rather than fostering a self-reliant, prosperous Kosovar-run Kosovo, is creating a new international dependency hooked on assistance funds and the presence of numerous international aid workers.

What seems to have been overlooked in the current approach is the fact that prior to the move to strip away Kosovo's political autonomy in 1989, and even during the decade of oppression the Kosovars suffered under Milosevic, the Kosovar people demonstrated a remarkable amount of initiative and economic skill. These characteristics should be part of our strategy in restoring Kosovo's economy.

Another problem is the plight of thousands of Kosovars who are being illegally detained in Serbia. Some of these individuals were taken in the final hours of Serbia's sway over Kosovo last June as virtual hostages. They include some of the leading intel-

lectual lights of Kosovar society: doctors, lawyers, journalists and teachers.

The fact that the international community has remained nearly mute in the face of their continued detention is disappointing, and the refusal of the U.N. Security Council to demand their immediate release is troubling and unacceptable.

Until the Kosovar detainees have been released and accounted for, no real peace will be able to come to Kosovo. I would hope that the new government in Serbia under President Kostunica will cooperate in remedying this tragic situation.

The important industrial town of Mitrovice remains a divided city where international peacekeepers have been unable to return hundreds of ethnic Albanian residents to their homes. Failure to resolve this issue leaves the shadow of possible partition hanging over Kosovo.

Another problem in the U.N.'s approach to the Kosovo mission is the issue of who should be able to control and operate important economic assets such as the Trepca mines. Although there have been recent steps to explore reopening this most important economic asset for many months, the U.N. did not take any action because of its fears that Serb ownership would be an obstacle.

Elections have been scheduled in 30 municipalities throughout Kosovo for October 28. This resolution calls upon all the citizens of Kosovo to avail themselves of the Democratic process and to peacefully express their political preferences. Let us hope that the adoption of this resolution and those upcoming elections will provide the beginning of the journey to a lasting and just peace in Kosovo.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House to support H. Res. 451.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) one of the original cosponsors of this legislation.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from American Samoa for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.Res. 451. I am an original cosponsor. I commend the chairman of our Committee on International Relations for sponsoring this resolution and for the work that he has done on Kosovo and on so many other wonderful things in the House Committee on International Relations, and I am honored to cosponsor this resolution with him.

This calls for lasting peace, justice, and stability in Kosovo. And it is something that is still illusive even after the successful American intervention there where we prevented lives from being lost, we prevented ethnic cleansing and genocide. I am very, very proud of the role that this country and this Congress have played in saving the Kosovar people, the people of Kosovo.

I rise in strong support of this resolution because although the international community talks a good game, the European Union has not met its pledges even though it has contributed the majority of the funding for Kosovo reconstruction. This resolution calls upon the EEU to do so.

As the resolution states, police, sanitation, telecommunications, electricity and water supply have not been adequately put forth for the people of Kosovo. It is too long. It must end.

This resolution also calls, as the chairman pointed out, for the immediate return of all Kosovar prisoners still being held in Serbia. There are still hundreds of Kosovars in Serb jails, perhaps thousands, including Flora Brovina and Albin Kurti. They should be freed immediately and returned to their families in Kosovo.

It is an outrage that when the Serbs were retreating from Kosovo they captured Kosovar Albanians and imprisoned them, dragged them to Belgrade, dragged them into Serbia, and imprisoned them where they remain today. These people should be freed immediately.

This resolution also gives Congress an opportunity to discuss broader issues. I and all Americans congratulate the Serbian people for the birth of democracy in their land and for finally running their murderous leader, Milosevic, out of office.

Yet, while the United States is certainly pleased of the changes in Serbia, there are significant issues which we must consider. The most important is the question of sanctions. We must be open to the new Democratically elected government in Serbia. President Kostunica needs the opportunity to succeed. Lifting some sanctions should be on the table, but lifting all should not.

I agree with the actions of the Clinton administration maintaining visa restrictions against Milosevic and his lieutenants, but I am also concerned about lowering the outer wall of sanctions. Those must remain on Serbia.

We have withheld international financial institution assistance because Belgrade was opposing the work of the International War Crimes Tribunal and denying Kosovars the right to self-determination. For the outer wall to crumble while President Kostunica rejects the tribunal, and he is rejecting it still, and Serbia is still acting as though nothing happened in Kosovo, is unwise.

The new government in Belgrade must recognize the new reality in Kosovo. After the thousands of deaths and tens of thousands of wounded, it remains extremely difficult to ever imagine Kosovo again as part of Serbia. Kosovo deserves the opportunity to be dependent and the outer wall of sanctions against Serbia should remain in place until Serbia is prepared to be part of a solution, not the problem, in Kosovo.

Independence for Kosovo is something that is right. And as the chairman pointed out, elections are being held later on this month and it will be the first opportunity for Kosovars to participate in democracy. And I would urge all of them to do so. And that ought to be the first step in a free and independent and democratic Kosovo.

There are still, however, many problems. Mitrovica is a divided city. The Serbs have occupied the mines and have not allowed the Albanian Kosovars to be able to establish any kind of economic viability because of the occupation of these mines. Those mines are part of Kosovo and should not be occupied by the Serbs.

Mitrovica should not be a divided city. Albanians there are being prevented from returning to their homes. That must not stand.

Finally, Belgrade must finally recognize the independence of Bosnia. Until Belgrade gives up on controlling lands on both sides of the Drina River and establishes permanent diplomatic relations with Bosnia, the Yugoslav state succession question will still fester.

And by the way, while we are saying that the Kosovars have the right to self-determination and independence, and they must have that right, I believe the Montenegrins have as well.

Yugoslavia is a fallacy. Serbia continues to keep the Montenegrins as part of so-called Yugoslavia and continues the fallacy that Kosovo is part of Yugoslavia. The Kosovar Albanians and the Montenegrins should have the right to self-determination and should have the right to establish their own democratic nations if they so desire.

Therefore, while I rise in favor of this important resolution, I urge my colleagues to keep in mind the bigger picture in the form Yugoslavia. I urge all my colleagues to support H. Res. 451.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) the distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for his leadership in bringing this very important resolution to the floor today and to my good friends on the minority side and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for his leadership and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON).

This is the time for us to make this statement, and I think we are doing it collectively as a Congress. Hopefully our voices will be heard in Serbia.

Mr. Speaker, I am an original cosponsor of H. Res. 451 and I strongly support its passage here today.

In a series of hearings that we held on the Helsinki Commission, which I chair, the atrocities committed in Kosovo by Yugoslav and Serbian forces have been very amply documented and the continued incarceration of Kosovar Albanians in Serbian prisons were detailed in very numbing detail.

The culpability of Milosevic for war crimes and crimes against humanity for which he has been indicted have also been made clear. It is also obvious that there is an unacceptable lack of security in Kosovo, evident in the frequent instances of violence and destruction in the period since the conflict ended.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, major change finally came to Yugoslavia. The people voted to throw Slobodan Milosevic out of office. And when he would not leave, they took to the streets to make clear that they had had enough.

While President Kostunica takes a nationalist point of view, he nevertheless appears willing to work towards democracy and the rule of law rather than create more problems.

I was pleased to hear that he has already indicated his willingness to look into the cases of Kosovar Albanians who right now, today, are languishing in Serbian prisons.

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I believe he will, and every friend of democracy fully expects him to do the right thing. At one of our Helsinki Commission hearings, we heard terrible testimony, horrible conditions about these people who have been held in these terrible prisons, Kosovar Albanians who have committed no crimes. We ask, we demand that they be released now, immediately. Let the Albanians go.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I think it is critical that we strongly condemn all of the violence which is occurring in Kosovo today regardless of the ethnicity of the victim, regardless of the ethnicity of the culprit. I have been a strong critic of Serbian repression in Kosovo in the past. As a matter of fact, when I met Milosevic the first time in Belgrade in the early 1990s, I raised the issue of his police, his thugs who are committing egregious abuses against the Kosovar Albanians and called on him and his thugs to stop it. But let me also say that none of us want to accept any wanton acts of violence whether it be revenge against Serbs or other members of minorities in Kosovo. Therefore, and I think this is important in the resolution, the Campaign Against Violence mentioned in this resolution is absolutely critical for all sides to accept and to implement. I would hope that the Albanians will criticize Albanians and Serbs will criticize Serbs when that Campaign Against Violence is transgressed. We need peaceful non-violence in Kosovo and in Serbia. This resolution calls on all parties to stand down.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for his eloquent support of this measure.

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

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

Again my compliments and commendation to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and certainly the chairman of our Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for their primary sponsorship of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this measure which enjoys strong bipartisan support. It is also supported by the administration. Congressional oversight of policy in Kosovo is remiss if it only looks at the inevitable problems that follow 40 years of communism, 10 years of apartheid and 1 year of brutal armed aggression. Responsible oversight must also recognize achievements as well as goals for future progress.

After the NATO victory, the international community mobilized assistance that helped feed and house more than one million Kosovo refugees before the first postwar winter. The international mission in Kosovo successfully negotiated an agreement with the Kosovo Liberation Army to disband and publicly hand over its weapons.

Although daily life in Kosovo has significantly improved compared to the violence, devastation and chaos that plagued the region during armed conflict a year ago, more must be done, Mr. Speaker, to develop a self-sustaining economy that discourages the rise of criminal elements.

The European Union must also continue to bear the primary responsibility and costs for the economic reconstruction of Kosovo and take all necessary steps to ensure that its future budgets provide the required resources in a timely fashion.

Mr. Speaker, the administration of all basic services such as police, sanitation, water, telecommunications and electrical supply should be put into the hands of the people of Kosovo at the earliest possible date. The international peacekeeping force in Mitrovica should take immediate measures to ensure that all the residents are able to return in security to their homes. And, most importantly, all citizens of Kosovo should follow the principles enunciated by community leaders at the Airlie House declaration of July 23 of this year which included antiviolence, representation of all citizens in local councils, surrendering illegal weapons, a commitment to counter Slobodan Milosevic's influence in Kosovo as well as dissolving any other illegitimate governing and security structures.

Mr. Speaker, the winds of democratic change have swept through the region in recent days and months, bringing in democratic reform in Croatia and toppling Slobodan Milosevic from controlling Serbia. In the wake of these dramatic events, the resolution before the House today supports greater progress towards reconciliation within Kosovo and between the member nations of

southeast Europe to build a community of cooperating democracies and growing free market economies.

Again I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from American Samoa for his support of this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 451, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 577) to honor the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for its role as a protector of the world's refugees, to celebrate UNHCR's 50th anniversary, and to praise the High Commissioner Sadako Ogata for her work with UNHCR for the past 10 years, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 577

Whereas since the founding of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in December 1950, it has become one of the world's principal humanitarian agencies with 244 offices in 118 countries and helps nearly 22,000,000 people in more than 140 countries;

Whereas on December 14, 2000, UNHCR marks a half-century of helping millions of the world's most vulnerable and courageous people;

Whereas UNHCR continues to fulfill its mandate, as adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 14, 1950, to provide international protection to refugees and persons seeking asylum and to seek durable solutions to their problems;

Whereas UNHCR has worked to ensure respect of refugees' basic human rights and adherence to the principle of nonrefoulement, which prohibits the expulsion and return of refugees to countries or territories where their lives or freedom would be threatened;

Whereas the United States and its citizens have long welcomed refugees to our shores;

Whereas, although UNHCR's responsibilities under its original mandate do not include internally displaced persons, it plays a critical role in assisting and protecting internally displaced populations in many situations, particularly where refugee and internally displaced populations are mixed;

Whereas the heart of UNHCR's mandate is protection, and UNHCR must continue to emphasize protection in choosing durable solutions for refugees, including voluntary re-

turn, local integration in countries of first asylum, and resettlement;

Whereas vulnerable refugees, particularly women, children, and the elderly, face special protection and assistance needs and UNHCR must continue to emphasize their needs in its policy and program efforts;

Whereas, in collaboration with other international agencies and nongovernmental organizations, UNHCR has shaped policies on which the international community can agree to move forward on peacefully resolving refugee situations;

Whereas under the leadership of High Commissioner Sadako Ogata and her predecessors, UNHCR has made invaluable contributions for humanity by helping to promote peace and respect for human rights for all uprooted peoples; and

Whereas UNHCR has twice been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its service to humanity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the United States House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes and honors the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the occasion of its 50th anniversary for its contributions on behalf of the world's refugees;

(2) expresses its support for the continued efforts of UNHCR;

(3) affirms its support for international protection for the victims of persecution and human rights violations and for the achievement of durable solutions for refugees; and

(4) calls on the international community to work together with UNHCR in efforts to ensure that host countries uphold humanitarian principles and the human rights of refugees, to lessen the impact of refugees on host countries, and to promote the safe voluntary repatriation, local integration, or resettlement of refugees.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 577, in observation of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. This measure honors the excellent service that the UNHCR has provided the international community since 1950.

This comparatively small agency of the U.N., since its inception, has helped ameliorate and, in many instances, resolve the plight of millions of victims of persecution and abuse. I would like to commend our colleague the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) for his diligence in making certain that this

Congress is able to record its immense respect for the UNHCR on the occasion of this important milestone.

We should also note that H. Res. 577 pays fitting tribute to our current High Commissioner, Dr. Sadako Ogata, who is stepping down after completing a meritorious 10-year tour of duty in this vital international post. During her tenure, Commissioner Ogata has seen the case load of refugees and persons of concern to her office rise to a total of some 22 million. These millions are indicative of the increase in wars, internal conflicts and natural disasters that have produced a tide of human suffering that has only been paralleled in the past by our most serious global conflicts.

The UNHCR has also had to exceed the terms of its own mandate as laid out in the statutes that created the office of high commissioner some 50 years ago by providing invaluable assistance to those vulnerable individuals who are internally displaced within the borders of their home nations but are also victims of persecution or human rights abuses.

As global events have become more complex, Mr. Speaker, the UNHCR has been able to adapt itself to meeting the new challenges these situations have presented. It is hoped, therefore, that this resolution, by calling attention to the good work performed by the UNHCR and by the staff of that office, will increase the support by American citizens and others around the world of the effort spearheaded by the UNHCR.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I urge our colleagues to support H. Res. 577.

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

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

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, again I want to compliment the chief sponsor of this bill the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) and our chairman of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), and also the ranking member of our committee, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON).

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. House Resolution 577 honors and recognizes the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the occasion of its 50th anniversary for its contributions on behalf of the world's refugees. On December 14 of this year, the UNHCR will mark a half century of helping millions of the world's most vulnerable people.

As I said earlier, I want to commend the gentleman from Ohio for introducing this legislation on behalf of many of the hungry and homeless people around the world. The UNHCR, Mr. Speaker, has been mandated by the United Nations to lead and coordinate international action for the worldwide