

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to thank the participants of this debate. I have enjoyed working with Mr. Payne and the other members of the Subcommittee on Africa on this resolution, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution.

Mr. ROYCE, Mr. PAYNE, and the Members of the Subcommittee on African Affairs are to be congratulated for their attention to the difficult political and humanitarian crisis in Sierra Leone.

When Sierra Leone received independence from Britain in 1961, it had everything going for it. The fierce tribalism that plagues some African nations never developed there, and although there are 14 ethnic groups, urban life has led to a blending of cultures. Sierra Leone benefited from strong educational institutions at the time of independence and boasts many highly educated citizens. But after independence, corrupt politicians found it relatively easy to consolidate power and accumulate great wealth.

Neighboring Liberia's civil war spilled over into Sierra Leone ten years ago, and faction leader Charles Taylor, now Liberia's president, armed and supported a Sierra Leone rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front. Led by Foday Sankoh, a cashiered army corporal, the RUF has demonstrated no discernible political agenda. Its followers have murdered and maimed thousands of the poorest people. Like the Shining Path in Peru, the RUF terrorizes the population to ensure compliance. RUF leaders recruit teenage and pre-teen boys and girls, sometimes forcing them to kill their own families before taking them from their rural villages at gunpoint. The practice of amputation and carving RUF initials into the skin of children became commonplace.

Sierra Leoneans finally rose up and demanded elections. In 1996 they poured into the streets, even battling soldiers to protect ballot boxes. In the first democratic elections in many years, they chose Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, a retired U.N. diplomat, as President.

Kabbah never came to grips with the country's many problems. In May 1997, the army seized the capital again and invited the RUF to join them in looting the city. Nine months later, Nigerian troops operating under the Economic Community of West Africa Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) ousted the vandals and restored Kabbah to power.

On January 6 of this year, the RUF launched another offensive on the capital and destroyed the country's largest hospital, its 170-year-old university, and its new telecommunications center before the ECOMOG troops drove them out again.

For the moment, there is a sign of hope. On May 18, 1999, President Kabbah and rebel leader Sankoh signed a cease-fire agreement. This tenuous peace must be guarded and nurtured. This resolution is an important step in sustaining continued U.S. engagement and support.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the mo-

tion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 62, as amended.

The question was taken.

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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SUNDRY MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

CONDEMNING THE NATIONAL ISLAMIC FRONT (NIF) GOVERNMENT

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H.Con.Res. 75) condemning the National Islamic Front (NIF) government for its genocidal war in southern Sudan, support for terrorism, and continued human rights violations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 75

Whereas according to the United States Committee for Refugees (USCR) an estimated 1,900,000 people have died over the past decade due to war and war-related causes and famine, while millions have been displaced from their homes and separated from their families;

Whereas the National Islamic Front (NIF) government's war policy in southern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains, and the Ingessena Hills has brought untold suffering to innocent civilians and is threatening the very survival of a whole generation of southern Sudanese;

Whereas the people of the Nuba Mountains and the Ingessena Hills are at particular risk, having been specifically targeted through a deliberate prohibition of international food aid, inducing manmade famine, and by routinely bombing civilian centers, including religious services, schools, and hospitals;

Whereas the National Islamic Front government is deliberately and systematically committing genocide in southern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains, and the Ingessena Hills;

Whereas the Convention for the Prevention and the Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, defines "genocide" as official acts committed by a government with the intent to destroy a national, ethnic, or religious group, and this definition also includes "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction, in whole or in part";

Whereas the National Islamic Front government systematically and repeatedly obstructed peace efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) over the past several years;

Whereas the Declaration of Principles (DOP) put forth by the Intergovernmental Authority for Development mediators is the most viable negotiating framework to resolve the problems in Sudan and to bring lasting peace;

Whereas humanitarian conditions in southern Sudan, especially in Bahr al-Ghazal and the Nuba Mountains, deteriorated in 1998, largely due to the National Islamic Front government's decision to ban United Nations relief flights from February through the end of April in 1998 and the government continues to deny access in certain locations;

Whereas an estimated 2,600,000 southern Sudanese were at risk of starvation late last year in southern Sudan and the World Food Program currently estimates that 4,000,000 people are in need of emergency assistance;

Whereas the United Nations-coordinated relief effort, Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), failed to respond in time at the height of the humanitarian crisis last year and has allowed the National Islamic Front government to manipulate and obstruct the relief efforts;

Whereas the relief work in the affected areas is further complicated by the National Islamic Front's repeated aerial attacks on feeding centers, clinics, and other civilian targets;

Whereas relief efforts are further exacerbated by looting, bombing, and killing of innocent civilians and relief workers by government-sponsored militias in the affected areas;

Whereas these government-sponsored militias have carried out violent raids in Aweil West, Twic, and Gogrial counties in Bahr el Ghazal/Lakes Region, killing hundreds of civilians and displacing thousands;

Whereas the National Islamic Front government has perpetrated a prolonged campaign of human rights abuses and discrimination throughout the country;

Whereas the National Islamic Front government-sponsored militias have been engaged in the enslavement of innocent civilians, including children, women, and the elderly;

Whereas the now common slave raids being carried out by the government's Popular Defense Force (PDF) militias are undertaken as part of the government's self-declared jihad (holy war) against the predominantly traditional and Christian south;

Whereas, according to the American Anti-Slavery Group of Boston, there are tens of thousands of women and children now living as chattel slaves in Sudan;

Whereas these women and children were captured in slave raids taking place over a decade by militia armed and controlled by the National Islamic Front regime in Khartoum—they are bought, sold, branded, and bred;

Whereas the Department of State, in its report on Human Rights Practices for 1997, affirmed that "reports and information from a variety of sources after February 1994 indicate that the number of cases of slavery, servitude, slave trade, and forced labor have increased alarmingly";

Whereas the enslavement of people is considered in international law as "crime against humanity";

Whereas observers estimate the number of people enslaved by government-sponsored militias to be in the tens of thousands;

Whereas former United Nations Special Rapporteur for Sudan, Gaspar Biro, and his successor, Leonardo Franco, reported on a number of occasions the routine practice of