

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 206

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 17, 1999

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Referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing grave concern regarding armed conflict in the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation which has resulted in civilian casualties and internally displaced persons, and urging all sides to pursue dialog for peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Whereas during the Russo-Chechen War of 1994–1996, Russian Federation military forces used massive force against civilians in Chechnya, causing immense human casualties, gross human rights violations, large-scale displacement of individuals, and destruction of property;

Whereas Chechnya has been the site of internal lawlessness and numerous kidnappings, including that of United

States citizen Fred Cuny, whose exact fate is still unknown;

Whereas in recent months, extremist forces based in Chechnya have mounted armed incursions into the adjacent Russian Federation Republic of Dagestan and attempted to establish a political entity therein against the wishes of the majority of the population of Dagestan;

Whereas almost 300 persons have died as a result of unsolved terrorist bombings in Russia that coincided with the armed incursions into Dagestan and Russian authorities have attributed the terrorist bombings to Chechen insurgents;

Whereas the United States recognizes the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation;

Whereas Russian Federation armed forces have conducted armed attacks against Chechnya and positioned forces with the stated intention of sealing Chechnya's borders and creating a security zone in the region;

Whereas such attacks and indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force have harmed innocent civilians and given rise to over 100,000 internally displaced persons, most of whom have escaped into neighboring regions of Russia;

Whereas such indiscriminate attacks are a violation of paragraph 19 of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, approved at the 1994 Summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, held in Budapest, Hungary, which states that in the event of armed conflict, participating States "will seek to create conditions favorable to the political solution of the conflict. They will cooperate in support of humanitarian

assistance to alleviate suffering among the civilian population, including facilitating the movement of personnel and resources to such tasks”, and paragraph 36, which states, “If recourse to force cannot be avoided in performing internal security missions, each participating State will ensure that its use must be commensurate with the needs for enforcement. The armed forces will take due care to avoid injury to civilians or their property.”;

Whereas the conflict in the North Caucasus may threaten democratic development, the rule of law, and respect for human rights throughout Russia;

Whereas authorities in Moscow and other cities of the Russian Federation have used terrorist bombings as a pretext to intensify a campaign against individuals from the North Caucasus region, including the detention and forcible expulsion of such individuals from these cities; and

Whereas in response to Russian attacks the elected Government of Chechnya has declared its solidarity with renegade Chechen forces in opposing Russian attacks: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That the Congress—

3 (1) urges the Government of the Russian Fed-
4 eration and all parties to cease the indiscriminate
5 use of force against the civilian population in
6 Chechnya, in accordance with commitments of the
7 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Eu-
8 rope;

1 (2) urges all parties, including the Government
2 of the Russian Federation, to enter into negotiations
3 on the North Caucasus conflict with legitimate polit-
4 ical representatives of the region, including Presi-
5 dent Maskhadov and his Government, and to avail
6 itself of the conflict prevention and crisis manage-
7 ment capabilities of the Organization for Security
8 and Cooperation in Europe, which helped broker an
9 end to the 1994–1996 War;

10 (3) urges the Chechen authorities to use every
11 appropriate means to deny extremist forces located
12 in its territory a base of operations for the mounting
13 of armed incursions that threaten peace and stability
14 in the North Caucasus region;

15 (4) urges the Chechen authorities to create a
16 rule of law environment with legal norms based upon
17 internationally accepted standards;

18 (5) cautions that forcible resettlement of inter-
19 nally displaced persons would evoke outrage from
20 the international community;

21 (6) urges that the Government of the Russian
22 Federation seek and accept international humani-
23 tarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the in-
24 ternally displaced persons from Chechnya, so as to
25 reduce the risk of civilian casualties; and

1 (7) calls on the Government of the United
2 States to express to all parties the necessity of re-
3 solving the conflict peacefully, with full respect to
4 the human rights of all the citizens of the Russian
5 Federation, and to support the provision of appro-
6 priate international humanitarian assistance.

Passed the House of Representatives November 16,
1999.

Attest:

JEFF TRANDAHL,

Clerk.