

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BARR), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 77, nays 14, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 183 Ex.]

YEAS—77

Alexander	Feinstein	Portman
Baldwin	Fischer	Reed
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Bennet	Graham	Roberts
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hassan	Rosen
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Heinrich	Rubio
Brown	Hoehn	Sasse
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Scott (SC)
Carper	Inhofe	Shaheen
Casey	Jones	Shelby
Cassidy	Kaine	Smith
Collins	Kennedy	Stabenow
Coons	King	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Tester
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cramer	Loeffler	Toomey
Crapo	Manchin	Udall
Cruz	McConnell	Van Hollen
Daines	McSally	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murphy	Wicker
Enzi	Paul	Young
Ernst	Peters	

NAYS—14

Blumenthal	Klobuchar	Schatz
Booker	Markey	Schumer
Cantwell	Menendez	Warren
Gillibrand	Merkley	Wyden
Hirono	Murray	

NOT VOTING—9

Burr	Johnson	Sanders
Capito	Moran	Scott (FL)
Harris	Perdue	Sinema

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Arkansas.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a pe-

riod of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. COTTON pertaining to the introduction of S. 4609 are printed in today's Record under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. COTTON. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

ABRAHAM ACCORDS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, a few days ago, Flight 971 took off from Tel Aviv Airport. You may say: Of course the flight took off from Tel Aviv; that happens every day—but not like this flight. You see, Flight 971 took off from Tel Aviv Airport, flew south, directly over Saudi Arabia, which hasn't happened, and landed in Abu Dhabi because the United Arab Emirates has formed a peace agreement with Israel—recognizing its right to exist, opening up Embassies in Israel and in the United Arab Emirates, beginning trade in commerce. Just days ago, the first cargo aircraft took off and flew, taking supplies, technology, medicine—engagement between the Nation of Israel and the Arab nation of the United Arab Emirates, forming a new alliance in the Middle East.

Flight 971 is significant because 971 is the country code if you are going to call the United Arab Emirates. The return flight, by the way, leaving from Abu Dhabi and flying back to Israel is Flight 972—the country code for Israel.

That first flight that took off, on the outside of the plane were emblazoned three words—one in English, one in Hebrew, and one in Arabic—all translated, the word "peace."

It is a new day. And this week, when President Trump and the Foreign Ministers from the United Arab Emirates and from Bahrain and the Prime Minister of Israel all stood at the White House and spoke of each other in a new partnership and then all sat at a table and signed documents together, beginning a new relationship not just with UAE but also with Bahrain, it was a remarkable day in world history.

In 70 years of Israel's history, only two nations that are Arab nations have recognized Israel's right to exist, even—Jordan and Egypt. In 1 day, two more nations joined—the UAE and Bahrain. It was significant to be able to see the journey on that and to be able to hear the Foreign Ministers of Bahrain and UAE compliment President Trump, Mike Pompeo, and Jared Kushner for their leadership and, as the Foreign Minister from Bahrain said, President Trump's statesmanship in this process.

It was a negotiation that was turned on its head. For decades, American negotiators have tried to work to solve the issues with the Palestinians first and then to work to solve every other

relationship second. That has been the American focus. The Trump negotiations reversed it. They believed that many in the Arab world were tired of the Palestinians holding their foreign policy hostage, and they flipped it and said: Why don't we start negotiating with the Arab world first and see if they want to open up trade negotiations with Israel and be able to stabilize those negotiations?

It has worked. Not only has it worked in two countries—in a single day signing an agreement—but there are multiple other nations that are currently looking at this same deal with Israel to say: Yes, we still need to resolve the issues in the Palestinian territory. Yes, that is still very important. But these nations can work toward peace and unity together as they resolve their differences.

They signed a document dealing with relationships diplomatically, but they also signed something they called the Abraham Accords Declaration. Let me read this accord to you because it is significant. It begins with this simple statement:

We, the undersigned, recognize the importance of maintaining and strengthening peace in the Middle East and around the world based on mutual understanding and coexistence, as well as respect for human dignity and freedom, including religious freedom.

That is a significant statement. Nations have spoken of religious freedom, but it has not thrived there.

The document goes on to say:

We seek tolerance and respect for every person in order to make this world a place where all can enjoy a life of dignity and hope, no matter their race, faith, or ethnicity.

We support science, art, medicine, and commerce to inspire humankind, maximize human potential and bring nations closer together.

We seek to end radicalization and conflict to provide all children a better future.

We pursue a vision of peace, security, and prosperity in the Middle East and around the world.

It was a document many people said would never be signed, but it is a stake in the ground to say it is a new day in the Middle East in peace negotiations and a pivot, as Prime Minister Netanyahu said.

Nations like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Amman, Morocco, Sudan, and Lebanon should take notice and should see the benefit to economic trade and engagement, to confronting Iranian influence in the area that tries to destabilize so much of the Middle East, pushing back on terrorism, and developing partnerships in science and health and technology and prosperity for everyone in the region. That happened this week.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. LANKFORD. There is something happening on Monday that much of the world has missed as well in the Middle East. For a year, there has been a process ongoing to be able to confront Iran.

Iran has actively stated they are going to continue to pursue their nuclear ambitions. They have actively stated they are going to pursue weapons deals. They have actively stated they want to continue to break the arms embargo.

Some of our allies have stood silent, but Iran has discussed purchasing weapons of all types from all places. We used to be united—regardless whether it was nuclear or not—that Iran should not continue to accelerate that. As the largest exporter of terrorism in the world, we should confront what Iran is trying to do—continue to provide heavy arms.

As of Monday, the United States will move into a different mode with Iran. As of midnight Sunday night, snap back sanctions begin on Iran on Monday. And that is a different moment for us as a nation, to say we have stated as a country, now through multiple Presidencies, that we will not allow Iran to be a nuclear power or to continue to arm itself in such a way to do its neighbors harm.

When snap back sanctions occur on Monday, all of our allies should be aware that the United States is steadfast in that commitment. We would ask you to join us in that as well.

Over the past few months, thousands of troops have come back home from the Middle East—from Syria, from Iraq, from Afghanistan. By the end of this year, we will have 4,500 troops still in Afghanistan; that is from a high just a few years ago of 100,000 boots on the ground.

Ongoing negotiations for peace continue between Afghan leadership and the Taliban. Those are problems that have existed for decades and in some areas, generations.

While I don't believe Afghanistan will suddenly break out and be a bastion of peace for the world, we do have a responsibility to help them where we can but also an obligation to protect our sons and daughters. Our blood and our treasures spilled in Afghanistan for decades. We shouldn't lose the investment of that blood and treasure. But it is good to see so many people coming home.

In Europe, a free-trade agreement is actively being negotiated with the UK. We are pleased to be able to partner with such a special-relationship country like the United Kingdom. We have had a long-lasting friendship with them since we settled a little conflict in 1776 and another dustup in 1812. That special relationship with the UK should continue on with a very good trade agreement.

I am pleased that the administration continues to push forward in the area of trade—an area that it is amazing to me how many people didn't even notice was the powder keg of Europe that just recently was resolved.

For generations, the area around Serbia, Kosovo have been a hotbed area for conflict.

In the past few weeks, the Trump administration has negotiated a peace

deal between Serbia and Kosovo that leaves Serbia to actually officially recognize Kosovo. Again, that may not seem like a big deal to many other people, but to Oklahomans—many of whom have served in our 45th and who have served there in Kosovo, helping to protect and stabilize that country and provide security there in that region—it is very significant to us to be able to see peace breaking out between Serbia and Kosovo.

I am pleased that, while many people in the world don't even pay attention to what is happening in Serbia and Kosovo, the Trump administration has, and their diplomatic team has been very engaged in negotiating that and bringing to them some stability.

Interestingly enough, in the negotiations both Serbia and Kosovo also agreed to designate Hezbollah as a foreign terrorist organization and to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and to be able to move their embassies to Jerusalem, which is another affirmation of what is happening in the Middle East in the string of what is ongoing.

One last comment that many people may have missed, we all grieve for what is happening in Lebanon. That experiment in multiracial, multifaith, and cooperative government has been a struggle, but they have been a stronghold for religious tolerance in Lebanon. Watching the hundreds of people who were killed and thousands who were injured in the explosion at their docks in Beirut was painful for the entire world. The United States has stepped up as being the top donor to humanitarian aid to Lebanon during this time period, and we are engaging in multiple ways.

At the end of the day, if we are going to help Lebanon be stable, we have to help that experiment in democracy there in the Middle East to be able to thrive with transparency.

I partnered with Senator MURPHY and several other colleagues to help set our Nation's priority to help Lebanon rebuild, including to utilize the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, called the DFC, to help them in their infrastructure projects; to push out China, which is trying to work their way into the Middle East and dominate there; to allow the people of Lebanon to decide their own future; to leverage leadership in the International Monetary Fund to prevent multilateral bailouts that don't allow for real reforms in their banking system; and to push out corruption and push out Hezbollah.

There are things we can do that are not of a partisan nature on which Senator MURPHY and I cooperate together to be able to help push for Lebanon. It is important that they continue to be a stable force in the region. This is a real time of testing for them as a country. I am proud the administration has pushed our diplomats in Lebanon to be able to find ways where we can practically help now and long term for real reforms for them. There is a lot going on around the world.

While we are focused on COVID, rightfully so for our own health, while we focus on our economy, rightfully so, and while we focus on the issues of racial inequality, rightfully so, we cannot lose track of the issues we also need to be engaged in around the world. It is important that America continue to be a leader in diplomacy and a leader in bringing religious liberty and freedom and opportunity for all people.

Whether you are in Hong Kong, as we discussed before, or whether you are in Abu Dhabi, all people deserve the recognition of their humanity and respect and an opportunity to be able to live their lives with freedom. Let's continue to stand for the values that define us and define us together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I am sure you and I and all the Members of this body remember that night in late March. It was late at night. I remember standing in the back of the Chamber to see one of the truly historic votes. It was a unanimous vote of the U.S. Senate to pass the CARES Act. It was an amazing achievement to see the Senate and the Congress come together in that way with the White House, with the President, to help meet the needs of the American people.

When we passed that bill back in March, September seemed a long way away. We thought we had provided enough aid for small businesses. It turns out we didn't. We thought we had provided enough aid for people, unfortunately, who have fallen into unemployment through no fault of their own but the fault of this dreaded COVID, but we didn't provide enough.

We hoped that we had provided enough for first responders, for schools, for healthcare professionals, for testing, and for all the things that were necessary to get us out of this terrible pandemic. It turns out that wasn't the case. Here we are in September facing a renewed version of this virus that is now spreading in parts of the country that weren't affected back in March.

I want to address, No. 1, that we must do something. We have to respond to the needs of the American people just as we did in March. I don't understand why this time it seems to be a partisan issue; why this time we can't have the same spirit that we had then of negotiation, of give and take, of compromise to reach a bill that all realize now was a really significant accomplishment.

For some reason, now it just seems to be much harder. I understand the concern about the debt and the deficit. I used to be a Governor. I know about balancing budgets. States have to balance their budgets, but now is not the time. If we don't take further action to shore up the economy and protect the