

time of need. The U.S. Embassy in Rome has provided \$50,000 in emergency relief funding and President Obama has pledged to devote resources to preserving the region's cultural and artistic heritage. Additionally, as part of the U.S. effort to support the Italian people, the U.S. Department of State and the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) formed a public-private partnership to respond to the educational needs of the University of L'Aquila, and will strive to help the students and other human resource needs. The students are key to the future of the region, and the University is the economic lifeblood of the city of L'Aquila. It is therefore vital to help this sector recover in this time of need.

The Abruzzo earthquake is a tragedy that has affected lives all over the world, the least we can do as a Congress, and as a nation, is to recognize those involved in this tragedy and those who are helping Italy to rebuild. We cannot withhold this honor from those victims that perished in the tragedy. As honored Members of Congress, we have the opportunity to ensure that proper recognition is given to those involved in the earthquake.

I firmly believe that we must pass this legislation in order to demonstrate our support of those people who lost their lives and those people who lost their loved ones, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 430, 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. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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.

□ 1430

CALLING ON NORTH KOREA TO END HOSTILE RHETORIC AND ACTIVITY TOWARD SOUTH KOREA

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 309) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that North Korea should immediately stop any hostile rhetoric and activity towards the Republic of Korea and engage in mutual dialogue to enhance inter-Korean relations, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 309

Whereas North Korea's nuclear tests and missile activities, and their suspected pro-

liferation, are threatening peace and stability in Northeast Asia and beyond;

Whereas the North Korean leadership continues to pursue its nuclear ambitions while up to 2,000,000 North Koreans reportedly starved to death during the late 1990s and hundreds of thousands fled North Korea in search of freedom and food;

Whereas, on October 18, 2004, H.R. 4011, the North Korean Human Rights Act, became Public Law 108-333, bringing attention to the human rights conditions in North Korea and to provide United States support for North Korean refugees;

Whereas, on October 9, 2006, North Korea detonated a nuclear explosive device prompting the United Nations Security Council to adopt military and economic sanctions against North Korea through Resolution 1718;

Whereas, on June 30, 2008, H.R. 2642, the Supplemental Appropriations Act, became Public Law 110-252, granting the President the authority to waive the Glenn Amendment sanctions in order to facilitate North Korea's denuclearization process and to provide heavy fuel oil energy assistance to North Korea in support of the Six-Party Talks;

Whereas, on October 7, 2008, the North Korean Human Rights Reauthorization Act became Public Law 110-346;

Whereas, on October 11, 2008, North Korea was removed from the United States list of state sponsors of terrorism;

Whereas, on October 15, 2008, the Naval Vessel Transfer Act became Public Law 110-429 and included provisions to upgrade the Republic of Korea's foreign military sales status to that of "NATO plus three";

Whereas, on January 30, 2009, North Korea announced that it would nullify all inter-Korean agreements that are in pursuit of putting an end to the state of political and military confrontations and abrogate the agreements on the Sea Demarcation Line, known as the "Northern Limit Line";

Whereas, on February 3, 2009, President Barack Obama stated, in a call with the Republic of Korea's President Lee Myung-bak, that recent events underscore the need for the United States and the Republic of Korea to work together even more closely to achieve complete and verifiable denuclearization of North Korea;

Whereas, on February 10, 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that North Korea must understand that all of the countries in East Asia have made it clear that North Korea's recent behavior is viewed as unacceptable;

Whereas, on February 20, 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated, in a joint press conference with the Republic of Korea's Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan, that the United States and the Republic of Korea maintain a joint resolve to bring about the complete and verifiable denuclearization of North Korea through the Six-Party Talks and that North Korea is not going to get a different relationship with the United States while insulting and refusing dialogue with the Republic of Korea;

Whereas for more than a year, North Korea has refused proposals from the Republic of Korea for mutual dialogue and also has refused to fully implement the Six-Party agreements on denuclearization;

Whereas, on April 5, 2009, North Korea launched a missile in clear violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1718 prompting a statement by President Obama condemning the launch;

Whereas, on April 13, 2009, the United Nations Security Council adopted a Presidential Statement condemning the launch;

Whereas, on April 14, 2009, North Korea declared that it would withdraw from the Six-

Party Talks and resume its nuclear program, and subsequently expelled International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors at the Yongbyon facility;

Whereas, on April 29, 2009, North Korea announced that unless the United Nations Security Council promptly apologize for infringing the sovereignty of North Korea, and withdraw resolutions and decisions adopted against North Korea, it would conduct nuclear tests and test-firings of intercontinental ballistic missiles, and build a light water reactor plant and start the technological development for ensuring self-production of nuclear fuel;

Whereas, on May 25, 2009, North Korea announced that it has conducted a second nuclear test and in successive days, North Korea has launched six short-range missiles and threatened to abrogate the July 27, 1953, armistice ending the Korean War;

Whereas, on May 29, 2009, North Korea announced that it would "take additional self-defense measures" if the United Nations Security Council takes any further actions against North Korea;

Whereas, on June 12, 2009, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1874, which condemns North Korea in the strongest terms, and imposes stronger sanctions on North Korea by introducing measures to conduct cargo inspections, to restrict North Korea's Weapons of Mass Destruction-related financial transactions, and to strengthen the arms embargo; and

Whereas in face of serious security challenges on the Korean Peninsula, including the recent North Korean hostilities towards the Republic of Korea, the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea remains resilient and firm, based on shared values, mutual trust, and common interests: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) North Korea should immediately stop any hostile rhetoric and activity towards the Republic of Korea and engage in mutual dialogue to enhance inter-Korean relations;

(2) North Korea should fully implement the Six-Party joint statement of September 19, 2005, verifiably abandon all of its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, and return to the Non-Proliferation Treaty at an early date;

(3) North Korea should comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1718 of 2006 and 1874 of 2009;

(4) the United States remains committed to the promotion of inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation; and

(5) the strategic importance of the strong alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea, in promoting peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia, should be recognized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that North Korea should immediately stop its hostile activities and instead return to dialogue.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier of my strong support of H. Res. 309, it is a

thoughtful, timely, and relevant resolution offered by my dear friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING). I also wish to recognize the contributions and efforts of my colleague, Mr. MEEKS, also from New York. He was the principal Democratic lead cosponsor and is a member of my Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment.

Mr. Speaker, this important and bipartisan resolution shares, at its substantive core, three key principles. First, it expresses a unified sense of the Congress that North Korea should cease all hostile and destabilizing activity on the Korean Peninsula. Second, it calls on North Korea to reengage in dialogue with South Korea, as well as with the Six-Party Talks. And, third, it reaffirms our unconditional and unwavering commitment to our alliance partnership with the Republic of Korea.

As we are all aware, North Korea's recent hostile activities have once again brought world attention to the fragile peace and tenuous security framework on the Korean Peninsula. In a span of less than 3 months, North Korea conducted another nuclear test, launched several intercontinental ballistic missiles, and suspended or nullified all major inter-Korean agreements, including the armistice that has maintained peace between North and South Korea since 1953.

Even more alarming, Mr. Speaker, North Korea removed IAEA inspectors at Yongbyon and announced that it was restarting its plutonium production program with the ultimate aim of weaponizing its nuclear material. Meanwhile, amid the hostile brinkmanship, two American journalists, Euna Lee and Laura Ling, were captured, tried, and sentenced to 12 years in prison for reform by hard labor.

North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Il, has let it be known that his 26-year-old son, Kim Jong Un, will succeed him as he succeeded his own father. North Korea's communist leadership regime is being solidified into a totalitarian, hereditary, authoritarian regime.

These startling events have unquestionably precipitated the necessity of a unified congressional response to North Korea's hostile acts, while also sending a message of strong solidarity and support for our close friend and ally, the Republic of Korea.

Just last Friday, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution condemning "in the strongest terms possible" North Korea's nuclear test, imposing new sanctions, demanding that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea not conduct any further nuclear test or any launch using ballistic missile technology, and urging Pyongyang to come back to the Six-Party Talks without preconditions.

House Resolution 309 before us today will reinforce the Security Council's message that Pyongyang's recent actions are unacceptable, and it will also

reinforce a message President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton both underscored regarding the strength of our alliance with South Korea.

The administration and the international community have sent clear messages to North Korea about its provocations, and it is time that Congress also follows suit.

Mr. Speaker, our consideration of House Resolution 309 today is rendered all the more relevant by the visit of President Lee Myung-bak to Washington. I understand that his incredibly busy schedule will include a summit with President Obama and meetings with Cabinet officials and the House and Senate leadership. I was also made aware that President Lee will receive the honorary doctorate degree from George Washington University, where he was a visiting scholar 10 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, it is always a special occasion when Korea's President visits the United States, and I certainly would like to extend a sincere welcome and best wishes to President Lee, whom I had the honor of meeting with last year in Seoul.

Mr. Speaker, for almost 1½ years now, since his inauguration last February, President Lee has continually emphasized the importance of a strategic alliance with the United States, and this has been manifested through several notable achievements. Most recently, South Korea joined the Proliferation Security Initiative aimed at preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. In November of last year, Korea formally acceded to the Visa Waiver Program. In October, a currency swap agreement was signed between our two countries to stem the liquidity issues in the global financial markets. And through legislation passed by our Congress last September, Korea's Foreign Military Sales status was officially upgraded to the level of NATO plus three.

President Lee was also instrumental in arranging for the resumption of the importation of beef imports from the U.S. to Korea after diffusing a sensitive political situation that temporarily halted our imports of beef to South Korea. His determination to settle the beef issue underscores the important commercial ties between Korea and the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to close my remarks by offering a few thoughts on the importance of reaffirming our alliance partnership with Korea. The history of relations between our two countries, which can be tracked back to a treaty of friendship more than 25 years ago, has been marked by consistency and mutual solidarity between our two nations.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

I rise in strong support of this resolution put forward in March by my good

friend and Homeland Security ranking member, PETER KING, to show solidarity with our South Korean allies in their hour of need. Its consideration is timely; it is timed to coincide with tomorrow's Washington summit meeting with the President of the Republic of Korea.

North Korea is fast becoming a foreign policy crisis spiraling out of control. In April, there was a long-range missile launch; in May, there was another underground nuclear test. Only 1 week ago, a Pyongyang kangaroo court took the provocative and morally reprehensible act of sentencing captured U.S. citizen journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee to 12 years in a labor camp. North Korea also continues to hold a South Korean citizen as a hostage. Our thoughts and prayers are with those captives and their families.

The United Nations Security Council has finally passed a resolution with some teeth. Unfortunately, U.N. Resolution 1718, passed in 2006 after Pyongyang's first nuclear test, was ignored when North Korea returned to the negotiating table.

North Korea's response to this latest U.N. resolution has been more bluster and brinkmanship. The North Koreans revealed, to no one's surprise, that they have maintained a highly enriched uranium program all along, in addition to their plutonium program. They now threaten the world with more bombs and possible nuclear war.

Earlier this month, Kim Jong Il sent a patrol boat into South Korean waters to back up his threats made against our South Korean ally. Some are now convinced that there will be a future military confrontation along the DMZ or in the Yellow Sea. And today, 28,500 U.S. military personnel still stand guard in South Korea, a country often called "the last frontier of the Cold War."

The "Dear Leader" is obviously testing the mettle of this President and this Congress. Kim Jong Il has responded to the outstretched hand of President Obama's inaugural address with missiles, nuclear bombs, the seizure of American citizens, and a threat of war. He is preparing to launch yet another long-range missile, one that could reportedly reach the United States and is likely to conduct yet another underground nuclear test.

I say enough is enough. Now is the time for the consequences which our current North Korean Special Envoy, Stephen Bosworth, promised after the April 5 missile launch. Last week, Secretary Clinton raised the re-listing of North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism as one possible consequence. But a few days later, the House Rules Committee refused to allow consideration of an amendment to the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, offered by my good friend and ranking member, Representative ROS-LEHTINEN, which would have done just that. It is unfortunate that Secretary Clinton would consider this, but not the House leadership.

The time for hesitancy is over, Mr. Speaker. America needs to respond to North Korea.

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

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the ranking member, Mr. KING from New York, as much time as he may consume.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding.

At the outset, let me thank Chairman BERMAN and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN for the support they have given me on this resolution and for bringing it to the House floor. Also, let me thank my colleague from New York (Mr. MEEKS) for being the prime cosponsor of the bill and for his support in pushing it forward. And of course Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, who does a truly outstanding job as chairman of the subcommittee, I want to thank him as well.

Mr. Speaker, when I first introduced this resolution back in March, it was clear then, obviously, that Korea was a major threat to world stability and a major threat to the national security of the United States, and of course also to its Asian neighbors. Well, since then, the situation has only gotten worse. As Mr. BILIRAKIS pointed out, it has been step after step of aggressive action, provocative action, action defying world opinion, defying resolutions of the United Nations, and absolutely defying agreements that have been made with the Six Parties over the previous years.

Mr. Speaker, President Clinton reached out and tried to engage North Korea, President Bush obviously reached out and tried to engage North Korea, began the Six-Party Talks, made China a part of that process; and yet at every stage, when it comes to weaponizing uranium, plutonium and moving forward, North Korea has refused to respond in good faith. And when they do make a feeble attempt at good faith, it is obviously a ploy, and they renege as soon as any concession is made by the United States or any of our allies. So, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we send a message to the North Korean Government.

And let's be clear about this. When we are talking about the North Korean Government, we're really talking about an organized crime family masquerading as a state. Kim Jong Il defies every standard of decency that is built up in the community of nations. I think it is important to realize that, especially when North Korea is contrasted with the Republic of Korea, which has become a model democracy and it is such a strong and staunch ally of the United States.

So as we go forward, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for the President and the Secretary of State to know that Congress will stand behind them if they have to take stronger action, if

they have to really lean back and push back against North Korea. I think everything should be on the table. The fact is that we now have a situation where, with going forward with its nuclear program, North Korea really puts its neighbors in jeopardy, and perhaps soon after that Europe and the United States, with their missile system, with the delivery system, with the nuclear relationships. And I think everything should be on the table, including a very strong missile defense system. And we should have an open debate, put partisanship aside and stand together as Americans to confront what could be a mortal danger to our allies and also causing the situation in Asia to spiral out of control. I certainly think when Japan sees what North Korea is doing, as far as advancing its nuclear program, we could well see Japan considering a nuclear program. We have strong friends, such as Taiwan, who now will be in danger.

Also, it is time for China to realize that they have a major role to play in solving this crisis. The fact is, North Korea could not survive if it did not receive its energy and its food supplies from China. And China should realize that this game can only go on for so long where they somehow take a certain delight in North Korea antagonizing the United States. And also, they feel they can buy off North Korea with their food and energy, and they don't want refugees streaming across their border. But this has now gone beyond the stage where we are just talking and sitting down; we are talking about the very security of the United States being in danger here.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this resolution. Yes, we have to continue constructive dialogue, we have to engage, to the extent we can, with North Korea; but the fact is that, as Mr. BILIRAKIS said, when the President reached out in good faith—President Clinton, President Bush, and now President Obama have reached out in good faith—the response to them has been an iron fist, it's been missiles, it's been rockets, and it's been weaponizing of nuclear fissile material.

□ 1445

So rather than be caught short, rather than our being victims of something which we should anticipate now, let us stand together, and I certainly reach out across the aisle so that all of us, as Republicans and Democrats and as Americans, can stand with the President as he goes forward, and hopefully he will, to stand up to this really blatant aggression, I believe, by North Korea and send a message to Kim Jong Il, whether it's him or his son, no matter who ends up controlling or calling the shots in North Korea, that it will be met by concerted action from the United States. And also call on countries such as China to start doing what they should be doing, and to reassure our allies such as Japan and Taiwan that the United States will do all it

can to prevent and stop North Korea from becoming a nuclear power.

I urge adoption of the resolution.

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

I want to commend and thank my good friend, the gentleman from New York for his sponsorship, again, of this important resolution and certainly thank him for his insights and understanding of the current situation that we're faced with as far as dealing with North Korea.

Mr. Speaker, the geopolitical situation now, the realities and the development as a result of North Korea's latest activities now, makes it absolutely necessary for the United States to strengthen our alliance and partnership with South Korea.

The security alliance between the United States and Korea has been pivotal ever since it was forged through much shedding of blood during the Korean War some 60 years ago. As I recall, over 33,000 of our men and women in military uniform died as a result of that terrible conflict known as the Korean War.

Without question, South Korea has remained a steadfast U.S. ally, especially in our time of need, whether it be the horrific conflict of Vietnam, where I personally served at the time, where some 50,000 South Korean soldiers were right there fighting alongside the members of our Armed Forces there at that time. When we needed assistance in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, and other global hotspots, South Korea responded affirmatively and dependably as our ally. The foundation of our friendship and alliance is unshakeable. Through our shared values and common history, we are able to meet global challenges together, ranging from terrorism to the current crisis in North Korea.

Mr. Speaker, our economic and trade relationship with South Korea is one of the strongest in Asia, and currently South Korea is our seventh-largest trading partner in the world. In 2007 our two countries concluded a free trade agreement that now awaits approval by our Congress as well as the Korean National Assembly.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement will bring tremendous benefits to both of our countries. The International Trade Commission has forecast that the elimination of tariffs on U.S. goods under the agreement would increase our GDP by about \$11 billion a year. The agreement will also eliminate regulatory and other nontariff barriers that have historically restricted access by farmers, manufacturers, and service providers. And to the South Korean market, with growing difficulties and the health of our economy, in my opinion, this proposed agreement will be a win-win situation: a win for our workers, a win for our businesses, and a win for our consumers.

But perhaps the most compelling argument supporting a free trade agreement with this important ally of ours is the very reason that we are gathered here in support of House Resolution 309. The geopolitical factors in East Asia and North Korea's recent destabilizing actions necessitates a firm and tangible U.S. commitment in the region. And realizing that the free trade agreement would send the right message to both North and South Korea that we seek an even stronger and more comprehensive economic and trade relationship with our important ally, the Republic of Korea.

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade, the Member from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Congressman PETER KING of New York's legislation. I think it's very important at this point in time to recognize, as we have discussed today, the importance of that relationship that we have with South Korea and to recognize also just how much of a test North Korea's provocative actions have been for our allies in South Korea.

If we think back to the aftereffect of the Korean War and how South Korea lay in ruins and think today about the fact that South Korea has one of the highest per-capita incomes in the world and yet we look at North Korea and it has the lowest, it is truly dramatic. I have been in North Korea, and it's phenomenal to me to see the kind of devastation that that misrule has led to in terms of the population, the stunted growth, the malnutrition that you can see when you meet people. But particularly for our friends in South Korea, who today are one of our strongest trading partners, particularly for them at this point in time, when we see this North Korean foreign policy, which has always been aggressive but lately has included long-range missile tests; has included three-stage ICBMs; includes booting U.N. inspectors from the country; the sentencing of Laura Ling and Euna Lee, two young American journalists, sentencing them to 12 years hard labor; the ongoing counterfeiting of U.S. \$100 bills; missile proliferation out of North Korea; drug trafficking and other illicit activities, so many illicit activities that I think some of us are confounded by the fact that almost half of the hard currency that goes into that regime is money they make through illicit activities. And now North Korea has conducted a second underground nuclear test in 3 years. We are in the midst of a leadership struggle, and many expect as a result more provocations, more missile tests, even more nuclear tests perhaps over the ensuing months.

Weeks after the North Korean test, the U.N. Security Council has passed a

watered-down resolution. And just as the previous administration did after North Korea's October 2006 nuclear test, this U.N. action will be touted. It will be touted by our spokesman as an effective response. Well, we've heard this story before, unfortunately. It is not an effective response, and it is because, frankly, with the lowest common denominator U.N. resolution approach, where China and Russia get that opportunity to water down that resolution so that it won't be enforced effectively, frankly, we come to a conclusion. And the conclusion for me—and I've followed this issue for many years—is that the United States can achieve an awful lot by deploying measures to further undercut North Korea's economy and to target its proliferation activities. We have found that the source of doing that before; we should do it again.

Past attempts to squeeze the wallet of North Korea have proven very successful. When banks from across Asia refused to do business with the North Koreans after a bank in Macau was shut down by U.S. sanctions for laundering counterfeit U.S. currency for North Korea, it brought enormous pressure. It was at a point in North Korea where the previous ruler, Kim Jong Il, temporarily the ruler, could not pay his generals. And that was until this effort was dropped with the belief that North Korea would bargain its nuclear program away. Those sanctions were lifted. North Korea got back on its feet. The work that they were doing on missile proliferation could begin again because they had the hard currency again.

There were reports that North Korean counterfeiting of our \$100 bills has been ramped up in recent months. News reports indicate that South Korea has given us the information on between 10 and 20 North Korean bank accounts, most of them in China, one of them in Switzerland. One former U.S. official has called that Macau bank—and I have been in Macau and we have seen those \$100 bills—he calls that the tip of the iceberg of North Korean illicit activity.

We know what to do now. We know what worked in terms of shutting them down when we were willing to do it. So if we have the will, we can do that again.

Mr. Speaker, North Korea's second nuclear test in 3 years offers a silver lining: clarity of the intentions of that regime. In case we didn't know it before, in case we didn't suspect it when we found that they were helping Syria on the banks of the Euphrates, when they were helping Syria develop a nuclear program, North Korea has dropped the pretense of being willing to negotiate away its nuclear program. We have learned, as PETER KING, our colleague from New York, has told us, about the work done on uranium enrichment in addition to the plutonium program. They had a secret underground program that they never divulged to us.

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, who will be visiting Washington this week, advocated for a new approach with respect to the Six-Party Talks in a weekend interview. That South Korea, our ally for over 60 years, is pressing for a fresh approach should speak volumes to us, and I hope we are listening.

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

I want to thank my good friend and colleague the gentleman from California for his comments, certainly one of the most recognized experts that we have in the House as far as issues dealing with the Korean Peninsula. I do thank him for his thoughts and sentiments on this important issue.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my good friend the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and also Mr. MEEKS for offering this important resolution and especially also the chairman of our committee, Mr. BERMAN, and also our senior ranking member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for their leadership and their support in bringing this bill before the floor.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution and offering President Lee our best wishes for a pleasant visit to Washington and a successful summit with President Obama sometime this week.

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Once again, I want to thank my good friend PETER KING, the ranking member of the Homeland Security Committee, for introducing this very important resolution, very timely as well. And I urge quick and unanimous passage.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to convey the importance of the passage of H. Res. 309, which urges North Korea to cease all hostile rhetoric and activity toward the Republic of Korea. In the interest of the Korean people, it is imperative that Korea begin to engage in a dialogue in an effort to improve inter-Korean relations. Development can only come about with sincere and diplomatic communication via inter-Korean engagement.

North Korea's nuclear and missile program, and their suspected proliferation, is one of the gravest threats to international peace and stability in Northeast Asia and beyond. The time has come for the North Korean regime to abandon its nuclear weapons and all nuclear programs, and revert to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) post haste. Yet North Korean leadership continues to pursue its nuclear ambitions while up to 2,000,000 North Koreans reportedly starved to death during the late 1990s and hundreds of thousands fled North Korea in search of freedom and food.

Given the urgency of timing and development on the issue of North Korea's nuclearization, President Obama noted in a call with the Republic of Korea's President Lee Myung-Bak on February 3, 2009, that recent events underscore the immediate need for the United States and the Republic of Korea to work together even more closely to achieve complete and verifiable denuclearization of

North Korea. As North Korea continues to pursue proliferation, time is running out for the plausibility of comprehensive denuclearization. On February 10, 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that North Korea needs to understand that all of the countries in East Asia have made it clear that North Korea's recent behavior is viewed as unacceptable. Furthermore, on February 20, 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated, in a joint press conference with the Republic of Korea's Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan, that the United States and the Republic of Korea maintain a joint resolve to bring about the complete and verifiable denuclearization of North Korea through the Six-Party Talks. Secretary of State Clinton also stated that North Korea will not be establishing a new and different relationship with the United States while simultaneously insulting and refusing dialogue with the Republic of Korea.

H. Res. 309 additionally requires North Korea's compliance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1718, which prevents a range of goods from entering or leaving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and imposes an asset freeze and travel ban on persons related to the nuclear-weapon program, should North Korea's pursuit of nuclearization not cease immediately. The strategic importance of the strong alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea cannot be overstated. Such an alliance is necessary in promoting peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia, and should be recognized.

In conclusion, we have reached a point in time where North Korea must cease their proliferation efforts. Additionally, North Korean leadership should scale back their weapons program by aiming to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. In order to implement change for the people of Korea and improve its image in the international arena, it is necessary that North Korea engage in inter-Korean dialogue. I urge passage of this important resolution.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 309, 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.

HONORING SUMO WRESTLER TAKAMIYAMA DAIGORO

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 479) honoring the contributions of Takamiyama Daigoro to Sumo and to United States-Japan relations.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 479

Whereas Takamiyama Daigoro was born Jesse Kuhaulua in Maui, Hawaii, on June 16, 1944;

Whereas Takamiyama Daigoro entered professional Sumo, an ancient Japanese sport with origins spanning over several centuries;

Whereas Takamiyama Daigoro was the first United States born sumo wrestler and also became the first foreigner to win the top division championship of Sumo in 1972;

Whereas upon his 1972 victory, United States Ambassador Robert Ingersoll read a congratulatory message from President Richard Nixon, marking the first time English words were spoken at a sumo tournament;

Whereas Takamiyama Daigoro competed in over 1400 matches, established numerous records, and earned many awards over his 20-year career;

Whereas Takamiyama Daigoro became the first and only foreign born wrestler to become an oyakata, or training master, by establishing a training stable for sumo wrestlers;

Whereas Takamiyama Daigoro paved the way for Polynesian and other foreign wrestlers to compete in this traditional ancient sport including Saleva'a Atisano'e, also known as Konishiki, who became the first foreigner to reach ozeki, the second highest sumo rank, Chad Rowan, also known as Akebono, who became the first foreigner to reach yokozuna, the highest sumo rank, and Fiamalu Penitani, also known as Musashimaru, who became the second foreigner to reach yokuzuna; and

Whereas Takamiyama Daigoro is retiring on June 16, 2009, at the mandatory retirement age of 65: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors Takamiyama Daigoro's achievements to Sumo and his contributions to enhancing United States-Japan relations; and

(2) encourages the international community to recognize the successes of Takamiyama Daigoro in Sumo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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 American Samoa?

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of this resolution, recognizing the contributions of Takamiyama Daigoro to the sport of sumo wrestling, the most ancient sport in Japan, and to the U.S.-Japan relationship.

Mr. Speaker, June 15, 2009, marks the day before Takamiyama's 65th birthday, when those in sumo must retire.

Over the course of this exceptional 45-year career, Takamiyama Daigoro

not only achieved great success as a sportsman but also built enduring bridges between the United States and the people and the Government of Japan.

Jesse Kuhaulua, that is his real Hawaiian name, known professionally in Japan as Takamiyama Daigoro, was a trailblazer in the sport of sumo wrestling in every sense of the word.

□ 1500

He was born in the great State of Hawaii and became the first U.S.-born wrestler to enter the sport of sumo in Japan. When he came to Japan to enter the dohyo, the sumo wrestling ring, he was new to Japan; and despite having no prior experience in Japan with sumo wrestling, he quickly mastered the sport's physical and unique traditions. He also mastered the Japanese language and the nuances of the Japanese culture. Takamiyama competed in over 1,400 matches, winning 12 kinboshi or gold stars, and 11 sansho, or special prizes. In 1972 he became the first foreigner to win the Emperor's Cup, the top division championship in the sport of sumo wrestling. After that victory, U.S. Ambassador Ingersoll read a congratulatory message from President Nixon, marking the first time English words were ever spoken at a sumo tournament. Takamiyama Daigoro to this day is the first and only foreigner to open his own training stable for sumo wrestlers. I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise in support of this resolution, which gives long overdue recognition to the accomplishments of sumo champion Takamiyama Daigoro, who won Japan's top division sumo championship in 1972. This native son of Hawaii, also known as Jesse Kuhaulua, was the first foreigner to achieve this distinction since competitive sumo tournaments first appeared in the 16th century. Athletes have long been recognized as goodwill ambassadors who can often promote international understanding more effectively than professional diplomats. For example, 2 years ago former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice named baseball legend Cal Ripken, Jr. as a goodwill ambassador to expand the role of athletes in diplomacy. Mr. Daigoro, who retires tomorrow from the professional ring at age 65, has spent three and a half decades using his athletic skills to promote understanding and friendship between the people of the United States and the people of Japan. I, therefore, join Ms. HIRONO and my congressional colleagues from the Aloha State in supporting this resolution, which offers congratulations and thanks to this outstanding athlete for his remarkable record in sumo, for his role in diversifying that which had previously been exclusively a Japanese sport, and for