

the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on February 7, 2003 at 1:43 p.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he submits the Economic Report of the President and the 2003 Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHL,
Clerk of the House.

ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 108-2)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Joint Economic Committee and ordered to be printed.

ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT TRANSMITTED TO THE CONGRESS, FEBRUARY 2003, TOGETHER WITH THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS

To the Congress of the United States:

The economy is recovering from the effects of the slowdown that began in the middle of 2000 and led to the subsequent recession. The American economy has been hit hard by the events of the past three years, most tragically by the effects of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Our economy and investor confidence were hurt when we learned that some corporate leaders were not playing by the rules. The combined impact of these events, along with the three-year decline in stock values that impacted business investment, slowed growth in 2002. Despite these challenges, the economy's underlying fundamentals remain solid—including low inflation, low interest rates, and strong productivity gains. Yet the pace of the expansion has not been satisfactory; there are still too many Americans looking for jobs. We will not be satisfied until every part of our economy is vigorous and every person who wants a job can find one.

We are taking action to restore the robust growth that creates jobs. In January, I proposed a growth and jobs plan to add needed momentum to our economic recovery. We will accelerate the tax relief already approved by Congress and give it to Americans now, when it is most needed. Lowering tax rates and moving more Americans into the lowest tax bracket will help our economy grow and create jobs. Faster marriage tax relief and a faster increase in the child tax credit will especially help middle-class families, and should take effect now. We will take steps to encourage small business investment, helping them to expand and create jobs. We will end the unfair double taxation of corporate income received by individuals. By putting more money back in the hands of share-

holders, strengthening investor confidence in the market, and encouraging more investment, we will have more growth and job creation. These steps will allow Americans to keep more of their own money to spend, save, or invest. They will boost the economy, ensure that the recovery continues, and provide long-term economic benefits through higher productivity and higher incomes.

As our economy recovers, we also have an obligation to help Americans who have lost their jobs. That is why we extended unemployment payments for workers who lost their jobs and improved incentives for investment to create new jobs. I also proposed a bold new program of reemployment accounts to help workers searching for jobs.

Our commitment to a strong economy does not stop with these important steps. We will continue to strengthen investor confidence in the integrity of our markets. We will develop better ways to train workers for new jobs. We will make the Nation's regulations and tax code less onerous and more reflective of the demands of a dynamic economy, and expand opportunities for open trade and stronger growth in all nations, especially for emerging and developing economies.

Our Nation's economic progress comes from the innovation and hard work of Americans in a free market that creates opportunities no other system can offer. Government does not create wealth, but instead creates the economic environment in which risk takers and entrepreneurs create jobs. With the right policies focused on growth and jobs, strong economic fundamentals—and hard work—I am confident we will extend economic opportunity and prosperity to every corner of America.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 2003.*

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

CONDEMNING THE SELECTION OF LIBYA TO CHAIR THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 27) condemning the selection of Libya to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 27

Whereas on January 20, 2003, Libya, a gross violator of human rights and state sponsor of terrorism, was elected to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights ("Commission"), a body charged with the responsibility of promoting universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all;

Whereas according to the rotation system which governs the selection of the Executive Board of the Commission, 2003 was designated as the year for the Africa Group to chair the Commission, and the Africa Group selected Libya as its candidate;

Whereas South Africa's Democratic Alliance spokeswoman, Dene Smuts, was quoted by the British Broadcasting Corporation as saying that the South African Government's decision to support Libya's election was an insult to human rights and that African countries "should have supported a candidate of whom all Africans could be proud";

Whereas Amnesty International has repeatedly documented that Libya's human rights situation continues to seriously deteriorate with gross violations taking place systematically, extrajudicial execution used against government opponents, and political detainees routinely tortured physically and psychologically during interrogation, with some detainees dying in custody as a result;

Whereas Human Rights Watch recently underscored that "[o]ver the past three decades, Libya's human rights record has been appalling" and "Libya has been a closed country for United Nations and nongovernmental human rights investigators";

Whereas Human Rights Watch further stated that "Libya's election poses a real test for the Commission . . . [r]epressive governments must not be allowed to hijack the U.N. human rights system";

Whereas the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights stated that "the Government of Libya should not be entrusted by the United Nations to lead its international effort to promote human rights around the world";

Whereas Freedom House declared that "[a] country [such as Libya] with such a gross record of human rights abuses should not direct the proceedings of the UN's main human rights monitoring body . . . [t]his will undermine the UN's moral authority and send a strong and clear message to fellow rights violators that they are in the clear";

Whereas on November 13, 2001, a German court convicted a Libyan national for the bombing in 1986 of the La Belle disco in Berlin, in which two United States servicemen were killed, and the court further declared that there was clear evidence of responsibility of the Libyan Government for the bombing;

Whereas Libya was responsible for the December 21, 1988, explosion of Pan American Airline Flight 103 en route from London to New York that crashed in Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 259 passengers and crew, and 11 others on the ground;

Whereas a French court convicted six Libyan Government officials in absentia for the bombing of UTA Flight 772 over Niger in 1989;

Whereas United Nations Resolution 748 of March 31, 1992, imposed an arms and air embargo on Libya and established a United Nations Security Council sanctions committee to address measures against Libya;

Whereas United Nations Resolution 883 of November 11, 1993, tightened sanctions on Libya, including the freezing of Libyan funds and financial resources in third countries, and banned the provision to Libya of equipment for oil refining and transportation;

Whereas United Nations Resolution 1192 of August 27, 1998, reaffirmed that the measures

set forth in previous resolutions remain in effect and binding on all member states, and further expressed the intention of the United Nations to consider additional measures if the accused individuals for Pan Am Flight 103 and UTA Flight 772 bombings had not arrived or appeared for trial promptly in accordance with paragraph 8 of the Resolution;

Whereas in January 2001 a three-judge Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands found Libyan Abdel Basset al-Megrahi guilty of the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, sentenced him to life imprisonment, and said it accepted evidence that he was a member of Libya's Jamahariya Security Organization, and in March 2002 Scottish appeal judges in the Netherlands upheld his conviction;

Whereas as recently as January 12, 2003, Libyan leader, Moammar Gaddafi, in an interview with Newsweek- Washington Post reporter, Lally Weymouth, failed to accept responsibility for the attack and had the audacity of calling for the United States to share the burden of compensation;

Whereas Libya remains on the Department of State's list of state-sponsors of terrorism;

Whereas the United States found the selection of Libya to chair the Commission to be an affront to international human rights efforts and, in particular, to victims of Libya's repression and Libyan-sponsored terrorism, and therefore broke with precedent and called for a recorded vote on Libya's chairmanship;

Whereas Canada and one other country joined the United States in voting against Libya and 17 other countries abstained;

Whereas the European Union's common position was to abstain from the vote objecting to Libya's selection as chair of the Commission;

Whereas 33 countries ignored Libya's record on human rights and status as a country subject to United Nations sanctions for the terrorist bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 and voted for Libya to lead the Commission;

Whereas the majority of these countries are United States foreign aid recipients;

Whereas the selection of Libya to chair the Commission is but the most recent example of a malaise plaguing the Commission, whereby its credibility has been called into question in recent years as its membership ranks have swelled with other egregious human rights violators;

Whereas the United States' challenge is part of a broader effort to reform the Commission, reclaim it from the oppressors, and ensure that it fulfills its mandate;

Whereas on January 20, 2003, Ambassador Kevin Moley, United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, emphasized that "[w]e seek to actively engage and strengthen the moral authority of the Commission on Human Rights, so that it once again proves itself a forceful advocate for those in need of having their human rights protected . . . [w]e are convinced that the best way for the Commission to ensure the ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights over the long-term is to have a membership comprised of countries with strong human rights records at home";

Whereas a majority of the 53 member states of the Commission are participants in the Community of Democracies and signed the Seoul Declaration of November 12, 2002, calling upon democratic nations to work together to uphold the principles of democracy, freedom, good governance, and accountability in international organizations;

Whereas the participants in the Seoul Ministerial meeting of the Community of Democracies issued a Statement on Terrorism in which they "strongly denounced terrorism as a grave threat to democratic societies and the values they embrace . . . [they] re-

affirmed that terrorism constitutes a threat to international peace and security as well as to humanity in general and indeed to the very foundation on which democracies are built . . . [and] [t]he most recent terrorist attacks confirm that international cooperation against terrorism will remain a long-term effort and requires a sustained universal commitment"; and

Whereas although United Nations sanctions against Libya have been suspended, the sanctions remain in effect, and Libya's continued status as an international outlaw nation and its continued unwillingness to accept responsibility for its terrorist actions should bar it from consideration as a candidate for membership in the United Nations Security Council or any other United Nations entity or affiliated agency: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) strongly condemns the selection of Libya to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights ("Commission");

(2) commends the President and the Administration for the principled position of the United States in objecting to and calling for a vote on Libya's chairmanship of the Commission;

(3) commends countries which joined the United States in objecting to Libya's selection as chair of the Commission;

(4) expresses its dismay at the European Union common position of abstention on the critical vote over Libya's chairmanship;

(5) is appalled at the support provided to Libya in its efforts to lead the Commission;

(6) will hold accountable countries who voted in favor of Libya's chairmanship;

(7) highlights its grave concern over the continuing efforts of human rights violators and terrorist countries to use international fora to legitimize their regimes and continue to act with impunity, and calls on the President to raise United States objections to such efforts during bilateral and multilateral discussions and to direct pertinent Cabinet secretaries to do the same;

(8) calls on countries at various stages of democratization to demonstrate their commitment to human rights, democracy, peace and security, and support efforts to reform the Commission;

(9) calls on the President to instruct the Secretary of State to consult with the appropriate congressional committees, within 30 calendar days of adoption of this resolution, regarding the United States priorities and strategy for the 59th session of the Commission on Human Rights and strategy and proposals for reform of the Commission;

(10) calls on the President to issue an objection to the continued suspension of sanctions against Libya and to call for their full reinstatement until Libya publicly accepts responsibility for the Pan Am Flight 103 bombing, provides appropriate compensation to the victims, and is in full compliance with all of the other requirements of the United Nations sanctions imposed as a result of Libya's orchestration of the Pan Am 103 terrorist attack; and

(11) calls on the Secretary of State to engage member countries to support United States efforts to ensure that states that are gross violators of human rights, sponsors of terrorist activities, or subject to United Nations sanctions will not be elected to leadership positions in the United Nations General Assembly nor will they be elected to membership or leadership positions on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Security Council, or any other United Nations entity or affiliated agency.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Il-

linois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 27, the concurrent resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bipartisan measure, condemning the selection of Libya as the Chair of United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Despite the best efforts of the United States and a handful of other countries, Libya was elected to this position on January 20 of this year. For a country whose own human rights record will not stand up to scrutiny, Libya is certainly in no position to stand in judgment of any other country. Virtually every human rights organization has condemned Libya's flagrant disregard for human rights and the rule of law. Unfortunately, some 17 countries abstained in the vote for the Commission's Chair, including all of the members of the European Union, who choose to look the other way and let Libya attain this coveted post.

How is it that a country such as Libya will soon be in a position to control the proceedings of the U.N.'s main human rights monitoring body?

Historically, the chairmanship of the commission rotates among the major regional groupings in the U.N. system. This year the opportunity to nominate a candidate fell to the Africa group which selected Libya as Africa's candidate. Their selection was primarily in recognition of financial support Libya provided toward the establishing a new Africa union to succeed the ineffective Organization for African Unity. It is also due in part to Libya's backing of the new African Partnership for Development, an initiative led by African states such as South Africa, Nigeria and Senegal, that calls for increased trade benefits and debt relief from the West in exchange for commitments to promote human rights and good governance across the continent.

Needless to say, Libya's central role in these initiatives will undermine their credibility. According to Human Rights Watch, "Over the past 3 decades, Libya's human rights record has been appalling and Libya has been a closed country for United Nations and nongovernmental human rights investigators."

Freedom House declared that Libya's chairmanship would "undermine the U.N.'s moral authority and send a strong and clear message to fellow

rights violators that they are in the clear.' We do not have to go any further than the most recent State Department Human Rights Report to learn that Libya's extensive security forces continue to commit numerous serious human rights abuses.

Qadhafi uses summary judicial proceedings to suppress domestic opposition, and torture is used as a punishment and during interrogations. With prisoners held incommunicado, many political detainees are held for years without charge. Libya's government restricts freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion. Violence against women is a widespread problem, as is the use of forced labor and repression against key tribal groups. In short, Libya's record should disqualify it from membership in the 53-member commission, not to speak of any claim it might have to chair its proceedings.

We are well aware that Libya has yet to clear its name in connection with the 1988 terrorist bombing of Pan Am 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people. Although one of two former Libyan intelligence agents was convicted in the case 2 years ago and the conviction was upheld on appeal, Qadhafi continues to deny all responsibility for the bombing and has yet to pay compensation to the surviving family members to the victims of that terrorist attack.

While temporarily suspended, U.N. sanctions as a result of the Pan Am 103 bombing remain applicable against Libya, whose continuing status as an outlaw nation should bar it from consideration as a candidate for membership in the U.N. Security Council or any other U.N. body. The very credibility of the United Nations has been called into question with this Libyan selection.

The United States will obviously have no easy task in reforming the Commission, ensuring that it fulfills the ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The place to begin, in my view, is to ensure that the Commission has a membership comprised of countries with strong human rights records.

□ 1430

It should, for example, include participants in the community of democracies who have signed the Seoul declaration of November 2002, calling upon democratic nations to work together to uphold the principles of democracy, freedom, good government, and accountability in international organizations.

I look forward to consulting with the Secretary of State on our priorities of strategy for the upcoming 59th session of the commission and for its long-term reform and renewal.

I would also call upon the President to resist any effort now to lift U.N. sanctions against Libya until that country publicly accepts responsibility for the Pan Am 103 bombing, provides appropriate compensation to the vic-

tims, and is otherwise in full compliance with all the requirements of the United Nations sanctions.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this very important resolution.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume, and I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 27.

Mr. Speaker, this important resolution condemns in the strongest possible terms the absurd selection of Libya as Chair of this year's United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Let me begin, Mr. Speaker, by expressing my sincere gratitude to my colleagues across the aisle, our distinguished Committee on International Relations chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who chairs our Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, for collaborating with us on the text of this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, on January 20, Colonel Muammar el-Gaddafi's Orwellian regime, a state sponsor of terrorism and a gross violator of human rights under United Nations sanctions, was elected by member states to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, a body charged with responsibility for promoting universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. This, Mr. Speaker, is the ultimate theater of the absurd.

By virtue of its position in the Africa group of member states in the United Nations, Libya emerged as the pre-ordained Chair of the U.N. human rights commission.

Traditionally, Mr. Speaker, this post has rotated among the U.N.'s geographic groups, with each group respecting the other's nominee without a challenge. Realizing that the Africa group's turn was due and that, appallingly, Libya would be its choice, our administration took the unprecedented step of breaking with tradition and challenging Libya's nomination.

It was the right move, Mr. Speaker. The United States cannot stand idly by as monstrous abusers of human rights such as Libya hijack the human rights commission.

Given the absurd realities of the United Nations in so many instances, our protest was too little, too late, and Libya survived the challenge. Only Canada and Peru had the courage to stand by us in standing up to this outrage.

Although this piece of legislation focuses on the selection of Libya to chair the human rights commission, it is also relevant to a similar outrage which we learned about only recently. Because of an absurd alphabetical rotation scheme, Saddam Hussein's Iraq is set to assume the presidency of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament for a 30-day term starting on May 1. Apparently, Mr. Speaker, this is

Saddam Hussein's reward for 13 years of success in his efforts to defeat U.N. sanctions and inspectors by rebuilding his capacity to create mass havoc with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons.

Mr. Speaker, in response to these twin outrages, many of my colleagues here today will no doubt argue that enough is enough and conclude that it is time to pull the plug in our participation of such U.N. agencies. I fully understand their sentiment, but as we have seen in the current Iraq crisis, the U.N. is both a reality and, to some extent, a necessity. We cannot solve all of the world's problems without a forum to discuss our differences and hopefully to coordinate our responses.

Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere hope that H. Con. Res. 27, the first piece of foreign policy legislation to be considered by the 108th Congress, will be remembered as a watershed event in our efforts to reclaim the United Nations human rights commission and other hopelessly misguided institutions from the rogue states which have captured them for their own propaganda purposes.

This resolution is only a first step. We must follow up with a multipronged effort to bolster U.S. leadership at the U.N. and to reform its membership and leadership criteria.

First, Mr. Speaker, we have to increase the capacity of our State Department to engage in multilateral diplomacy. Our diplomats have to become more effective in lobbying other governments to vote with the United States on critical matters at the U.N.

The United States must also engage in a vigorous and sustained effort to establish and to build a new democracy caucus within the U.N. that will assist democratic nations to work within and across regional lines to promote democratic leadership within the U.N. system.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we need to engage in a comprehensive effort to reform the outmoded system of regional voting and decision-making, and we must challenge rotational alphabetical and other leadership schemes that permit nations under U.N. sanctions to assume leadership positions at the United Nations.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure and to continue to work toward a more rational, sane, and effective United Nations.

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

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me the time.

As we have heard, Mr. Speaker, on January 20 of this year, Libya, a gross violator of human rights and a state sponsor of terrorism, was elected to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights despite the Bush administration's best effort to block this

farce. Hiding behind procedural explanations and diplomatic maneuverings, 33 countries ignored Libya's use of terror, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, persecution and harassments of political opponents, the selling of human beings into bondage as slaves; and instead, they voted for Libya to preside over this foremost human rights body.

The commission is one of the few international forums confronting human rights violators, and it sets much of the tone and the agenda for a global human rights accountability. Its mission essentially is to give voice to those who are oppressed; thus, the selection of Libya was not only a defeat for justice and human dignity but a betrayal of all those brave souls worldwide who risk imprisonment, exile or even death to fight for universal rights and for fundamental freedoms.

It was, and is, a betrayal of millions upon millions living under brutal regimes from North Korea to Cuba to China to Vietnam to Iran and Iraq. It is a betrayal also of the suffering endured by the families of the victims of Pan Am Flight 103. It shows contempt for the mission and work of the commission, and it only serves to empower and embolden pariah states who are increasing their presence on the commission and manipulating its agenda in order to legitimize their unacceptable practices.

How can a regime which does not allow U.N. human rights monitors into its borders and refuses to comply with its obligation under international human rights covenants be a member of the commission, much less be elected to preside over it? How can a nation subject to U.N. sanctions for its role in terrorist attacks be rewarded with a leadership position such as this?

Enough is enough. The U.S. cannot and will not sit idly by and allow dictators and terrorist states to further hijack the commission and other U.N. bodies.

That is why the resolution before us, which I had the pleasure of drafting with my friend, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on International Relations, and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), our ranking member, not only provides overwhelming evidence about Libya's record on human rights and terrorism but gives direction and support to the Bush administration as it attempts to reclaim the commission from the tyrants.

Toward this goal, we look forward to continuing our discussions with the administration on such possible areas of reform such as the establishment of at least a minimum set of standards which should be met by all states who seek to be members of this body; also, the creation of a democracy caucus where its members make decisions based on shared values and commitments, rather than regional or bilateral considerations; to establish cri-

teria for accreditation of nongovernmental organizations to the commission, to make sure that these NGOs are not agents of violator governments; also, to provide recognized prisoners of conscience and human right dissidents in exile an opportunity to render testimony on the situation of their country of origin during debate of pertinent resolutions at the annual session of the commission.

This resolution extends beyond the commission. It seeks to prevent a repetition of this unacceptable situation in other U.N. fora, forums such as the Conference on Disarmament which may have Iraq at its helm in May of this year. And to achieve these goals, Mr. Speaker, the resolution calls for a diplomatic initiative to ensure that states that are gross violators of human rights, sponsors of terrorist activities or subject to U.N. sanctions, they will not be afforded membership or elected to any leadership position on any non-General Assembly U.N. entity or affiliated agency.

Article V, in fact, of the U.N. charter provides, in principle, the suspension of a member state's rights if it is subject to U.N. sanctions. In addition, the resolution seeks to address attempts made by the Libyan dictator to escape his regime's responsibility for the Pan Am 103 bombing. It calls on the President to seek full reinstatement of sanctions against Libya until it is in full compliance with all of its obligations under these sanctions, sanctions which were imposed, Mr. Speaker, as a result of Libya's orchestration of this terrorist attack.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this is a comprehensive, forward-looking resolution which seeks to restore the commission's moral authority as well as the relevance of other U.N. bodies so they may fulfill their mandates. It enjoys bipartisan support, and I ask my colleagues to vote for passage of this resolution today.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield as much time as he might consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished Democratic whip, one of the most effective global fighters for human rights in this body or any place.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California is very kind, and I thank him for his remarks; but more than that, I thank him for his leadership on this issue and so many issues of vital concern to human rights internationally.

I also want to thank my very good friend, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the chairman. He himself is a giant in standing up for human rights. He and I have traveled overseas and participated in the Helsinki process together, he chairing delegations on which I had the honor of serving with him.

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Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friends, the gentleman from Illi-

nois and the gentleman from California, for bringing this very important resolution to the House floor. It is, I believe, a moral imperative and a matter of principle that this House speak as one today.

The selection on January 20 of Libya, a gross, and I have heard that word used a number of times, and in our own lexicon of law "gross" means beyond the pale, a gross violator of human rights and a state sponsor of terrorism to ironically chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights is, in my opinion, an affront to basic decency and it demeans the United Nations itself.

Absurd, grotesque, tragic. Those are just a few of the words that have been used to describe Libya's election to this post. Our State Department includes Libya on its list of state sponsors of terrorism. Amnesty International has documented Libya's extrajudicial execution of government opponents and torture of political detainees. Human Rights Watch has called Libya's human rights record over the last three decades appalling.

Imagine, the Commission on Human Rights, which claims to stand for free elections, free expression and fair trials, will now be chaired by a Nation that has not had a free election since Colonel Qaddafi seized power in 1969. Imagine, the Commission on Human Rights will now be chaired by a nation that itself refuses, refuses to admit U.N. human rights investigators. Imagine, the Commission on Human Rights will now be chaired by a nation that was responsible for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 that killed 270 people, and they harbored for years and years the perpetrators of that act; responsible for the 1986 bombing of La Belle Disco in Berlin that killed two U.S. servicemen; and for the 1989 bombing of UTA Flight 772 over Niger.

The selection of Libya to head the Commission on Human Rights undermines the credibility, integrity, and relevance of the United Nations. We must not, I repeat, Mr. Speaker, we must not countenance or ignore or rationalize the dangerous, illegal and destabilizing behavior by criminals and nations whose rogue status endangers international security and stability.

The only bright spot in this otherwise outrageous, dismal act is that it may, it just may spur the international community to closely scrutinize Libya's human rights record and force serious thinking about reforming the Commission and the way of selecting the Commission. I urge our government, Mr. Speaker, to work to accomplish both of those ends.

I believe this resolution is an important step in focusing our attention on this egregious act of irresponsibility by the United Nations and by its member states, and I urge my colleagues to support unanimously this very important resolution.

Again, I thank the chairman, the distinguished gentleman from Illinois,

and my friend, the gentleman from California, for yielding me this time and for their leadership in this effort.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to say what a pleasure it is to work with the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) on important issues such as these. They are immensely helpful and, as I say, are a real pleasure.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to echo the words of my good friend from Illinois. It is a pleasure and an honor to begin yet another session of Congress with him. We look forward to achieving many things together.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to express my grave concerns with the content of the resolution condemning the election of Libya to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

I abhor Libya's human rights record. I don't agree with Libya's selection to head the Commission. But, the members of the United Nations have held a legitimate, democratic vote. Despite our serious reservations we have a responsible obligation to abide by the U.N.'s decision. We should not, as this resolution calls for, hold nations accountable for their votes.

In a straight up or down vote, the U.N. Commission on Human Rights voted to elect Libya as its chair. Many people don't agree with that decision—Members of Congress, human rights advocates and many others. There is clear evidence of Libya's state sponsorship of terrorism and it's human rights record. Yet, regardless of our distaste with the outcome, this was a fair election in which the member nations elected Libya to this post. Everyone involved had an opportunity to vote and a majority decided who they wanted to lead them. Democracy has prevailed. Now, the U.S. Congress is asked to vote to condemn that practice of democracy?

The United States should practice what it preaches. We cannot in one breath say democracy is good and in the next say democracy is bad, simply because we disagree with the result.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, on December 21, 1988 Pan Am Flight 103 exploded in the skies over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 innocent people. Sadly, the government that sponsored this terrorist act only fifteen years ago—Libya—has now been selected to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Unfortunately, the hypocrisy of this reaches far beyond the Pan Am tragedy. Libya continues to stand in consistent violation of international human rights treaties. It's not just that torture and random executions are not condemned by Libya, such gross violations of human rights are heavily practiced and supported by high ranking government officials.

Libyans—especially those that freely express their political opinion—live in fear of their own government every day. Torture, abuse and unfair detentions are common practice within the Libyan system of justice, yet Libya has not admitted to a single case of human rights abuses within their country.

The preamble of the United Nations' Charter appropriately states: "We the peoples of the United Nations determined to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights." As Libya assumes the chair of the U.N.'s Commission on Human Rights, it is clear that this faith has been seriously compromised.

It is appalling that a nation with a clear and consistent record of complete disregard for human rights now stands in this key role in helping combat human rights violations. I believe that the legitimacy of this Commission has been lost and thousands of innocent men and women across the world, who fall victim to harsh and unfair treatment every day, will continue to suffer without hope as long as nations like Libya lead the fight to protect human rights by chairing this commission.

I join my colleagues in supporting H. Con. Res. 27, which condemns the selection of Libya to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, on the basis of abominations like Libya's recent election to chair the Human Rights Commission, it's plain that the U.N. has tripped over the final precipice and is now descending ever-deeper into the abyss of moral relativism.

We've seen from the U.N., for decades, a flagrant pattern of amoral accommodation, calculated appeasement, and even the willful suppression of the distinction between good and evil itself.

We see a disturbing lesson at work: In the United Nations of the Twenty-First Century, a documented record of state-sponsored terrorism, aggressive militarism and systematic brutality are no impediment to a country's rise within the U.N.'s bureaucratic hierarchy. From the International Criminal Court's excesses, to Iraq's chairmanship of the disarmament conference, and Libya's chairmanship of the Human Rights Commission, the U.N. is utterly marginalizing itself.

The free world can't delegate international security decisions to an organization capable of absurd actions like the elevation of Libya to the Human Rights Commission or Iraq to the Disarmament Conference.

Let's not hedge the truth: The U.N. is legitimizing indefensible regimes and at the end of this path lays utter irrelevance. The free nations of the world face a number of grave problems and we can never allow illegitimate regimes to dictate the terms of our freedom or security.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn in the strongest possible terms the selection of Libya to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Libya has committed untold acts of terror against the United States and its citizens. Libya has not demonstrated sufficiently that it does not support international terrorism. Nor has it abandoned its quest for weapons of mass destruction. Congress correctly extended the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act until August 2006.

To be sure, let's look at Libya's record of uncivilized behavior during the last two decades: In the 1980s it was reported that Libya used chemical weapons against government rebels in the Chad civil war. It was also reported that during this time Libya was seeking chemical and nuclear weapons. Muammar al-Qadhafi also stated that he supported international terrorism, and defended terrorism in wars of national liberation. Because of this support, the

United States named Libya a state sponsor of terrorism on December 29, 1979.

Libya was suspected of being involved in the April 5, 1986 bombing of a Berlin nightclub frequented by U.S. Armed forces personnel. Three U.S. soldiers died in the blast. On April 15, 1986 the United States bombed three target areas in Libya in retaliation for the Berlin incident.

The United States and the United Kingdom accused Libya of complicity in the December 21, 1988 explosion of Pan American Airways flight 103 en route from London to New York that crashed in Lockerbie Scotland, killing 259 passengers and crew and 11 people on the ground. Also, France suspected that Libyans were involved in the bombing and crash of UTA flight 772 over Niger in Africa in 1989.

The United States has noted al-Qadhafi recent recantations on his support for terrorism with some skepticism and caution.

Mr. Speaker, if indeed Mr. al-Qadhafi and his regime have indeed reformed, the civilized world would feel a lot better if they had more time to establish a favorable track record in this regard. To reward such recent behavior with this very important and prestigious appointment makes a mockery of what this commission stands for.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support today of H. Con. Res. 27, which condemns the selection of Libya to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The international community has long known that Libya has a deplorable record on human rights and is a sponsor of terrorism. For that reason, it is shocking that Libya is now the chair of a body charged with the responsibility of promoting universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for the world's citizens.

The United Nations' decision to elect Libya as the Chair of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights is alarming for several reasons. First, it is remarkable that United Nations would even consider Libya's candidacy for the position, given the fact that Libya has not accepted responsibility for its role in the terrorist bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 that killed hundreds of innocent people over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988. Until Libya takes responsibility for its actions and complies with particular Security Council mandates, Libya cannot have any credibility in being the chair of a United Nations commission that promotes human rights. In today's world, where we seek to defeat the threat posed by international terrorism, it is irresponsible for a state like Libya to be elected to such a leadership position.

Second, Libya's selection to be chair of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights reflects a disturbing trend in international institutions. It has become highly prevalent that states which violate human rights laws seek to secure positions in global bodies that espouse such laws so they can protect their reputations and those of similar regimes. Members of the international community must speak out against such practices lest these institutions become a mockery of international law and human rights.

I urge the House to pass this resolution, which states in the strongest possible terms the outrage of Congress at the selection of Libya to chair the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. The Resolution clearly states that: (1) Libya is a gross violator of

human rights; (2) it is a state sponsor of terrorism; (3) several countries as well as international organizations have condemned Libya's selection as chair of the Commission; (4) the United States is appalled by the European Union's common position of abstention on the critical vote over Libya's selection as chair of the commission; (5) the Secretary of State should engage member countries to support the United States efforts to ensure that states that are gross violators of human rights or sponsors of terrorism not ascend to leadership positions in the United Nations.

Libya has a horrific human rights record. Citizens do not choose their leaders in free and fair elections, nor are they able to petition their government for redress of grievances. It uses summary judicial proceedings to suppress domestic opposition. Security forces torture prisoners during interrogations and as punishment. Security forces arbitrarily arrest and detain persons, and many prisoners are held incommunicado. Many political detainees are held for years without charge. There is not an independent judiciary that enforces legal rights of citizens, and citizens do not have the right to a fair public trial or to be represented by legal counsel. The government infringes on citizens' privacy rights, and citizens do not have the right to be secure in their homes or persons, or to own private property. Libya restricts freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, and religion. Is this the type of country that should be charged with being the chair of a commission that promotes human rights? I think not.

Libya is one of seven countries on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terror. As I have said in the past, Libya has continued to acquire weapons of mass destruction and promote state-sponsored terrorism. Last year, our Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security said that there was no doubt that Libya seeks nuclear weapons. Furthermore, he said that Libya has produced at least 100 tons of different kinds of chemical weapons. It is antithetical to the United Nations' mission for peace that a state engaged in creating global havoc be in charge of one of its most important committees.

It is imperative that members of the international community do not retreat from their responsibility to ensure that those charged with monitoring human rights are not, in fact, grave violators themselves. We must not give credibility to countries which violate human rights and support terrorism. To do otherwise is to legitimize their practices.

Congress has recently made its policy clear with respect to Libya's alarming behavior. In 2001, Congress passed the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of 2001, which President Bush signed into law in August 2001. I was an original co-sponsor of the bill, and in the Ways and Means Committee I argued in favor of extending the current sanctions in place against Iran and Libya for an additional five years. ILSA threatens the imposition of economic sanctions against foreign entities investing in Iran and Libya's energy sectors. ILSA combines deterrence (the possibility of sanctions) with presidential discretion (through broad waiver authority). ILSA has been very effective so far, the Congress overwhelmingly approved the reauthorization of legislation to keep the pressure on Libya and Iran to stop their pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and ballistics missile technology. Libya also remains hostile

to the State of Israel and may support terrorist activities against Israel.

Mr. Speaker, it is this great nation's hope that it can one day live in a world where it is not threatened by international terrorism and that human rights for all will be respected. The selection of Libya as chair to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights undermines these goals. I, therefore, urge the House to pass this resolution by a strong bipartisan vote.

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Chairman for bringing this important issue to the attention of the House and the American people.

Two years ago, many in this chamber were shocked when the United States was removed from the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and of the International Narcotics Control Board.

The U.S. was a founding member of the Human Rights Commission and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was its first Chair.

The U.S. spends more money fighting the use of illegal narcotics than any other nation in the world.

Despite these facts, some of our "friends"—and I use the term with increasing skepticism—at the United Nations felt it was more important that nations like Libya and Syria serve on the U.N. agency overseeing human rights and that the Netherlands—a country whose own Web page admits they will not enforce their drug laws—should serve in our place on a board designed to enforce drug laws.

Chairman HYDE stood up and led this body to call for the suspension of U.S. funds to the U.N. until we were reinstated on the Human Rights Commission. We are now back on that board.

I offered an amendment that passed this House to curtail our funding of the International Narcotics Control Board until we were returned to its membership. This year the U.S. was again shut out while Iran, Brazil and Nigeria were added to the Board.

We have seen that the United Nations does not learn from its mistakes. As former President Reagan might have said, "There they go again."

While we have been reelected to the Human Rights Commission, Libya has been elected to its Chairmanship. Think about that. Libya. A nation led by a brutal dictator who is known to sponsor international terrorism. Yet only two other nations joined the U.S. in opposing their election to head this prestigious body whose duty is to protect human rights. Eight European nations made the "courageous" decision to abstain.

And in an example of how momentum is the true ruler of the United Nations and its bloated bureaucracy, this year's meeting of the U.N. Conference on Disarmament will be presided over by Iraq—despite the fact that Iraq is under U.N. sanctions for failing to disarm and even now faces international action for this failure.

I wish I could tell you I was surprised.

But the United Nations has not been the effective body it could have been over the past two decades. Time and time again, the U.N. in recent years has done more harm than good.

I still believe the U.N. can be a useful body. One that helps promote dialogue and the exchange of ideas around the world. But many of its members have forgotten that respect is

earned through logical decisions that advance the security of the world—not by blindly following bureaucratic momentum that promotes rogue regimes at the expense of the greatest democracies in the world.

I truly hope that the actions we take here today send a message to the U.N. and its members that if they want the body to continue to be a force for good and progress in the world, they must think before they act and make decisions worthy of respect. The election of Libya to Chair the Human Rights Commission, and the continued exclusion of the U.S. from U.N. committees and boards, are not decisions of which they should be proud.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OTTER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 27.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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.

HONORING CZECH REPUBLIC PRESIDENT VACLAV HAVEL

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 22) honoring Czech Republic President Vaclav Havel.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 22

Whereas Vaclav Havel, President of the Czech Republic, is widely respected throughout the world as a proponent of democratic principles;

Whereas Vaclav Havel's superb skills as a playwright and essayist helped promote democracy in Eastern Europe during the Cold War;

Whereas the plays of Vaclav Havel were instrumental in bringing international attention to the struggle for democracy in Czechoslovakia;

Whereas Vaclav Havel was imprisoned three times for his efforts to promote democratic thought and reforms in communist Czechoslovakia, yet maintained his convictions throughout;

Whereas Vaclav Havel was a cofounder of the human rights organization Charter 77 and the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted;

Whereas Vaclav Havel, as leader of the Civic Forum movement, was a key figure in the 1989 bloodless overthrow of the Czechoslovakian communist government known as the Velvet Revolution;

Whereas following the Velvet Revolution, Vaclav Havel was elected by the people as President of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic in 1990, and following a peaceful split forming two separate states, elected President of the Czech Republic in 1993;

Whereas under the leadership of Vaclav Havel, the Czech Republic has been an important and valued member of the world community;