

abuses, including extrajudicial executions and other unlawful killings, rape, and other sexual violence, torture, and other ill treatment and arbitrary arrest and detention, as well as the consequences of a high level of displacement, pervasive insecurity, and intentional destruction of homes and other buildings not justified by military success."

They are talking about this. We can see that this person was being tortured. This photo is of someone from the cabinet—the Gbagbo cabinet. He tried to make a statement—Ouattara said he is trying to keep some of those people, but here he is in the middle of killing him. He died after this. Here they are executing another person they found as a Gbagbo supporter.

This is happening today as we speak. Ouattara's bloodletting seems unabated, and he doesn't seem to be interested in restraining his forces from eliminating perceived pro-Gbagbo supporters. He does not deserve an invitation to our White House or an audience with the President in the Oval Office.

Instead of participating in our Nation's debt crisis, President Obama is meeting with this killer and human rights abuser. Even today, while Ouattara is in the President's office, his death squads are roaming the streets of Abijan. It is an outrage, and maybe now we understand where some of the priorities are.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LIEBERMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DEBT CEILING

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, too many Ohioans are struggling—as are people all over the Nation—in this economy. They are watching Washington with disgust as some politicians are risking economic catastrophe. The House of Representatives continues to waste time as our Nation stands just 4 days away from a catastrophic default. Instead of working with us on a bipartisan basis in the Senate on a compromise measure to prevent a crisis, House Republicans are cutting closed-door deals to find votes on a bill that has no chance of becoming law. We are simply running out of time for these kinds of games.

Only a bipartisan bill coming out of the Senate, negotiated with Republican Leader MCCONNELL and Democratic Leader REID, provides hope for a way out of this impasse. As the majority leader moves forward, I ask my Republican colleagues across the aisle to proceed with its work and not delay the resolution with filibusters and procedural tricks.

In the spirit of compromise, Majority Leader REID has come forth with a plan to reduce the deficit by \$2.2 trillion. It is truly a compromise because it meets the Republicans' main criteria. It incorporates some of Senator MCCONNELL's language. It contains spending cuts to roughly match the debt ceiling increase through 2012—the spending cuts in the Reid plan are ones Republicans had previously agreed to and, in many cases, advanced—and it contains no revenue increases, all criteria and demands from overwhelming numbers of Senate Republicans.

The majority leader's plan is not perfect. It is not the balanced approach I hoped it would be. But most importantly, right now, it prevents a default, it reduces the deficit—a critical imperative for our children and grandchildren—and it protects Medicare and Social Security and Medicaid.

My office is being swamped with calls and e-mails from Ohioans who cannot believe we are so close to default. I can't either. Let me read a couple letters from Ohio voters. Both of these individuals self-identify as Republicans when they write to me. The first one is from Representative MARCY KAPTUR's district, which is in northern Ohio, along the lake. He says:

I am a 40-plus-year-old Republican who has tried to work to eliminate the tax money we use that is now paid to oil and gas companies as tax subsidies. I don't like my tax money being given to these companies with Senators' blessings. I would like to ask both of you—

He sends this, apparently, to myself and my colleague, Senator PORTMAN—to support a balanced approach being proposed by the President and put debt and deficit to bed until an election can be held and the American people can determine who should be in Congress. We should have listened to Ronald Reagan when he said this should not have been undertaken.

Meaning the debt limit issue.

The debt limit is on past bills and should not be raised and not be used as a political volleyball and upset our financial institutions.

Another letter writer—again, a Republican—says:

I did not vote for our current President, but I have to side with him on the debt ceiling issues. I am exhausted by the political bickering that goes on in Washington. Quit the child-like fighting and get this thing done. The American people are tired of it all.

A default would risk what amounts to a permanent tax hike on all Americans. Interest rates could rise for anyone applying for a home mortgage, a car loan or a college loan. Credit costs for all borrowers would climb. Governments at every level, businesses, not for profits, homeowners, credit card holders, even several States have already been placed on a credit watch. Every State would be hurt by a Federal default, which is why Governors of both parties are calling for a deal.

There could be repercussions for pension funds and money market funds that guard the retirement savings of middle-class families. A default on our

obligations would be a knockout blow to the financial security of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. These are public employees who have spent their lives working in Ohio's courts and schools and many other public positions in local and State government. That is why the Director of OPERS—the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System—sent a letter with nine of her colleagues pleading:

America is now a debtor nation and must show the world the nation's word is its bond. It is critical that the debt ceiling be raised to avoid a default.

The Ohio Public Employees Retirement System, obviously, represents Republicans and Democrats alike.

As a member of the Senate Banking Committee, I heard Chairman Ben Bernanke, a Republican appointee, speak in March, and he said default would be "an extremely dangerous and very likely recovering-ending event."

Just today, several mayors of Ohio's large- and medium-sized cities—for example, the cities of Hillsboro, South Euclid, Chillicothe, North Royalton, Lancaster, Akron, Middletown, Shaker Heights, Reynoldsburg, Dayton, Steubenville, Solon, Newark, Fairfield, and other cities, Republicans and Democrats alike—wrote:

As Mayors, we rely on the partnership of the federal government to help us create jobs and grow our communities. Uncertainty surrounding the federal budget puts key programs like Community Development Block Grants and Community Oriented Policing Services in jeopardy. Job-creating infrastructure projects would come to a halt without the full support of our federal partners. Inaction on the debt ceiling threatens programs like Social Security that our citizens rely on to survive.

I have heard the Presiding Officer—in a meeting today, in fact—talk passionately about the uncertainty this would inject into our economy—to follow the House lead—and do this again in 6 months and the irresponsibility of that proposal. As difficult as this has been for people on all sides and the contentiousness and anger, it doesn't matter whether we are angry or it is contentious around here, but what does matter is the message it sends to main street—Main Street Connecticut, Main Street Hartford, Main Street Columbus, Main Street New Haven and Toledo. When businesses are thinking about expansion, when they are thinking about taking a loan out or thinking about borrowing money, they are not going to do it when we are in the midst of a financial crisis such as we are in now. If we were going to do this again in 6 months, you can bet we would have the same kind of divisions, the same kind of arguments.

The assistant majority leader told the story today about a Chicago businessperson who is terrified of this and what would happen if we didn't raise the debt ceiling, if we went into default; what might happen 6 months from now if we went through it again.

So the responsible position is for this body, on a bipartisan basis, to work on

the McConnell-Reid plan, to pass this, send it to the House of Representatives, and for them to pass it. We can then focus on job creation and on deficit reduction, but we will have moved forward together in a way that we have not for far too long a period of time.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Of course.

Mr. DURBIN. There have been Members of the Senate and House who have gone before the cameras and come to the floor in each of those bodies and argued that defaulting on the national debt is really not a big deal, although we have never done that one time in our history—we had one technical default for a few days but never really defaulted on our debt one time in our history.

I ask the Senator from Ohio, in the response he is getting back from Ohio and I am getting back from Illinois from people who are genuinely concerned about a default on the national debt, I wonder if he has been hearing from Social Security recipients who are asking whether they will be receiving their checks after August 2 if we default on their debt. I wonder if he is getting calls from disabled veterans whom we promised to stand by the rest of their lives who receive monthly checks for their medical care and other things. Has he heard from small business leaders in Ohio, as I have in Illinois, who are suggesting that an increase in interest rates at this moment in time is exactly wrong when it comes to job creation?

I would like to ask the Senator from Ohio, when one of our colleagues from Pennsylvania comes to the floor and says defaulting on the national debt can be easily managed and no one will notice—I would like to ask the Senator from Ohio whether that is his impression.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. That is surely not my impression. I appreciate the comments from the assistant majority leader from Illinois.

I listen to the words, as I have read, that Ronald Reagan said. The debt limit was raised 18 times in the 8 years of the Reagan administration, and each time it was, there were people who didn't like doing it. Nobody likes to vote for that. But there was never this: let's go up to the edge and take a chance. President Reagan always preached—as Presidents have since in both parties—that this is not a risk we can take, and I know this.

I hear from Social Security beneficiaries, I hear from veterans, I hear from small businesspeople, and I hear from contractors around Wright-Patterson Air Force Base that they don't think we should take this risk, that they are—some use the word “terrified” getting this close to default, and most can't really believe we are this close. I can't, either.

The Senator from Illinois and I have talked about this many times over the last few months, that we figured there

would not be these lines in the sand and this belief that it doesn't matter if we default and we would get to a solution. But we haven't been able to.

But no responsible people in elected office that I can think of in the last 30 or 40 years have wanted to go this close to default and play chicken and just think, well, maybe it won't hurt us much. We know what happens with interest rates. We know what might happen with Social Security checks and veterans' benefits and prison guard pay and airport safety and food inspectors—all of those functions that matter. I don't know why any responsible leader in this body or the other body would want to take that risk.

Mr. DURBIN. I would like to ask through the Chair if the Senator from Ohio would yield for this question.

He may recall the time not that long ago when we closed down the government of the United States for a period of time, and there were some radio talk show hosts who argued that America wouldn't notice, just as they are arguing now that America won't notice if we default on our national debt. I know the Senator from Ohio can recall that and the fact that America did notice, and those who engineered that crisis paid a heavy political price.

What I am really getting to at this point, though, is to ask the Senator from Ohio—Monday night, when the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, went on national television with the President of the United States and announced he had a bipartisan plan, he called it, that he could pass in the House of Representatives, many of us had the impression that was going to be done on Tuesday. Well, it wasn't done on Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday. It is only today that they are voting on it, some 5 or 6 days later.

I would like to ask the Senator from Ohio, losing that 4- or 5-day period of time when we could have been moving forward to a compromise—the impact that has as we face this looming deadline of a default on our national debt on August 2.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I thank the Senator for that comment and question. This is clearly more dangerous for our economy and our country, from Wall Street to Main Street, than what happened when they closed the government down 15 years ago or threatened to a few months ago. That was troubling, and that was damaging to our country, but we don't know what exactly would happen here. We are almost sure interest rates would go up. We are almost sure many people who benefit from government services directly would see those benefits go away. Whether it is a Social Security check or whether it is food safety or running the airports safely, all of those things would be at risk.

I have heard a lot of sort of brouhaha or a lot of strong words out of the House and a lot of promises, but there seems to be too many people in that Chamber who don't really see the seri-

ousness of this, don't see that this really does put our economy in jeopardy.

You know, it is not just our economy. That is the most important part, but it is also our reputation around the world. It is the strength of the dollar. It is the blot on our national reputation. I haven't been to Europe in a long time, but I hear reports from people around the world that they are saying: What is going on in the United States of America that you can't even agree on raising the debt ceiling so you can really focus on things such as jobs?

I had a meeting just last week—Senator ROCKEFELLER and I, earlier this week—and there were eight or nine Senators who joined us to talk about focusing on a jobs agenda and what we need to do to restore American manufacturing. In a State such as Illinois, and in Connecticut—the other Senator from Connecticut was in our meeting and talked about Bridgeport and New Haven and all the manufacturing that is done in this country. We are still a major manufacturing country. This is going to hurt manufacturers. It is going to mean they can't borrow to meet payroll or borrow to expand or borrow to create more jobs.

Why would we risk any of this instead of getting this done by focusing on job growth, and focusing on getting our budget in order? We know how to do this. In the 1990s—and the Presiding Officer and the assistant majority leader were very much part of it—in the 1990s, we got to, one, a balanced budget and, second, we got to 21 million private sector jobs net increase because we passed a responsible budget. It had some tax increases for upper income people. It also had some tax breaks in it for middle-income people. It also had major cuts and major investments. And we did all of that because we wrote a thoughtful budget—didn't get a lot of help from the other side, but put that aside, we did it right, we got to a budget surplus, and we created 21 million jobs. We know how to do this. But we didn't see anybody playing these kinds of games: Maybe we just let the debt ceiling go and go into default. We just could not take this chance.

I thank the Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank my colleague from Ohio for talking about this issue because it is on the minds of everyone here on Capitol Hill and across the Nation. We are getting a lot of e-mails and phone calls and letters, and it is understandable because this is the first time in our Nation's history that we face default on our national debt.

I received a letter from Amy in Germantown, IL, downstate. We have a lot of German families in our State, and we have a town named “Germantown.” Amy contacted me and said:

Please do your utmost to compromise on a budget solution before the deadline expires. Our family has already weathered multiple economic downturns due to the dot-com bubble burst, 9/11, and most recently the subprime mortgage crisis. We are responsible

with our income, saving for our children's education and our retirement. However, we are extremely nervous about our savings and investments once again. If the United States of America defaults on its loan obligations, it is likely we will see a significant reduction in the value of our 401K and 403B investments, as well as the investments we have made for our children and grandchild's education.

. . . I cannot stand by another day and listen to all the elected officials in Washington talk about their convictions. Please remember your constituents and their situations.

Another letter from Scott in Bloomington, IL:

Dear Senator, I thought I'd offer you a real life personal example of what you are doing to common Americans by dragging out to the last minute the resolution of the Federal debt limit. Ironically, every August 1st, I receive a distribution from a tax-deferred retirement account. That account includes a variety of investments, not the least of which are equity mutual funds. The failure to provide leadership in Congress, along with the President and House leaders, will probably cost me about \$5,000 this year. I will never see this money again. The recent fall in the equity markets is a direct result of the nervousness you are creating by failing to resolve the Federal debt limit issue, playing the usual political games. I respectfully request that you share this message with all of your colleagues as a reality check. Stop your games played for your own personal advantage, and start thinking about the people you are supposed to be serving.

A letter from David in Casey, IL:

I am retired and don't look forward to having my Social Security or veterans benefits cut. Why is it the rich get by with no additional taxes and we are taxed and our benefits in jeopardy? So why don't you elected officials wake up, start living like the rest of the population, put politics aside and do what is right for the country.

From the Lincoln Courier newspaper:

"From what I'm hearing, interest rates would go up," said Jim Muschinske, revenue manager for the Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability. "Some people may be more hesitant to buy big-ticket items they would have to finance."

As a result, sales tax revenues are going to suffer for local governments. "That could start a ripple effect," the newspaper went on to write.

"If the consumer pulls back, corporations would be more hesitant to add to their payroll," Muschinske said. "They may cut or, at the very least, not hire. At this stage of the recovery, we would hope hiring would be further along."

What troubles me the most is this is a manufactured political crisis. This is a self-inflicted political wound. Eighty-nine times since 1939 we have routinely—except for one little glitch—extended the debt ceiling. We have done it under Republican Presidents 55 times and Democratic Presidents 34 times. It is bipartisan.

All the President is asking for is the authority to borrow the money to pay for what Congress has spent. Members of Congress who come to the floor and pledge "I will never vote to extend the debt ceiling" are the same Members of Congress who just weeks ago said to the President: Stay in Afghanistan,

stay the course, spend the money. We have got to do it. Mr. President, \$10 billion a month in Afghanistan. For every dollar we spend, we have to borrow 40 cents. So for President Obama to keep the promise made by these same Members of Congress, he has to borrow funds to do it. Now that he has asked for authority to borrow it, they are saying: Oh, no, we want nothing to do with borrowing the money. And that is why we are here today.

Mr. President, let me say a word about the other issue that is being debated; that is, the deficit. And I know you feel as seriously about it as I do. The deficit in this country has to be addressed. We are leaving a debt to our children that is unimaginable, and we have to change it.

I have been working for a year and a half with the deficit commission the President created and with a group called the Gang of 6, and we have come up with a bipartisan approach to deal with this. It is sensible. It spreads the pain—and there will be pain—to everyone across America and puts everything on the table—everything. We don't spare anyone except the poorest and most vulnerable in our Nation.

We basically said to people: We have to raise revenue, and we have to start by increasing the tax burden of those in the highest income categories. I think it stands to reason. If we are asking for sacrifice from working families who are paying for college student loans, why wouldn't we ask the wealthiest people in America to pay a little more on their taxes?

Secondly, we put all of the Federal spending on the table, and we make dramatic cuts in Federal spending—not just on the side of the ledger that deals with nondefense but also in the Defense Department. There are some Members of Congress who argue that you cannot cut a penny from the Department of Defense.

When I was on the deficit commission, we had experts who came in from the Pentagon, and we learned that the Pentagon and the Department of Defense is the largest Federal employer in America.

But then Senator CONRAD of North Dakota asked an important question. He said: Beyond those Federal employees in the Department of Defense, how many contractors, how many contract employees work for the Department of Defense?

The expert said: I have no idea.

Senator CONRAD said: Well, give me a range.

Well, he says, between 1 million and 9 million.

That is quite a range. I think it is evidence that we ought to look at every single contract in the Department of Defense. Believe me, there are some of them that shouldn't be there where we are paying too much money and not getting the security we expect for our Nation.

So we need to look at both sides of the ledger—the defense side and the

nondefense side—and save the money. Keep our troops safe and keep America safe, but don't waste money on that which doesn't make us safe.

Finally, the entitlement programs—and this is where many people across America do get nervous. I believe in Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid. I particularly believe we have a commitment to seniors who paid their entire working lives into these programs expecting them to protect them when they reached the age of retirement.

This year, on January 1, 10,000 Americans reached the age of 65, qualifying for Social Security and Medicare. On January 2, another 10,000; January 3, again. And for 19 more years, every day 10,000 more people will qualify for Social Security and Medicaid. Welcome to the baby boomers. Those who were born after World War II are now reaching retirement age and with that expect, because they paid in for a lifetime, to receive Social Security and Medicare. Now we need to look at those programs and ask, What can we do to make them stronger longer? We may have some disagreement about exactly how that is done, but we both agree that if we don't touch Medicare and leave it as is, in a matter of 6, 7, or 8 years, it will be insolvent, unable to pay its bills. That is unacceptable. We need to find ways to make Medicare a strong, viable program that will pay the medical bills of seniors and the disabled when they need them.

Social Security, the same. There is good news in Social Security; it is solvent for 25 years. We cannot say that about many programs, if any, in Washington. But the bad news is at the end of 25 years, benefits would have to be cut 22 percent. That is tough. A lot of people have no other source of income.

What I have suggested, and I hope people will listen carefully: Small changes we make today in Social Security will play out over 25 years to buy the solvency we need in this program for decades to come. Every penny of savings in Social Security needs to be reinvested right back into Social Security so we do not take the savings from Social Security for general deficit reduction—not at all. Whatever savings are there, put them back into the Social Security Program.

There are ways to do this. We could do it in a sensible fashion, and the only way I can say that with some confidence is I have done it. When I first got elected to Washington in 1983, they said: Welcome to Washington. Social Security is broke.

We sat down and fixed it. We bought over 50 years of solvency at that time. We can do it again. We have to think about this in thoughtful terms, preserve the basic benefits of these programs but give them a longer life so they will be there when they are needed in the future. Our Gang of 6 came up with a bipartisan agreement to deal with this. Thirty-six Senators of both parties have agreed to join us in this

effort, and I hope it becomes the basis for us addressing our deficit crisis and that we avert what clearly is a manufactured political crisis coming August 2 and that we extend this debt ceiling so we do not hurt our recovering economy. We cannot hurt the innocent businesses and families across America who count on us for leadership.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PEACEFUL AND JUST RESOLUTION IN GEORGIA

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 113, S. Res. 175.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 175) expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to ongoing violations of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia and the importance of a peaceful and just resolution to the conflict within Georgia's internationally recognized borders.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I know of no further debate. I ask the Senate to vote on the adoption of the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Hearing no further debate, the question is on the adoption of the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 175) was agreed to.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I ask unanimous consent the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be agreed to, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 175

Whereas, since 1993, the territorial integrity of Georgia has been reaffirmed by the international community and 36 United Nations Security Council resolutions;

Whereas the United States-Georgia Strategic Charter, signed on January 9, 2009, underscores that "support for each other's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders constitutes the foundation of our bilateral relations";

Whereas, in October 2010, at the meeting of the United States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated, "The United States will not waiver in its support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity";

Whereas the White House released a fact sheet on July 24, 2010, calling for "Russia to end its occupation of the Georgian terri-

tories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia" and for "a return of international observers to the two occupied regions of Georgia";

Whereas Vice President Joseph Biden stated in Tbilisi in July 2009 that the United States "will not recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states";

Whereas, according to the Government of Georgia's "State Strategy on Occupied Territories," the Government of Georgia has committed itself to a policy of peaceful engagement, the protection of economic and human rights, freedom of movement, and the preservation of cultural heritage, language, and identity for the people of Abkhazia and South Ossetia;

Whereas the August 2008 conflict between the Governments of Russia and Georgia resulted in civilian and military casualties, the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia, and large numbers of internally displaced persons;

Whereas large numbers of persons remain displaced as a result of the August 2008 conflict as well as the earlier conflicts of the 1990s;

Whereas the August 12, 2008, ceasefire agreement, agreed to by the Governments of Russia and Georgia provides that all troops of the Russian Federation shall be withdrawn to pre-conflict positions;

Whereas the August 12, 2008, ceasefire agreement provides that free access shall be granted to organizations providing humanitarian assistance in regions affected by violence in August 2008;

Whereas the recognition by the Government of Russia of Abkhazia and South Ossetia on August 26, 2008, was in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia;

Whereas Human Rights Watch concluded in its World Report 2011 that "Russia continued to occupy Georgia's breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and strengthened its military presence in the region by establishing a military base and placing an advanced surface-to-air missile system in Abkhazia";

Whereas the parties have taken some constructive steps in recent months, including the resumption of direct flights between Russia and Georgia, Russian troop withdrawal from the Georgian village of Perevi, and regular participation in the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism;

Whereas these positive steps neither adequately address the humanitarian situation on the ground nor constitute full compliance with the terms of the August 2008 ceasefire agreement;

Whereas, on November 23, 2010, before the European Parliament, Georgian President Saakashvili declared that "Georgia will never use force to restore its territorial integrity and sovereignty";

Whereas Secretary of State Clinton stated in Tbilisi on July 5, 2010, "We continue to call for Russia to abide by the August 2008 cease-fire commitment . . . including ending the occupation and withdrawing Russian troops from South Ossetia and Abkhazia to their pre-conflict positions.";

Whereas the Russian Federation blocked the extension of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to Georgia and the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, forcing the missions to withdraw from South Ossetia and Abkhazia;

Whereas troops of the Russian Federation stationed in Abkhazia and South Ossetia continue to be present without the consent of the Government of Georgia or a mandate from the United Nations or other multilateral organizations;

Whereas, at the April 15, 2011, meeting in Berlin between the foreign ministers of Geor-

gia and NATO, Secretary of State Clinton stated, "U.S. support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity remains steadfast. . . . We share Georgian concerns regarding recent Russian activities that can negatively affect regional stability.";

Whereas, on April 25-26, 2011, Foreign Minister of Russia Sergei Lavrov made a high-profile visit to Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which was immediately criticized by the Department of State as "inconsistent with the principle of territorial integrity and Georgia's internationally recognized borders";

Whereas the Senate supports United States efforts to develop a productive relationship with the Russian Federation in areas of mutual interest, including non-proliferation and arms control, cooperation concerning the failure of the Government of Iran to meet its international obligations with regard to its nuclear programs, counter-terrorism, Afghanistan, anti-piracy, and economics and trade; and

Whereas the Senate agrees that these efforts must not compromise longstanding United States policy or United States support for its allies and partners worldwide: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) affirms that it is the policy of the United States to support the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Georgia and the inviolability of its borders, and to recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as regions of Georgia occupied by the Russian Federation;

(2) calls upon the Government of Russia to take steps to fulfill all the terms and conditions of the 2008 ceasefire agreements between Georgia and Russia, including returning military forces to pre-war positions and ensuring access to international humanitarian aid to all those affected by the conflict;

(3) urges the Government of Russia and the authorities in control in the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia to allow for the full and dignified return of internally displaced persons and international missions to the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia;

(4) supports peaceful, constructive engagement and confidence-building measures between the Government of Georgia and the authorities in control in South Ossetia and Abkhazia and encourages additional people-to-people contacts; and

(5) affirms that finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict is a key priority for the United States in the Caucasus region and that lasting regional stability can only be achieved through peaceful means and long-term diplomatic and political dialogue between all parties.

ENCOURAGING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SAUDI ARABIA

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 114, S. Res. 216.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 216) encouraging women's political participation in Saudi Arabia.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution (S. Res. 216) encouraging women's political participation in Saudi Arabia, which had been reported from the Committee