

and gratitude of this country's government.

Unfortunately, some members of the Filipino community have not been accorded such respect. Amerasian children, children of mixed heritage borne by Philippine mothers and U.S. servicemen, have been denied the right to immigrate to the U.S.

In the spirit of today's House resolution, I would ask my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to join me in sponsoring my bill, H.R. 2540, the Amerasian Reunification Act. This legislation would help reunite families and children born in the Philippines. Your support of this legislation will send a resounding message to the citizens of the Philippines that Americans are willing to stand behind their democratic beliefs in assisting those less fortunate in need.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCARBOROUGH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.)

ON NIGERIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, none of us should take comfort or have joy when someone loses their life. So I do not stand today on the floor of the House to celebrate the death of the despotic leader of Nigeria, Sani Abacha, for a human life has been lost.

Immediately upon his death, however, a military major general was appointed. I do think it is important that we look upon this opportunity for all of us who believe in human rights and human dignity and the full promise of a country like Nigeria with 115 million citizens, the largest nation on the continent of Africa. I do believe this is a time that we stand up and ask for democratic free elections, the respect of human rights and human dignity, and the assessing of the needs of the people of Nigeria and their needs being the highest priority over the greed of despotic leaders.

As I watch the news unfold, tragic that someone has lost their life, but it gives us an opportunity to speak up and stand up and be counted. Otherwise we all can turn our backs and our heads and we can say, well, there has been a nonviolent transition of government. Of course, it has. Military leaders selected another military leader.

The question is, will there be free elections in Nigeria? Will there be the opportunity for the people of Nigeria to have jobs, for the oil-rich Nigeria to translate some of those dollars into the education of their children, the health care, the opportunities for employment, or will business be as usual?

I for one think it is important that Nigerians around the world, people of goodwill who want their country to be restored to its natural promise of leadership on the continent of Africa and in the world, the place where it has been in the past and the place where it has been in recent years, when it helped America in the Persian Gulf War, even Africa today looks to Nigeria to be a leader.

How tragic it was that the President of the United States in his visit to the continent could not include on his list the largest African nation to be part of that historic journey because it had not accepted the principles, the basic tenets of human dignity and human respect.

So Nigerians across the world, and particularly those in this great Nation, and to my good friends in Houston, Texas, it is time now for your voices to be raised and demand the transition that will transition the Nigerian Government into democracy, free elections into the fall. The major general who has now been despotically appointed by dictators themselves must commit himself to free elections. Our corporate friends who enjoy the largess of a country with respect to the businesses that are done there, their voices, too, must be raised.

I do know that overall sanctions at the drop of a hat do not necessarily work, but I think it is now high time for Nigeria to unshackle itself from despotic leadership, punitive measures towards its constituency base, the mass killings of writers, poets, activists and adversaries of the government, and stand up and be counted for the democracy of which its promise can fulfill. Nigeria can be a leader on the African continent and in the world. We should be ashamed to allow the despotic leadership to continue.

Those of us who care about the continent in Nigeria, someone who has studied, as myself, in Nigeria, traveled in Nigeria, appreciate and love the people of Nigeria, have strong constituents who are in fact citizens or past citizens of Nigeria, I would simply say that now is the time for all voices to be heard. No one's head should be turned. No one should say, I am afraid that my name can be counted because the despot in Nigeria may haul me over from the United States or they may harm my family. What kind of country is that?

So it is so extremely important that we call upon this newly appointed new leader, self-appointed, if you will, not democratically elected, to bring about democracy to his people, freedom to his people, free elections to his people, human dignity to his people. And we in the United States of America must be in the front of the line demanding that kind of justice for the Nigerian people.

My friends who are Nigerians in this country, your voices must be the loudest, and you must join us in ensuring that there is, yes, a good atmosphere for doing business, but good opportunity for living a better quality of life

in a democratic society. Nigeria deserves nothing less. This country should call upon it to do what is right.

□ 2045

HOUSE PASSES LEGISLATION TO STIFFEN SANCTIONS REGARDING MISSILE PROLIFERATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURR of North Carolina). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Fox) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in the House to congratulate my colleagues for joining with myself and the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) in passing historic legislation which will stiffen sanctions against Russian organizations that have provided missile hardware and technology to Iran. The legislation imposes a minimum of 2 years of sanctions against Russian organizations and companies identified as having provided missile materials or technology or have tried to since January 22, 1998 when the Russian government issued a decree banning such activity.

The urgency of this legislation is apparent. Thanks to critical assistance from Russian firms, Iran is making steady progress in developing medium- and long-range ballistic missiles which is not in the best interests of the United States or in world peace. Unless something happens soon, Iran may be able to produce its own medium-range missiles within less than a year. If the assistance from Russia continues, Iran soon will be able to produce long-range ballistic missiles as well.

For more than a year, the Clinton administration has been in dialogue with Russia about stopping this assistance. Thanks in large part to the pressure brought to bear by the very legislation we have considered today, some progress has been achieved, at least on paper.

On January 22, the Russian government issued a decree to block the transfer of missile technology to Iran but in the nearly 6 months since this decree was issued it has become apparent that the Russian government is not fully committed to implementing it. Despite progress in some areas, the evidence suggests that at least some elements of the Russian government continue to believe that the transfer of missile technology to Iran serves Russian interests. Congress cannot change the misguided foreign policy calculations of some Russian officials but we can give Russian firms that are in position to sell missile technology to Iran compelling reasons not to do so. The sanctions contained in our legislation will require such firms in Russia and elsewhere to choose between short-term profits when dealing with Iran and potentially far more lucrative long-term economic relations with the United States.

As this legislation was adopted here in the House today, by a 392-22 vote, we