

automobiles. To this end, I was pleased to support H.R. 6, which significantly raised CAFE standards, and would do much to increase the efficiency of American automobiles.

However, the government does not hold a monopoly on innovation. Many of the great discoveries of our time were accomplished by private individuals and companies. From Thomas Edison's discovery of the light bulb to Henry Ford's perfection of the automobile, private innovators have changed the face of America. It is my hope that the Automotive X PRIZE will once again spur the creative and innovative spirit of American citizens to help us in our fight for energy independence and security.

I would like to thank Mr. LUNGREN for introducing this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H. Res. 907, as amended, which recognizes and congratulates the forward-thinking X PRIZE Foundation on one of its latest contest endeavors, the Automotive X PRIZE.

There is a rich history in this country of prizes sponsored by private entities leading to innovations in science and technology. Starting with the Ansari X PRIZE, the privately funded X PRIZE Foundation has successfully been able to build on the concept of the 1927 Orteig Prize, which awarded \$25,000 to the first person to be able to make a nonstop transatlantic flight. While the actual Orteig Prize name may not be well known, the recipient of this prize, Charles Lindbergh, certainly is. The benefits of the \$400,000 of investment teams made in an effort to win this prize certainly have been realized, and the \$250 billion aviation industry that took off shortly thereafter certainly continues to prosper. Likewise, the 2004 Ansari X PRIZE leveraged over \$100 million in research by teams vying for a \$10 million price for private spaceflight. Won by Mojave Aerospace Ventures, the Ansari X PRIZE changed the public's perception of personal spaceflight.

Now the Automotive X PRIZE is poised to produce similar results for the next generation of automobiles, viable, super-efficient vehicles. As the resolution states, our "national security and economic prosperity demand that we move toward a sustainable future." This prize certainly helps us move in that direction. It will be awarded to the team that can design, build and sell super-efficient cars that achieve 100 miles per gallon and are not concept cars, but cars that people will want to buy. If successful, the end result in and of itself will be impressive, but the overall benefits to the Nation will be too numerable to measure. This prize, like those before it, will generate millions of privately funded research dollars producing research that may

not in the end win the prize, but could spur additional technologies. Likewise, this prize will stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit of inventors and investors alike, both known entities and brilliant minds working in backyard garages.

I congratulate the X PRIZE Foundation's leadership in creating a private, independent competition designed to help move us closer to a sustainable energy future. I wish them much success, look forward to seeing the results it produces, and encourage my colleagues to support this resolution.

With that, I would reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, at this time I have no recognized Members, I think Mr. FEENEY does, so I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield 1 minute to Dr. BARTLETT, my friend from Maryland.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, just a few days ago, Shell Oil Company sent out a press release saying that by no later than 2015 the world would not be able to meet the demands of our economies for oil and natural gas. At just about the same time as that, a group came to my office to brief me on the Automotive X PRIZE. You may have noticed how much harder people will work for a prize than they will for money. Just note the Olympics and what these athletes will do for a prize. So I am very, very supportive of this fantastic idea. I bought the first Prius in Maryland, I bought the first Prius in Congress, and I want to buy the winning car from this competition.

I have here a note from Donald Foley, who is the executive director of the Automotive X PRIZE, and he has noted my desire to buy that winning car. So hopefully we will be driving that to the Congress in not too long.

Thank you very much for yielding.

□ 1530

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my colleague and friend from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, prizes have a history of encouraging innovation by promoting competition and expanding the talent pool to include a numerous and diverse array of groups and individuals. Those unable or unwilling to secure grants can participate in the race for the goal. With prizes, government funding is not used to pick technological winners and losers. The prize is only awarded if the goal is met. Prizes encourage the investment of private capital and research, even beyond the monetary value of the prize.

I applaud the X PRIZE Foundation for spurring competition and innovation in the race to a more efficient automobile. When the 100 mile-per-gallon vehicle is achieved, citizens of my home State of Nebraska will be able to drive across the State on Interstate 80 on only 4½ gallons of fuel. This tre-

mendous efficiency would dramatically reduce our Nation's dependence on foreign oil, it would stimulate our economy, and certainly improve our national security.

I am grateful for the vision and enterprise of men like Dr. Peter Diamandis who kindle the spark of innovation that leads to revolutionary technologies.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I just want to make sure that I check with Mr. SMITH whether that is stopping for red lights that takes 4½ hours to go across Nebraska.

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 Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 907, 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.

CALLING FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION TO THE CURRENT ELECTORAL CRISIS IN KENYA

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 283) calling for a peaceful resolution to the current electoral crisis in Kenya, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 283

Whereas on December 27, 2007, the citizens of Kenya went peacefully to the polls to elect a new parliament and a new President and signaled their commitment to democracy by turning out in large numbers and, in some instances, waiting in long lines to vote;

Whereas on December 29, 2007, the opposition presidential candidate, Raila Odinga, was reportedly over 300,000 votes ahead of the incumbent with 90 percent of the precincts reporting;

Whereas on December 30, 2007, the head of the Electoral Commission of Kenya ("ECK") declared that Mwai Kibaki won the presidential election by 197,000 votes;

Whereas Mr. Kibaki was sworn in as President within an hour of the announcement of the election results, despite serious concerns raised about the legitimacy of the election results by domestic and international observers;

Whereas the lack of transparency in vote tallying, serious irregularities reported by election observers, the implausibility of the margin of victory, and the swearing in of the Party of National Unity presidential candidate with undue haste, all serve to undermine the credibility of the presidential election results;

Whereas the Government of Kenya imposed a ban on live media that day, and shortly

after the election results were announced, in contravention of Kenyan law, the Government also announced a blanket ban on public assembly and gave police the authority to use lethal force;

Whereas on January 1, 2008, 4 commissioners on the ECK issued a statement which called into question the election results announced by the Commission and called for a judicial review;

Whereas the head of the European Union Election Observation Mission stated that "Lack of transparency as well as a number of verified irregularities . . . cast doubt on the accuracy of the results of the presidential election as announced by the ECK" and called for an international audit of the results;

Whereas observers from the East African Community have called for an investigation into irregularities during the tallying process and for those responsible for such irregularities to be held accountable;

Whereas in 1991 President Daniel Arap Moi agreed to move from one party rule to multi-party politics, and in 1992, Kenyans voted in record numbers in the country's first multi-party election in almost 26 years;

Whereas in 1997 Kenya held its second multi-party elections, despite extremely high levels of tension between the opposition and the ruling party;

Whereas in 2002 the opposition succeeded in forming and holding together a coalition that for the first time in history ousted the ruling party from power, demonstrating to Kenyans and Africans that incumbency and the entrenched clout of a ruling party can be defeated through the ballot box;

Whereas the violence and unrest in Kenya threatens to roll back the democratic gains made over the past 17 years;

Whereas more than 900 people have died and an estimated 250,000 people, 80,000 of whom are children, have been displaced as a result of the violence;

Whereas Kenya has been a valuable United States ally since independence, providing the United States with access to its military facilities and political support in the United Nations, and has been an important ally in the war against terrorism, especially since the United States embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998;

Whereas the political instability in Kenya is connected to a larger struggle for democracy and is not merely the result of tribal violence;

Whereas continued violence and unrest could have serious political, economic, and security implications for the entire region; and

Whereas the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs has stated that "serious flaws in the vote tallying process damaged the credibility of the process" and that the United States should not "conduct business as usual" in Kenya: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) commends the Kenyan people for their commitment to democracy and respect for the democratic process as evidenced by the high voter turnout and peaceful voting on election day;

(2) strongly condemns the ongoing violence in Kenya and urges all parties concerned to immediately end use of violence as a means to achieve their political objectives;

(3) calls for a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the conflict in Kenya;

(4) calls on the 2 leading presidential candidates to continue to accept external and internal assistance to help find a solution to the current crisis which has the support of the people of Kenya;

(5) calls on Kenyan security forces to refrain from use of excessive force and respect the human rights of Kenyan citizens;

(6) calls for those who are found guilty of committing human rights violations to be held accountable for their actions;

(7) calls for an immediate end to the restrictions on the media, and on the rights of peaceful assembly and association;

(8) condemns threats to civil society groups, journalists, religious leaders, human rights activists, and all those who are making every effort to achieve a peaceful, just, and equitable political solution to the current electoral crisis;

(9) calls on the international community, United Nations aid organizations, and all neighboring countries to provide assistance to those affected by violence and encourages the use of all the diplomatic means at their disposal to persuade relevant political actors to commit to a peaceful resolution to the current crisis; and

(10) urges the President of the United States to—

(A) continue to support diplomatic efforts to facilitate a dialogue between leaders of the Party of National Unity, the Orange Democratic Movement, and other relevant actors that will lead to the establishment of an interim or coalition government in order to implement necessary constitutional reforms, establish a mechanism to investigate the election crisis, and address its root causes;

(B) consider the imposition of targeted sanctions, including a travel ban and asset freeze, on political leaders and other relevant actors who refuse to engage in mediation efforts to end the political crisis in the country; and

(C) conduct a review of current United States aid to Kenya for the purposes of restricting all non-essential assistance to Kenya unless the parties are able to establish a peaceful political resolution to the current crisis which is credible to the Kenyan people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PAYNE. 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 concurrent resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, "Kenya is at a crossroads." Those are the words spoken this morning by the chairman of the Human Rights Commission of Kenya in a hearing that I chaired on the current crisis today.

Kenya had been considered a linchpin on economic and political stability in the East Africa region for decades. We always were proud of the accomplishments and the achievements of them, and we often pointed to Kenya as a beacon of how other African countries

and countries throughout the developing world should move towards democracy. However, we have seen very sad occurrences during the past month or two. H. Con. Res. 283 seeks to address the unfortunate and still unfolding political crisis in Kenya.

I went to Kenya last month to assess the situation and to encourage political, religious, community, and civil society leaders to find a peaceful resolution to the current situation. I visited thousands of displaced children in Jamhuri showground and met with volunteers from diverse backgrounds. It was remarkable and encouraging to see Kenyans coming together to help their fellow citizens, donating food and material to those in need.

Indeed, witnessing the violence and meeting the young victims was deeply troubling. Yet, I am confident that Kenyans will come out of this crisis united. Kenyans must put Kenya first.

Kenyans of different religious, ethnic, and economic backgrounds live together peacefully in a region long marred by civil war and political chaos. Unfortunately, like the millions of Kenyans, the more than 170,000 refugees from the Ogaden and Somalia regions in Kenya will also be affected, because when the central government is affected, those other people, refugees and other groups in need, are also affected, as will be the lives of so many others in the countries surrounding Kenya. Many depend on Kenya for economic and industrial progress for their countries to survive.

On December 27, 2007, the citizens of Kenya went peacefully to the polls to elect a new parliament and a new president, despite the logistics challenges and long lines. More than 14 million Kenyans registered to vote. That is 82 percent of the eligible voters. An estimated 2,547 parliamentary candidates were qualified to run in the 210 constituencies, a clear indication of the desire and the determination of Kenyans to participate and to be a part of the political process in their country.

Incoming President Mwai Kibaki was hastily declared the winner by the Electoral Commission of Kenya, after a series of highly irregular events which cast significant doubt on his so-called victory. Let me be blunt: The election results announced by the ECK do not reflect the wishes of the Kenyan people. The people of Kenya voted for change. What they were given was more of the status quo.

In reaction to what occurred, Kenyans went to the streets to express their frustration and anger. The protests soon turned violent, and it is still unfolding as we speak. More than 1,000 people have been killed and over 300,000 displaced as a result of unrest, including an estimated 80,000 children under the age of 5, and these young lives are being traumatized as we speak. Millions more have been adversely affected. Two members of the parliament from the opposition ODM were killed in

January, reducing a five-member lead to three.

The instability in Kenya continues to threaten and affect the economies of neighboring countries, imposing serious threats to regional stability, a fragile region in the first place. But this is going to make it even more fragile. The Kenyan economy has been hit hard and recovery may take a long time.

H. Con. Res. 283 does several critical things. One, it strongly condemns the ongoing violence in Kenya and urges all parties concerned to immediately end the use of violence as a means to achieve their political objectives. It also calls for all parties to participate in good faith and dialogue mediated by former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, and asks President Bush to consider imposing asset freezes and travel bans on leaders in the Party of National Unity, the Orange Democratic Movement, and other relevant actors who refuse to engage in this dialogue to end the current crisis.

Additionally, the resolution calls for the international community to respond to the grave humanitarian needs of the people of Kenya and all neighboring countries to provide assistance to those affected by the violence.

□ 1545

At the same time, it calls for a review of our assistance to Kenya and restrict any nonhumanitarian assistance.

Before concluding, though, I would like to point out that U.S. diplomatic efforts in the wake of the election have not been stellar. Indeed, the response to the Kenyan election crisis proves beyond a doubt that some of the administration officials are too quick to embrace a government that engages in electoral abuses and overlook rather than condemn its electoral and human rights abuses.

We saw this happen in the 2005 elections in Ethiopia. We must proceed carefully and thoughtfully and work with our partners in the EU and AU to help resolve this crisis. I also want to emphasize a very critical point. Despite statements by some to the contrary, what is happening in Kenya is not an ethnic conflict. It is a political conflict with ethnic overtones.

We must look closely at the historical and political context to really understand and to avoid making additional mistakes on how we characterize what is happening today in Kenya. However, if political leaders in Kenya do not make a serious effort to stop the violence now and address the systemic problems that exist in their political structures, the violence we are seeing could certainly reach a point of no return.

Once that happens, it will be very difficult to stop. It is critical that a transitional coalition government is established with a clear mandate to implement necessary reforms such as a new constitution, a new electoral law, a new electoral commission, and address

the root causes of the crisis and prepare the country for transparent Presidential elections within 2 years. The people of Kenya deserve no less.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 283, addressing the current crisis in Kenya. I, like much of the world, was shocked by the violence that followed the December 27 elections in Kenya, a country that has proven to be a great friend and ally of the United States over the years.

My heart and my condolences, as well as that of every Member of this Chamber, go out to the victims of this violence and their families, some 1,000 people who have been killed since that fateful election day.

There have been shocking events that few of us expected to see in Kenya, protesters shot by police, gangs with machetes butchering innocents, a crowd of people, including women and children, burned alive in a church. Two opposition parliamentarians, as Mr. PAYNE just pointed out, have been gunned down since the violence began. Now some 300,000 people have fled their homes, have fled their neighbors, and remain displaced. They are virtual refugees within their own country. Aid workers tell us that about 80,000 of these internally displaced people are children under the age of 5.

The priority for everyone has to be to stop the violence and to end the killing. In addition, we must examine the context in which the violence erupted in the first place.

The broad strokes of what happened during and after the December 27 elections are now well known. Millions of Kenyans voted that day in the country's fourth multiparty elections and it is a testament to the Kenyan people that some 14.2 million people, 82 percent of all eligible voters, were registered to vote. I won't recite the polling numbers or give an autopsy of the election, but suffice it to say that at some point the system went terribly wrong.

The European Union said the elections were "marred by a lack of transparency which raised concerns about the accuracy and final results of this election." Election observers from the East African community also raised serious concerns about the elections, and eventually the United States, too, asserted that "serious flaws in the vote tallying damaged the credibility of the process."

I want to commend my friend and colleague, Chairman PAYNE, for his leadership on this issue. I joined him to cosponsor this resolution, which calls for an end to the violence and an end to restrictions on the media. It condemns threats to human rights activists and others who are working for a peaceful solution to this crisis. It calls on President Kibaki and the challenger, Mr.

Odinga, to work together for a mediated solution to this crisis.

The U.S. must do all that it can to encourage them to move in this direction. The resolution emphasizes our hope that this dialogue will lead to an establishment of an interim or coalition government that can enact constitutional reform and establish a mechanism to investigate this crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I urge strong support and backing for H. Con. Res. 283.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. I would like to begin by commending the gentleman from New Jersey, Chairman PAYNE, of the Africa Subcommittee. I want to thank him for introducing this resolution that addresses the troublesome violence that is occurring today in Kenya, and I would like to recognize the good work of the subcommittee's ranking member, Mr. SMITH, as well.

Mr. Speaker, the situation in Kenya has been described. Since the post-election violence erupted at the end of December, we know that now over 1,000 Kenyans have been killed. We know that a quarter million souls have been forced to flee from their homes. Many of these homes have been burned. Many individuals have been burned. As this resolution notes, international observers found the election to be seriously flawed, implicating the government. Today, as Kenya's politicians fight for power, its people suffer and some of those people are suffering terribly.

This resolution calls on President Mwai Kibaki and opposition candidate Raila Odinga to accept external assistance to find their way out of this. This has been occurring of late with the former U.N. Secretary General bringing about some progress. But without this, the factions seem incapable of moving ahead on their own.

The resolution also calls for holding accountable those responsible for violence. Widespread violence can almost always be traced back to ringleaders. That was the case in Rwanda, where a small band sparked a genocide. Kenyans don't want their country ripped apart, but a small number of recruiters, I suspect, are leading it in that way. We should do our best to let would-be killers, including government officials, know that the world is watching and they will face the consequences if they incite violence.

The State Department's top official charged with Africa recently called the violence "ethnic cleansing." We cannot be complacent. The potential for violence spiraling upward should never be discounted. This is the reason, of course, that our Peace Corps is leaving Kenya.

Looking back a few months, the U.S. and the international community was complacent and somewhat naive about

the Kenyan elections. News reports and analysts expressed surprise over the election violence. I chaired the Africa Subcommittee for 8 years working with Chairman PAYNE. There is a tendency, an understandable one, to see African "successes," and Kenya has been described as one. While many African countries have made progress, many African countries face fundamental and very difficult challenges that leave them very vulnerable. A better realization of that, a more realistic view, I think, would lead to a better Africa policy.

Kenya is a very important country. Its economy is key to East Africa. This violence has been economically devastating to many Kenyans. We have terrorism concerns in the region. So we have humanitarian and other reasons, other reasons besides just the question of the inhumanity here to help Kenyans move forward. It is Kenyans themselves who must look within to help get out of this crisis. But the U.S. and others should help, and this resolution calls for that help. I urge support for it, and I commend Chairman PAYNE for authoring it.

Mr. PAYNE. Let me thank the gentleman from California and commend him for the outstanding work that he did as chairman of this subcommittee and his continued interest in the subcommittee's activities.

I would like to say that I appreciate the gentleman from New Jersey cosponsoring this resolution, Mr. SMITH, and Mr. WOLF, who has been a true real leader on issues in Africa, too. One of the things that I must say, as I already mentioned about Mr. ROYCE, that our Subcommittee on Africa, regardless of which political party tends to chair it, has worked in a bipartisan manner for the 20 years that I have been a member of the committee, sometimes in the majority, sometimes in the minority.

But the thing that has been very encouraging is that in 95, 96 percent of the time, I would say we are on the same page. We see things the same way. We might have to tweak a word or two here, but by and large, we have been able to move forward on so many important issues because of the bipartisan spirit.

Once again, Mr. ROYCE, I appreciate your continued support, and, of course, Ranking Member SMITH, who is not only doing a tremendous job here but with the Helsinki Commission, and for the fact that he is very interested in the situation in China, I appreciate your continued human rights efforts. It's a pleasure to work with you.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PAYNE. I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. KENNEDY. I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his work in this area and just say, having just returned from another part of the world that has been turned upside down by election disturbances in Pakistan, with the assassination of Benazir

Bhutto, it's clear to me that the United States' interest in monitoring elections is paramount because of the national security implications in all of these parts of the world, that we have election monitors stationed in all of these places of the world where there are elections.

I know that the NDI and the NRI, the National Democratic Institute, National Republican Institute and these organizations that we promote as a country, we need to, as a Congress, continue to support those organizations because they are absolutely indispensable towards our national security in helping to secure better faith and confidence in these elections that are taking place around the world. If there is confidence in these elections, and, clearly, these elections have been called into dispute, especially here in Kenya, then there is going to be an unraveling of confidence, and, as we have seen, an occurrence of violence. That occurrence of violence is going to be destabilizing, not only to the region but also to our own national security interests.

That is why I support this resolution and certainly want to salute my colleagues in saying that in the future, we need to do more to support these efforts of monitoring these elections and giving the support that they need on the ground to make sure that they really are transparent elections in every sense of the word.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. PAYNE. Let me thank you very much. Let me also commend you for the work that you continue to do in Cape Verde and other developing countries, and your work in Haiti certainly makes all of us proud.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Again, I want to thank Chairman PAYNE for his great leadership on this issue. We work very well together on that committee.

Mr. Speaker, this was very important, and it is very important that we get a very strong vote by the House on behalf of the Payne resolution. We need to send a clear message to Kenya that we are watching, that we care deeply about what is unfolding there, and that we stand in solidarity there with those who have lost loved ones, with the IDPs and others.

We want a robust democracy in Kenya because they want a robust democracy in Kenya. The people deserve it. We thought they had it to some extent.

I think the chairman's mention of Ethiopia was a very important one. We thought Ethiopia was moving in the right direction. An election was held. It was seriously marred with irregularities, and then a series of killings followed thereafter. That's still a very unsettled part of the world as well. Again, I want to thank the chairman for his important resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 283, calling for a peaceful resolution to the current electoral crisis in Kenya, introduced by my distinguished colleague from New Jersey, Chairman PAYNE. This important legislation commends the Kenyan people for their significant strides towards democracy and calls for the peaceful resolution of their current electoral crisis.

As a senior Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs as well as the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, I am deeply concerned with the current crisis in Kenya. It saddens me to see the once relatively stable country of Kenya explode into chaotic violence, which has left more than 900 people dead and forced 300,000 people from their homes. Democracy must move forward in Kenya, and the cry for clear, transparent and peaceful elections must not go unheard by the international community. As Kenya's political crisis also becomes a humanitarian emergency, with over 300,000 people displaced from their homes and the distribution of food aid halted, experts have begun to warn of a looming health crisis. It is vital for the people of Kenya that we work rapidly to bring this conflict to a peaceful conclusion.

This important legislation denounces Kenyan security forces from using unwarranted force and urges them to respect the human rights of Kenyan citizens. This legislation further condemns the callous terrorization to civil society groups, journalists, religious leaders, and civil rights leaders.

While Kenya has long been an important friend and ally to the United States, at times our relationship has been strained due to concerns about corruption and human rights conditions in the sub-Saharan nation. However, this intricate relationship has been recently renewed and reinvigorated with the advent of the 1992 multiparty elections in Kenya. The people of Kenya have shown a desire and commitment for democracy that is unprecedented and sets a new standard for the region. Their unparalleled commitment to democracy and respect for the democratic process is indicated in the high voter turnout and peaceful voting on election day.

On December 27, 2007, the desire of the Kenyan nation for a meaningful change in politics and the revival of democracy was manifest in the millions of Kenyans who took to the polls. The months preceding the December elections showed opposition candidate Raila Odinga leading in the polls over incumbent President Mwai Kibaki. Amidst domestic and international cries of polling irregularities, the Electoral Commission of Kenya declared President Kibaki as the winner.

It is not the election itself but rather the aftermath of the elections and a way forward that concerns us here today. The Kenyan Constitution authorizes the establishment of the Electoral Commission of Kenya, ECK. While the ECK is comprised of 22 commissioners, 19 of the commissioners were appointed by President Kibaki last year, which is authorized by the Kenyan Constitution. What is not authorized was the appointment of the new commissioners without proper consultation with opposition parties, which violated the Inter-Parliamentary Parties Group Agreement of 1997. While the ECK quickly declared President Kibaki the winner, the chairman of the commission later admitted that he "was

under intense political pressure from powerful political leaders and the ruling party." Furthermore, press reports quote the Kenya Electoral Commission Chairman Samuel M. Kivuitu as stating that "the day he went to deliver the certificate declaring Kibaki the winner, he saw the chief justice already at the State House reportedly waiting to swear in Kibaki." The swearing-in ceremony itself was so rushed that it is said organizers forgot to include the national anthem in the program. Mr. Speaker, to call these events "irregularities" as the ECK commissioners and ECK staff have conceded, is a vast understatement. In order for Kenya to continue moving forward on its current democratic trajectory, elections must be transparent, free, and fair, none of which were seen in the December 27 election. This legislation calls upon the two leading presidential candidates to accept offers of external and internal assistance to help find a solution to the current crisis that has the support of the people of Kenya.

What is equally disturbing was the United States' reaction to this electoral crisis. While the EU observers criticized the election for its myriad of inconsistencies, on December 30, the United States government reportedly congratulated President Kibaki for his victory. In a recently released report, the EU concluded, "the 2007 general elections have fallen short of key international and regional standards for democratic elections. Most significantly, they were marred by a lack of transparency in the processing and tallying of presidential results, which raises concerns about the accuracy of the final results of this election." Following both regional and international uproar, the United States seemingly changed its position in January as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, declared that "serious flaws in the vote tallying process damaged the credibility of the process." Such inconsistency on the part of diplomatic corps of the United States sends a poor message to our friends and allies struggling for democracy across the sea.

As outrage over the electoral results permeated throughout the country, so too did spontaneous demonstrations of anger and ultimately violence. Recent statistics reported by the UN and Kenyan sources state that since late December more than 900 people have been killed and an estimated 300,000 displaced, including some 80,000 children under the age of five. International observers have proclaimed that while some protestors died due to mob violence, many others were reportedly shot and killed by police. While the Kenya military did not engage in riot control for most of January, press reports and Kenyan sources state that Kenyan police and security were given authority to use lethal force to disperse mobs. In the wake of the disputed election results, the Kenyan government banned demonstrations and initiated media restrictions, which seem to have further stoked the fire.

Mr. Speaker, with the intolerable number of Kenyans dead and displaced, it is imperative that the United States play a meaningful role in resolving the current crises. With two failed international missions, it is time that we rethink our strategy in addressing the current crisis.

The ongoing violence as a means to achieve political objectives in Kenya must come to a halt. We need the superior support of the United Nations to assist those affected

by violence, and use all the diplomatic means to persuade relevant political actors to commit to a peaceful resolution to the crisis. This legislation emphasizes precisely these issues.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this extremely important legislation that arbitrates for the Kenyan people.

□ 1600

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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 Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 283, 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. PAYNE. 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.

CONGRATULATING LEE MYUNG-BAK ON ELECTION TO PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 947) congratulating Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the Presidency of the Republic of Korea and wishing him well during his time of transition and his inauguration on February 25, 2008.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 947

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea share a longstanding and comprehensive alliance rooted in the common principles of freedom and democracy;

Whereas on June 11, 2007, the House of Representatives passed H. Res. 295 recognizing "the strong alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States and expresses appreciation to the Republic of Korea for its contributions to international efforts to combat terrorism";

Whereas on December 19, 2007, the Senate passed S. Res. 279 recognizing that "the strength and endurance of the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea should be acknowledged and celebrated";

Whereas, since 2000, the United States House of Representatives and the Republic of Korea National Assembly have engaged in an interparliamentary exchange to discuss issues central to the U.S.-Republic of Korea relationship;

Whereas there are deep cultural and personal ties between the peoples of the United States and the Republic of Korea, as exemplified by the large flow of visitors and exchanges each year between the two nations, as well as the nearly two million Korean-Americans;

Whereas Congress recognizes January 13 as Korean-American Day, honoring the con-

tributions of Korean-Americans in forging stronger bilateral ties between our two countries;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is the United States seventh largest trading partner and the United States is the third largest trading partner of the Republic of Korea with nearly \$80 billion in annual trade volume;

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea are working closely together to promote international peace and security, economic prosperity, human rights, and the rule of law; and

Whereas Lee Myung-Bak, upon winning the election to become the next President of the Republic of Korea, stated that he would seek to further strengthen the relationship with the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives congratulates Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the presidency of the Republic of Korea and wishes him well during his time of transition and on his inauguration on February 25, 2008.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which 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 Jersey?

There was no objection.

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

I would like to first thank my friend Mr. ROYCE of California for introducing this resolution which congratulates President-elect Lee Myung-Bak on his victory in the South Korean presidential elections.

In electing Lee Myung-Bak, the South Korean people have selected a man of exceptional accomplishment and proven leadership. During his 27 years at the helm of Hyundai Group, Mr. Lee transformed the company from a successful but relatively small local corporation into South Korea's largest industrial conglomerate with a dominant worldwide presence.

Mr. Lee and Hyundai's success helped drive the Republic of Korea's dramatic success as an East Asian economic "tiger" in the seventies, eighties and nineties. The parallel is particularly appropriate since in English the Korean word "hyundai" means "modern." As Mr. Lee led the company to new heights, he played a direct role in the spectacularly rapid modernization of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Lee's extraordinary professional career is right at home among the American Dream stories of our Nation. The son of a cattle rancher who fell onto hard times, Mr. Lee was born into poverty and worked his way through