

activities in eastern Ukraine, blaming President Putin for a “mad, aggressive and deadly policy of war against Ukraine” and lying to the Russian people about this policy;

Whereas Mr. Nemtsov had been investigating Russia’s role in Ukraine and was preparing to release an investigative report conclusively proving the participation of the Russian Armed Forces in the invasion of Ukraine and revealing the extent to which the Government of the Russian Federation was involved;

Whereas, prior to his death, Mr. Nemtsov planned to lead a Spring March on March 1, 2015, to protest the Russian military’s presence in Ukraine;

Whereas, on February 28, 2015, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko stated that he believed Mr. Nemtsov had been murdered because he planned to disclose this evidence of Russia’s involvement in Ukraine;

Whereas President Putin called critics of his government “a fifth column” and “national traitors”, inviting violent attacks upon them and sponsoring a campaign of hatred, intimidation, and aggression;

Whereas, on February 20, 2015, a new movement called Anti-Maidan marched freely through Moscow calling for violence against this “fifth column”, with signs naming Mr. Nemtsov as an enemy of Russia;

Whereas Mr. Nemtsov’s colleagues stated that he was under state surveillance shortly before his murder and he was murdered in one of the most heavily-secured areas of Moscow, suggesting the Government of Russia’s culpability;

Whereas other prominent figures in Russia who have criticized President Putin and his government have also been assassinated, including Vladimir Goloviyov, Yuri Shchekochikhin, Anna Politkovskaya, Alexander Litvinenko, Magomed Yevloyev, Stanslav Markelov, and Natalia Estermirova;

Whereas none of the individuals responsible for these assassinations have been brought to justice, raising serious questions about the ability of Russian authorities to conduct a credible investigation into Mr. Nemtsov’s murder;

Whereas a culture of impunity and lack of accountability prevail in Putin’s Russia, with law enforcement, judicial, and investigative bodies often used to target political opponents and civil society, and thus lacking credibility to conduct an investigation themselves;

Whereas the Russia Investigative Committee released a list of motives for Mr. Nemtsov’s murder which do not take into account his role as a prominent government critic, surveillance cameras were allegedly turned off for maintenance during the time of his murder, and Kremlin-sponsored channels are inciting fear and hatred by propagating conspiracy theories that blame the United States for his assassination;

Whereas these continuing assassinations are intended to intimidate the people of Russia and undermine political and social reform in the Russian Federation; and

Whereas support for rule of law and human rights in the Russian Federation will help ensure its future as a free, strong, and vibrant society and enduring stability in the Russian Federation will come from an active civil society in which democracy flourishes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the courageous work of Boris Nemtsov, a tireless advocate for reform and human rights who sacrificed his life in the fight for freedom and democracy in the Russian Federation;

(2) expresses its deepest condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Mr.

Nemtsov, as well as to all the people of Russia;

(3) condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the murder of Boris Nemtsov on February 27, 2015, as well as the assassinations of numerous other human rights and democracy activists in the Russian Federation since President Vladimir Putin came to office;

(4) urges the President to seek a United Nations Security Council resolution that establishes an independent investigation into the assassination;

(5) calls upon the Government of Russia to support and facilitate an independent inquiry into the murder of Mr. Nemtsov;

(6) urges the Government of the Russian Federation to release all political prisoners and to end the ongoing harassment of political opponents, human rights activists, and journalists;

(7) calls for the restoration of an independent judiciary and the rule of law in the Russian Federation, and an end to all restrictions on the media and freedom of speech;

(8) urges the President to add the names of persons that Mr. Nemtsov requested be added to the visa ban list as provided for under the Sergei Manitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012 (title IV of Public Law 112-208) and continue to sanction human rights violators in the Russian Federation;

(9) urges the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to obtain, examine, and publish the investigative report Mr. Nemtsov planned to release as part of the OSCE observer role in eastern Ukraine to demonstrate the inability of the Government of the Russian Federation to suppress the truth Mr. Nemtsov represented; and

(10) urges the President to significantly increase United States Government support to like-minded partners and human rights activists in the Russian Federation to create a more vibrant civil society and open media environment in which democracy can flourish.

SENATE RESOLUTION 97—SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KIRK, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 97

Whereas there are more than 3,500,000,000 women in the world today;

Whereas women around the world have fundamental human rights, participate in the political, social, and economic life of their communities, play a critical role in providing and caring for their families, contribute substantially to the growth of economies and the prevention of conflict, and, as farmers and caregivers, play an important role in advancing food security for their communities;

Whereas the advancement of women around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States;

Whereas on September 24, 2014, President Barack Obama highlighted the United States support for the advancement of women, noting: “Where women are full participants in a country’s politics or economy, societies are more likely to succeed. And that’s why we support the participation of women in parliaments and peace processes, schools, and the economy.”;

Whereas women remain underrepresented in conflict prevention and conflict resolution efforts, despite proven success by women in conflict-affected regions in moderating violent extremism, countering terrorism, resolving disputes through nonviolent mediation and negotiation, and stabilizing societies by improving access to peace and security services, institutions, and decision-making venues;

Whereas on December 19, 2011, the Obama Administration launched the first United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (referred to in this preamble as the “National Action Plan”) that includes a comprehensive set of national commitments to advance the active participation of women in decisionmaking relating to matters of war and peace;

Whereas the National Action Plan states the following: “Deadly conflicts can be more effectively avoided, and peace can be best forged and sustained, when women become equal partners in all aspects of peace-building and conflict prevention, when their lives are protected, their experiences considered, and their voices heard.”;

Whereas the National Action Plan requires the National Security Council staff to coordinate a comprehensive review of, and update to, the National Action Plan in 2015 with consultation from international partners and civil society organizations;

Whereas according to the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State, women’s full and meaningful participation in security forces vastly enhances their effectiveness;

Whereas the ability of women and girls to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve strong and lasting economic growth and political and social stability;

Whereas according to the International Monetary Fund, “focusing on the needs and empowerment of women is one of the keys to human development”;

Whereas according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, two-thirds of the 781,000,000 illiterate people in the world are female;

Whereas according to the United States Agency for International Development, compared to uneducated women, “educated women are less likely to marry early and more likely to have smaller and healthier families. They are also more likely to get a job and earn a higher wage.”;

Whereas according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the majority of women living in rural areas of the developing world are heavily engaged in agricultural labor, yet they receive less credit, land, agricultural inputs, and training than their male counterparts;

Whereas according to the United Nations Population Fund, women have access to fewer income-earning opportunities and are more likely to manage the household and engage in agricultural work, making women more vulnerable to economic insecurity caused by natural disasters and long-term changes in weather patterns;

Whereas according to the World Bank, women own or partly own more than one-third of small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries, and 40 percent of the global workforce is female, yet, women entrepreneurs and employers have disproportionately less access to capital and other financial services compared to men;

Whereas despite strides in recent decades, women around the world continue to face significant obstacles in all aspects of their lives, including underrepresentation in all aspects of public life, denial of basic human rights, and discrimination;

Whereas despite achievements by individual female leaders, women around the world are still vastly underrepresented in high-level positions and in national and local legislatures and governments and, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women account for only 21.9 percent of national parliamentarians;

Whereas 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of gender-based violence, and 1 in 4 women has suffered abuse during pregnancy;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, approximately 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth every day, with 99 percent of all maternal deaths occurring in developing countries;

Whereas according to the United Nations Population Fund, more than 200,000,000 women and girls around the world would like to access family planning services but are unable to do so;

Whereas according to data from the World Bank, women between the ages of 15 and 44 are at a greater risk of rape and domestic violence than cancer, war, traffic accidents, and malaria combined;

Whereas on August 10, 2012, President Barack Obama announced the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, the first inter-agency strategy to address gender-based violence around the world;

Whereas violence against women and girls impedes progress in meeting many international global development goals, including efforts to stem maternal mortality and the spread of HIV/AIDS;

Whereas on October 11, 2013, President Barack Obama stated that the practice of child marriage was a “threat to fundamental human rights”;

Whereas according to the International Center for Research on Women, one-third of girls worldwide are married before the age of 18 and 1 in 9 girls are married before the age of 15;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization, suicide is the leading cause of death for girls ages 15 to 19, followed by complications from pregnancy and childbirth;

Whereas it is imperative to alleviate violence and discrimination against women and afford women every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities;

Whereas 2015 marks the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, where 189 countries committed to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to integrate gender equality into all dimensions of society;

Whereas 2015 marks the deadline for meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and progress towards meeting the targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment remains uneven; and

Whereas March 8 is recognized each year as International Women’s Day, a global day to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women past, present, and future, and to recognize the obstacles that women still face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women’s Day;

(2) recognizes that the empowerment of women is inextricably linked to the potential of countries to generate economic growth, sustainable democracy, and inclusive security;

(3) recognizes and honors individuals in the United States and around the world, including women who are human rights defenders, who have worked throughout history to en-

sure that women are guaranteed equality and basic human rights;

(4) reaffirms the commitment to ending discrimination and violence against women and girls, to ensuring the safety and welfare of women and girls, to pursuing policies that guarantee the basic human rights of women and girls worldwide, and to promoting meaningful and significant participation of women in all aspects of their societies and communities;

(5) supports international calls for a “Post-2015 Development Agenda” to include a stand-alone goal to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment; and

(6) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women’s Day with appropriate programs and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 98—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 98

Whereas multiple sclerosis (referred to in this preamble as “MS”) can impact people of all ages, races, and ethnicities, but is at least 2 to 3 times more common in women than in men;

Whereas there are approximately 2,300,000 people worldwide who have been diagnosed with MS;

Whereas MS is typically diagnosed in individuals between the ages of 20 and 50, however it is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 children and adolescents are living with MS in the United States;

Whereas MS is an unpredictable neurological disease that interrupts the flow of information both within the brain and between the brain and the rest of the body;

Whereas symptoms of MS range from numbness and tingling in the extremities to blindness and paralysis, and the progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted;

Whereas there is no laboratory test available that can definitively diagnose MS;

Whereas while MS is not directly inherited, studies show that there are genetic and, probably, environmental factors that make certain individuals, such as Caucasians of Northern European ancestry, more susceptible to the disease than others;

Whereas the exact cause of MS is still unknown and there is no cure;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition, a national network of independent MS organizations dedicated to the enhancement of the quality of life for all those affected by MS, recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

Whereas the mission of the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition is to increase opportunities for cooperation among MS organizations and provide greater opportunity for the effective use and development of resources for the benefit of individuals and families affected by MS;

Whereas the United States plays a critical role in coordinating MS research globally and amplifies the impact of research in the United States through which results are delivered to MS patients;

Whereas in 2012, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society of the United States was a founding member of the Progressive MS Alliance, which coordinates research to accelerate the development of treatments for pro-

gressive MS by removing international scientific and technological barriers, and which now includes MS societies from 11 countries;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week during March of every calendar year;

Whereas the goals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week are to invite people to join the movement to end MS, encourage everyone to do something to demonstrate their commitment to moving toward a world free of MS, and to acknowledge those who have dedicated their time and talent to help promote MS research and programs; and

Whereas this year, Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week is recognized during the week of March 2, 2015, through March 8, 2015: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(2) encourages States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week by issuing proclamations designating Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(3) encourages media organizations to participate in Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week and help provide education to the public about multiple sclerosis;

(4) commends the efforts of States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(5) recognizes and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to ending multiple sclerosis by—

(A) promoting awareness about individuals that are affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) supporting multiple sclerosis research and education programs;

(6) recognizes all individuals in the United States living with multiple sclerosis;

(7) expresses gratitude to the family members and friends of individuals living with multiple sclerosis, who are a source of love and encouragement to those individuals; and

(8) salutes the health care professionals and medical researchers who—

(A) provide assistance to individuals affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) continue to work to find ways to stop the progression of the disease, restore nerve function, and end multiple sclerosis forever.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 8—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE SHOULD ISSUE A COMMEMORATIVE STAMP HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE THREE CIVIL RIGHTS MARCHES FROM SELMA, ALABAMA TO MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA THAT TOOK PLACE OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL WEEKS IN MARCH 1965

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. SCOTT, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. COONS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. WARREN, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. CON. RES. 8

Whereas on March 7, 1965 “Bloody Sunday”, approximately 600 civil rights marchers, led by now-Representative John Lewis of