

Elder Scott dearly, as will all those who knew him. I send my deepest condolences to his family. May God comfort them in this time of grief, and may his love be with them always.

DETENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN AZERBAIJAN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last year I expressed my grave concern about the Government of Azerbaijan's harassment and imprisonment of human rights defenders, journalists, and other civil society activists. Since then, the state of human rights in Azerbaijan has further deteriorated amid condemnation from President Obama and officials of other governments, as well as the European Union and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. I, too, wish to reiterate my dismay at the mistreatment of these brave individuals, and call for the release of all political prisoners in Azerbaijan, including Leyla and Arif Yunus.

Imprisoned and denied access to justice for over a year, Leyla and Arif Yunus are examples of the many activists and critics of the government whom President Ilham Aliyev seeks to silence. Their arrest last year coincided with the release of their report on politically motivated detentions, and since then their health has reportedly suffered significantly. Recently they were sentenced to 8½ and 7 years in prison, respectively, and face further prosecution.

Leyla and Arif Yunus, and all other political prisoners in Azerbaijan including journalist Khadija Ismayilova, who on September 1 was sentenced to 7½ years, should be freed immediately. In addition, and in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights to which it is party, the Government of Azerbaijan, which recently chaired the Council of Europe, should uphold the provisions of its own constitution and end the persecution of civil society members, journalists, and political activists who are guilty of nothing more than peaceful expression.

ENDING THE SCOURGE OF LANDMINES IN MOZAMBIQUE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last week marked an important milestone in the campaign to rid the world of antipersonnel landmines. On September 17, Mozambique, where two decades ago an estimated 200,000 unexploded landmines were left over from a brutal 15-year civil war, became the first country with large-scale mine contamination to have all known minefields cleared. While accidents due to unknown mines and other unexploded ordnance in Mozambique will occasionally occur in the future as they still do in Europe 70 years after World War II, the number is a tiny fraction of what it once was, and it will continue to decline.

The State Department recognized this milestone in a statement, which included the following:

Since 1993, when Mozambique emerged from decades of conflict as one of the world's most landmine-affected nations, the United States has been proud to partner with the people of Mozambique, investing more than \$55 million toward improving the safety and security of local communities through the U.S. Conventional Weapons Destruction program.

Through that partnership—which includes the international donor community and humanitarian demining organizations—we have worked diligently to safely clear landmines and unexploded ordnance, prevent injuries through community outreach and education, and provide medical and social services to survivors of accidents involving these legacies of past conflicts.

I have spoken many times in this Chamber about these indiscriminate weapons, which are triggered by the victim, whether a soldier or an unsuspecting child. They linger for days, weeks, years, and even decades after armed conflicts end. They destroy lives as well as livelihoods, making fields unworkable and roads impassable, crippling the economies of already impoverished communities. In recent years the United States has made important contributions to the worldwide eradication of landmines, and I have long supported funding for the State Department's humanitarian demining programs and for assistance for mine victims through the U.S. Agency for International Development's Leahy War Victims Fund, but the job is far from done.

The painstaking work of HALO Trust and other dedicated organizations and individuals in Mozambique demonstrates what is possible. We used the Leahy War Victims Fund there, starting back in 1989, to provide artificial limbs, wheelchairs, and rehabilitation for victims of mines. Melissa Wells, our outstanding Ambassador to Mozambique at the time, was a strong supporter of that program. Thousands of people have regained their mobility as a result. My wife Marcelle, a registered nurse, traveled to Mozambique and visited some of them more than two decades ago. With this declaration, Mozambicans can live with far less fear of being maimed or killed while working in their fields, walking to school, or just stepping outside of their homes.

This is a time to commend the people and Government of Mozambique and the courageous deminers, as well as those who have helped the victims of mines rebuild their lives. But as one who has worked to stop the use of landmines ever since my legislation to halt U.S. exports of these weapons was first enacted back in 1992, I must emphasize that landmines continue to threaten innocent people in many other countries.

We have come a long way since 1994 when President Clinton, in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly, called on all countries to rid the world of landmines. But we have not yet achieved that goal, and we should rededicate ourselves to eliminating this scourge from the Earth. The best way for the United States to do that is to

join the 162 signatories to the Ottawa Treaty banning the production, use, export, and stockpiling of antipersonnel landmines.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, due to the Jewish holiday, I was unable to attend votes this week. Had I been present, I would have voted against the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 36, against the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2685, and against the motion to invoke cloture on amendment No. 2669.

REQUIRING A REGIONAL STRATEGY TO ADDRESS THE THREAT POSED BY BOKO HARAM

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to praise Senate passage earlier this week of legislation I authored, S. 1632, to help combat the threat posed by the Boko Haram terrorist group. I am hopeful that our colleagues in the House will pass the bill quickly so that it can go to the President's desk for signature.

Boko Haram is a notorious terrorist organization. Less well known, however, is what the name means: "Western education is forbidden." This descriptive moniker helps explain the organization's determination to terrorize young girls who seek an education—girls who seek nothing more than a better life and a path to independence.

Following the horrific kidnapping of 276 girls more than a year ago, Boko Haram has continued to commit barbaric acts of violence against civilians. According to the Congressional Research Service, Boko Haram may have killed more than 11,000 people, with more than 5,500 people killed in 2014 alone. Boko Haram has also pledged allegiance to ISIS, a fellow terrorist organization, in an attempt to further their reach and increase their ability to intimidate the citizens of Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger. We cannot sit idly by while Boko Haram continues to terrorize women, girls, and religious minorities in these African nations.

Last year, in response to the kidnapping of the schoolgirls, I worked with Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI and garnered the support of all 20 women Senators in urging Secretary of State John Kerry to seek Boko Haram's addition to the United Nations al-Qaeda Sanctions List. Following this letter, the United Nations Security Council voted to subject Boko Haram to a complete asset freeze, travel ban, and arms embargo.

This year, I am again leading a bipartisan legislative effort to address the threats posed by Boko Haram. Specifically, my bipartisan bill, which now awaits consideration in the House of Representatives, calls on the U.S. Departments of State and Defense and their relevant partners to work together in creating a 5-year strategy to