

the Senate, in order to conduct a hearing on pending executive nominations on Tuesday, March 11, 2008, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Witness list

Grace C. Becker, of New York, to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice.

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs to be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 11, 2008 in order to conduct an oversight hearing entitled "VA and DoD Cooperation and Collaboration: Caring for the Families of Wounded Warriors." The Committee will meet in room 418 of the Russell Senate Office Building, at 10 a.m.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 11, 2008, at 2:30 p.m. in order to hold a closed hearing.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following fellows and interns be allowed the privilege of the floor during consideration of the budget resolution: Arkaprava Deb, Ben Miller, Blake Thompson, Bridget Mallon, Bruce Ferguson, Cascade Tuholske, Claudia Garcia-Martinez, Connie Cookson, Damian Kudelka, Elise Anderson, Elise Stein, Emily Schwartz, Emma Redfoot, Ezana Teferra, Hy Hinojosa, Kayleigh Brown, Lily Alverson, Marissa Reeves, Mary Baker, Michael Bagel, Mike Yarnell, Mollie Lane, Ron Gebhausbauer, Stacy Celinsky, Susan Hinck, Suzanne Payne, Tamara Clay, Tom Louthan, and Tyler Gamble.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jeffrey Phan, a fellow in Senator BINGAMAN's office, be granted the privileges of the floor for the pendency of S. Con. Res. 70, the budget resolution.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE SENATE TO FAMILIES OF WOMEN AND GIRLS MURDERED IN GUATEMALA

On Monday, March 10, 2008, the Senate passed S. Res. 178, as amended,

with its preamble, as amended, as follows:

S. RES. 178

Whereas since 2001, more than 2,000 women and girls have been murdered in Guatemala;

Whereas most of the victims are women ranging in age from 18 to 30, with many of the cases involving abduction, sexual violence, or brutal mutilation;

Whereas while the overall murder rate in Guatemala has increased substantially, the rate at which women have been murdered in Guatemala has increased at an alarming rate, almost doubling from 2001 to 2006;

Whereas according to data from Guatemala's Public Prosecutors Office, few arrests and fewer convictions have occurred, and prosecutors, forensics experts, and other state justice officials have not brought the perpetrators to justice;

Whereas from 2001 to 2006, there were only 20 convictions for the murders of women and girls;

Whereas the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Government of Guatemala has reported that in 1 year alone police officers were implicated on 10 separate occasions in the murder of women in Guatemala, and recommended that such officers and other officials be held accountable for their acts;

Whereas an effective, transparent, and impartial judicial system is key to the administration of justice, and the failure to ensure proper investigations and prosecutions hampers the ability to solve crimes and punish perpetrators;

Whereas inadequate financial, human, and technical resources, as well as a lack of forensic and technical expertise, have impeded the arrest and prosecution of suspects;

Whereas the Special Prosecutor for Crimes Against Women of the Government of Guatemala has reported that her office has reviewed approximately 800 incidents of domestic violence per month, with some of those cases ending in murder, and that deaths could have been prevented if the legal system of Guatemala provided for prison sentences in cases of domestic violence;

Whereas the murders of women and girls in Guatemala have brought pain to the families and friends of the victims as they struggle to cope with the loss of their loved ones and the fact that the perpetrators of these heinous acts remain unknown to the proper authorities;

Whereas many countries in Latin America face significant challenges in combating violence against women, and international cooperation is essential in addressing this serious issue;

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided assistance to the Government of Guatemala to implement judicial reform and rule of law programs, and in fiscal year 2006, Congress provided \$1,500,000 for programs to combat impunity, corruption, and crimes of violence, of which \$500,000 is to be allocated to strengthen the special prosecutorial units charged with investigating the murders of women in Guatemala;

Whereas the Government of Guatemala has undertaken efforts to prevent violence against women, as evidenced by its ratification of the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, done at New York December 10, 1984, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, done at New York December 18, 1979, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women, done at Belem do Para, Brazil June 9, 1994, and other international human rights treaties, and the

enactment of laws and the creation of state institutions to promote and protect the rights of women;

Whereas the Government of Guatemala has created special police and prosecutorial units to address the brutal murders of women in Guatemala;

Whereas in June 2006, the Government of Guatemala successfully abolished the "Rape Law" which had absolved perpetrators of criminal responsibility for rape and certain other crimes of violence upon the perpetrator's marriage with the victim;

Whereas legislators from various parties in Guatemala have joined lawmakers from Mexico and Spain to form the "Interparliamentary Network against 'Femicide'";

Whereas the Government of Guatemala and the United Nations recently entered into an agreement to establish the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), which has a mandate to investigate and promote the prosecution of illegal security groups and clandestine security organizations that function with impunity and are suspected of attacking human rights defenders, justice officials, and other civil society actors; and

Whereas continuing impunity for crimes against women is a threat to the rule of law, democracy, and stability in Guatemala: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses its sincerest condolences and deepest sympathy to the families of women and girls murdered in Guatemala, and recognizes their courageous struggle in seeking justice for the victims;

(2) expresses the solidarity of the people of the United States with the people of Guatemala in the face of these tragic and senseless acts;

(3) condemns the ongoing murders of women and girls in Guatemala, and encourages the Government of Guatemala to act with due diligence in order to promptly investigate these killings, prosecute those responsible, and continue to work toward eliminating violence against women;

(4) urges the Government of Guatemala to strengthen laws with respect to domestic violence and sexual harassment, to improve the integrity of the prosecutorial and judicial systems, and to provide the resources and commitment necessary to adequately enforce justice for crimes against women;

(5) urges the President and the Secretary of State to continue to incorporate the investigative and preventative efforts of the Government of Guatemala regarding the murder of women and girls into the bilateral agenda between the Governments of Guatemala and the United States;

(6) encourages the Secretary of State to continue to support efforts by the Government of Guatemala to train and equip the special police and prosecutorial units of the Government of Guatemala to conduct thorough and proper investigations of crimes of violence against women, and to implement judicial reform and rule of law programs;

(7) encourages the Secretary of State and the Attorney General to provide assistance in establishing a comprehensive missing persons system and an effective state protection program for witnesses, victims' relatives, and human rights defenders;

(8) urges the Government of Guatemala to hold accountable those law enforcement and judicial officials whose failure to investigate and prosecute the murders adequately, whether through negligence, omission, or abuse, has led to impunity for these crimes;

(9) encourages the Secretary of State to support efforts to identify perpetrators and unknown victims through forensic analysis, including assisting the Government of Guatemala in adequately funding the National