

major setback as a result of the Bolaños crisis when Taiwan, which provided the country with nearly \$200 million in aid between 1997 and 2003, announced it would cease sending aid until the national crisis is resolved.

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

The PLC and Sandinista plan to oust the president, or at least strip him of much of his power, has largely ignored the sentiments of the average Nicaraguan. As Rodolfo Delgado Romero of the Managua-based Nicaraguan Studies Institute told COHA, "Nicaragua must overcome the vicious cycle of crises and have the capacity to learn from errors that date back to the 19th century" so it is no longer a country "where the majority of the population is excluded from the decision-making process . . . a nation controlled by relatively exclusive elites for most of its history." Nicaragua is in desperate need for politicians who work on behalf of and truthfully represent its citizens.

The power struggle currently being witnessed in Nicaragua also demonstrates that the region is still plagued by corruption and political pandering. Such behavior invariably leads to unstable rule, which carries the potential for serious conflict and underscores the need for a corruption-free OAS that can act decisively as an arbiter to uphold democracy in the hemisphere. It is disconcerting to note that despite his three years of painfully-achieved economic progress in a nation wrestling with stifling underdevelopment, Bolaños is on the verge of falling victim to manipulations by self-serving political opponents. While it appears likely that President Bolaños will narrowly survive to finish his term, the events of the last two months have cast an almost impenetrable shadow over Nicaragua's troubled democracy.

HONORING JUDGE MICHAEL
BATCHIK

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER
OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 19, 2004

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Judge Michael Batchik upon his retirement after 25 years of service to the citizens of the 52nd District Court, 1st Division and the 52nd District Court, 2nd Division of Oakland County, Michigan.

Professionally, Judge Batchik served as chairman of the Judicial Conference Committee of the State Bar of Michigan, and has been an active member of numerous judicial organizations, including the Representative Assembly and the American Judges' Association. Mike has served as president of the Michigan District Judges' Association and president of the Oakland County District Judges' Association. He is also a past president of the Walled Lake Rotary.

During his tenure in the 52nd District Court, Judge Batchik initiated and implemented a highly successful jail alternative program. The program involves sentencing non-violent offenders to work in a structured community service program in lieu of jail, including a garden program that produces food for charitable organizations in the district. He has also been actively involved in implementing the very positive and successful "Sobriety Court" program at the Court. This program has been a key turning point in the lives of many drunk drivers, as well as reducing recidivism.

Mr. Speaker, I extend our entire community's sincere appreciation and gratitude to

Judge Michael Batchik for his fine service to our community and our country; and wish him and his wife, Connie, the very best as they begin the next chapter of their lives.

REGARDING H. RES. 863

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 19, 2004

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, according to the Foreign Assistance Act, U.S. foreign assistance: "shall be used in support of, rather than substitution for, the self-help efforts" of developing countries and "should focus on establishing and upgrading the institutional capacities of developing countries in order to promote long-term development."

Over 40 years have passed since the enactment of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act, and countries throughout, the world still face hurdles, including: extreme poverty, hunger, disease, high unemployment, and civil unrest. The U.S. Government only has a limited amount of resources available for international development assistance, and we need to ensure that we spend every dollar in the most efficient way possible to help as many people as possible. I strongly believe that the most efficient way to distribute foreign assistance is through building local capacity.

What exactly is local capacity building? Local capacity building can be defined as a continuous process where individuals, communities, organizations and governments improve their ability to understand and solve their development challenges in a sustainable way. Assistance means "to give support" . . . it doesn't mean to do it yourself.

The most effective foreign assistance tools are not necessarily tangible things like bulldozers and construction equipment, or hiring American contractors to do the job in-country, but a more powerful and inanimate tool: knowledge. The transfer of knowledge via technical assistance, training and education is what will create long-term, sustainable development. This transfer of technical skills, be it teaching basic business skills for small businesses to flourish, demonstrating how to build wells, explaining the importance of rotating crops, developing a judicial system that hews to the rule of law, or promoting an educational system that provides opportunities for both men and women, is considered local capacity building and is fundamental for sustainable development.

Today, I am introducing a resolution that reaffirms the importance of local capacity building in U.S. foreign assistance programs. As my resolution illustrates, there is legal precedent and also considerable consensus within the development community that building local capacity is the key to creating long-term sustainable development.

But building local capacity isn't just done on an individual level, it needs to be done on a societal level and a governmental institutional level. Problems like poor access to health care, lack of financial literacy, teacher training are long-term, institutional problems. They are not going to be solved by a one-time infusion of foreign aid. Education and training of citizens in the developing world doesn't evaporate when the political climate or funding level

changes in the United States or an international NGO reaches its strategic goals and departs.

The goal of local capacity building is to have individuals and governments take ownership of development programs and modify them to achieve lasting results. Where U.S. assistance can make a powerful difference is by providing the technical assistance and training to locals so that they are able to properly address their own problems. Communities can then take this knowledge and find ways to improve their own livelihoods on their own terms and in the appropriate cultural context.

An excellent example of foreign assistance technology transfer is USAID's Coffee Corps program. The U.S. sends renowned U.S. coffee specialists to coffee producing countries to assist coffee farmers in establishing the highest quality beans that will receive a higher market value. This knowledge transfer stays with individual producers and helps create more wealth and development within a rural community.

USAID has an excellent track record in promoting training programs for foreign aid recipients in key areas of economic development, and we need to recognize USAID's efforts and encourage other foreign assistance programs to push for a broadening of the usage of local capacity building within international development.

U.S. foreign assistance must invest heavily in programs that "train the trainers", promote educational and cultural exchanges, and fully fund grassroots development programs like the Peace Corps. The Millennium Challenge Corporation, MCC, appears to be making strides in promoting more sustainable development programs, but we must mandate that a country's commitment to building local capacity is a factor when the MCC considers a country's eligibility for funds.

I served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Colombia during the 1960s, and our mantra was: "Work yourself out of a job." Peace Corps volunteers work to educate their counterparts in 'best practices' in areas such as agriculture, health, education, small business and IT development. These counterparts are then able to teach these new skills to other community members, enabling local residents to develop and sustain a better quality of life. "Work yourself out of a job," shouldn't just be the mantra of Peace Corps volunteers. It should be reaffirmed as the central tenet of U.S. development assistance so that citizens in developing countries gain the knowledge to improve their lives and, in turn, improve the world.

SSGT RUSSELL SLAY

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 19, 2004

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor SSGT Russell Slay and to extend my deepest sympathies to his family and friends.

Staff Sergeant Slay was a constituent of the 29th District of Texas, and a true hero, who died on November 9, 2004 while serving his country in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Russell Slay joined the U.S. Marine Corps at the age of 18, and had served his country