

churches, the Tibetan Buddhists and the Falun Gong spiritual movement.

I am left to wonder if it was Akin Gump which counseled CNOOC, and ultimately the Chinese government, to first caution President Bush not to politicize the Unocal takeover bid, and then warn Congress to "correct its mistaken ways of politicizing economic and trade issues and stop interfering in the normal commercial exchanges between enterprises of the two countries."

Ultimately, I question the appropriateness of an American firm advising and being on the payroll of the Chinese government. In my opinion, their interests, and all which that encompasses, are simply not deserving of your representation and only serve to degrade the strong reputation for integrity your firm has enjoyed over the years.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

P.S. During the presidency of Ronald Reagan, no major law firm or lobbying organization would have represented the Soviet Union if it had tried to take over an American oil company.

VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER SINGH JOINT SESSION

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who will be addressing a joint session of Congress next week.

I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Singh at a dinner in April 2002 at the U.S. Embassy. An Oxford economist by training, Prime Minister Singh ushered in a new era of economic liberalization in India. Through slashing red tape and eliminating bureaucracy, he cut India's deficit and opened the economy, leading to India's status as a primary figure in the global economy.

I have had the opportunity to visit India three times, and led 13 of my colleagues to visit India for their first time. In my own district, we boast the 2nd largest South Asian community in the country.

On behalf of the merchants of Little India on 74th Street in Jackson Heights in my district, and as the former co-chair of the India Caucus, I look forward to the Prime Minister's remarks and congratulate him and the Indian American Community for the historic address.

BUILDING BETTER RELATIONS WITH AFRO-COLOMBIANS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to the attention of my colleagues an important visit by a delegation of Afro-Colombian leaders to Washington this week. The Vice President of the Colombian House of Representatives, the Honorable Dr. Edgar Torres, and the Governor of Chocò, the Honorable Dr. Julio Ibarguen are the leaders of this auspicious delegation. These Afro-Colombian leaders have come to the United States to raise the

awareness of the conditions of the Afro-Colombian community in Colombia, most specifically the province of Chocò, and to request congressional assistance in obtaining and directing resources to the problems of this community.

Representing a quarter of Colombia's population, Afro-Colombians are two-thirds of the nation's extreme poor, have illiteracy of 45 percent, and have inadequate access to health care. They have lower standards of living than most other groups in Colombia. They often live in isolated and remote communities with little access for advancement and improvement.

As a leader in the legislative chamber, Dr. Torres is one of the most influential Afro-Colombians in the nation and has worked to raise awareness of the struggle of Afro-Colombians. He has championed and pursued greater multinational awareness and assistance for the people of Colombia. He has worked to raise the issue of the global community of the impoverishment and challenges facing his people. Dr. Torres has been a powerful, important and poignant voice for the struggle and desire for equality among Afro-Colombians.

The department of Chocò has the highest percentage of Afro-Colombians in the country. It also has the lowest per-capita level of government investment in health, education, and infrastructure. The people of Chocò suffer daily with poverty, illiteracy, lack of medical care, and lack of opportunity. They have great plans for advancement but little opportunity.

Governor Ibarguen has worked to improve the infrastructure for the province. He has advanced plans and strategies designed to provide new hope and opportunity to the people of Chocò and to address the pressing and urgent needs of the community. He has seen firsthand the hardship and misery of Afro-Colombians and works with local, national, and international agencies to overcome these daunting challenges. He nonetheless could use the assistance and aid of the 109th Congress and the American people.

These Afro-Colombian leaders are here in Washington to build a dialogue with the international community on behalf of the people of Colombia. They are trying to find allies and alliances with leaders of this country and the international community to help wage the fight for self-sufficiency and equal treatment of Afro-Colombians. They should be commended in their efforts to reach out and ask for our assistance. We should be gracious in our commitment to help their cause. They are trying to reach out to us and we must be prepared to respond.

There are a number of opportunities available to this Congress to reach out to the Colombian people, and Afro-Colombians in particular. In August, there will be a dialogue hosted in Colombia to raise the awareness of the Afro-Colombian challenge. I and other members of the Congressional Black Caucus have extended our support to these efforts and I hope my colleagues in the House will join us. My colleague, the Honorable GREGORY MEEKS, is already planning a congressional delegation to visit the country and to participate in the dialogue on race.

In addition to these congressional activities, the Pan American Development Foundation and the Afro-Latino Development Alliance are providing important information, awareness,

and assistance to the Afro-Colombian struggle. They are hosting Dr. Torres and Dr. Ibarguen in their visit and tour this week. They have played an indomitable role in finding opportunities for assisting Afro-Colombians. I expect that these organizations will continue their hard work on behalf of Afro-Colombians.

The United States has provided substantial assistance to the Government of Colombia, most of it through Plan Colombia to assist the Government of Colombia in waging war against political insurgents and narcotics traffickers. The Afro-Colombian delegation believes that a shift in resources from military to economic development purposes in communities such as the Chocò province will achieve greater success than our military assistance.

It is important that this Congress take action to help the Afro-Colombian people. It is unconscionable to think that an entire group of people would suffer in this manner in this day and age. We must do more as the representatives of this caring and loving nation. I urge my colleagues to reach out to Dr. Torres and Dr. Ibarguen while they are here this week. I urge my colleagues to extend aid and assistance to Afro-Colombian populations.

I have introduced the following resolution (House Concurrent Resolution 175) to encourage greater assistance and recognition to Afro-descendant populations throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. This resolution is another step in addressing the Afro-Colombian struggle. I submit this copy of the resolution into the RECORD.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Acknowledging African descendants of the transatlantic slave trade in all of the Americas with an emphasis on descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean, recognizing the injustices suffered by these African descendants, and recommending that the United States and the international community work to improve the situation of Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Whereas during Black History Month it is important that we not forget that African-Americans are not the only survivors of the transatlantic slave trade;

Whereas like the United States, many European nations benefited greatly from the colonization of Latin America and the Caribbean and their participation in the slave trade;

Whereas the story of African descendants in all of the Americas remains untold, leading them to be forgotten, made invisible, and allowed to suffer unjustly;

Whereas it is important to acknowledge that as a result of the slave trade and immigration, approximately 80,000,000 to 150,000,000 persons of African descent live in Latin America and the Caribbean, making them the largest population of persons of African descent outside of Africa;

Whereas Afro-descendants are present in most all Latin American countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela;

Whereas the size of Afro-descendant populations vary in range from less than 1 percent in some countries to as much as 30 percent in Colombia and 46 percent in Brazil and make up the majority in some Spanish speaking Caribbean nations, such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic;

Whereas Afro-descendant populations have made significant economic, social, and cultural contributions to their countries and the Western Hemisphere from their unfortunate involvement in the transatlantic slave