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S. RES. 376

Supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 6, 2014

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BEGICH, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

MARCH 11, 2014

Reported by Mr. MENENDEZ, without amendment

MARCH 13, 2014

Considered and agreed to with an amended preamble

RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

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

Whereas women around the world 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 both 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 November 15, 2013, Secretary of State John Kerry stated: ''Creating opportunities for women is not just the right thing to do. It's also a strategic necessity. Societies where women are safe, where women are empowered to exercise their rights and to move their communities forward—these societies are more prosperous and more stable—not occasionally, but always.'';

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 included 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: ''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 women remain underrepresented in conflict prevention and conflict resolution efforts, despite proven successes by women in conflict-affected regions in moderating violent extremism, countering terrorism, resolving disputes through non-violent mediation and negotiation, and stabilizing their societies by improving access to peace and security services, institutions, and decisionmaking venues;

Whereas the ability of women 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 Global Gender Gap Report 2013 published by the World Economic Forum, ''reducing gender inequality enhances productivity and economic growth'';

Whereas according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, two-thirds of the 774,000,000 illiterate people in the world are female;

Whereas according to the United States Agency for International Development, ''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 World Bank, women own or partly own over 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;

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 21.4 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 UN Women, violence against women causes more death and disability for women and girls between the ages of 15 and 44 than cancer, war, traffic accidents, and malaria combined;

Whereas, on August 10, 2012, President Obama announced the first interagency Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally;

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 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 be-

fore the age of 18 and 1 in 9 girls are married before the age of 15;

Whereas according to Save the Children, pregnancy-related complications are a leading cause of death among girls between the ages of 15 and 19 in developing countries;

Whereas according to the United Nations Population Fund, women have access to fewer income-earning opportunities and tend to manage the household and partake in agricultural work, thus increasing their vulnerability to natural disasters and long-term changes in weather patterns;

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; 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 a day 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 the women in the United States and around the world who have

worked throughout history to ensure 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; and

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

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