

and agree to H. Res. 643, which recognizes September 11, as a day of remembrance, extending sympathies to those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, and their families, honoring the heroic actions of our Nation's first responders and Armed Forces, and reaffirming the commitment to defending the people of the United States of America against any and all future challenges.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

CALLING ON THE U.N. TO CONSIDER TAIWAN'S U.N. APPLICATION

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 14, 2007

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my support for Taiwan and its application for admittance to the United Nations. It is vital that Congress and the Administration support our friend and ally by giving it the respect and dignity it deserves with a seat in the U.N. General Assembly.

It is unfortunate that the Secretary General of the United Nations chose to reject without consideration Taiwan's application for membership on July 23, 2007. His unfortunate statement "The position of the United Nations is that the People's Republic of China represents the whole of China as the sole and legitimate representative government of China," does not reflect the reality in the Taiwan Straits. For nearly 60 years there have been, two different and distinct governments in the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. By admitting Taiwan as a member of the United Nations, there would be no change to the present reality at play in the Taiwan Straits.

China's claims to an internationally recognized norm of "One China" do not ring true when one reviews the status quo. The Chinese authorities' only actions regarding relations with Taipei are to intimidate and embarrass. China uses military and diplomatic threats to oppose Taiwan's independence and belittle those who make attempts to bring the issue forward. At the same time it insists Taiwan is part of China, and yet does nothing to assist the people of Taiwan in obtaining help for health, wealth or happiness.

The Secretary General's argument that the 1971 Resolution 2758 admitting China to the U.N. means the government in Beijing represents the interests of Taiwan as well is flimsy, at best. Resolution 2758 recognized the legitimacy of the People's Republic of China as China's rightful representative, however, there is no authority granted to the People's Republic of China over the people of Taiwan. This does nothing to change the fact that the government in Beijing has no authority over the 23 million people of Taiwan and that the government of Taiwan has had no authority over the people of the People's Republic of China.

The United Nations should not dismiss Taiwan's status simply as a matter that has been previously resolved by Resolution 2758. Taiwan's accession to the General Assembly will not change the current state of affairs in the Taiwan Strait. China makes no effort to control or impose its will upon Taiwan's politics or policies. Taiwan conducts elections, enters

into trade agreements and conducts business in the international community on its own.

Taiwan's admission into the U.N. will have important public health ramifications as well. A seat in the United Nations would help Taiwan secure a place in the World Health Organization. Such a development will reduce the likelihood that diseases such as avian flu could spread through Taiwan's busy ports.

Furthermore, the idea of having dual U.N. representation of a ["unified"] country is not unprecedented. When a conflict such as the one facing Taiwan and China exists, it is in the interest of the international community to follow past precedent. I hope the Secretary General, the President and my colleagues will recall that East and West Germany were given two seats in the General Assembly, Belarus and Ukraine were given seats even as part of the Soviet Union and North and South Korea are each represented in the General Assembly.

I hope this body and the Administration will stand firm and support U.N. membership for Taiwan.

HONORING PRESIDENT SIRLEAF OF LIBERIA

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 14, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce an article written by George Gedda entitled "Light in Liberia" published in World View. This article is about President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf who assumed the office of presidency in Liberia on January 2006 after a democratic election in a country which in recent years suffered under the dictatorial rule of Charles Taylor. First Lady Bush and Secretary of State Rice attended her inaugural ceremony on January 16, 2006.

President Sirleaf is the first African woman to be elected president in Liberia. She is on a mission to lift her people from the dark political legacy of ex-presidents, Charles Taylor and Samuel Doe when fraud, corruption, human rights abuses, and ethnic conflict were rampant. From 1989 to 1996, a civil war in Liberia claimed the lives of more than 200,000 Liberians and displaced a million other people in refugee camps in neighboring countries. President Sirleaf herself endured torture as a military prisoner of Doe's rebel forces. During Taylor and Doe's administration over a 25 year period, the per capita income in Liberia dropped from \$1000 to \$120 according to the World Bank.

President Sirleaf's leadership brings hope to Liberia. Seven months after her presidency, the lights came on in Liberia for the first time in 14 years on July 26, 2006 and water was turned on in some areas of the country. During her first year in office, school enrollment increased by 40%. Additionally, service to 350 health facilities in Liberia was reported restored. President Sirleaf is also taking a stance against corruption and increased transparency in her country by requiring all senior level government officials to publicly declare their assets.

I praise President Sirleaf for these accomplishments and for her determination in steering her country towards the right direction.

One of the biggest challenges that Liberia faces is addressing its national debt which, without relief, will continue to consume an inordinate amount of resources and cripple development in the country. The United States is providing support to Liberia. Just earlier this year, Secretary Rice announced the cancellation of Liberia's \$391 million U.S. debt.

President Sirleaf's tenacity and contribution is inspiring, and I applaud her for her leadership.

LIGHT IN LIBERIA
(By George Gedda)

How bad off was Liberia after back-to-back civil wars? This is what President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said she found after taking office in January 2006: "There was no electricity and no water. Schools and clinics had crumbled, and roads were impassable. Institutions of governance had completely collapsed, and corruption was rampant. Many youths have spent more time in war than in school. Average incomes had fallen 80 percent. Exports had collapsed. Over three-quarters of our people lived below the poverty line of one dollar per day."

In November 2005, Sirleaf became the first African woman to be elected president. It was a hopeful sign after a generation of catastrophic misrule and warfare in Liberia. She brought a genuine commitment to her people and, seemingly, the wherewithal to make a positive difference. Her resume included a Master's degree from Harvard and 10 years' work on development issues at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations.

She was a clear pick-me-up for Liberians following the era of Charles Taylor, responsible for many of the more than 200,000 deaths that occurred during the successive civil wars. Taylor fled Liberia in 2003 and, as of this past April, was awaiting trial before an international tribunal on charges of crimes against humanity for sponsoring a brutal rebellion in neighboring Sierra Leone. A 15,000-member UN peacekeeping force has been deployed in Liberia for four years. Its current mandate expires Sept. 30.

The combination of war and repression forced Sirleaf to spend parts of two decades outside of Liberia, including most of the 1980-90 rule of President Samuel Doe. In an interview with the Los Angeles Times, she recalled the terror-filled moments when Doe's forces detained her in the mid-1980s:

"I was taken to the military prison. In fact, as we were going, they told me they were going to take me to the beach and bury me alive. They started in that direction, changed their minds, put me through tortures, put matches to my hair. They said, 'We're going to burn your hair off,' but didn't do it. They would come as close as possible. It clearly was just meant to terrorize me." After her release, Sirleaf fled the country. In 1990, rebel forces tortured and murdered Doe, the same fate that befell his predecessor, President William Tolbert, in 1980.

Sirleaf is now trying to help lift Liberia out of that grim political legacy and show what responsible leadership can achieve. With First Lady Laura Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in attendance at her inaugural on Jan. 16, 2006, Sirleaf told her countrymen: "We know that your vote was a vote for change, a vote for peace, security and stability, a vote for individual and national prosperity, a vote for healing and leadership. We have heard you loudly."

One of the brighter days of Sirleaf's tenure occurred on July 26, 2006, when the lights came on in Liberia for the first time in 14 years, albeit only in a small section of the capital. The lighting illuminates streets, hospitals and office buildings. But most Liberians still have to fend for themselves