

protections and greater social stability.

President Museveni said that to meet all of the health and education needs of Uganda, they would have to build the tax base through economic reforms and introduce free enterprise. That is exactly what they have done, with very positive results.

So recovering African economies already offer the U.S. significant commercial opportunities. While African countries are still in the early stages of economic reform, America's growing exports, exports to Africa already total \$6 billion per year. That supports 100,000 American jobs. American investment on the continent is increasing. American corporations, looking beyond the headlines of civil strife, are clearly recognizing opportunities in Africa.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act would strengthen these positive trends by putting Africa more firmly on the trade and investment map. This legislation would encourage qualifying African countries in annual, high-level trade forums, modeled after forums the U.S. holds with other regions of the world, to continue along this route of reducing tariffs and reforming the economy. These forums would have symbolic value, demonstrating that the world's most powerful economy takes Africa's economic development seriously.

American exporters and investors stand to benefit by the African Growth and Opportunity Act. Qualifying African countries would be reducing barriers to American goods and investment, including reducing tariffs and regulatory burdens and protecting private property. In other words, this legislation treats trade and investment as a two-way street.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act has received strong support from American businesses, particularly those already engaged in Africa and aware of the opportunities. There should be a sense of urgency about the African Growth and Opportunity Act. There should be a sense of urgency about Africa itself.

While several African countries are making encouraging economic progress, others are not. Africa's share of world trade and developing world foreign direct investment is small. Unless these trends are reversed, Africa runs a real risk of becoming economically irrelevant. I urge passage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

AGOA promises to make Africa more relevant to the world economy. That is why it enjoys the support of virtually every African country.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act is not a panacea for Africa's many challenges. But it would help.

While modest from an American perspective, AGOA promises tangible benefits and a psychological boost to those African countries

wishing to become economic partners with the U.S.

This is the least we can do for countries fighting their best against the continent's economic marginalization, and worse.

Having encouraged difficult market-opening reforms, denying greater market access for a modest amount of African goods disrespects our many interests in Africa.

It is also indefensible policy toward the world's poorest continent just as it is developing some momentum.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this Act when it reaches the House floor.

CHINESE ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday, I came to the floor to speak about the escalating rush of illegal immigrants coming from the People's Republic of China directly into Guam. Just within the past week, another 257 more illegal immigrants coming from the People's Republic were apprehended at sea and brought to shore.

Last Thursday, on April 15, 152 Chinese nationals suspected of trying to enter Guam were interdicted by the U.S. Coast Guard. Fortunately, as a result of the efforts of my office, the governor's office, and I think a sensible policy pursued by the White House, and the cooperation of the government of the Northern Marianas, this vessel, instead of being taken to Guam, was taken to the Northern Marianas, where it was assumed because of the differing laws which are applicable to the Commonwealth, these nationals of the People's Republic of China will be more easily repatriated back to China.

Immediately after that vessel was detained, another vessel carrying 105 nationals from the People's Republic of China docked at Apra Harbor on Guam. This was yet the largest single apprehension on Guam, with 34 women and at least 6 juveniles.

According to the INS, the number of apprehended illegal immigrants from the People's Republic caught on Guam since January this year is now up to 585. As I have informed the House before and people of this country, these immigrants are coming directly from Fukien Province, are paying crime syndicates anywhere from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to ship them to the United States. Guam being the closest American territory, these criminal organizations then funnel them right into our island, and we are now experiencing boat landings nearly every 2 to 4 days.

Upon arrival, these people who are being sent to Guam by criminal organizations are eventually apprehended by primarily local officials, turned over to Federal officials, and they are expected to apply for some form of asylum.

Mr. Speaker, what we see here is a clear exploitation of INA, the Immigration and Naturalization Act, as it is applicable to Guam, by Chinese crime syndicates. Chinese nationals who succeed in finding employment inside the United States, who have come to this dream, are actually turned into indentured servants with no legal papers and immense debts to pay. They continue to pay off these Chinese crime syndicates, even after they are in the United States, for well over a decade. This is a criminal activity which must end.

Now we have this humanitarian crisis on the high seas. It takes approximately anywhere from 10 to 15 days on these decrepit vessels, which are expected to simply take a one-way trip from Fukien Province in China.

This has created a number of crises on Guam. It has created a resource crisis. The INS does not have any funds to attend to these, so it has been left up to the government of Guam to feed them, house them, and clothe them. Now over 400 Chinese nationals are currently being housed in a Guam facility with a capacity of 150 at a cost of approximately \$97 per immigrant per day.

The government of Guam estimates that the total expense for apprehending, staffing, housing, and detaining these illegal immigrants from the People's Republic has cost the people of Guam nearly \$2.5 million. This is a Federal responsibility. No State in the Union would put up with this.

There is also a potential environmental crisis as these boats deliberately run aground on our reefs. There is also a potential health crisis. In one shipment of these illegal immigrants, well over half of the illegal immigrants were tested positive for TB.

Over the past few days, I have had several meetings, including officials at the Department of Justice, officials in the National Security Council and the White House, and I am happy to report that they have taken some action on this. But the Federal Government needs to take clearly more responsibility over this.

It is very interesting to note that, as widely reported in the news about 2½ weeks ago, Guam was considered a possible destination point for Kosovar refugees. It was estimated that Guam may have to house as many as 5,000 to 10,000 Kosovar refugees.

Everyone willingly acknowledged that the Federal Government would be responsible for such an eventuality on Guam. Yet, in this particular instance where we are talking about 400 illegal Chinese immigrants for a Federal responsibility, the Federal Government today has not paid the government of Guam and is now only beginning to become engaged in the process.

I urge my colleagues to take a good look at this issue. I have introduced H.R. 945 to address the issue of the applicability of the INA to Guam.