

Afghanistan, and Turkey's unprovoked incursion into Syria; read the first time.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. J. RES. 59

Whereas the Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham, better known by its acronym ISIS, flourished in the chaos unleashed by the civil war in Syria and at one point controlled extensive territory in Iraq and Syria;

Whereas ISIS murdered thousands of innocent civilians, including Americans, and sought to ethnically cleanse the territory it controlled of religious minorities;

Whereas the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, which is composed of Kurdish and Arab fighters, remains an essential United States partner in the successful campaign to destroy ISIS' so-called "caliphate";

Whereas, backed by the United States and United States allies, the Syrian Democratic Forces liberated millions of Syrians from ISIS' terrorist regime, and sustained approximately 11,000 casualties in the fight;

Whereas ISIS, al Qaeda, and their affiliates have proven resilient and have regrouped when the United States and its partners have withdrawn from the fight against them;

Whereas Turkey's unprovoked incursion into northeastern Syria, which began on October 9, 2019, has displaced more than 166,000 civilians, according to the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, and dozens of civilians have been killed on both sides;

Whereas, as a result of Turkey's incursion into northeastern Syria and the withdrawal of United States Armed Forces, the Syrian Democratic Forces have turned to Russia and the brutal Assad regime for support, while more than a hundred ISIS-affiliated detainees have escaped from detention facilities; and

Whereas the Assad regime is responsible for murdering at least 500,000 civilians and displacing at least 12,000,000 Syrians, or roughly half the country's population at the time that the civil war began in 2011, and the regime's return to northeastern Syria through its new partnership with the Syrian Democratic Forces will allow the regime to extend its murderous campaign and again subjugate the Kurdish, Sunni Arab, and religious minorities of northeastern Syria: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress—

(1) condemns in the strongest terms the Government of Turkey's escalating hostilities against Kurdish partners of the United States in Syria, while recognizing the Government of Turkey's legitimate humanitarian, economic, and security concerns emanating from the conflict in Syria;

(2) calls upon the United States Government to pressure the Government of Turkey, including through sanctions, to act with restraint, provide accountability for human rights abuses conducted by militias acting in support of Turkish military operations, and curtail its hostilities against United States partner forces in Syria;

(3) reiterates United States opposition to the forced repatriation of refugees from third countries into Syria, and calls upon all refugee returns to be safe, dignified, and voluntary;

(4) urges the President to rescind his invitation to the White House to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan until a more enduring cease-fire has been established be-

tween Turkish and Kurdish forces in northeastern Syria;

(5) calls upon the United States Government to continue supporting liberated Syrian Kurdish and Arab communities in northeast Syria through humanitarian support, including those displaced or otherwise affected by ongoing violence in Syria, and calls upon other nations to increase support to stabilization efforts in northeastern Syria;

(6) strongly opposes any abandonment of our Kurdish and Arab partners in Syria;

(7) calls for a halt to the withdrawal of United States Armed Forces from Syria where practical, and calls for the continued use of air power to target ISIS and provide protection of ethnic and religious minorities in northeastern Syria;

(8) expresses support for a continued United States military presence in Iraq, along with efforts to help Iraqi forces control their border, protect their sovereignty, and counter ISIS;

(9) recognizes the continuing threat to United States and United States allies posed by al Qaeda and ISIS, which maintain an ability to operate in Syria and Afghanistan;

(10) warns that a precipitous withdrawal of United States forces from the ongoing fight against these groups, without effective, countervailing efforts to secure gains in Syria and Afghanistan, could allow terrorists to regroup, destabilize critical regions, and create vacuums that could be filled by Iran or Russia, to the detriment of United States interests and those of our allies;

(11) recognizes that an unbroken chain of Iranian-controlled territory across Syria poses a significant threat to Israel;

(12) reiterates support for international diplomatic efforts to facilitate peaceful, negotiated resolutions to the ongoing conflicts in Syria and Afghanistan on terms that respect the rights of innocent civilians and deny safe havens to terrorists;

(13) encourages close collaboration between the executive branch and the legislative branch to ensure continuing strong, bipartisan support for United States military operations in Syria and Afghanistan; and

(14) calls upon the President to certify whether conditions have been met for the enduring defeat of al Qaeda and ISIS before initiating any further significant withdrawal of United States forces from the region.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 369—RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE MONTAGNARD INDIGENOUS TRIBESPEOPLE OF THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS OF VIETNAM TO THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES DURING THE VIETNAM WAR, AND CONDEMNING THE ONGOING VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. TILLIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 369

Whereas the Montagnards are an indigenous tribespeople living in Vietnam's Central Highlands region;

Whereas the Montagnards were driven into the mountains by invading Vietnamese and Cambodians in the 9th century;

Whereas French Roman Catholic missionaries converted many of the Montagnards in the 19th century and American Protestant missionaries subsequently converted many to various Protestant sects;

Whereas, during the 1960s, the United States Mission in Saigon, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and United States Army Special Forces, also known as the Green Berets, trained the Montagnards in unconventional warfare;

Whereas an estimated 61,000 Montagnards, out of an estimated population of 1,000,000, fought alongside the United States and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces against the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong;

Whereas the Central Intelligence Agency, United States Special Forces, and the Montagnards cooperated on the Village Defense Program, a forerunner to the War's Strategic Hamlet Program, and an estimated 43,000 Montagnards were organized into "Civilian Irregular Defense Groups" (CIDGs) to provide protection for the areas around the CIDGs' operational bases;

Whereas, at its peak, the CIDGs had approximately 50 operational bases, with each base containing a contingent of two United States Army officers and ten enlisted men, and an ARVN unit of the same size, and each base trained 200 to 700 Montagnards, or "strikers";

Whereas another 18,000 Montagnards were reportedly enlisted into mobile strike forces, and various historical accounts describe a strong bond between the United States Special Forces and the Montagnards, in contrast to Vietnamese Special Forces and ARVN troops;

Whereas the lives of thousands of members of the United States Armed Forces were saved as a result of the heroic actions of the Montagnards, who fought loyally and bravely alongside United States Special Forces in the Vietnam War;

Whereas, after the fall of the Republic of Vietnam in 1975, thousands of Montagnards fled across the border into Cambodia to escape persecution;

Whereas the Government of the reunified Vietnamese nation, renamed the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, deeply distrusted the Montagnards who had sided with the United States and ARVN forces and subjected them to imprisonment and various forms of discrimination and oppression after the Vietnam War ended;

Whereas, after the Vietnam War, the United States Government resettled large numbers of Montagnards, mostly in North Carolina, and an estimated several thousand Montagnards currently reside in North Carolina, which is the largest population of Montagnards residing outside of Vietnam;

Whereas the Socialist Republic of Vietnam currently remains a one-party state, ruled and controlled by the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), which continues to restrict freedom of religion, movement, land and property rights, and political expression;

Whereas officials of the Government of Vietnam have forced Montagnards to publicly denounce their religion, arrested and imprisoned Montagnards who organized public demonstrations, and mistreated Montagnards in detention;

Whereas some Montagnard Americans have complained that Vietnamese authorities either have prevented them from visiting Vietnam or have subjected them to interrogation upon re-entering the country on visits;

Whereas the Department of State's 2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices ("2018 Human Rights Report") documents that, despite Vietnam's significant economic

growth, some indigenous and ethnic minority communities benefitted little from improved economic conditions, even though such communities formed a majority of the population in certain areas, including the Northwest and Central Highlands and portions of the Mekong Delta;

Whereas the 2018 Human Rights Report states that, although Vietnamese law prohibits discrimination against ethnic minorities, such social discrimination was longstanding and persistent, notably in the Central Highlands;

Whereas the 2018 Human Rights Report documents that land rights protesters have reported regular instances of government authorities physically harassing and intimidating them at land expropriation sites around the country, or arresting local residents for “causing public disorder”;

Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) references in its 2019 Annual Report (the “2019 USCIRF Report”) the accounts of Montagnards being publicly berated and humiliated for their affiliation with the unrecognized Evangelical Church of Christ;

Whereas the 2019 USCIRF Report documents that one-quarter of prisoners of conscience were minority religious groups, including the Montagnards;

Whereas the 2019 USCIRF Report estimates that 10,000 individuals in the Central Highlands are refused ID cards, household registration, and birth certificates by local authorities in retaliation for refusing to renounce their faith; and

Whereas USCIRF has recommended every year since 2002 that Vietnam be designated a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-292) due to “systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the contributions of the Montagnards who fought loyally and bravely with United States Armed Forces during the Vietnam War and who continue to suffer persecution in Vietnam as a result of this relationship;

(2) condemns ongoing actions by the Government of Vietnam to suppress basic human rights and civil liberties for all its citizens;

(3) calls on the Government of Vietnam to allow human rights groups access to all regions of the country and to end restrictions of basic human rights, including the right for Montagnards to practice their Christian faith freely, the right to land and property, freedom of movement, the right to retain ethnic identity and culture, and access to an adequate standard of living; and

(4) urges the President and Congress to develop policies that support Montagnards and other marginalized ethnic minority and indigenous populations in Vietnam and reflect United States interests and commitment to upholding human rights and democracy abroad.

SENATE RESOLUTION 370—DESIGNATING OCTOBER 2019 AS “NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH” AND OCTOBER 23, 2019, AS “UNITY DAY”

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Ms. SMITH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HASSAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 370

Whereas 1 in 5 students report being bullied and nearly 16 percent of students report being cyberbullied;

Whereas students who experience bullying are at an increased risk for poor school adjustment, sleep difficulties, anxiety, and depression;

Whereas National Bullying Prevention Month was founded in 2006 by the National Bullying Prevention Center of the PACER Center and has been held during the month of October each year since;

Whereas National Bullying Prevention Month is a nationwide campaign that seeks to educate the public about, and raise awareness of, bullying prevention;

Whereas individuals, families, schools, school districts, communities, and many others have hosted thousands of events to spread the message of National Bullying Prevention Month;

Whereas Unity Day was started by the National Bullying Prevention Center in October 2011 and is the signature event of National Bullying Prevention Month;

Whereas Unity Day has been held on the third or fourth Wednesday of each October since 2011 and will be recognized in 2019 on October 23;

Whereas the goal of Unity Day is to bring together youth, parents, educators, businesses, and community members across the United States to emphasize—

- (1) a message of uniting for kindness, acceptance, inclusion, and mutual respect;
- (2) that all students deserve to be safe in school, online, and in their communities;
- (3) that there is value in celebrating the differences between people; and
- (4) that compromise and tolerance are important in communication;

Whereas Unity Day has been highlighted on national television shows and in public service announcements, films, and public displays of art and expression; and

Whereas Unity Day is often celebrated by—

- (1) wearing orange, the official color of Unity Day;
- (2) holding student and teacher led discussions at schools;
- (3) organizing efforts at community centers; and
- (4) expressing support for Unity Day through art, music, dance, and social media;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates October 2019 as “National Bullying Prevention Month”;

(2) designates October 23, 2019, as “Unity Day”; and

(3) acknowledges that the prevention of bullying of children should be a national priority.

SENATE RESOLUTION 371—RE-AFFIRMING THE SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN AND CALLING ON ALL PARTIES TO UPHOLD THEIR COMMITMENTS TO PEACE AND DIALOGUE AS OUTLINED IN THE 2018 REVITALIZED PEACE AGREEMENT

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 371

Whereas the United States recognized South Sudan as a sovereign, independent state on July 9, 2011, following its secession from Sudan;

Whereas the United States played a key role in helping draft the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that laid the groundwork

for the 2011 referendum on self-determination, through which the people of South Sudan overwhelmingly voted for independence;

Whereas the people and Government of the United States have a deep and abiding interest in South Sudan’s political stabilization and post-conflict development;

Whereas stability in Sudan is critical to peace and security in the region, including for South Sudan, and the United States Government remains committed to fostering Sudan’s peaceful transition, as reflected by the passage of Senate Resolution 188 (116th), which “encourag[es] a swift transfer of power by the military to a civilian-led political authority in the Republic of the Sudan”;

Whereas, since the onset of the civil war in South Sudan in December 2013, nearly 400,000 South Sudanese citizens are estimated to have been killed, 1,900,000 have been internally displaced, and 2,300,000 have fled the country and registered as refugees;

Whereas the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) signed on September 12, 2018 by the political parties of South Sudan, affirms the Parties’ commitment to the permanent ceasefire and forbids human rights violations and restrictions on humanitarian assistance;

Whereas the R-ARCSS establishes two phases of implementation, a Pre-Transitional Period until May 12, 2019, which was subsequently extended to November 12, 2019, followed by the establishment of a Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) for three years;

Whereas the six-month extension of the deadline to form the RTGoNU was granted to allow additional time to complete critical Pre-Transitional tasks, including agreement on the number and boundaries of states and important security arrangements;

Whereas the R-ARCSS stipulates that the signatories will create an enabling political, administrative, operational, and legal environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection;

Whereas the people of South Sudan continue to suffer from a humanitarian crisis, with the United Nations reporting that over 6,300,000 people, more than half the population, were classified as severely food insecure at the peak of the lean season in 2019, including an estimated 10,000 who faced famine conditions, and despite slight improvements in food security during the harvest, the number of children under age five who are acutely malnourished is projected to rise to 1,300,000 in early 2020;

Whereas humanitarian organizations are providing lifesaving assistance to more than 5,300,000 South Sudanese people and are providing other vital support services such as medical care to survivors of sexual violence and facilitating access to education to over 690,000 children;

Whereas religious and faith-based organizations have played a key role in the peace process and humanitarian response efforts in support of the people of South Sudan;

Whereas at least 112 humanitarian aid workers have been killed since the start of the conflict in 2013, including at least 15 in 2018;

Whereas the United States Department of State 2018 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in South Sudan states that both the government and opposition forces engaged in serious human rights abuses by perpetrating extrajudicial killings, including ethnically based targeted killings of civilians, and by engaging in arbitrary detentions, torture, rape, beatings, and looting of property;

Whereas, on March 15, 2019, the United Nations Security Council extended the mandate