

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 256

Expressing support for the countries of Eastern Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 6, 2017

Mr. COHEN (for himself, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. SIRES, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. BARR, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. ISSA, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. EVANS, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. TURNER, Mr. COOK, Mr. WITTMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. COLE, Mr. KEATING, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Ms. STEFANIK) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the countries of Eastern Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Whereas the United States has shown strong commitment to the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democratic development of the countries that emerged from the ashes of the former Soviet Union and the communist bloc it once dominated;

Whereas many of these countries have, during the past three decades, undertaken the considerable political and economic reforms necessary to achieve the aspirations for

European and Euro-Atlantic integration, or are continuing to do so;

Whereas the incorporation of Eastern European countries into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has contributed toward a vision of Europe that is aimed at promoting stability and cooperation, at building a Europe whole and free, united in peace, democracy and common values;

Whereas the mission of NATO since its founding in 1949 is to promote democratic values, cooperation on defense and security issues, and the peaceful resolution of disputes;

Whereas NATO remains the most important and critical security link between the United States and Europe;

Whereas NATO allies and partners in Central and Eastern Europe, including countries of the Western Balkans, and the former Soviet Union have stood alongside the United States in joint peace operations in the Western Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere around the globe;

Whereas Russia's aggressive actions against neighboring members of the NATO Alliance and nearby NATO partner countries, including its many violations of Baltic airspace, occupation of Georgian territory in 2008, annexation of Crimea in 2014, and continued threats to Moldovan territorial integrity and sovereignty, not only violate its commitments under the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) agreements but are also key contributors to Europe's instability;

Whereas NATO reaffirmed its military security commitment to the Baltic States in response to increased Russian military activities;

Whereas NATO allies increased their assistance to NATO partner countries by endorsing the Substantial NATO–Georgia Package in support of Georgia at the Wales Summit, the Comprehensive Assistance Package in support of Ukraine at the Warsaw Summit, and developed a phased Defense and Related Security Capacity Building package in support of Moldova;

Whereas the European Reassurance Initiative represents the United States commitment to enduring peace, stability, and territorial integrity in Europe as members and partners of the NATO Alliance;

Whereas British Prime Minister Theresa May stated, “On defense and security cooperation, we’re united in our recognition of NATO as the bulwark of our collective defense and we reaffirmed our unshakeable commitment to this alliance. We’re 100% behind NATO.”;

Whereas Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid stated, “Our NATO allies can rely on us to act as agreed in recent summits in Chicago, Wales and Warsaw, our UN partners have appreciated and respected our role in peace-keeping operations and our European partners know that Estonia is a reliable partner when there is a crisis” and Estonian Prime Minister Jüri Ratas stated, “Our commitment to NATO is steadfast.”;

Whereas Latvian President Raimonds Vējonis stated, “We [Latvia] continue increasing our defense spending consistently on our own, and our allies appreciate that. A historic decision on deployment of four multinational battalions in the Baltic States and Poland was made at the NATO Summit in Warsaw this summer. This is by far the most serious proof of NATO’s readiness to defend

independence of the Eastern European countries, including Latvia.”;

Whereas Czech Republic Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka stated, “NATO is the basis for our security” and that he hopes “the United States will remain a solid NATO partner.”; and

Whereas the United States must remain committed to our NATO allies in the face of any aggression irrespective of their ability to meet the NATO benchmark of spending: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns any threat to the sovereignty, ter-
3 ritorial integrity, freedom and democracy of the Bal-
4 tic States;

5 (2) condemns the clear, gross, and uncorrected
6 ongoing violation of the Helsinki principles by the
7 Russian Federation with respect to the sovereignty
8 and territorial integrity of Ukraine;

9 (3) supports keeping United States sanctions
10 imposed against Russia relating to Crimea in effect
11 until Ukraine’s sovereignty over Crimea has been re-
12 stored, as well as sanctions relating to the Donbas
13 until the Minsk agreements are fully implemented;

14 (4) considers it essential for the United States
15 to maintain and increase political, economic, and se-
16 curity support for the countries of Central and East-
17 ern Europe;

1 (5) appreciates the spirit of friendship of the
2 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including
3 those of the Western Balkans, their commitment to
4 collective security, and their contributions, past and
5 present, to peace operations around the globe;

6 (6) supports keeping the door to NATO mem-
7 bership open to those countries that are eligible to
8 join the Alliance and meet all the necessary require-
9 ments for membership;

10 (7) supports and encourages the democratic as-
11 pirations of the people of all countries concerned, in-
12 cluding Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova; and

13 (8) calls for continued support to the United
14 States European Reassurance Initiative.

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