

voting for this legislation. A decade has passed since Yitzhak Rabin was murdered; I pray another decade need not pass before his lifelong goal of peace in the Middle East is realized.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution honoring the life and legacy of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

It has been 10 years, November 4, 1995, since Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by a gunman in central Tel Aviv after attending a rally, however, Mr. Rabin's service to the Israeli people and work to promote peace with Israel's neighbors is still present today.

At the age of 19 Mr. Rabin joined the Israeli Army where he served for 27 years, culminating his military career as I.D.F. Chief of Staff. After retiring from I.D.F. service on January 1, 1968, he was appointed Israeli Ambassador to the United States.

Mr. Rabin returned to Jerusalem in early 1973, and became active in the Israel Labor Party. In the December 1973 elections, he was elected to the Knesset, and when Golda Meir formed her government in April 1974, he was appointed Minister of Labor. This government resigned shortly afterwards, and on June 2, 1974, the Knesset voted confidence in a new government headed by Yitzhak Rabin. As Prime Minister, Mr. Rabin placed a special emphasis on improving the economy, solving social problems, and strengthening the I.D.F.

Following the Labor Party's defeat in the May 1977 elections, Mr. Rabin served as a member of Knesset in the opposition, until the formation of the National Unity Government in September 1984. He then served as Minister of Defense in the National Unity Government from September 1984 to March 1990.

From March 15, 1990, to June 23, 1992, Mr. Rabin served again in the Knesset in the opposition. Before the 1992 elections, the Israel Labor Party held its first nationwide primaries. Mr. Rabin was elected chairman of the party in February 1992, and in the June 1992 national elections he was elected Prime Minister.

On September 13, 1993, Mr. Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat signed the Declaration of Principles in Washington, DC, outlining the proposed interim self-government arrangements. The "GazaJericho First" agreement, signed in Cairo on May 4, 1994, addressed the implementation of the first stage of the Declaration of Principles. Following the progress in the negotiations with the Palestinians, Mr. Rabin received the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize for his work.

I had the opportunity to meet Prime Minister Rabin and value his memory. Mr. Rabin was an extraordinary man, and not enough can be said about his commitment to the Israeli people, his country, and regional peace. Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 535 to honor the legacy and life work of Mr. Rabin.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 538. On the 10-year anniversary of his death, I believe that it is important to think back and honor the life of Yitzhak Rabin, for he was a great figure in the pursuit of worldwide peace and stability in the Middle East. During his two terms as Prime Minister of Israel, Rabin attempted to work and negotiate with then Palestinian Liberation Organization leader Yassar Arafat to bring about a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

Rabin's service to the nation of Israel began with his work in the Israeli Defense Forces. Rabin rose to the position of Chief of Staff, and under his command, Israel was able to successfully defend itself against its neighboring states during the Six-Day War. Following his retirement from the IDF, in 1968 Rabin was chosen to serve as ambassador to the United States. In 1973 he was elected to the Knesset. Only one year later, Rabin was chosen to be the leader of the labor party, eventually being elected Prime Minister of Israel. During the early 1990s, in Rabin's second run as Prime Minister, he made it a priority to solve the Palestinian conflict. His tireless efforts on that behalf led to the Oslo Accord. For his efforts Rabin was awarded the Noble Peace Prize.

As we all know, Prime Minister Rabin was murdered in Tel Aviv by a citizen who did not support his efforts towards achieving peace. I had the opportunity, along with President Clinton and several other Members of Congress, to attend his funeral in Israel. It was one of the most deeply moving ceremonies to which I have ever been.

We remember Yitzhak Rabin today as a great man who worked his whole life to protect and strengthen the free state that is Israel. His memory inspires us to continue the progress for global peace. It is crucial that his memory and influence is not forgotten a decade after his tragic assassination.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 535, and appreciate this opportunity to honor the life, legacy, and example of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on the tenth anniversary of his death.

My first trip to Israel was to attend Mr. Rabin's funeral. During my most recent trip to Israel I joined with thousands of Israelis and other international guests in a moving tribute to his distinguished life.

Yitzhak Rabin said that, "politicians are elected by adults to represent the children." In my eyes, Rabin was a man that politicians could look up to for his tremendous valor and courage. During the peace rally in Tel Aviv where he was brutally assassinated his last words were: "I have always believed that the majority of the people want peace, are prepared to take risks for peace. Peace is what the Jewish People aspire to."

Mr. Rabin served in war and was a man of peace. His death was a tremendous loss for Israel and the whole world. I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution honoring his life and legacy.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 535, honoring the life, legacy, and example of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on the tenth anniversary of his death. Mr. Rabin dedicated himself to peace and worked to ensure a lasting peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. Today we honor his legacy and, by doing so, commit ourselves once again to building a lasting peace in this still volatile region.

Mr. Rabin led a distinguished life dedicated to his people. He served in the Israeli army, as Ambassador to the United States, as the Minister of Defense, and as the Prime Minister. As Prime Minister, Rabin was instrumental in the signing of an interim agreement with Egypt in 1979 and the Declaration of Principles framework agreement between the Israelis and Palestinians in 1993.

For his efforts, Mr. Rabin was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994. At that time he

stated, "there is only one radical means of sanctifying human lives. Not armored plating, or tanks, or planes, or concrete fortifications. The one radical solution is peace."

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ADERHOLT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 535.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. LANTOS. 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 question will be postponed.

MOURNING LOSS OF LIFE CAUSED BY FLOODS AND MUDSLIDES IN OCTOBER 2005 IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 280) mourning the horrific loss of life caused by the floods and mudslides that occurred in October 2005 in Central America and Mexico and expressing the sense of Congress that the United States should do everything possible to assist the affected people and communities, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 280

Whereas on October 4, 2005, Hurricane Stan made landfall on Mexico's Gulf coast, bringing sustained winds of 80 miles per hour before weakening to a tropical storm and generating separate storms across southern Mexico and Central America;

Whereas Hurricane Wilma, a category four hurricane, made landfall in Cozumel, Mexico on October 22, 2005, and stalled over the Yucatan Peninsula bringing over 60 inches of rain to some parts of the Peninsula and causing severe flooding, over 75,000 evacuations, damaging between 30-40 percent of the houses in Cancun, and causing severe damage to the area's vital tourism industry;

Whereas Hurricane Beta made landfall on October 30, 2005, near Karabal and Sandy Bay, Nicaragua, as a category two hurricane, displacing thousands of people, damaging critical communications and transportation infrastructure, and bringing destructive winds and rains to these and approximately 50 other communities;

Whereas the heavy rainfall associated with these storms caused widespread and severe flooding that has affected millions of people across Central America, including the people of Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Guatemala, and the people of Mexico;

Whereas, as of October 12, 2005, the flooding had killed an estimated 2,000 people across Central America and Mexico, according to government estimates which are expected to be revised upwards;

Whereas rains have produced more than 900 landslides, burying entire villages and causing numerous deaths in Guatemala, with official government estimates confirming 654

deaths, 577 people missing, and more than 120,000 people affected across 621 communities in the provinces of Escuintla, Guatemala, Quetzaltenango, Chiquimula, San Marcos, Chimaltenango, El Quiché, and Baja Verapaz;

Whereas many of the affected areas are especially vulnerable to natural disasters and lack access to basic healthcare, sanitation, and medical services;

Whereas the flooding and landslides have damaged housing and public infrastructure in 251 of the 331 municipalities in Guatemala and sustained rains across much of the country have hampered ongoing relief efforts;

Whereas two simultaneous emergencies in El Salvador—the severe flooding caused by Tropical Storm Stan and the eruption of the Santa Ana volcano on October 1, 2005—have affected half of the country and forced the evacuation of more than 69,000 people to local shelters;

Whereas Tropical Storm Stan caused massive flooding in the Mexican States of Veracruz, Chiapas, Oaxaca, Tabasco, Puebla, Hidalgo, and Guerrero and forced the evacuation of approximately 370,000 people from nearly 3,000 communities to local shelters, according to the Government of Mexico;

Whereas extensive rainfall in the Costa Rican provinces of Alajuela, Cartago, Guanacaste, Heredia, Puntarenas, and San Jose in the Pacific and Central Valley caused severe flooding and landslides, forcing more than 1,000 people in 459 communities to evacuate to local shelters, damaged 550 houses, 117 bridges, and 11 educational buildings, and more than 281 roads have been blocked or damaged by mudslides;

Whereas many families in these affected areas are homeless and in desperate need of reconstruction help;

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) initially provided \$150,000 to USAID/Guatemala for the local purchase and distribution of emergency relief supplies, as well as for helicopter support, including fuel and rental of local helicopters and an additional \$1,200,000 to USAID/Guatemala for emergency grants to nongovernmental organization partners for emergency health, water and sanitation, and shelter activities;

Whereas USAID/OFDA committed \$200,000 to support the Pan American Health Organization's (PAHO) emergency health and water and sanitation activities as part of the United Nations joint appeal;

Whereas USAID/OFDA is working closely with the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico to coordinate transportation and distribution of relief commodities to affected communities and for the local purchase and distribution of emergency relief supplies, water, and food;

Whereas on October 8, 2005, the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) deployed a 58-person team to Guatemala City to assist with ongoing disaster relief efforts in southwestern Guatemala and sent nine United States Army helicopters to conduct search and rescue missions and provide for the transportation of emergency relief supplies, including food, medical supplies, and communications equipment, to affected areas, as well as flying in host nation firefighters, emergency aid workers, and doctors; and

Whereas the United States initially has provided \$100,000 to the Mexican Red Cross for the local purchase and distribution of emergency relief supplies to aid victims of Hurricane Wilma, and a USAID/OFDA team is working with USAID/Mexico, local disaster officials, and other organizations to assess impacts, aid requirements, and deliver

further emergency assistance: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) Congress—

(A) mourns the horrific loss of life caused by the floods and mudslides that occurred in October 2005 in Central America and Mexico;

(B) expresses its deep condolences to the families of the many victims;

(C) commits to provide the necessary resources and to stand by the people of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico in the relief, recovery, and rebuilding efforts;

(D) applauds the prompt humanitarian response to this natural disaster by the United States Agency for International Development, the United States Armed Forces, and other departments and agencies of the United States Government, the United Nations and other international organizations, and nongovernmental organizations;

(E) recognizes the growing support by international donors for relief efforts;

(F) affirms its commitment to additional United States support for relief and long-term reconstruction efforts in areas affected by the flooding;

(G) urges continued attention by donors and relief agencies to the needs of vulnerable populations in the stricken countries, particularly those left homeless by this disaster and whose welfare and economic livelihoods have been disrupted;

(H) urges assistance which targets immediate and long-term infrastructure needs, with a special emphasis on improvements that aim to increase emergency preparedness and withstand future natural disaster events; and

(I) encourages the Administration and other international donors to provide immediate and long-term assistance for the reconstruction of affected infrastructure that is a requisite for the economic and social development of the devastated communities; and

(2) it is the sense of Congress that it should be the policy of the United States—

(A) to promote economic growth and improved living standards, reduce poverty, and promote democracy and the rule of law in the countries of Central America;

(B) in concert with multilateral humanitarian organizations, the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank, to actively support the reconstruction of affected communities in places to be determined by respective governments in collaboration with representatives of such communities;

(C) to expedite humanitarian relief and reconstruction efforts in order to mitigate the immediate and long-term threats to public health, economic development, and security in Central America;

(D) to provide technical assistance to Central American governments in order to strengthen the capacity of first responders and governmental institutions at the national, provincial, and local levels in the area of disaster management coordination and preparedness, including information and communications systems to help with the response to natural disasters; and

(E) to encourage the governments of these countries to improve disaster mitigation techniques and compliance among all key sectors of their societies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

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GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 the concurrent resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ADERHOLT). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, devastating storms affected most of the Western Hemisphere this hurricane season, and many people throughout the region will spend the next few months and years rebuilding their lives and their communities. Many people in the U.S., as well as our neighbors in Central America, are in this situation in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Stan, Wilma, and Beta.

These hurricanes and other tropical storms that barreled through the Caribbean, along Mexico's gulf coast, and along parts of Central America and up to our shores, brought heavy winds and destructive rainfall. The torrential downpours caused widespread flooding and severe mudslides, killing an estimated 2,000 people and affecting millions of others across Central America, including the people of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Mexico. Some of these areas sustained severe damage to residential and commercial infrastructure and crippled destruction of transportation as well as food crops.

In some of the hardest hit areas, schools, homes, roads, hospitals, and other buildings were simply washed away. Some villages in Guatemala were swept away by mudslides and have been turned instead into mass graves. Our prayers are with these communities.

House Con. Res. 280 was introduced last month to urge expedited humanitarian relief, as well as stronger efforts to provide technical assistance to Central American governments in order to strengthen the capacity of first responders and governmental institutions at the national, provincial, and local levels. Furthermore, this legislation urges assistance which targets immediate and long-term infrastructure needs, with a special emphasis on improvements that aim to increase emergency preparedness and withstand future natural disasters.

I urge my colleagues to support House Con. Res. 280.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this important resolution. The human suffering and economic devastation caused by natural disasters in 2005

seem to know no bounds. The year began with the aftermath of the horrendous tsunami in Southeast Asia, only to be followed by a brutal hurricane season which included hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

While we in the United States have rightly come to associate these hurricanes with the apocalyptic destruction that they inflicted on our Gulf Coast States, Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita also tore through much of Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Some of the worse loss of life as a result of these storms occurred in Guatemala, where more than a thousand men, women and children were killed and where more than 120,000 people had the normalcy of their lives shredded to bits by the avalanches of mud and debris.

The hurricanes brought similar havoc in Mexico and Central American countries. In Mexico, some 400 people in southern states like Oaxaca were forced to evacuate to shelters and up to 40 percent of the homes in popular tourist destinations like Cancun were severely damaged.

Mr. Speaker, as we continue to contribute to the rebuilding and recovery efforts in Mexico and in affected Central American countries, we must ensure that our joint efforts to reconstruct homes, health facilities, schools and other buildings increase the likelihood that these structures will withstand similar natural disasters which are sure to come in the future.

Working with volunteers from two organizations based in my congressional district, I believe twin strategies are necessary to help guarantee that these structures are safe and strong. A friend and neighbor of mine, David Rivard, created an organization called Codes and Safety for the Americas, CASA, while his wife created an organization called Airline Ambassadors International. David and Nancy Rivard are extraordinary and exemplary citizens, giving of their own time, energy, effort, and resources to help our neighbors in this hemisphere.

Mr. Speaker, we must ensure that reconstruction which is financed by the United States taxpayer is less likely to succumb to hurricane-force winds or be built in mudslide-prone areas. Building projects funded by USAID must be models of quality construction. We also must cultivate a culture of code compliance in developing countries through exchanges of building professionals, educational seminars, and other expertise-sharing programs.

I look forward to working with the administration and these two organizations in making the strategies a reality in our rebuilding efforts around the globe. In the meantime, today's resolution achieves the objective of building safe and sturdy dwellings by supporting the adoption and implementation of disaster-mitigation techniques by the governments and construction sectors of countries which are prone to natural disasters. I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Congressman BURTON, for sponsoring this important legislation mourning the loss of life resulting from hurricanes and flooding in Central America.

We are discussing this resolution as the record fourteenth hurricane of the season, Hurricane Epsilon, still rages. Although Hurricane Epsilon has moved out to the Atlantic where it poses no threat to land, we were not so lucky with Hurricane Beta. This hurricane slammed into Nicaragua in late October and caused a great deal of damage, flooding and forced evacuations in both Nicaragua and neighboring Honduras. And Hurricane Wilma left its imprint not only on Mexico but on our own state of Florida, just one week before Hurricane Beta hit.

This has been a difficult and trying hurricane season throughout our hemisphere. And it has been made even more difficult by the fact that many Central American countries are still trying to rebuild after hurricanes from previous years, such as 1998's devastating Hurricane Mitch.

So I strongly support this resolution, which expresses our heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies to the victims of flooding and mudslides caused by the various hurricanes. It also pledges our support to the countries of Central America that have been hit hardest by multiple hurricanes this year, and our help in rebuilding their infrastructure and economies.

And let's be clear—the region will need not only our help, but the help of the entire international community. Guatemala, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Haiti, Cuba and Costa Rica were all hit by damaging winds and drenching rains this hurricane season, causing widespread destruction and flooding.

The magnitude of this devastation is staggering. In Guatemala alone, the official death toll is just over 670, although other sources estimate that more than 2,000 people may have perished and that hundreds are missing. Across the region, tens of thousands of families have been affected by these natural disasters. Thousands of Central American families have lost everything. They are in need of food, clean water, clothes and shelter.

Just as Mexico and the countries of Central America contributed to us during our time of need after Hurricane Katrina, we should now contribute to them.

So I am pleased that the US government, particularly through USAID and the US Armed Forces, has responded quickly with both initial monetary and technical aid during this crisis. While I encourage these efforts, we must be sure to provide relief and long-term reconstruction assistance to the affected communities.

Many of us on the Subcommittee were already concerned about poverty and inequality in Central America and about proposed cuts to core development funding for Central America. I was pleased by the strong bipartisan support the Subcommittee showed when almost every Subcommittee Member joined me in sending a letter in late October to the conferees on the Foreign Operations bill urging them to restore this funding.

While we continue the long-term fight to reduce poverty and inequality in Central America, we must also offer our condolences to the victims of this most recent natural disaster.

And I know that many of the victims' families live here in the United States. So I would also like to acknowledge the actions of the US Latino communities in DC, New Jersey, and around the country, who quickly mobilized to send money and aid to help the survivors. Our diversity is our greatest strength and connects us to almost every country in the world. When tragedy strikes anywhere in the world, it also is directly felt in the homes of US citizens who still have family and friends in their countries of origin.

Personally, I am deeply saddened by the devastation and loss of life caused by massive flooding, landslides, and hurricanes in Guatemala and throughout Central America. I would like to express my deepest sympathies and condolences to the victims and their families and friends, both in Central America and here at home.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 280, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 479) recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution that began on October 23, 1956 and reaffirming the friendship between the people and governments of the United States and Hungary, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 479

Whereas on October 23, 1956, university students marching through the streets of Budapest were joined by workers and others until their numbers reached some 100,000 Hungarian citizens protesting against the communist government of Hungary and its domination by the Soviet Union, whereupon the Hungarian Security Police opened fire on the crowd and killed hundreds;

Whereas the Hungarian government under Prime Minister Imre Nagy released political prisoners, including major church leaders, took steps to establish a multi-party democracy, called for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Hungary, announced Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, and requested United Nations assistance in establishing Hungarian neutrality;

Whereas the Soviet Union launched a massive military counteroffensive against the revolt on November 4, 1956, sending tens of thousands of additional troops from the Soviet Union and launched air strikes, artillery