

When, following the Chinese invasion in 1949–1950, Tibet was established as an autonomous region in the People's Republic of China, the Tibetan people were granted the right of autonomy in determining the shape of their religious, cultural and social institutions. China's leadership is on record as agreeing to this principle.

Unfortunately, between 1951 and 1959 the government of the People's Republic of China did not uphold these guarantees of autonomy, leading to the 1959 Lhasa Uprising and the flight of the Dalai Lama from Tibet. During the past 44 years, tens of thousands of Tibetans have been forced to flee their homeland in the face of continued Chinese repression and violation of their right to religious and cultural autonomy. I find this a tragedy.

Nonetheless, the Dalai Lama, in seeking to engage with China's leadership to discuss the future of the Tibetan people, has specifically cited that he is not seeking independence for Tibet, that he is willing to confine his discussions to achieving cultural and religious autonomy for his people, and that he is willing to negotiate within the framework enunciated by Deng Xiaoping in 1979.

Indeed, in his statement today on the "44th Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising," the Dalai Lama stated that "As far back as the early seventies in consultation with senior Tibetan officials I made a decision to seek a solution to the Tibetan problem through a "Middle Way Approach." This framework does not call for independence and separation of Tibet. At the same time it provides genuine autonomy for the six million men and women who consider themselves Tibetans to preserve their distinctive identity, to promote their religious and cultural heritage that is based on a centuries-old philosophy which is on benefit even in the 21st century, and to protect the delicate environment of the Tibetan plateau. This approach will contribute to the overall stability and unity of the People's Republic of China."

Over the past 12 years I have made every effort to encourage rapprochement between China and Tibet, including helping to pass messages from His Holiness, the Dalai Lama to China. I believe the Dalai Lama is absolutely sincere in his desire to negotiate a peaceful solution to what has been a great tragedy for the Tibetan people.

This past September the Chinese government made it possible for two envoys of the Dalai Lama to visit Beijing to re-establish direct contact with the Chinese leadership, and to visit Tibet to meet with local Tibetan officials. This trip was, in my view, very significant, very encouraging, and very meaningful.

Nonetheless, much remains to be done if the people of Tibet are to achieve freedom and autonomy in determining the shape of their society. It is my sincere hope that China's new

leadership will extend the hand of cooperation in resolving differences with Tibet.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, no one can deny the contributions women and children have made to this country and the world. In government, business, education, medicine, the arts, and athletics, women have met and exceeded the great challenges placed before them. It is altogether fitting, then, that we set aside one day every year to pay tribute and acknowledge these accomplishments: March 8, 2003 is International Women's Day.

On this day, we celebrate the progress women and girls have made over the years, but we also renew our commitment to create a better world and bestow a better future to women and girls in every country. We must not rest on our laurels until all women and girls enjoy basic human rights and have the opportunity to fulfill their life dreams.

Rarely does a day go by when we do not hear the news of a woman fighting for those rights and those dreams, whether it be a girl struggling to get an education in Afghanistan, a mother desperately seeking to provide for her children in sub-Saharan Africa, or a woman expressing her views in the streets of Venezuela. We who enjoy the blessings of liberty and democracy have an obligation to raise our voice on behalf of these women and girls to let them know that they are not alone and we are fighting for them.

All over the world, women and girls are looking to the United States for leadership and I would like to take this time to address several critical issues that I believe are vital to their lives: international family planning assistance, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW, rape as an instrument of war, and the plight of women in Afghanistan.

Honest differences of opinion exist on this issue, but I believe that those of us in Congress who support a robust package of U.S. assistance to international family planning organizations must not back down. I was dismayed when on July 22, 2002 Secretary of State Colin Powell decided to withhold the \$34 million U.S. contribution to the United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA—an amount allocated to it by law and after months of negotiation and with bipartisan support—because he determined that UNFPA participated in coercive family planning programs in China. The administration's decision to withhold the funds and withhold \$25 million for Fiscal Year 2003 runs counter to common sense and counter to the findings of its own investigative team.

Just over a month earlier a three member State Department team investigated UNFPA programs in China and concluded quite clearly that there was

no evidence that UNFPA supported or participated in coercive family planning programs and recommended that it receive the full U.S. \$34 million contribution. Nevertheless, the Administration chose to ignore these findings and, in doing so, struck a terrible blow to U.S. leadership in combating overpopulation.

One can not underestimate the importance of family planning assistance, especially for the poor. The United Nations estimates that the world's population will double to 12 billion by the year 2050. Most of this growth will occur in countries least able to sustain it and educational and medical services will suffer greatly as a result. In the age of global terrorism where groups such as al-Qaida find new recruits among the poor, the sick, and the uneducated, this is especially troubling.

No woman should be prevented from receiving the assistance she deserves to plan and care for healthy families. When we help them, we reduce poverty, improve health, and raise living standards.

Each and every dollar the United States spend on international family planning assistance—none of which, I might add, is spent on international abortion—is one less dollar we will have to spend on costlier interventions in the future.

So many of my colleagues share my view and together we must work harder to ensure that the United States reclaims its leadership role on international family planning and reproductive issues. On International Women's Day, I urge my colleagues to support full funding for the UNFPA and other international family planning programs.

Sadly, another year has gone by and the United States still has not yet ratified the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. As Americans, we can no longer afford to ignore this important document and put in jeopardy our status as a leader in advancing human rights for women and girls.

Given that it has been over 20 years since President Carter signed the Convention, one might think that the delay in ratification is due to the fact we are dealing with a treaty that requires years of study and consideration. Yet the Convention simply requires that participating states take all appropriate steps to eliminate discrimination against women in political and public life, law, education, employment, health care, commercial transactions, and domestic relations.

We are alone among the leading democracies in our failure to ratify. In fact, our partners outside the Convention include Iran, North Korea, and Sudan. Are these the countries with whom we share our values of democracy, freedom, and respect for human rights? Are these the countries we can count on in the international arena?

Women and girls around the world who turn to the United States for leadership in advancing their rights are

mystified that we do not take the simple step of ratifying the Convention. When we do, the sky will not fall, the sun will rise in the morning, and the Constitution will still be the law of the land.

By ratifying the Convention, the United States will reclaim its leadership status as a champion of the rights of women and girls and send a strong signal of warning to those states who abuse those rights.

On International Women's Day, I call on my colleagues in the Senate to move forward and ratify the Convention.

The use of rape as an instrument of war is a gross violation of the basic human rights of women and girls and I have worked hard over the years to raise awareness about this issue. The United States must work closely with our friends and allies in the international community to eliminate this practice once and for all.

We have seen far too often in recent years how soldiers have used rape in an organized, systematic, and sustained manner to intimidate, spread fear, and ethnically cleanse entire communities. In Bosnia, Rwanda, and East Timor, women were kidnaped, interned in camps and houses, forced to do labor and subjected to frequent rape and sexual assault.

Those who committed these crimes did not believe that anyone was watching. They were wrong.

On February 22, 2001, the international tribunal in the Hague sentenced three Bosnian Serbs to prison for rape during the Bosnian war. Judge Florence Mumba of Zambia stated, "Lawless opportunists should expect no mercy, no matter how low their position in the chain of command."

Last year, in response to a report co-authored by the Shan Women's Action Network and the Shan Human Rights Foundation, I and 31 other Senators wrote to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to urge him to investigate rape cases by Burmese soldiers between 1996 and 2001 involving 625 women and girls.

The report was based on interviews with refugees on the Thai-Burmese border. It found that the rapes were committed mostly by officers in front of their troops and that 61 percent were gang rapes and 25 percent ended in the murder of the victims. The victims included girls as young as 5 years old.

The Burmese junta did not make a serious effort to investigate the cases. It called the report "totally false and unjust" and sought to discredit the authors.

Those who committed these heinous crimes in Burma must be brought to justice. The United States and the international community must continue to put pressure on the Burmese regime to come clean and take substantive action to punish those responsible.

I commend the victims who overcame their fears to report what happened in Burma. I am hopeful more

women and girls who have suffered the same crime will come forward and speak up. On International Women's Day, I urge the administration and our friends and allies to join me in continuing the fight to end the practice of rape as an instrument of war.

The situation for most women and girls in Afghanistan has improved since the fall of the Taliban. Nevertheless, there is still a great deal of work to be done and I am concerned that the administration is not paying enough attention to the reconstruction of Afghanistan in general and the condition of women and girls in particular.

The United States Congress made a strong statement in support of the women and girls of Afghanistan by passing the "Afghan Women and Children Relief Act of 2001" and the "Afghan Freedom Support Act of 2002". Now we must follow up with sufficient funding. I was proud to co-sponsor an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2003 Omnibus appropriations bill that directed \$8 million of the money appropriated for humanitarian aid to Afghanistan towards programs that support women's development: \$5 million to the Ministry of Women's Affairs, \$1.5 million to the Human Rights Commission, and the rest to USAID.

The future for women and girls in Afghanistan is by no means assured. There are credible reports that in Herat, the local governor Ismail Khan has censored women's groups, intimidated women leaders, and removed women from his administration. In all parts of Afghanistan, women still fear abuse from authorities, avoid attending school, and face undue harsh restrictions.

I am particularly concerned to learn of reports that police in Herat are detaining women and girls caught with unrelated men and forcing them to undergo medical examinations to determine if they recently had sexual intercourse. I and my colleague from California, Senator BOXER, wrote to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin Powell urging them to put pressure on Ismail Khan to stop these practices and do more to protect the rights of women and girls.

Our victory in Afghanistan will be lost if women and girls are not afforded basic human rights. On International Women's Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to them for a better future and let us let them know that we will not turn our backs on them again.

We must debate and ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. We must rededicate ourselves and our resources to international family planning programs. We must not ignore the use of rape as an instrument of war. We must help the women and girls of Afghanistan realize their hopes and dreams.

We cannot afford to remain silent. We cannot afford to place women's rights on a second tier of concern of U.S. foreign policy. On International

Women's Day, the United States and the international community must take a strong stand and issue a clear warning to those who attempt to rob women of basic rights that the world's governments will no longer ignore these abuses, or allow them to continue without repercussion.

TRIBUTE TO BRUCE GWINN

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a special friend and outstanding public servant, Bruce Gwinn, who passed away on January 29, 2003, following a year-long battle with cancer.

I share the grief of many here in Washington who came to know and love Bruce Gwinn in the course of his 30 years working on Capitol Hill. And, of course, my most heartfelt sympathies go out to Bruce's wife, May, his three children, Dylan, Maria and Byron, and his entire extended family.

Bruce was born and raised in Charleston, SC, and graduated from Duke University in 1971. After serving in the Army, Bruce moved to Washington to begin a career in public service. Following my election to the House of Representatives in 1974, Bruce came to work for me as my first Legislative Director, and he served with me right up until I was elected to the Senate in 1980.

Bruce was far more than a superb advisor—he was a valued and trusted friend.

From 1981 to 1990, Bruce worked as a professional staffer on the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, where he served under three chairmen. He then served as a senior policy advisory for the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee, where he was responsible for all regulatory issues.

In 1997, Bruce returned to work on the Energy and Commerce Committee, where he served as Congressman JOHN DINGELL's top advisor on international trade policy. True to inform, he worked full-time right up until days before he passed away.

Bruce Gwinn was of a rare and special breed. He was known by everyone with whom he came in contact as a supreme optimist. Although he had his share of challenges in life, Bruce was always thankful for what he had, and always thought the best of others. People were naturally drawn to Bruce because of his contagious smile and enormous heart. And he had the most uncanny ability to diffuse any tense situation with his endearing sense of humor.

Although Bruce was a very soft-spoken man, when he spoke, you knew you could take his words to the bank. He was as knowledgeable as anyone on Capitol Hill, on a whole variety of issues.

At any point in the past 20 years, Bruce could have taken his expertise on trade, commerce, consumer protection, and other important matters, and