

Many women journalists have been targeted and unjustly detained. In particular, the escalating use of criminal charges of “false news” or “fake news” to imprison journalists and activists is alarming. Certainly, these incitements of “fake news” echo President Trump and his administration’s regressive rhetoric and attacks on the press and democratic values.

As of December 2019, Turkey was the world’s second worst jailer of journalists with 47 in prison, coming in close second to China with 48. President Erdogan has cracked down on independent criticism by shuttering more than 100 news outlets and jailing dozens of journalists. Editor Hatice Duman was imprisoned in 2003 and is serving a life sentence based on charges of propaganda and being a member of a banned group. Duman was the owner and news editor of the socialist weekly “Atilim,” which had opposed President Erdogan’s policies. She was convicted based on authorities’ claim of her attendance at a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party demonstration and the testimony of confidential witnesses. Duman’s husband later said the police threatened sexual violence against his family if he did not testify against his wife. Ayseur Parildak and Hanim Büsra Erdal, two journalists for “Zaman,” are both serving sentences for terrorism-related offenses based on claims that “Zaman” had ties to Fethulaah Gülen. Sadiye Eser, a reporter for the pro-Kurdish “Mezopotamya News Agency,” has also been detained by police since November 2019 on politically motivated charges of membership of a terrorist organization.

In Egypt, President Sisi has attempted to quash dissent and consolidate control by wrongfully imprisoning human rights defenders. Mahienour el-Masry, a human rights lawyer, has spent her career organizing peaceful protests, advocating for political prisoners, and denouncing human rights violations. She was arrested in September 2019 following a wave of protests calling for President Sisi’s resignation and charged with collaborating with a terrorist organization, spreading “false news,” and using social media to publish false rumors. Esraa Abdel Fattah, a human rights activist and reporter for the banned “Tahrir News,” was arrested on charges of spreading “false news,” membership in a banned group, and abuse of social media networks in October 2019. Abdel Fattah was reportedly beaten, hung from handcuffs for hours, and choked with her clothes while interrogated.

In Burundi, authorities have cracked down on free expression in anticipation of the country’s 2020 elections. Christine Kamikazi and Agnes Ndirubusa, journalists at Burundi’s last remaining independent newspaper “Iwacu,” were arrested and convicted on charges of attempting threat against state security by collaborating with the rebel

group RED-Tabara. Kamikazi and Ndirubusa were traveling with two colleagues to report on in-fighting between Burundian security forces and RED-Tabara when they were arrested. They were convicted despite the fact that “Iwacu” had informed authorities of their plan to travel to the area for reporting and the fact that the RED-Tabara attack had already occurred before their travels to the region.

Finally, a year ago today, I highlighted 14 women political prisoners in a statement marking International Women’s Day. Of those 14, 8 remain in detention today. These include Saudi women’s rights and human rights activists Loujain al-Hathloul, Nassima al-Sada, Samar Badawi, Nouf Abdulaziz, and Maya’a al-Zahrani; Senator Leila de Lima, detained for her criticism of extrajudicial killings in the Philippines; Guligeina Tashimaimaiti, a Uyghur PhD student detained in China; and Aster Fissehatsion, a political dissident held incommunicado without charge nor trial since 2001 in Eritrea.

In Egypt, Russia, China, Iran, Turkey, Burundi, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, and Eritrea, these women threatened by a repressive government, abusive authorities, and critical risks to their health are advocating for the betterment of their entire communities. Sadly, these 25 women highlighted today only represent a small fraction of countless women and girls unjustly detained and imprisoned.

On this International Women’s Day, we reflect on the remarkable achievements of women and the work that remains to be done by all of us to reach gender parity. The women political prisoners we have highlighted today serve as role models championing human rights, democracy, cultural tolerance, and environmental preservation. Their detention should embolden the rest of us to take up their causes in their absence. I call on governments unjustly detaining women for exercising their fundamental rights to immediately release these political prisoners. We will not forget these women, what they have fought for, and what they have sacrificed for all of us as a result.

WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, on January 28, 2020, I submitted a statement for the RECORD on H. Con. Res. 83, which directs the President to terminate the use of U.S. Armed Forces to engage in hostilities against Iran.

H. Con. Res. 83 was passed by the House of Representatives on January 9, 2020, and received in the Senate and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations on January 13, 2020. Pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1546(c), H. Con. Res. 83 should have been treated as a privileged resolution and reported out of the committee on January 28.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority leadership opted not

to hold a committee debate or vote on H. Con. Res. 83. As I explained in my statement of January 28, I understand that this decision was based primarily on the view that a concurrent resolution, under the War Powers Resolution, may be privileged only if it uses the word “remove” or the phrase “removal of United States Armed Forces engaged in hostilities,” rather than “terminate” or “terminate the use of United States Armed Forces to engage in hostilities,” as used in H. Con. Res. 83. As I will explain, however, this view is not consistent with Senate precedent.

On February 13, 2020, the Senate passed S.J. Res. 68. This resolution contains identical operative language to H. Con. Res. 83, directing the President to “terminate” the use of U.S. Armed Forces for hostilities against Iran. The very fact that S.J. Res. 68 was considered in the Senate on a privileged and expedited basis clarified that there are no magic words required for privilege under the War Powers Resolution, and that the use of “terminate” qualifies for such privilege. As a result, it is clear that H. Con. Res. 83 should have been accorded privileged status and, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1546(c), should have been reported out of committee and put up for a Senate vote.

Fortunately, the Senate prerogatives under the War Powers Resolution were vindicated by the debate, privileged consideration, and vote on S.J. Res. 68. As such and in light of the identical purpose and operative texts of the Senate joint resolution and the House concurrent resolution, there is no need at this point for a second, identical debate to occur either in the committee or on the Senate floor. In other words, inaction on H. Con. Res. 83 is harmless.

Both Chambers of Congress have made their views and the views of the American people with regard to U.S. hostilities against Iran quite clear. I hope President Trump and his national security staff abide by this message.

BICENTENNIAL OF MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, on March 15, 1820, Maine became our Nation’s 23rd State. It is a pleasure to join my fellow Mainers in celebrating this bicentennial and the generations of people who have written an inspiring and remarkable history.

The story of Maine begins long before President James Monroe signed the legislation granting statehood to what had been a district of Massachusetts. For thousands of years, the land has been home to the Wabanaki, who have drawn sustenance from Maine’s woods and waters. The People of the Dawn remain valued members of our communities today, and their reverence for nature is the foundation of the ethic of environmental stewardship that continues to guide our State.

French explorers, led by Samuel de Champlain, first visited the area in 1604. In 1607, more than a decade before