

and kept them in prolonged pretrial detention. The executive branch exercised control over and pressured the judiciary. The government partially restricted freedom of expression. The government's respect for freedoms of assembly, association, and religion was poor, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) continued to face restrictions.

In the face of decades of human rights and religious freedom abuses under the Mubarak regime, successive U.S. administrations, including the Obama administration, failed to advocate for those whose voices were being silenced. Many pro-democracy activists and religious minorities that I spoke with while in Egypt felt abandoned by the West.

At this historic time of transition, we must not make that mistake again. While there is a palpable sense of anticipation and even hope about what the future might hold for the Egyptian people, the outcome is far from guaranteed.

There are reliable reports of human rights abuses and political repression following Mubarak's resignation. For example, a recently released Congressional Research Service report indicated that:

The SCAF has warned news organizations that it is illegal to criticize the military in the press. A military court sentenced a blogger (Maikel Nabil) to three years in prison for insulting the military. Others have criticized the SCAF over press reports that female detainees in military custody were subject to "virginity tests" by doctors.

Given the nature and extent of U.S. assistance to Egypt over the years, the U.S. military has developed good relations with the Egyptian military and we should leverage those ties as Egypt looks to transition from military to civilian rule. It will be critical for Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, among others, to engage with the SCAF.

Ultimately, I believe that the majority of Egyptians of all faiths want democracy. The question is will it be taken away from them after a single election?

Their yearning for true freedom and democracy must not be underestimated. We have a responsibility to stand with them and help them realize their aspirations.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN GARRARD

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 7, 2011

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an outstanding citizen of South Alabama who has dedicated his life to the service of his community and his fellow man. I am proud to inform this House that John Garrard of Atmore, Alabama, was recently honored with the Atmore Chamber of Commerce's Lifetime Achievement Award.

A resident of Atmore for over 60 years, Mr. Garrard has a long and distinguished record of public service. A World War II veteran of the U.S. Navy, Mr. Garrard graduated from Millsaps College with a degree in economics and business administration and a minor in secondary education. He soon put his education to good use back in his community.

He began his career as a teacher at Escambia County High School. Afterwards, he joined the First National Bank of Atmore, where he rose to the position of president and where he continues to serve on the board of directors.

Mr. Garrard has also served on the Atmore Public Library Board for 48 years, was a mem-

ber of the Atmore Rotary Club for 30 years, and was a part of Fountain Prison Ministry for 15 years. Mr. Garrard was also named Atmore's Citizen of the Year in 1981.

Today, even in retirement, Mr. Garrard continues to serve his community as a member of the Atmore City Council. The extent of Mr. Garrard's commitments is considerable. It is because of the work of people like John Garrard that small towns throughout south Alabama, and around the country, are able to thrive and maintain a vibrant sense of community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Escambia County and South Alabama, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. John Garrard for his service, and applauding the example of civic engagement that he has set. His presence is surely felt throughout his community which has benefitted from his many contributions of time and talent. Through his life of service and dedication, he has definitely earned this award, and I am proud to join his many friends and family in saluting him for this most deserving honor.

REAFFIRMING COMMITMENT TO NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

SPEECH OF

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 6, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today as a proud co-sponsor and strong supporter of H. Res. 268, which reaffirms our national commitment to a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Madam Speaker, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has persisted for generations. It has claimed thousands of lives and has contributed to instability in the world's most volatile region. Few things would do more to advance the cause of world peace than the achievement of the two-state solution which recognizes Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state with secure borders and the right of the Palestinians to govern themselves in an autonomous state with the resources and factor endowments to enable the Palestinian people to live in dignity.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a strong and vocal advocate for direct negotiations, has already accepted a two-state solution, only to be continually rebuffed by the Palestinians at every turn.

Madam Speaker, attempts by Palestinian leadership to circumvent direct negotiations with Israel and instead seek direct recognition from the United Nations and foreign governments is counter-productive and undermines the work that has been done over the last several decades to come to a peaceful and mutually beneficial resolution.

The unilateral declaration of statehood by the Palestinian Authority shows a disregard for and violation of the underlying principles of Middle East peace agreements, including the Oslo Accords, the Road Map, and most recently the Annapolis Conference.

Madam Speaker, a two-state solution is the only feasible resolution to this long-standing conflict. Therefore I strongly applaud the Ad-

ministration for opposing international recognition of a Palestinian state that is not reached in direct negotiation with Israel.

I urge the President to direct the United States Ambassador to the U.N. to exercise our veto with respect to any resolution of the United Nations Security Council to the contrary and call upon Palestinian leaders to return to the negotiation table in a good faith effort to reach a mutually acceptable agreement to bring about the two-state solution, which is one and sure path to the just and lasting peace we all seek.

For these reasons, I strongly support H. Res. 268 and urge my colleagues to join me.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 7, 2011

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 500 on July 6, 2011, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

CONGRATULATING PHIL JOHNSON, ATMORE'S CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 7, 2011

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a distinguished citizen of South Alabama for his exemplary service to our region and his community. I am pleased to note that Phil Johnson was recently named Atmore, Alabama's 2010 Citizen of the Year.

If a leader is someone who is willing to give of himself in order to benefit society, then Phil Johnson certainly fits the definition of a leader. His stamp on Atmore and surrounding Escambia County is his legacy of developing local arts programs and inspiring a passion for the arts among our young people.

Ten years ago, Mr. Johnson played a leading role in founding the Greater Escambia Council for the Arts (GECA) and has been instrumental in raising awareness for the arts throughout his community.

Mr. Johnson has also performed in, directed, and produced an exceptional number of performances, and helped secure a theater in downtown Atmore.

Thanks to Mr. Johnson's vision and dedication, the residents of Atmore and Escambia County have enormous opportunities in the arts. From actors to playgoers to the young people who have become involved in the arts for the first time, many have benefited from Mr. Johnson's work and achievements.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the arts serve a vital role in our communities, and they can have an especially large impact in small towns like Atmore.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Mr. Johnson for his remarkable service, and to join the people of Atmore in recognizing the great difference he has made in that community.