

111TH CONGRESS
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H. CON. RES. 51

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 1, 2009

Received and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the 50th anniversary of the signing of the
Antarctic Treaty.

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty was signed by 12 nations in Washington, DC, on December 1, 1959, “with the interests of science and the progress of all mankind”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty was established to continue and develop international “cooperation on the basis of freedom of scientific investigation in Antarctica as applied during the International Geophysical Year”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty came into force on June 23, 1961, after its unanimous ratification by the seven countries (Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, New Zealand, Norway, and the United Kingdom) with territorial claims in the region and five other countries (Belgium, Japan, South Africa, the Soviet Union, and the United States), which had collaborated in Antarctic research activities during the International Geophysical Year from July 1, 1957, through December 31, 1958;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty now has 47 nations as signatories that together represent nearly 90 percent of humanity;

Whereas Article IV of the Antarctic Treaty states that “no acts or activities taking place while the present Treaty is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica”;

Whereas the 14 articles of the Antarctic Treaty have provided a lasting foundation for maintaining the region south of 60 degrees south latitude, nearly 10 percent of the Earth’s surface, “for peaceful purposes only”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty prohibits “any measure of a military nature”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty has promoted international nuclear cooperation by prohibiting “any nuclear explosions in Antarctica and the disposal there of radioactive waste material”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty provides a framework for the signatories to continue to meet “for the purpose of exchanging information, consulting together on matters of common interest pertaining to Antarctica, and formu-

lating and considering, and recommending to their Governments, measures in furtherance of the principles and objectives of the Treaty”;

Whereas common interests among the Antarctic Treaty nations facilitated the development and ratification of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources;

Whereas the international cooperation represented by the Antarctic Treaty offers humankind a precedent for the peaceful governance of international spaces;

Whereas in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the International Geophysical Year, the Antarctic Treaty Parties in their Edinburgh Declaration recognized the current International Polar Year for its contributions to science worldwide and to international cooperation; and

Whereas the International Polar Year program has endorsed the Antarctic Treaty Summit that will convene in Washington, DC, at the Smithsonian Institution on the 50th anniversary of the Antarctic Treaty: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) recognizes that the Antarctic Treaty has
4 greatly contributed to science and science coopera-
5 tion worldwide and successfully ensured the “use of
6 Antarctica for peaceful purposes only and the con-
7 tinuance of international harmony” for the past half
8 century; and

1 (2) encourages international and interdiscipli-
2 nary collaboration in the Antarctic Treaty Summit
3 to identify lessons from 50 years of international co-
4 operation under the Antarctic Treaty that have leg-
5 acy value for humankind.

Passed the House of Representatives September 30,
2009.

Attest: LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk.