

have spoken directly to Chancellor Merkel about this commitment, and I know that it is personal for her. I want our German friends to understand that this isn't about getting to a specific dollar figure. This is about continuing to meet all needs for a very small, very fragile part of the population that is rapidly aging.

This is the last chance to make sure that those who suffered through the most horrific crimes against humanity are cared for. Survivors are in their eighties, nineties, and into their one hundreds. There is a finite amount of time left. This is not an indefinite commitment on the part of Germany.

The resolution before us today continues to support the goal of ensuring that all Holocaust victims in the United States and around the world are able to live with dignity, comfort, and security in their remaining years.

No amount of money can ever erase the tragedies of the past. No amount of money is ever a substitute for justice. But the day-to-day suffering of this very vulnerable population can be eased. The needs of elderly survivors are exacerbated by their physical and mental experiences during the Holocaust. Leaving their own homes for institutionalized care is often not an option. The tragic loss of many family members at the hands of Nazis means that many survivors rely on social services for meal deliveries or rides to doctor appointments. These are the most basic of human needs, and they deserve to have them met.

I want to thank my friend, Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN, and I want to thank Ranking Member ENGEL and Chairman ROYCE for their support, and Senator NELSON and Senator COLLINS for their efforts in the Senate.

I want to urge my colleagues to join us in urging Germany to ensure basic dignity and comfort for survivors.

When you look into the eyes of survivors in my district, as I do quite often, they worry about others. They say: Never again.

But we should worry about them. For their remaining time on this Earth, they deserve peace through living out their lives with dignity. Germany can help make sure that they do. Jack Rubin knew and fought for that literally until his last breath, and this resolution commits Congress to that fight for dignity.

□ 1500

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Our colleagues have been very eloquent this afternoon, and I agree with everything that has been said here, along with what the chairman has said.

Mr. Speaker, every year we lose more and more of those who lived through the Holocaust, and it is unthinkable that many spend their last days in poverty with no support network. Nobody wants that.

With this resolution, we are simply saying that this should not be the case.

We are saying that these survivors should never go without assistance and resources and that it is time for the Government of Germany to work with its partners and correct this problem.

So for all the reasons that were mentioned, I support this measure. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

So I think, for the Members here, we all understand that we have to commit to do all we can to honor and to support those survivors who are still with us. Their stories serve as testaments to the consequences of doing nothing in the face of evil.

Within these victims' lifetimes, we have already seen the minimization and the outright denial of the nightmares visited personally upon them during the Holocaust. We have already seen those who deny the existence of the Holocaust, as Iran did in May of this year again when it hosted yet another denial of the Holocaust and Holocaust cartoon contest.

We owe it to those who suffered through Hitler's genocide to empower them to live the remainder of their lives in dignity and to hold to Elie Wiesel's pledge: that we shall never forget.

I urge every Member's support for this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the concurrent resolution, S. Con. Res. 46.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR A NEW MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 729) expressing support for the expeditious consideration and finalization of a new, robust, and long-term Memorandum of Understanding on military assistance to Israel between the United States Government and the Government of Israel.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 729

Whereas in April 1998 the United States designated Israel as a "major non-NATO ally";

Whereas, on August 16, 2007, the United States and Israel signed a 10-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on United States military assistance to Israel, the total assistance over the course of this understanding would equal \$30,000,000,000;

Whereas since the signing of the 2007 Memorandum of Understanding, intelligence and defense cooperation has continued to grow;

Whereas, on October 15, 2008, the Naval Vessel Transfer Act of 2008 was signed into law (Public Law 110-429) and defined Israel's qualitative military edge (QME) as "the ability to counter and defeat any credible conventional military threat from any individual state or possible coalition of states or from non-state actors, while sustaining minimal damage and casualties, through the use of superior military means, possessed in sufficient quantity, including weapons, command, control, communication, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities that in their technical characteristics are superior in capability to those of such other individual or possible coalition of states or non-state actors";

Whereas, on July 27, 2012, the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-150) declared it to be the policy of the United States "to help the Government of Israel preserve its qualitative military edge amid rapid and uncertain regional political transformation";

Whereas Israel faces immediate threats to its security from the United States designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, Hezbollah, and its missile and rocket stockpile estimated to number around 150,000, and from the United States designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, Hamas, that continues to attempt to rebuild its tunnel network to infiltrate Israel and restock its own missile and rocket stockpiles;

Whereas Israel also faces immediate threats to its security from the ongoing regional instability in the Middle East, especially from the ongoing conflict in Syria and from militant groups in the Sinai;

Whereas Iran remains a threat to Israel, as demonstrated by Iran's continued belligerence, including several illegal tests of ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads, even reportedly marking several of these weapons with Hebrew words declaring "Israel must be wiped out";

Whereas the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 authorized funds to be appropriated for Israeli cooperative missile defense program codevelopment and coproduction, including funds to be provided to the Government of Israel to procure the David's Sling weapon system as well as the Arrow 3 Upper Tier Interceptor Program; and

Whereas, on December 19, 2014, the President signed into law the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-296) which stated the sense of Congress that Israel is a major strategic partner of the United States and declared it to be the policy of the United States "to continue to provide Israel with robust security assistance, including for the procurement of the Iron Dome Missile Defense System": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms that Israel is a major strategic partner of the United States;

(2) reaffirms that it is the policy and law of the United States to ensure that Israel maintains its qualitative military edge and has the capacity and capability to defend itself from all threats;

(3) reaffirms United States support of a robust Israeli tiered missile defense program;

(4) supports continued discussions between the Government of the United States and the Government of Israel for a robust and long-term Memorandum of Understanding on United States military assistance to Israel;

(5) urges the expeditious finalization of a new Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the United States and the Government of Israel; and

(6) supports a robust and long-term Memorandum of Understanding negotiated between the United States and Israel regarding military assistance which increases the amount of aid from previous agreements and significantly enhances Israel's military capabilities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material for the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank my good friends, the gentlewoman and gentleman from Florida, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. DEUTCH, who are chair and ranking member of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee, for their hard work and leadership in bringing this important measure to the floor today. And I also thank the ranking member, Mr. ELIOT ENGEL from New York, for his work on the resolution as well.

Israel is one of America's closest friends, and Israel is facing growing threats. Today Iran's leading terrorist proxy, Hezbollah, has thousands of missiles and rockets and mortars that are aimed at Israel—over 100,000. And the threat from Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps is even worse, as we hear from those chants: "Death to Israel."

The United States must stand with Israel to help promote security and stability in the volatile Middle East. And next year, the current memorandum of understanding signed with Israel in 2007 that guaranteed Israel \$3.1 billion per year in foreign military financing will expire.

The administration and Israel are currently negotiating the terms of a new package for the next 10 years, ensuring that Israel will maintain its qualitative military edge in the region. That is the goal of Mr. ELIOT ENGEL. That is my goal. That is the goal of our subcommittee chairman and ranking member.

This new agreement will guide our security cooperation: from Iron Dome and David's Sling, defending Israel from the air, to cooperative initiatives aimed at tunnel detection, defending Israel from below.

This relationship has real benefits for the United States. The two countries

share intelligence on terrorism, on nuclear proliferation, on regional instability. Israel's military experiences have shaped the United States' approach to counterterrorism and our approach to homeland security. The two governments work together to develop sophisticated military technology for defense, such as the missile and subterranean detection systems that I have mentioned. These systems developed jointly may soon be ready for export to other U.S. allies.

In part because of this security partnership, U.S. and Israeli companies partner in technological innovations that are helping the United States maintain its advantage in a range of military and nonmilitary security challenges.

So I urge my colleagues to strongly support this resolution, urging the expeditious finalization of a new memorandum of understanding between the Government of the United States and the Government of Israel so that Israel maintains its qualitative military edge and has the capacity to work with us to defend itself from all threats.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. I am proud to cosponsor this resolution, which calls for the expeditious consideration and finalization of a new, robust, and long-term memorandum of understanding on military assistance to Israel. The bond between United States and Israel is unbreakable. We share common values and goals, including democracy, rule of law, minority rights, and basic human freedom.

In 2008, the George W. Bush administration negotiated a memorandum of understanding with Israel that guaranteed \$3.1 billion in annual security assistance. Since then, the Obama administration has delivered on this commitment and has provided additional funds for missile defense, including the 2014 emergency supplemental for Iron Dome, which we passed in this House.

Since that agreement, Israel has faced some of the most urgent threats in history: rockets and tunnels from Gaza and Lebanon, nuclear threats from Syria and Iran, and the spread of ISIS throughout the region. And the United States has been there by Israel's side throughout this dangerous time.

These threats are only becoming more complex. ISIS has grown in the Sinai. Israel's neighbors are facing new burdens from refugees, leading to instability. And Iran's behavior in the region has, unfortunately, become even more dangerous.

So yesterday's insurance policy has become today's lifeline. As Israel confronts new threats, the United States must step up to defend our ally. Part of this will be through a new, negotiated MOU, or memorandum of understanding, to reflect the changing times and evolving threats in the Middle East.

Israel will need its American partner; but, make no mistake, the United States needs Israel as well. This relationship isn't a one-way street. Our security cooperation and intelligence sharing with Israel has never been closer. Israel helps develop new technology that the United States uses in our own security efforts. And the military hardware we are providing to help Israel defend itself will be spent here in the United States, saving or creating thousands of American jobs.

This resolution and its robust support here in the House, in both parties, demonstrates the true nature of the relationship between the United States and Israel. The support is bipartisan. Neither Democrats nor Republicans have a monopoly on support for Israel. Democrats and Republicans stand together, united with Israel. The American people stand with Israel.

The next MOU will be the next chapter in this friendship. It shows that no matter who the next President will be, Israel has America's promise of support. As Israel faces uncertainties throughout its region, at least it can count on American support, and Congress should work to make that happen. Israel has never asked for American troops or soldiers or for anyone to defend them except themselves, and we ought to continue to help them do that.

I ask all Members to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who chairs the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa and is the author of this measure.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the chairman of our wonderful committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. Speaker, I cannot emphasize enough just how important it is that the United States and Israel finalize a new, long-term, and robust memorandum of understanding on U.S. military assistance to Israel. And an overwhelming majority of our colleagues in Congress agree.

This bipartisan resolution, Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 729, that I introduced alongside my friend and colleague, the gentleman from south Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), the ranking member of our Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee, has over 275 cosponsors. This is the kind of support we don't see very often, but it underscores the level of commitment and support that the United States Congress has for our closest friend and ally, the democratic, Jewish State of Israel.

It is absolutely imperative, Mr. Speaker, that the administration finalize and sign a new memorandum of understanding with Israel as soon as possible because the threats to Israel aren't going away anytime soon.

Just last week, it was reported that the Israeli military had assessed that

it expects ISIS attacks on its southern border within 6 months. This is extremely alarming and, if true, all the more reason to finalize a new MOU with Israel.

We know that Egypt has been fighting ISIS in the Sinai for quite some time now; but if ISIS is able to continue moving north toward Israel, it would leave Israel vulnerable on almost every border, except the border that it shares with Jordan, where the King and the Jordanians have been so important in the fight against ISIS.

As if the thought of ISIS surrounding the Jewish state was not daunting enough, as a result of the Iran nuclear deal, the threats to Israel have only increased in magnitude and severity. Iran has shown that it has no intention of slowing down its ballistic missile program, which it uses to repeatedly threaten Israel. We have recently learned that the nuclear deal is full of secret concessions and exemptions to Iran which allow Iran to exceed limits that are set forth in the deal. And these are just the ones that we know of now. There are likely a lot more.

We just heard testimony last week that the administration may have sent Iran up to \$33.6 billion in cash payments, including \$1.7 billion in ransom payments. Administration officials have said that there is no way of tracing the money or of telling if that money will be used to support terror; but Iran had said that it needed hard currency, so we sent it because that is a great idea: to give a state sponsor of terror an infusion of billions of dollars of cold, hard cash. That makes a lot of sense.

So now Iran has as much as \$33.6 billion in cash; and, no doubt, it will be used to support terror. There is no doubt. It will be used to shore up Hezbollah's weapons supply. It will be used to increase the missile stockpile of Hezbollah. It will be used for many nefarious activities. And with Iran's stated intention to wipe Israel off the map, there should be no time wasted in ensuring that the Jewish state has the capability, has the capacity to defend itself and her people from every threat.

With all of the concessions that the administration has made to Iran, we need to make sure that this memorandum of understanding goes above and beyond.

As my former chief of staff of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Dr. Yleem Poblete, wrote in a piece for the Gatestone Institute a couple of months ago:

"The terms of any U.S.-Israel agreement must withstand comparison to the concessions offered Iran in the JCPOA and show unequivocally that Israel, a trusted ally and major strategic partner, fared better in negotiations than an unconstrained enemy."

This is why the administration must conclude this MOU with Israel. It would send a strong message to the people of Israel that the United States continues to stand by them and sup-

port them. But, Mr. Speaker, it would send an even stronger message to those who seek to harm Israel by signifying that the United States is committing to fully support Israel's defense and security needs.

So I urge my colleagues to support this measure. I call upon the administration to put the politicking aside, get this agreement done, secure Israel's safety and our own interests.

We are going to hear a lot of support for this resolution. We have heard about the many threats facing Israel.

□ 1515

And I spoke about the nuclear threat and how it has placed Israel in greater jeopardy. But what we don't hear too much about, Mr. Speaker, is how the nuclear deal has threatened Israel's qualitative military edge, the QME, that, by U.S. law, we are supposed to ensure.

When the administration signed that weak and dangerous nuclear deal with Iran, it had to sell it to the international community. How did it do that? Well, in order to sell the deal to our allies in the Gulf, the administration had to promise them that we would provide them with advanced weapon sales.

The administration likes to say that the Iran deal will make the world safer. But if that is true, then why are we going to increase so much the militarization of the Gulf countries?

Mr. Speaker, I expect that Gulf states sales of military jets to Bahrain, to Qatar, and to Kuwait will be approved by the administration as early as this month. We are about to open the spigot of cash that Iran can then use to build up its ballistic missiles, its military, and its terror activities. So we need to make sure that Israel understands that we are there to support her.

It makes no sense, Mr. Speaker, that we should be concentrating on stopping Iran, not assisting the regime, to further carrying out its nefarious activities and certainly not helping to build up its conventional nuclear arms race in the region. Not to mention that by doing this we are undermining the distinct advantage that Israel has militarily over its neighbors.

Even though Israel and our other partners in the region may have better relations now than ever before—and that is true, and that is wonderful—because they have an Iran, a mutual enemy that they understand is their greatest threat, history tells that it is better to be safe than sorry. So that is another important reason why we need to conclude this MOU with the Jewish state and ensure its qualitative military edge.

We have an ever increasingly dangerous Iran, a heavily militarized Middle East with advanced weaponry, ISIS becoming an even greater threat to Israel, Hezbollah on the Golan Heights and in Lebanon, and, of course, Hamas in Gaza. That is a daunting task to ask

of even the largest country, Mr. Speaker, let alone the tiny Jewish state.

So I urge my colleagues to support this resolution. I urge them to call upon the administration to uphold longstanding U.S. policy toward our closest friend and ally, the democratic Jewish state of Israel.

I thank the gentleman for the time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), an author of this resolution and a very valued member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member ENGEL for his support of this resolution and his outspoken and unwavering support for the U.S.-Israel relationship. I also thank Chairman ROYCE for his support of this as well. And to my friend and partner, Representative ROS-LEHTINEN, I thank her as well. It is wonderful working with her on so many issues, but in particular our work on the committee to strengthen the U.S.-Israel relationship. Thanks as well to Representatives GRANGER and LOWEY for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, reports indicate that the United States and Israel are very close to signing a new memorandum of understanding, a 10-year MOU on security systems.

This resolution before us today is very straightforward. It urges the conclusion of those negotiations. It doesn't prescribe terms of the MOU. It says that we need to get the MOU finished. This resolution has the overwhelming bipartisan support of over 275 Members of this House who are co-sponsors.

Now, the MOU is the backbone of our security relationship with Israel. The assistance provided has ensured and will continue to ensure that Israel is able to defend herself against any and all threats.

The threats that Israel faces increase every day. Every day the threat of rocket attacks from Hamas, Islamic Jihad, or Hezbollah looms. Every day Hezbollah adds more advanced rockets to its arsenal of over 150,000 capable of reaching every corner of Israel. Every day Iran transfers advanced technology and weapons to its terror proxies who target Israel. And every day Hamas is attempting to re-dig tunnels farther and farther into Israel.

ISIS militants edge closer to Israel's border in the Sinai, and the fighting in Syria creeps closer and closer into the Golan Heights. Terrorist groups now have unprecedented, sophisticated capabilities, and many of these pose a strategic threat to the broader region.

Mr. Speaker, Israel must have the resources that it needs to protect the safety and security of its territory and its people and, in turn, to preserve our own security and interests in the region.

Throughout these negotiations, the administration has said that it is prepared to conclude the largest ever aid package to Israel. Now, these funds, coupled with our enduring commitment to preserving Israel's qualitative

military edge, will help Israel remain strong and secure. And as the only democracy in the region, Israel stands as a beacon of hope for those around the world who recognize the global threat of terrorism and for those who value opportunity, equality, and freedom.

When this Congress speaks with one voice, Israel is stronger and safer. By passing this resolution, this Congress is sending a message to the world that we stand united in support of a new MOU, in support of Israel's right to self-defense, and in strong support of the U.S.-Israel relationship.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOH), a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. YOH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague. I stand in support of Representative ROS-LEHTINEN's H. Res. 729.

It is imperative that the United States finalize a new MOU with Israel on military assistance that provides for a robust defense posture of Israel while ensuring congressional oversight and scrutiny in the years to come.

Israel continues to face a growing threat from not only state sponsors of terrorism like Iran, but also from terrorist organizations like Hezbollah and Hamas. Both Iran and those terrorist organizations are determined to destroy Israel.

Israel, one of the United States' greatest allies in the region, is under constant threat; and the United States must stand strong and support her.

Hezbollah has an estimated stockpile of 150,000 rockets and missiles. Let me repeat that. It has over 150,000 rockets and missiles, which Iran has made a commitment to add smart bomb technology. This constant threat is growing and needs to be countered by the passage of a robust, long-term MOU. This will ensure Israel's defense and military capabilities are able to meet these growing threats.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 729 and support the continued defense cooperation with Israel.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, may I ask if there are any more speakers on the Republican side?

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, there are no further speakers other than myself to close.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the sponsors of this resolution, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. DEUTCH, for their hard work in crafting such a timely resolution. I thank, once again, Chairman ROYCE for working with me and the sponsors of this resolution to move this forward expeditiously.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things I always say is that the relationship between the United States and Israel is bigger than any of the personalities involved. Presidents come and go, Prime Ministers come and go, Members of

Congress come and go, members of the Knesset come and go, but the relationship between the U.S. and Israel endures and endures strongly.

The success of the last MOU between the United States and Israel is a great illustration of that fact. I think this resolution and the next memorandum of understanding, which we are expecting any day now, are more indications that, regardless of party, regardless of personalities, the U.S.-Israel alliance is serious business and a major foreign policy concern.

Those that try to denigrate Israel overlook the fact that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East and overlook the fact that we have no better ally in the United States than the people of Israel.

I am glad to support this measure. I urge all Members to do the same. Again, the U.S.-Israel alliance is serious business, a major foreign policy concern, and the right thing to do, not only for Israel but for the United States as well. So I support this measure, and I urge all our colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as this resolution notes, Israel faces a growing number of threats, and I think I would just speak for a moment about the nature of those threats. I appreciate Representative LEANA ROS-LEHTINEN bringing this resolution before us.

Representative ELIOT ENGEL and I had a rather unique opportunity of seeing how these threats keep evolving. We were near the border in Israel and had an invitation on the Gaza border to go into one of these tunnels that had been discovered. Imagine the shock when we found out the intentions of why this tunnel was dug. It ended up coming up underneath an elementary school.

Now, imagine for a minute the situation Israel is in when you have an adversary, Hamas in this case, who wishes to tunnel underneath an elementary school in order to capture children, take them back into Gaza, and force the IDF, as you and I knew they would do, to fight block by block by block to try to free those children. That was the strategy. Now, luckily the tunnels were discovered before they could carry this out.

I was in Israel also in 2006, back during the second Lebanon war. The Hezbollah rockets came down across northern Israel every day. And in Haifa, every day there were victims that were brought into that trauma hospital.

Back then, Hezbollah had a collection of about 10,000 rockets and missiles. That is what they had left in the inventory. They had shot off about half of their inventory. And in each of those, there were probably 90,000 ball bearings. And when they shot those rockets, they aimed at the city center in Haifa.

Today is 10 years later. Hezbollah, as Mr. YOH shared with you, has a nasty collection today of over 100,000 of these rockets and missiles. Now, if you were to take the United States out of the equation with respect to NATO, and you were to take a look at the NATO arsenal without us in it, Hezbollah, which is now equipped by Iran, has a larger number of weapons, rockets and missiles, than all of NATO combined without us.

Included in that class are 700 long-range, high-payload rockets that have now been provided to Hezbollah, and these new rockets that carry these huge payloads are capable of taking out a city block and just creating havoc.

And while the threat from Hezbollah is bad, let's talk about the threat from its sponsor for a minute. Let's reflect on the threat from Iran itself. If you wonder whether Iran intends what they say, think about their continued aggression in the region, and think about their testing of ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

In case there is any mistake about how we might interpret it, they put on the side of these missiles, in Arabic, in Farsi, and in Hebrew, the words, "Israel must be wiped out." That is the action of the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps. That is what it puts on its missiles.

Of course, under the administration's Iran deal, Tehran will keep much of its nuclear infrastructure and continue to develop advanced centrifuges faster and faster. They can continue to work on this, thus gaining the ability to produce nuclear fuel on an industrial scale. The ayatollah won't even have to cheat to be just steps away from a nuclear weapon 10 years from now when that agreement is phased out and expires. And that is about the same time that the next MOU will expire.

So for those who are wondering why we are passionate about this memorandum of understanding with Israel, it is because we have seen the threats. Mr. ELIOT ENGEL and I, in our trips to Israel to the border, have seen those threats.

□ 1530

Given that, and given that Israel faces, not just from the proxies like Iran, not just from Hamas that are funded, but also from Iran itself Israel faces this threat, we need to ensure that the security package currently being negotiated is as robust as possible. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 729.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, AND THE RULE OF LAW IN CAMBODIA

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 728) supporting human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in Cambodia, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 728

Whereas since the Paris Peace Accords in 1991, Cambodia has undergone a gradual, partial, and unsteady transition to democracy, including elections and multiparty government;

Whereas Prime Minister Hun Sen has been in power in Cambodia uninterrupted since 1985 and is the longest-serving leader in Southeast Asia;

Whereas Freedom House rated Cambodia as “Not Free” in its “Freedom in the World 2015” report, noting that “political opposition is restricted”, “harassment or threats against opposition supporters are not uncommon”, “freedom of speech is not fully protected”, and “the government’s tolerance for freedoms of association and assembly has declined in recent years”;

Whereas Cambodia held a general election on July 28, 2013, though widespread reports of irregularities largely related to the voter lists bring into question the integrity of the election;

Whereas a coalition of election monitors, including the National Democratic Institute (NDI), Transparency International Cambodia, and other domestic and international organizations, in a joint report on the 2013 election found “significant challenges that undermined the credibility of the process”;

Whereas Transparency International Cambodia, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, conducted a survey during the 2013 election that found at 60 percent of polling stations, citizens with proper identification were not allowed to vote;

Whereas the Cambodian National Election Committee (NEC) was accused of lack of independence and pro-government bias during its oversight of the 2013 election;

Whereas the composition of the NEC was changed after the 2013 election to include equal membership from both political parties, and the NEC’s continued independence is essential to free and fair elections;

Whereas the United States Congress has taken steps to protect democracy and human rights in Cambodia, making certain 2014 foreign aid funds intended to Cambodia conditioned upon the Government of Cambodia conducting an independent and credible investigation into the irregularities associated with the July 28, 2013, parliamentary elections and reforming the NEC or when all parties have agreed to join the National Assembly to conduct business;

Whereas United States aid to Cambodia has funded work in areas including development assistance, civil society, global health, and the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, largely via nongovernmental organizations (NGOs);

Whereas both NDI and the International Republican Institute (IRI) operate in Cam-

bodia, engaging local partners and building capacity for civil society, democracy, and good governance;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia has acted to restrict the right to freely assemble and protest, including the following instances;

Whereas, on January 3, 2014, Cambodian security forces violently cracked down on protests of garment workers, killing 4 people in Phnom Penh;

Whereas, on March 31, 2014, Cambodian police beat protestors with batons and clubs during a protest calling for a license for the independent Beehive Radio to establish a television channel;

Whereas in August 2015, the Government of Cambodia passed the “Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations” which threatens to restrict the development of civil society by requiring registration and government approval of both domestic and international NGOs;

Whereas, on October 26, 2015, 2 opposition lawmakers, including dual United States citizen Nhay Chamreoun, were violently attacked by pro-government protestors in front of the National Assembly;

Whereas, on November 16, 2015, the standing committee of the National Assembly expelled leader of the parliamentary opposition and President of the Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP) Sam Rainsy and revoked his parliamentary immunity;

Whereas Mr. Rainsy is the subject of a Government of Cambodia investigation of 7-year-old defamation charges against him which is widely believed to be politically motivated;

Whereas the United States Embassy in Cambodia has publicly called on the Government of Cambodia to revoke the arrest warrant issued against Mr. Rainsy, allow all opposition lawmakers to “return to Cambodia without fear of arrest and persecution”, and “to take immediate steps to guarantee a political space free from threats or intimidation in Cambodia”;

Whereas political advocate and anti-corruption activist Kem Ley was shot and killed in Phnom Penh on July 10, 2016;

Whereas the Government of Cambodia continues efforts to prosecute CNRP leaders on politically-motivated charges, bringing Mr. Sokha’s case to trial in Phnom Penh; and

Whereas national elections in 2018 will be closely watched to ensure openness and fairness, and to monitor whether all political parties and civil society are allowed to freely participate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to promoting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Cambodia;

(2) condemns all forms of political violence in Cambodia and urges the cessation of ongoing human rights violations;

(3) calls on the Government of Cambodia to respect freedom of the press and the rights of its citizens to freely assemble, protest, and speak out against the government;

(4) supports electoral reform efforts in Cambodia and free and fair elections in 2018 monitored by international observers; and

(5) urges Prime Minister Hun Sen and the Cambodian People’s Party to—

(A) end all harassment and intimidation of Cambodia’s opposition;

(B) drop all politically motivated charges against opposition lawmakers;

(C) allow them to return to Cambodia and freely participate in the political process; and

(D) foster an environment where democracy can thrive and flourish.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am rising here in strong support for H. Res. 728, supporting human rights and democracy and the rule of law in Cambodia.

We have all seen the consequences of land grabbing and the destruction of human liberty in that country. I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL), my colleague, for introducing this resolution. I want to thank him for his advocacy for the people of Cambodia.

Mr. Speaker, since Cambodia held its deeply flawed elections in 2013, we have seen significant attacks on those Cambodians peacefully opposing their government. Hun Sen’s thuggish regime continues to crack down on the political opposition and on activists, and they continue to arrest and beat those who point out violations of freedom of speech, violations, frankly, of a stolen election.

As noted in this resolution, Freedom House’s most recent report card rated Cambodia as not free, noting restrictions on and the harassment of the government’s political opposition. And that is putting it mildly. Last year opposition lawmaker and American citizen Nhay Chamreoun was severely and brutally attacked by plainclothes bodyguards who repeatedly kicked and stomped him. He was hospitalized for months.

We have all seen the pictures of opposition figures who have been beaten and stomped and put in the hospital there. Several months later, Kem Ley, a popular Cambodian political commentator, was murdered in broad daylight for his outspoken protest of the regime. So much for freedom of speech in Cambodia.

Then just last week, Hun Sen took yet another step to consolidate his grip on power, to make it impossible for people to run against him. He sentenced the de facto leader of the Cambodia National Rescue Party, Kem Sokha, to 5 months in prison on the spurious charge of refusing to appear for questioning in a politically motivated case that was brought against him. Although his sentence is short, the repercussions are dire, as convicted criminals are prohibited from holding office; and that, again, was what this was about: intimidation and trying to