

care of emergency patients, survivors of disasters, and our military forces serving at home and abroad. Research in this field should continue to be encouraged to allow the adaptation of critical technologies to continually improve the quality of emergency care.

BURMA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to mark an important milestone: the 18th anniversary of the founding of the Burmese National League for Democracy, NLD. As the world knows well, the NLD is the legitimate leadership of the country of Burma, as the party was elected overwhelmingly by the Burmese people in 1990.

Sadly, the 18th anniversary for the NLD is not a time for rejoicing. The NLD remains firmly under the boot of the Burmese ruling junta, the State Peace and Development Council, SPDC. Many of its leaders are imprisoned, including Nobel Laureate and democracy advocate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and NLD vice chairman, U Tin Oo. Thirteen elected NLD members of Parliament and over 400 party members currently serve in prison. Other NLD members have endured torture and have been killed as the SPDC continues to wage a campaign of harassment, intimidation—and worse—against party members and supporters.

In a testament to the courage and determination of its leadership, and despite these great hardships, the NLD remains unbowed. It continues to pursue nonviolent political change in Burma. I am proud to say that the Senate stands squarely alongside the NLD in its efforts. I am hopeful that the United Nations, U.N., Security Council will as well. Due to the determined efforts of many countries, including the United States, Burma is slated to be on the Council's agenda for the first time ever. It will then be time for member states to stand up and be counted in support of a nonpunitive resolution on Burma.

It should be noted that U.N. Under Secretary General Ibrahim Gambari's trip to Rangoon earlier this year was a complete failure. Mr. Gambari should not make a second trip to Burma unless and until the U.N. Security Council has considered and passed a resolution that, among other things, details the threats the SPDC poses to the people of Burma and the entire region. Such action would be a clear message to the SPDC that when it comes to Burma, the world is not satisfied with the status quo.

Similarly, I would encourage all relevant bureaus at the State Department and the National Security Council—particularly those relating to African affairs—to remain engaged and focused on this issue. The task of promoting democracy and reconciliation in Burma should not be left only to the East Asian and Pacific Affairs and the Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor bureaus at the State Department. With

three African nations currently sitting on the U.N. Security Council, our African affairs specialists need to more actively engage in building support for such a resolution. Ghana has already demonstrated its solidarity with the cause of freedom. The Republic of Congo and Tanzania need to follow suit.

Finally, on this, the 18th anniversary of the founding of NLD, I call upon the Burmese military regime to release Suu Kyi and all political prisoners. Only then can discussions on a meaningful reconciliation process—one that includes the full and unfettered participation of the NLD and ethnic minorities—proceed.

I ask unanimous consent that a Boston Globe Editorial on Burma be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Boston Globe, Sept. 26, 2006]

AN AGENDA FOR BURMA

Having placed the case of Burma's military junta on the formal agenda of the Security Council earlier this month, the United Nations now has an opportunity to show that it can be something more than an impatient debating club. If in the waning days of his tenure UN Secretary General Kofi Annan exercises the right combination of firmness and finesse with Burma's military dictators, he can help protect human rights, democracy, and regional security in Asia.

Unlike the coercive measures contemplated to cope with Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons or genocide in Darfur, the UN is not being asked to dispatch armed peacekeepers to Burma to impose risky economic sanctions on the narco-dictatorship there. Rather, moral suasion and diplomatic pressure are the means for dealing with the junta's violations of human rights and its threats to regional peace and security—threats manifest in the export of heroin, methamphetamine, HIV/AIDS, and the hundreds of thousands of refugees who have fled the military's brutal assaults on ethnic minorities.

Annan must be careful, however, in the way he exerts the UN's soft power. Last May, he sent UN undersecretary-general for political affairs, Ibrahim Gambari, to Burma, where he met with Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi as well as junta leaders. At the time, Gambari said he thought the junta bosses were "ready to turn a new page." But Gambari and Annan looked glibly soon after, when the junta extended Suu Kyi's house arrest for another year and intensified its campaign of ethnic cleansing, rape, and murder in the region inhabited by 2 million people of the Karen ethnic group.

Annan shouldn't allow Gambari to undertake a return trip to Burma without a Security Council resolution that spells out clear and reasonable demands for the true turning of a new page. That should include the release of all 1,100 political prisoners in Burma, including Suu Kyi and fellow leaders of the National League for Democracy, the party that won 82 percent of Parliamentary seats in a 1990 election that the junta has refused to honor ever since.

The NLD, which commemorates the anniversary of its 1988 founding on Sept. 27, must be invited along with other parties and representatives of Burma's ethnic nationalities to participate in a genuine political dialogue. The resolution Gambari takes to Burma should specify that such a dialogue

means working out terms for an agreement on a return to democracy. That resolution should also require the junta to end its attacks on ethnic minorities and to permit international aid organizations to have unimpeded access to all those in need within Burma. Nearly all the people of Burma need the world's help.

RECOGNIZING SERGEANT LEIGH ANN HESTER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask the entire Senate to join me today in congratulating one of Kentucky's amazing young heroes. SGT Leigh Ann Hester of Bowling Green, KY, is traveling to the Nation's Capital to receive the USO's Service Member of the Year Award at the organization's 2006 USO World Gala this September 28.

Sergeant Hester is being honored for her valorous service in combat in Iraq, which earned her the Silver Star medal. The Silver Star is the Army's third-highest award for gallantry, and Sergeant Hester is the first female soldier to win the medal for valor in combat since World War II.

A retail store manager in Bowling Green, Sergeant Hester joined the U.S. Army in 2001 and was assigned to the Kentucky National Guard's 617th Military Police Company, based in Richmond, KY. In March 2005, she was on the southeastern outskirts of Baghdad, shadowing a convoy of tractor-trailers carrying supplies for American forces.

The convoy was ambushed by about 50 heavily armed terrorists. They attacked from a trench alongside the road and rained down machine-gun fire and rocket-propelled grenades on the convoy for a sustained 3 minutes. Several truck drivers were killed, more were wounded. Thinking they had the upper hand, the terrorists moved towards the convoy, preparing to take hostages.

Suddenly three armored humvees roared up to the carnage. Sergeant Hester, as team leader of the second humvee, maneuvered her team into a position to draw the enemy's fire and begin fighting back with grenades and M203 rounds.

Sergeant Hester and her squad leader got out of their humvees and rushed the trench about 20 meters away from them to clear out the enemy. They worked their way through the insurgents, throwing grenades and firing M4s. When she ran low on ammunition, she ran back to a humvee to reload, exposing herself to enemy fire from multiple directions. Because this squad had been so well disciplined, Sergeant Hester was able to reach blindly into any of the humvees and know exactly where to grab more ammunition.

Finally, the soldiers of the 617th had put down enough fire that the enemy fell silent. It turns out that Sergeant Hester and her team, just 10 in all, had not only put themselves in the middle of a firefight against greater numbers and all survived, they had scored the highest death toll of insurgents in Iraq in many months. They killed 27, captured several wounded, seized a sizable