

the gentlelady from Florida, the ranking member, for helping us manage this legislation and get it approved by our colleagues.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 508, which recognizes the strong security alliance between the Government of Japan and the United States and expresses our country's appreciation to Japan for its role in enhancing stability in the Asia-Pacific region and also for their efforts in the global war on terrorism. I commend Mr. SAXTON for authoring this resolution and for the support by the leadership to bring this resolution up for our consideration.

On October 29, 2005, the Government of the United States and the Government of Japan entered into a renewed Security Consultative Agreement that calls for a major realignment of U.S.-Japan strategic alliance. This agreement continues Japan's strategic role for the security of the region in cooperation with the United States. In addition, the agreement will realign our U.S. forces within Japan and throughout the Pacific so that the U.S. is better positioned to respond militarily to incidents in Asia and the Pacific.

Incidentally, under the agreement, the U.S. territory of Guam could become the new home to elements of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force. It is projected that nearly 8,000 active duty Marines and their dependents will be relocated from Okinawa to Guam.

As you know, Madam Speaker, our U.S. territories fall under the jurisdiction of the House Natural Resources Committee, specifically under the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs. As chairman of the Subcommittee, I had the unique opportunity to travel to Japan and to the Pacific over the August recess to convene a field hearing on Guam on the proposed U.S. military buildup and the challenges the island's community will face due to the impact of relocating so many U.S. forces.

I was impressed by briefings we held with U.S. Navy ADM William French and U.S. Air Force BG Douglas Owens. Both were extremely forthright about the strategic value of Guam in defending our Nation and developing relationships and training opportunities with our allies, including Japan, so that our interests in the Asia-Pacific region are secured. In fact, while in Guam, our military was conducting "Operation Valiant Shield" which was a military exercise between our forces and those of our allies in the Pacific and Asia.

I was equally impressed with the patriotism of the people of Guam and the support they have shown for the relocation. This is not to say that there are no concerns throughout the community on what the impact of Marines will mean to the services provided to the Government of Guam. Any community would have concerns on education, healthcare, law enforcement, infrastructure, etc. It is my hope that as the buildup continues, the Congress will consider these impacts on the island community and work to mitigate such problems for the benefit of the community "outside the gates."

On my return from Guam, I also had the opportunity to meet with officials from the Japanese Defense and Foreign Ministries to be briefed on their progress in the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan. In addition to meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Haneda, we were informed by the Senior Coordinator for Japan-U.S. Security Affairs, Keiichi Ono and

the Deputy Director General for Realignment Initiatives Daikichi Momma and their team, that Japan is moving forward with the things they need to do to fully implement the realignment and that they would be mindful to take into account concerns raised about the impact of the realignment on the territory and people of Guam.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to express my appreciation and that of my constituents to the people of Japan for their continued strong alliance and for their role in enhancing stability in the Asia-Pacific region and their efforts in the global war on terrorism. I urge my colleagues to support adoption of H. Res. 508.

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the House Resolution 508, recognizing the strong security alliance between the Government of Japan and the United States and expressing appreciation to Japan for its role in enhancing stability in the Asia-Pacific Region and its efforts in the global war against terrorism.

The Government of Japan, crucial to stabilizing the Asia-Pacific Region, has for decades served as a cornerstone for U.S. national security posture worldwide. I expect our governments to remain strong allies long into the future. The Government of Japan's efforts in support of the global war against terrorism are commendable and serve as a superb model for other governments to emulate.

The people of Guam, who I represent in Congress, enjoy a robust relationship with the Japanese people. Many residents on Guam are of Japanese descent. Also, Guam hosts over a million Japanese tourists each year and we welcome more. Japanese companies make significant investments in Guam's telecommunications infrastructure and in our tourism and hospitality industry. Moreover, Guam's relationship with the Japanese people and their government will grow stronger in the years to come. The Government of Japan will, in large part, finance the planned re-location of elements of the III Marine Expeditionary Force from Okinawa to Guam. What is more, the future military training exercises on and in the waters around Guam will include greater numbers of Japanese Self-Defense Force personnel.

I welcome all efforts that strengthen the security relationship that exists between the United States and the Japan. I strongly support this resolution recognizing the valuable security alliance between the Government of Japan and the United States and expressing appreciation to Japan for its role in enhancing stability in the Asia-Pacific Region and its efforts in the global war against terrorism. I urge my colleagues' support.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 508, as amended.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam 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 question will be postponed.

□ 1145

COMMENDING THE PEOPLE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN FOR THEIR CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO HOLDING ELECTIONS AND BROADENING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 575) commending the people and the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for their continued commitment to holding elections and broadening political participation, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 575

Whereas on June 17, 2003, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan held parliamentary elections, the fourth since 1989, and the first during the reign of His Majesty King Abdullah II;

Whereas His Majesty King Abdullah II has announced that the next parliamentary elections in Jordan will be held November 20, 2007;

Whereas municipal elections for the local councils were held on July 31, 2007, under a new reformed municipal elections law passed on February 4, 2007, under which the mayors and councils of all municipalities in Jordan were elected;

Whereas the new reformed municipal elections law includes a 20 percent quota for women in the council seats and reduces the age of eligible voters from 19 to 18 years of age in order to expand the voter base;

Whereas with the direct assistance of the United States Agency for International Development and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, Jordan has placed great emphasis in recent years on the rights of women to vote and run for public office, thereby serving as a model for other countries in the region;

Whereas the people and the Government of Jordan are committed to continuing this progress;

Whereas His Majesty King Abdullah II recently emphasized the importance of building a thriving civil society when he declared, "We in Jordan—and many others, throughout the Middle East—are working hard to create a civic environment in which our people will thrive. The basic requirement is an inclusive, democratic civil society—one that guarantees rights, delegates responsibilities, honors merit and rewards achievement. The foundation stones on which we build are peace and stability, basic civil and political rights, essential services, freedom of expression and the rule of law."; and

Whereas Jordan continues to invest in reforming its educational system to incorporate democratic values and principles: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the people, the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and His Majesty King Abdullah II for their decision to conduct municipal and parliamentary elections in 2007;

(2) expresses its desire that Jordan's progress toward democratization continue and flourish as a model for other Arab countries;

(3) commends His Majesty King Abdullah II and the Jordanian people for striving to uphold women's rights and enhance women's participation in the political process;

(4) reaffirms the special relationship that exists between the people of the United States and the people of Jordan; and

(5) remains committed to assist Jordan, should it so desire, in promoting democratic reform.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this proposed resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again my appreciation and gratitude to the leadership of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the distinguished chairman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), the senior ranking member of the committee, for their support and leadership in bringing this proposed legislation before the floor. I also would like to thank the chief sponsor of this proposed bill, my good friend from the State of Washington (Mr. BAIRD), for introducing this thoughtful and timely measure commending the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on its commitment to holding elections and to broadening its sphere of political participation in its country.

The Kingdom of Jordan is an oasis of stability in the Middle Eastern desert full of difficulties and crises. Jordan is beset by most of the same threats that confront the whole Middle Eastern region, such as terrorism and extremism, but it also faces some distinct challenges. For example, a flood of Iraqi asylum-seekers numbering nearly 1 million. These refugees are now straining the infrastructure of a resource-poor nation of only 6 million citizens.

Despite these difficult challenges, and unlike other regional states that use Islamic extremism as an excuse to restrict democratic freedoms, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has courageously taken significant steps to broaden political participation. At the same time, it continues to hold the line against terrorism. This balance is exemplary.

Madam Speaker, Jordan has long been a leader in the Arab world in en-

hancing women's political involvement, and it is continuing along that path. Thanks to recent reform, 20 percent of the municipal council seats determined in Jordan's July elections were reserved for women. Jordan also lowered its voting age to 18 in order to involve more people in the election process.

As you know, Madam Speaker, there was some controversy surrounding these recent municipal elections. The Islamists withdrew their candidates 1 day before the vote, claiming that the system was unfairly stacked against them. However, based on the evidence I have been able to gather from the State Department and from other staffers who visited Jordan shortly after the elections, these elections were largely free and fair, marred only by minor irregularities that almost certainly had little or no impact on the final result. It now appears the Islamists were more concerned about an embarrassing, imminent defeat than they were about democratic procedures.

Last month, after the municipal elections, King Abdullah II announced that parliamentary elections will be held on November 20. Thus, Jordan continues to pursue its path toward greater democracy.

It is indeed impressive that Jordan keeps extremism at bay while expanding political participation. But it is no coincidence. By addressing reform, Jordan has encouraged moderation. That is a lesson that, unfortunately, too many Middle Eastern regimes have failed to understand.

We encourage Jordan in its efforts to implement political reform, and we look forward to the kingdom's further progress towards achieving the comprehensive and ambitious set of goals it put forth last year as part of Jordan's National Agenda.

Madam Speaker, King Abdullah's thoughtful and bold leadership has made him a welcome ally in difficult times in the Middle East, and the American and Jordanian peoples share a special friendship that this bill explicitly reaffirms.

I know that the Foreign Affairs Committee, of which I am a member, and its distinguished chairman, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), remain committed to this special relationship with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. I trust that my friends in the full House do as well.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support House Resolution 575, which commends the people and the Government of Jordan for their commitment to democracy. Today, much of the Middle East is sadly pervaded by tyranny, radical

and extremist Islam, terrorism and hatred of the United States and Israel. However, Jordan continues to stand out as a nation committed to moderation, to modernity, to democracy and to peace with the United States and Israel.

Madam Speaker, Jordan has taken the road less traveled in the Middle East, demonstrating to other nations the benefits of embracing democratic principles as the norm. Since 1989, Jordan has held four elections for its parliament, and King Abdullah has committed to holding the next set of elections by November of this year. Under a new election law passed in February, Jordanians went to the polls in late July, for the first time, to elect the mayors and the councils of every city and town in that country.

Jordan has also recognized that democracy is much more than just holding elections. The Jordanian Government is acting to establish the rule of law, to build a civil society, to build strong institutions and to broaden political participation to meaningfully engage citizens from all walks of life.

One example of this commitment, Madam Speaker, is the decision of the Government of Jordan to lower the voting age from 19 to 18 and to mandate that women fill at least 20 percent of council seats. This is a positive first step, and I hope that it will lead to further reforms and political participation.

King Abdullah himself has courageously spoken out and led the way for reform. King Abdullah recently stated, "We in Jordan, and many others throughout the Middle East, are working hard to create a civic environment in which our people will thrive. The basic requirement is an inclusive, democratic civil society, one that guarantees rights, delegates responsibilities, honors merit, and rewards achievement. The foundation stones on which we build are peace and stability, basic civil and political rights, essential services, freedom of expression and the rule of law."

Madam Speaker, a stable, peaceful and free Middle East is in the interests of the United States and indeed the entire world. And while much remains to be done, Jordan is serving as a model for other nations. It deserves our friendship and encouragement.

House Resolution 575 is particularly important. It expresses the House's desire that Jordan's progress toward democracy continues and flourishes as a model for other Arab countries. It also commends King Abdullah and the Jordanian people for upholding women's rights and enhancing the participation of women in the political process.

Finally, Madam Speaker, it reaffirms the special relationship that exists between the citizens of our two nations, as well as our ongoing commitment to helping Jordan, should it so desire, in promoting democratic reform.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this measure, Madam Speaker, and I urge

my colleagues to render their full support for its adoption.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I yield 6 minutes to my good friend and the chief sponsor of this proposed bill, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD).

Mr. BAIRD. Madam Speaker, it is indeed an honor for me to be here along with such distinguished colleagues giving just praise and recognition to a nation which is a leader in a very, very difficult environment. I want to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and the distinguished gentleman from American Samoa, and I particularly want to thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. LANTOS, for supporting and introducing this resolution.

We all know the Middle East is a region which is fraught with difficulties. If ever there is a region that needs and deserves models of courage, integrity and vision that is such a region, and if ever there were such models of integrity, vision and courage, Jordan and King Abdullah II are precisely those models.

In the most recent municipal elections, we saw not only a commitment to democratic reforms, but a commitment to moving forward with women's rights, and as many of us who have had the privilege traveling to Jordan know, the kingdom has been a real leader in this region, not only in promoting democratic reforms, but seeing that women are promoted to high positions of office within the cabinet and within the Parliament. It is a lesson that not only nations within the Middle East but within the world at large could benefit from.

In addition, the Kingdom of Jordan and King Abdullah II have led efforts to try to bring Islamic scholars from around the world to craft new visions for modern, pluralistic, tolerant and progressive visions of Islam, and the Oman declaration, which does not get nearly the attention it deserves, has been, I think, a visionary statement guiding and inspiring many people throughout the region.

In addition, I think it is worth saying that the Kingdom of Jordan has stepped up to try to help in the region. As we deal with the conflict in Iraq, they have provided valuable training to the Iraqi police and others. One of the challenges Jordan faces right now is the influx of nearly 1 million refugees, as was mentioned. This is a country that faces challenges in terms of energy costs, water availability, et cetera, and still, with all the challenges they face, they have reached out to try to assist others.

We have talked a lot in this body and elsewhere about the need for models in the Middle East in the hope that Iraq could one day become a model of democracy. I certainly share that hope. But I would say to my colleagues, we already have some very, very good

models in that region, and it is deserved that we would commend them and recognize them today. Jordan is precisely such a model. King Abdullah is precisely such a leader.

I am grateful that my colleagues today would take the time and the effort to recognize such achievements by such a courageous leader in such a wonderful country.

I would urge my colleagues to visit Jordan, to meet with their King, with the members of their Parliament and their cabinet officials, and I am sure they will share my sense of deep admiration and respect for what has been happening there.

So I urge passage of this legislation. I hope it marks a positive step, not only in recognition of Jordan, but a step in which this body finds ways to acknowledge the many positive achievements that are taking place in a region which we all know has many difficulties. But if we only focus on the difficulties or the bad news and we neglect the good news and the accomplishments, particularly when they are achieved by nations and individuals of such prestige and courage as Jordan, we would be missing a golden opportunity.

Thankfully, today, this House of Representatives will not miss that opportunity. We will acknowledge and recognize the recent elections and reforms by the Kingdom of Jordan and extend a hand of friendship and admiration to all the people of Jordan and to King Abdullah II himself.

With that, I thank all of those who cosponsored this legislation on both sides of the aisle. It truly has been a bipartisan effort.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this fine resolution.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I commend my good friend, the chief sponsor of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 575, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1200

PERCY SUTTON POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the bill (H.R. 954) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 365 West 125th Street in New York, New York, as the "Percy Sutton Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 954

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PERCY SUTTON POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 365 West 125th Street in New York, New York, shall be known and designated as the "Percy Sutton Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Percy Sutton Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Vermont.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 954.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I rise in support of H.R. 954, which designates the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 365 West 125th Street in New York City as the Percy Sutton Post Office Building. This measure, which has the support of the New York delegation, was unanimously reported from our committee on July 19, 2007.

Madam Speaker, I have many remarks that I can make about Mr. Sutton, somebody that I don't know but read about as a young man growing up in, of all places, Massachusetts and then Vermont. But whatever I say is not worth listening to when we have another member of the New York delegation, remarkable in his own right, who actually knows Mr. Sutton and I expect is going to share some of his good qualities and be somewhat silent on anything else that may not be appropriate stories about the interactions of these two terrific men.

So I am going to reserve my time, and when the appropriate moment comes, allow the distinguished Member from New York to speak on behalf of the merits of Mr. Sutton, where he will be forever commemorated by having his name on a post office in the great city of New York.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you, Madam Speaker. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Percy Sutton, a noted civil rights activist, lawyer and entrepreneur, has had numerous achievements in his lifetime. Today we honor Percy Sutton