

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 317

Expressing the sense of the Senate on the continuing relationship between the United States and Georgia.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 11, 2013

Mr. SESSIONS (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate on the continuing relationship between the United States and Georgia.

Whereas Georgia is a highly valued partner of the United States and has repeatedly demonstrated its commitment to advancing the mutual interests of both countries, including through the deployment of Georgian forces as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, where Georgia is currently the largest non-NATO contributor and serving without caveats in Helmand Province, and the Multi-National Force in Iraq;

Whereas, contrary to international law and the 2008 ceasefire agreement between Russia and Georgia, Russian forces have constructed barriers, including barbed wire and

fences, along the administrative boundary line for the South Ossetia region of Georgia;

Whereas this “borderization” is inconsistent with Russia’s international commitments under the August 2008 ceasefire agreement, is contrary to Georgia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, creates hardship and significant negative impacts for populations on both sides of these barriers, and is detrimental to long-term conflict resolution;

Whereas the peaceful transfer of power as the result of the October 2012 parliamentary elections in Georgia represents a major accomplishment toward the creation by the people of Georgia of a free society and full democracy;

Whereas the Presidential election of October 2013 marks another step in this transition to a free and open democracy in Georgia;

Whereas international election observers from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) concluded that the election “was efficiently administered, transparent, and took place in an amicable and constructive environment [. . .]. Fundamental freedoms of expression, movement and assembly were respected, and candidates were able to campaign without restriction. [. . .] A wide range of views and information was made available to voters through the media, providing candidates with a platform to present their programmes and opinions freely”;

Whereas such election conduct is consistent with actions that demonstrate progress toward a mature and free democracy; and

Whereas, on November 29, 2013, Georgia initialed an Association Agreement with the European Union (EU), making Georgia a member of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, removing significant trade restrictions with the European Union, and signifying an important preliminary step towards the signing and eventual implementation of the Association Agreement by all European Union members states and Georgia: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) declares that the United States supports the
3 sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of
4 Georgia and the inviolability of its internationally
5 recognized borders, and expresses concerns over the
6 continued occupation of the Georgian regions of
7 Abkhazia and South Ossetia by the Russian Federa-
8 tion;

9 (2) encourages the President to enhance de-
10 fense cooperation efforts with Georgia;

11 (3) supports the efforts of the Government of
12 Georgia to protect its government, people, sov-
13 ereignty, and territorial integrity within its inter-
14 nationally recognized borders;

15 (4) reaffirms its support for Georgia's NATO
16 membership aspirations, congratulates the Govern-
17 ment of Georgia on the steps it has taken to further
18 its integration with NATO, and commends the de-
19 termination of the Government of Georgia to main-

1 tain its troop contribution to International Security
2 Assistance Force and its willingness to extend its
3 mission in Afghanistan beyond 2014;

4 (5) congratulates the Government and people of
5 Georgia on the Presidential election of October 27,
6 2013, commends the Government and people of
7 Georgia on a peaceful and democratic transfer of
8 power, and encourages all parties to work together
9 constructively to maintain continued movement to-
10 ward a free and democratic society;

11 (6) strongly encourages the Government of
12 Georgia to defend the rule of law, improve the inde-
13 pendence of the judiciary, and protect the rights of
14 political opposition—all essential components of a
15 free and open democracy and which can and should
16 be demonstrated in the upcoming 2014 local elec-
17 tions;

18 (7) strongly supports a United States and inter-
19 national election monitoring mission for this final
20 phase of Georgia’s election cycle;

21 (8) further encourages the Government of Geor-
22 gia to refrain from politically motivated arrests and
23 prosecutions;

1 (9) affirms that the path to lasting stability in
2 this region is through peaceful means and long-term
3 diplomatic and political dialogue; and

4 (10) remains committed to assisting the people
5 of Georgia in their efforts to establish an enduring
6 democratic society with strong institutions within
7 the rule of law.

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