

France is the United States' ninth largest partner for trade in goods and sixth largest partner for trade and services. The United States and France are scientific and technical partners as well. Research institutions and private companies in both countries participate in extensive scientific collaboration on a wide range of issues, including computer development, biotechnology, and space exploration.

This spirit of cooperation also typifies the cultural exchange that takes place between American and French academic institutions, museums, and theatres. In light of our continued friendship between the people of the United States and France, we are honored that President Sarkozy will be appearing before a joint session of Congress this week on November 7, 2007.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, which congratulates Mr. Nicholas Sarkozy on his election to the presidency of France and welcomes President Sarkozy to Washington.

I might also add that it is especially nice that the leader of France has demonstrated time and time again that he has warm feelings towards the United States of America and is, indeed, a pro-American leader of France. The relations between the United States and France in the past several years has been a little frosty, and it's nice to see that those frosty relations have thawed. It's nice to see a leader of France who understands and wants to work with the United States and understands that we have a very close, long-standing relationship between our people.

I welcome President Sarkozy. I look forward to hearing him when he speaks before a joint session of the House and Congress later on this week. I think that this resolution is a fitting tribute to him, and I believe that the United States and France, under his leadership, will enjoy warm ties.

If I can think a bit about my French from grammar school, I could say, *Vive la France*.

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

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

The great nation of France and the United States of America have a shared heritage of commitment to freedom and independence. From time to time, of course, we have made different choices or followed different paths in our commitment to the rule of law, human rights and democracy, but we in the United States are always grateful to have France's collaboration in advancing important foreign policy and security objectives. The newly elected President of France, Mr. Nicholas Sarkozy, is this week paying an official visit to Washington and will address a joint meeting of this Congress during his visit.

His visit prompts us to recall some of the expressions of support Mr. Sarkozy has offered to our country and some of the concrete steps he has, indeed,

taken to join with the United States in addressing key issues of our day.

On the eve of the fifth anniversary of the September 11 attacks, then-French Interior Minister Nicholas Sarkozy traveled to New York City to demonstrate solidarity with the American people on that occasion. During his visit, Mr. Sarkozy paid tribute to New York City's Police and Fire Departments as part of the commemoration of the anniversary and noted as part of his remarks the following: "One thing is sure in the history of our two peoples, each time we faced a challenge, France was able to count on the United States of America."

He then presented to the New York Fire Department the French Medal of Honor, the very first time that the medal, the highest award for French firefighters, has been awarded to foreigners. By taking such actions, as both Minister of the Interior and now as the President of France, Mr. Sarkozy has won the appreciation of the American people.

I note that his attitude regarding the necessity of preventing Iran from achieving its nuclear ambitions, his expressed support for the nation of Israel and his praise for the United States as a land of opportunity are very much appreciated as well.

Mr. Speaker, we are glad to have France as an ally, and we hope to deepen the friendship and partnership that the United States and France have enjoyed so many times in the history of our two countries. As the cochair of the Congressional French Caucus, I believe that the resolution before us today helps send a message of continued friendship with the people of France while congratulating President Sarkozy on his election and welcoming him to the United States.

I ask all of my colleagues to join in supporting this very timely resolution.

I have one additional speaker.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) as much time as he may consume.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my good friend from Arkansas, the cochair of the U.S.-French Caucus, and appreciate his thoughtful remarks as well as the remarks of my friend from New York.

Mr. Speaker, I rise because I think it is really a great day that we are once again, after what could only be considered as somewhat of a hiatus in this institution, underscoring the importance of the relationship between the United States and France. It's very clear that there was a period of time when we were quite critical of France and, in fact, we all know that the sort of the politically correct thing to do was to engage in French bashing.

I always had a tough time with that myself. One of the reasons is that as we are here in this Chamber, the portrait just to my right is of the man who

underwrote the American Revolution, Marquis de Lafayette. In fact, his portrait is the only portrait of a non-American that hangs anywhere in this great building, the U.S. Capitol.

For us to recognize, as my friend from Arkansas just has said in his remarks, the great new, renewed friendship with the election of President Sarkozy between the United States and France is, I think, a great thing. I am very enthused about 11 o'clock Wednesday morning when we are in this very Chamber going to hear the words of France's new President.

As my friend said, for Nicholas Sarkozy, before he became President, when he was a minister on the fifth anniversary of September 11, to go to New York and demonstrate his solidarity with those who stood up to the terrorists and, again, his great assistance in working with us in supporting the State of Israel, in making sure that we do everything that we can to diminish the threat of the potential nuclear buildup in Iran; of course, the kinds of missions that Nicholas Sarkozy has embarked on most recently to return the hostages of many conflicts around is something that, I believe, is to be heralded. We just had the news this morning that President Sarkozy personally was able to see the return of, I think it was seven nurses, who had been held hostage.

So his commitment to the cause of freedom and liberty, and I will say, yes, his underscoring the great importance of the relationship and the alliance between France and the United States of America is a great thing for us. I congratulate my colleagues for their support and urge everyone to support this resolution.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 379, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. BOOZMAN. 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.

EXPRESSING CONCERN RELATING TO IRANIAN REGIME AND MAHMOUD AHMADINEJAD

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 435) expressing concern relating to the threatening behavior of the Iranian regime and its leader

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and the activities of terrorist organizations sponsored by that regime in Latin America, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 435

Whereas the Department of State has said that Iran is the “most active state sponsor of terrorism”;

Whereas the Department of State 2007 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report moved Iran to a “Jurisdiction of Primary Concern”;

Whereas in February 2006, the chairman of the Iranian legislative body announced an offer to assist Venezuela with a nuclear program;

Whereas in February 2006, Cuba, Venezuela, and Syria were the only 3 member nations of the 35-nation board of the International Atomic Energy Agency to vote against referring Iran to the United Nations Security Council for its nuclear program;

Whereas in September 2007, Iran requested observer-status membership in the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of the Americas (ALBA), an organization led by Hugo Chavez, President of Venezuela, to counter United States-led efforts for free trade in that region;

Whereas in September 2007, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the President of Iran, made his third visit in one year to Latin America, this time visiting Venezuela and Bolivia, where Mr. Ahmadinejad announced a commitment of Iranian investment in Bolivia of up to \$1,000,000,000 over five years;

Whereas Mr. Ahmadinejad and Mr. Chavez have announced plans for a \$2,000,000,000 shared fund to invest in projects in countries that Mr. Chavez characterized as seeking to “liberate themselves from the U.S. imperialist yoke”;

Whereas in July 2007, the Venezuelan energy minister announced plans to sell gasoline to Iran following riots in Iran opposing the Iranian Government’s policy of gas rationing;

Whereas in March, 2007 routine civilian airline flights were established from Tehran, Iran directly to Caracas, Venezuela;

Whereas the 2006 State Department’s Country Reports on Terrorism stated that Venezuela is not “fully cooperating” with United States antiterrorism efforts;

Whereas according to the State Department, “an individual claiming to be a member of an Islamic extremist group in Venezuela placed two pipe bombs outside the American Embassy in Caracas on October 23, 2006. Venezuelan police safely disposed of the two pipe bombs and immediately made one arrest. The investigation by Venezuelan authorities resulted in the additional arrest of the alleged ideological leader of the group. At year’s end, both suspects remained in jail and prosecutors were pressing terrorism charges against them”;

Whereas Hizbollah, Iran’s proxy terrorist group, executed the deadliest terrorist attack against Americans abroad since World War II, the 1983 suicide bombing of a United States Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, that killed 241 American servicemen;

Whereas Iran and Hizbollah were involved in the two deadliest terrorist attacks in Argentina: the March 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, which killed 29 people and the July 1994 attack against the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association (AMIA), which killed 85 people;

Whereas the Government of Argentina is currently seeking legal action against the

perpetrators of the 1994 AMIA terrorist attack;

Whereas in September 2007, the President of Argentina said to the United Nations General Assembly, “I want to stress here, in the United Nations headquarters, that unfortunately until now, the Islamic Republic of Iran has not collaborated with the Argentine justice system to clarify what occurred”;

Whereas according to a 2003 report by the Library of Congress, money laundered in the tri-border region, the area where Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil meet, “probably are in the billions of dollars per year” and “Hizbollah has reaped hundreds of millions of dollars in profits from narcotics and arms trafficking, product piracy, and other illicit activities in the tri-border area”;

Whereas the television station Telemundo interviewed residents of the tri-border region who said that “they’re only waiting for an order to put bombs on their body and attack the United States”;

Whereas in March 2007, Brazilian officials arrested 31 people for illegally issuing passports over the past 14 years, and press reports indicate that some of these passports may have been provided to members of terrorist organizations, including members of Hizbollah;

Whereas Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and the United States have formed the 3+1 Group, which has focused on the financing of terrorism, drug and arms trafficking, and border security, as well as the exchange of information, with the purpose of preventing terrorism and transnational crimes in the tri-border region;

Whereas in November 2006, Brazil established a new Regional Intelligence Center in the tri-border region, dedicated to coordinating intelligence activities of the police forces of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, and invited Argentina and Paraguay to send official representatives to the Center;

Whereas in March 2007, the Organization of American States’ Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) reaffirmed that “terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whatever its origin or motivation, has no justification whatsoever, affects the full enjoyment and exercise of human rights, and constitutes a grave threat to international peace and security, democratic institutions, and the values enshrined in the OAS Charter, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, and other regional and international instruments”;

Whereas in July 2007, the Government of Argentina enacted anti-terrorism legislation that put in place harsher penalties for cooperating with terrorists; and

Whereas as of March 2007, the Government of Brazil was considering expanded anti-terrorism legislation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses concern over the emerging national security implications of the Iranian regime’s efforts to expand its influence in Latin America;

(2) supports the existing counterterrorism efforts of Latin American countries, including the successful counterterrorism efforts of the 3+1 Group (consisting of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and the United States);

(3) emphasizes the importance of eliminating Hizbollah’s financial network in the tri-border region of South America where Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina meet and throughout the Western Hemisphere;

(4) commends and supports the efforts of individual countries and regional bodies in the Western Hemisphere that have led efforts to eliminate terrorist financing and other terrorist operations;

(5) calls on the United States Government to work with governments in the Western

Hemisphere to pursue an antiterrorism campaign based on cooperation and constant vigilance;

(6) urges the United States Government to work bilaterally and multilaterally with countries in the Western Hemisphere to help them create antiterrorism legislation that would give governmental authorities new tools to take action against terrorist networks; and

(7) recommends that the President of the United States create more mechanisms for joint counterterrorism operations and intraregional information sharing among supportive countries in the Western Hemisphere, especially in light of Iran’s increased involvement in the region.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

□ 1445

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I want to thank the gentlemen from Florida, Mr. KLEIN and Mr. MACK, both active and valued members of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, which I chair, for their work on this timely and important resolution that raises awareness about Iran’s growing foothold in the Western Hemisphere and its national security implications for all countries of this region.

This resolution is particularly valuable as it catalogues a series of facts and actions related to the growing presence of Iran south of our border.

Last month, immediately after his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Iranian President Ahmadinejad flew to Venezuela and Bolivia. This was his third trip the region this year. Mr. Ahmadinejad has used these trips to announce increased diplomatic cooperation and multilateral agreements on energy and industry.

Iranian involvement, Mr. Speaker, in Latin America is not new, as we all know. In 1994, Iran and its proxy terrorist group, Hezbollah, were involved in planning the bombing of the AMIA Jewish Cultural Center in Buenos Aires, where 85 people lost their lives in the bombing.

In fact, just last week I met with the U.S. Ambassador to Argentina, who updated me on Argentina’s progress on the AMIA bombings.

Hezbollah remains operational in parts of Latin America, and they continue to fundraise for their global operations.

The United States must do everything we can to help Latin America crack down on terrorist groups in the region, both through joint military exercises and through legislation, giving to governments new tools to eliminate the terrorist threats.

I strongly urge passage of this timely resolution.

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

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

I welcome the focus this bill places on the growing influence of Iran in Latin America. Because Iran is the leading state sponsor of terrorism, we dare not lose sight of its increasing presence and activities in the region, nor can we forget its past transgressions.

One year ago, Argentina's State Prosecutor concluded that the horrific 1994 AMIA bombing was "decided and organized by the highest leaders of the former government of Iran."

Yet, somehow the leader of Iran continues to be warmly received by many in the hemisphere. In fact, he has found much strength in his friendship formed with Hugo Chavez, Ahmadinejad's key ally in the region.

The implications of Iran's presence in Latin America are disconcerting in themselves. When partnered with the power of Venezuela's petroleum, it is truly a cause for alarm and concern.

Ahmadinejad has capitalized on his relationship with Chavez to inject his influence throughout the hemisphere, recently signing a cooperation agreement worth \$1 billion with Bolivia, and is reportedly making plans to establish an embassy for the first time in Quito, Ecuador.

Furthermore, the disturbing alliance between Venezuela, Iran and Cuba cannot be ignored. The radical efforts of Ahmadinejad, Chavez and Castro to stir anti-U.S. resentment in the region and support for anti-American regimes across the hemisphere are an increasing and undeniable threat to our security. For this reason, we must remain vigilant in our attention to the hemisphere and be sincere in our efforts to strengthen our relationships with the nations of Latin America.

I commend the efforts being taken by the U.S. and our partners in Latin America to combat terrorist activities. However, we must recognize that if the U.S. is to support the efforts of our friends in the region, we must support them wholeheartedly. We cannot continue to send mixed signals. Denying free trade agreements with Colombia, while calling for increased cooperation on any front is not good, fair or effective policy.

I thank my colleague for introducing this measure and look forward to additional efforts by Congress to comprehensively support our security in the Western Hemisphere.

Again, I have one more speaker, Mr. ENGEL.

Mr. ENGEL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he would like to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER).

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I again thank my friend from Arkansas for yielding, and I thank the gentleman from New York for his very thoughtful remarks on this important resolution. I rise in strong support of it.

I think that both my friends from New York and Arkansas have underscored the grave concern that we have about Iran's entry into this hemisphere, and especially in the remarks offered by the gentleman from Arkansas, Mr. Speaker, he underscored this nexus which has been developed by Hugo Chavez in Caracas, Venezuela and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Now, what is it that we have seen? Obviously there are a great deal of differences that exist when it comes to the vision that a Hugo Chavez would have and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad would have. But they have rallied around one particular point, and that is, virulent opposition to everything that the United States of America stands for. Both of them have been hypercritical of the United States and our policies and the cause of freedom, quite frankly, based on what we've seen in both countries.

The thing that is most troubling is the fact that Mr. Chavez has had this pattern of inviting Mr. Ahmadinejad into this hemisphere and, basically, continuing to promote the anti-American sentiment. And it is cause for concern, and I believe this resolution is very important.

Mr. Chavez took Mr. Ahmadinejad to the inauguration of Rafael Correa in Quito, Ecuador. And again, as my friend from Arkansas has just said, the prospect of an Iranian Embassy opening in Quito is something that's very troubling.

Similarly, he took him to meet with Evo Morales, the President of Bolivia, again, a very, very troubling sign. And I will say, quite frankly, I am even concerned about, while we've heralded the election that took place a week ago yesterday in Argentina, I do believe that there is reason for concern of the potential for this linkage there that exists. I think it's very exciting to see Cristina Kirchner become the President, succeeding her husband in Argentina, but I do believe that we need to remain very vigilant in looking at this linkage between Hugo Chavez, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and others within this hemisphere.

I would also like to laud my colleague from Arkansas for underscoring the importance of continuing to build our economic alliances with those countries in the hemisphere that are committed to political pluralism, the development of democratic institutions, the rule of law and self-determination.

We are on the verge, this week, we're going to be addressing the issue of a U.S.-Peru free trade agreement. We

also have on the horizon, as we all know, in this hemisphere both the Panama and the Colombia free trade agreements.

And so I will say, Mr. Speaker, I think this resolution is very timely. I congratulate my friends for underscoring the importance of this. And I hope that a by-product of it will be the recognition that working with our allies in this region to develop even stronger economic ties should be the next step for us to take.

Again, I urge strong support of this resolution.

Mr. MACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for House Resolution 435, concerning Iran's growing influence in Latin America.

I also want to thank my colleague from Florida, Congressman RON KLEIN, for all of his hard work on this resolution.

He is passionate about Latin America and it has been a pleasure to work with you to get this important resolution to the floor today.

This resolution, which has garnered wide, bi-partisan support, formally expresses what many of us have known for quite some time: Iran's growing ties and meddling in Latin America is a grave concern for us all.

There is no doubt that Iran has given strategic, financial, logistical, and tactical support and safe haven to terrorists groups such as Hezbollah and others.

And, according to military leaders at U.S. Southern Command, there is no doubt that Islamic terrorist groups, such as Hezbollah, have infiltrated indigenous groups throughout significant areas of Latin America in order to develop terrorist networks throughout the region.

Of particular concern to me is the growing and burgeoning friendship between Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez.

Iran, in my opinion, is seeking to do in Venezuela what the former Soviet Union did in Cuba: establish a base of operations in the Western Hemisphere in order to foment hatred and instability throughout the region.

This should cause great alarm for us all.

But this problem is bigger than Iran and Venezuela alone.

For far too long we have ignored growing unrest and loss of freedoms and the foundations for democracy throughout Latin America.

I have publicly and privately urged this administration and Congress to embrace our allies and do more throughout the region.

Our neglect has allowed leaders such as President Chavez to whip up opposition to the United States.

And further neglect, should we not act now to support our friends in the region, will allow Iran and others to continue to grow their terrorist networks throughout Latin America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, having no further speakers, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. 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 gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the

rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 435, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 236) recognizing the close relationship between the United States and the Republic of San Marino, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 236

Whereas the Republic of San Marino is the oldest republic in the world;

Whereas the Republic of San Marino was founded by those fleeing the religious persecution of the Roman Empire, and has adhered to the principles of tolerance and individual liberty throughout its history;

Whereas the United States and the Republic of San Marino have long held close ties based on common interests and common values;

Whereas the special bond between the Republic of San Marino and the United States was first expressed nearly a century and a half ago in an exchange of letters between President Abraham Lincoln and the Captains Regent of San Marino;

Whereas President Lincoln expressed in his letter his deep respect for the Republic of San Marino as "one of the most honored in all of history" and took encouragement from its example that a "government founded on republican principles is capable of being so administered as to be secure and enduring";

Whereas the Republic of San Marino has been a steadfast ally of the United States in many international organizations, such as the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund;

Whereas the Republic of San Marino has been a close collaborator on a number of key economic issues, such as the protection of intellectual property;

Whereas the Republic of San Marino has been a close collaborator in the fight against terrorism, including efforts to combat international terrorist financing;

Whereas through its chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the Republic of San Marino has worked to promote inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue;

Whereas earlier this year, the United States and the Republic of San Marino upgraded their diplomatic relations to ambassador-level, and exchanged the first bilateral Ambassadors in our history;

Whereas Paolo Rondelli, the first Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of San Marino to the United States, presented his credentials to President Bush at a ceremony at the White House on July 25, 2007; and

Whereas the Honorable Ronald P. Spogli presented credentials to the Captains Regent (co-Heads of State) in a ceremony in San Marino's Palazzo Publico on March 8, 2007: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) recognizes the close relationship between the United States and the Republic of San Marino;

(2) expresses its deep gratitude to the Republic of San Marino for its close collaboration and support in issues of critical importance to our economic and national security interests; and

(3) commemorates the first bilateral exchange of Ambassadors in the history of our long relationship.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I would like to thank my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), for introducing this resolution that recognizes a small but important friend of the United States.

It is often said, Mr. Speaker, that good things come in small packages, and in the case of San Marino, this is certainly true. San Marino is the third smallest country in Europe, only Vatican City and Monaco being smaller.

San Marino, which is home to 29,000 inhabitants in a territory one-third the size of the District of Columbia, attracts several million visitors a year. The tourist industry makes up over 50 percent of the country's GDP.

San Marino is said to be the oldest republic in the world. It was founded in 301 A.D. by Marinus of Rab, a Christian fleeing from religious persecution by the Roman Emperor.

Its constitution, which dates back to 1600, is the world's oldest written constitution, and remains in effect to this day.

San Marino has been an active player at the international level, including the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, and Council of Europe. Through these bodies, San Marino has sought to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue, as well as the protection of intellectual property.

San Marino has also cultivated a close friendship with the United States based on our shared values and interests. This relationship was first expressed when President Abraham Lincoln exchanged letters with the Captains Regent of San Marino.

Nearly 150 years after these letters were sent, the United States and San Marino upgraded their bilateral relations to include the first ever exchange

of ambassadors. President Bush welcomed San Marino's new Ambassador, Paulo Rondelli, during a White House ceremony on July 25. U.S. Ambassador Ronald Spogli presented his credentials to the Captains Regent in San Marino's Palazzo Publico on March 8. I welcome this development in our bilateral relations, and look forward to ever closer cooperation with our European ally.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution which recognizes the close relationship between our two countries, expresses gratitude to San Marino for its friendship and support, and commemorates the first ever exchange of ambassadors.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, let's take a moment to recognize an ally whose relationship with the United States certainly exceeds its size. Completely surrounded by Italy, the European microstate of San Marino has the smallest population of all the members of the Council of Europe. Yet, San Marino has made a strong ally of the United States, most notably within a number of international institutions, including the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund. In fact, the U.S. and San Marino have collaborated closely on several key issues such as combating international terrorist financing and protecting intellectual property rights.

Moreover, San Marino has been a leader in promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue within the European Union. The value of our relationship was marked earlier this year by the first exchange of ambassadors between the U.S. and San Marino.

I, therefore, ask my colleagues to join me in supporting Ranking Member DREIER's H. Con. Res. 236, recognizing our close relationship with the Republic of San Marino.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the author of this resolution, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) such time as he may consume. (Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), for their very thoughtful remarks on this resolution.

I also want to join in expressing my appreciation to my fellow Californian, the distinguished Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Mr. LANTOS and, of course, the ranking Republican, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

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I think both of the sets of remarks offered underscore something that is extraordinarily important, and that is that we thank and express our appreciation to our allies, no matter how