

# MEMBER DAY HEARING

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## HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

March 26, 2021

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## CONTENTS

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	Page
WITNESSES	
Meng, Hon. Grace, a Representative in Congress from the State of New York .....	4
Case, Hon. Ed, a Representative in Congress from the State of Hawaii .....	9
Hill, Hon. French, a Representative in Congress from the State of Arkansas ...	14
APPENDIX	
Hearing Notice .....	18
Hearing Minutes .....	19
Hearing Attendance .....	20
ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD	
Additional statement for the record from Representative Pete Sessions .....	20
Additional statement for the record from Representative H. Morgan Griffith ..	22
Additional statement for the record from Representative John Garamendi .....	24



## MEMBER DAY HEARING

Friday, March 26, 2021

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:08 p.m., via Webex, Hon. Gregory Meeks (Chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman MEEKS. The Committee on Foreign Affairs will come to order.

Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare a recess of the committee at any point.

And all Members will have 5 days to submit statements, extraneous material, and questions for the record, subject to the length limitation in the rules. To insert something into the record, please have your staff email the previously mentioned address or contact full committee staff.

As a reminder to Members, please keep your video function on at all times, even when you are not recognized by the Chair. Members are responsible for muting and unmuting themselves, and please remember to mute yourself after you finish speaking.

Consistent with House rules, staff will only mute Members as appropriate, when they are not under recognition, so that they can eliminate background noise.

I see that we have a quorum, and I now recognize myself for opening remarks.

Pursuant to notice, we meet today to conduct a Members Day Hearing to hear from our colleagues on their legislative priorities that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

I welcome our colleagues to the Foreign Affairs Committee, and we are pleased to have this opportunity today to hear from our colleagues about their legislative priorities, especially colleagues who do not sit on the best committee in the House of Representatives.

This Congress will preside over a historic shift in U.S. foreign policy, and there is no shortage of work ahead for our legislative body and this committee. It is critical that we look ahead to the realities and challenges of the 21st century. Financial crises, pandemics, climate change, and the rise of authoritarianism are indeed worldwide problems that have far-reaching domestic impacts.

These challenges will require global solutions, which will undoubtedly overlap committee jurisdictions. Likewise, our foreign policy is interdependent on having a domestic policy that reflects the values we champion abroad.

As Members of the U.S. Congress, the diversity of our districts and the diasporas that make up our communities give each mem-

ber invaluable insight. It is critical that this committee works closely with the entire Congress.

And it is in that spirit this hearing offers an open platform for Members who may hear their—so that Members can hear their legislative proposals, and for some of our most pressing foreign affair-related challenges are heard.

This of course will not be the only opportunity to engage with representatives from our other committees. As Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, my door is always open. I look forward to hearing from you and your ideas.

I now turn to Mr. Green for his remarks.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Chairman Meeks. And really appreciate you convening this important hearing to give our colleagues an opportunity to present their legislative ideas before the committee.

At a time of unprecedented challenges around the globe, from the coronavirus pandemic to a rising China, of course, the human crisis at our southern border, the work of this committee is more important than ever, and the participation of every Member of Congress is indispensable.

I look forward to continuing to work with you, sir, and lead Republican McCaul, on these issues. And I look forward to hearing from our Members today.

Thank you, sir, and I yield.

Chairman MEEKS. I thank Mr. Green. And I should put out—I know Ranking Member McCaul is not here, but I want to thank Ranking Member McCaul for his work and cooperation and working in a bipartisan spirit on this committee. Glad to have Mr. Green with us.

Each witness will now have 5 minutes to testify and then answer questions from Members of the committee. However, this hearing is intended to be primarily a listening session. Witnesses testifying today will be recognized in the order in which they arrive. So I look forward to hearing the testimony.

I now recognize my friend and fellow New Yorker, Representative Grace Meng, for 5 minutes.

#### **STATEMENT OF HON. GRACE MENG, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Ms. MENG. Thank you, Chairman Meeks, Ranking Member McCaul, and distinguished Members of this committee. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss several of my priorities that are under the jurisdiction of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. I always look back on my time on this committee so fondly. I'm grateful to the many friendships I have made, and I look forward to being together in person with you all again soon.

First, I really want to thank this committee for marking up my Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act just yesterday. Thank you, in particular, to Representative Lee Zeldin, my partner in this effort. One of my top priorities as a Member of Congress is protecting those who are vulnerable around the world, whether women and girls seeking an education or employment, those who lack access to basic services, or victims of natural disasters.

As vice Chair of the State and Foreign Operations House Appropriations Committee, I am proud to do what I can to help direct

our Federal funding priorities to address these concerns. During the 117th Congress, I hope this committee will champion bills that protect vulnerable women and girls around the world.

Today I want to bring to your attention a few pieces of legislation, some of which have already been introduced and others which I will reintroduce in the coming months. First, I would like to discuss the Safe from the Start Act, H.R. 571, which aims to prevent and respond to gender-based violence from the onset of emergencies.

This legislation helps the humanitarian community take preventative measures to ensure that quality services are available to survivors from the onset of an emergency or crisis. Crises like the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbate risks for GBV, which is exactly what Safe from the Start is set up to mitigate.

I am thankful to the bipartisan co-leads of this legislation, Representatives Chris Stewart, Lois Frankel, Mario Diaz-Balart, and Chrissy Houlahan, as well as the co-sponsors who sit on this committee, Chairman Meeks, Representatives Phillips, Cicilline, Costa, Titus, Deutch, Lowenthal, Connelly, Spanberger, Bass, Wild, Kinzinger, and Young Kim.

I also introduced the Divided Families Reunification Act, H.R. 826, with Representative Van Taylor as well as my colleagues on this committee, Representatives Sherman, Bass, Omar, Andy Kim, Schneider, Connelly, and Young Kim.

Over 70 years ago, the division of the Korean Peninsula into the two Koreas separated millions of Koreans from their family Members. This bill requires the Secretary of State or a designee to consult with officials in South Korea on potential opportunities to reunite Korean American families with their family Members in North Korea and requires the special envoy on North Korean human rights to submit a report on the opportunities for video reunion.

I will also be introducing the Youth Peace and Security Act, along with Representatives Fitzpatrick and Phillips. Youth populations have long been at the forefront of building peace in their communities by creating youth-led movements to mitigate negative effects of conflict and to prevent recurring cycles of violence. After all, it will be the young people who bear the burden of sustaining the peace over generations and lead their society from reconciliation to prosperity.

I look forward to introducing this legislation and hope to have the committee's support.

Finally, I will also introduce the Global Wildlife Trafficking Biosecurity Act with Representative Jeff Fortenberry. This bill is an entirely international response to end commercial trade in live wildlife for human consumption. It does this by incentivizing governments to address the root causes of zoonotic pandemics through international cooperation and powers U.S. assistance for health surveillance, wildlife trade enforcement, biodiversity, and food security.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify today and for your leadership on critical issues of human rights and national security. I look forward to continue working with this committee in the 117th Congress.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Meng follows:]

March 26, 2021

**Congresswoman Grace Meng (NY-6)**  
**Testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee**  
**Member's Day Hearing**

Chairman Meeks, Ranking Member McCaul, and distinguished members of this Committee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss several of my priorities that are under the jurisdiction of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. I always look back on my time on this Committee so fondly. I am grateful to the many friendships I've made, and I look forward to being together in person again.

First, I want to thank this Committee for marking up my **Refugee Sanitation Facility Safety Act (H.R. 1158)** just yesterday. Thank you in particular to Representative Zeldin, my partner in this effort.

One of my top priorities as a Member of Congress is protecting those who are vulnerable around the world – whether women and girls seeking an education or employment, those who lack access to basic services, or victims of natural disasters. As Vice Chair of the State and Foreign Operations House Appropriations Committee, I am proud to do what I can to help direct our federal funding priorities to address these concerns. During the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, I hope this Committee will champion bills that protect vulnerable women and girls around the world.

Today, I want to bring to your attention a few pieces of legislation, some of which have already been introduced and others which I will reintroduce in the coming months.

First, I'd like to discuss the **Safe from the Start Act (H.R. 571)**, which aims to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) from the onset of emergencies. This legislation helps the humanitarian community take preventative measures to ensure that quality services are available to survivors from the onset of an emergency or crisis. Crises like the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbate risks for GBV, which is exactly what Safe from the Start is set up to mitigate.

I am thankful to the bipartisan co-leads of this legislation: Representatives Chris Stewart, Lois Frankel, Mario Diaz-Balart, and Chrissy Houlahan, as well as the cosponsors who sit on this Committee: Chairman Meeks, and Representatives Phillips, Cicilline, Costa, Titus, Deutch, Lowenthal, Connolly, Spanberger, Bass, Wild, Kinzinger, and Young Kim.

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I will also be reintroducing the **Youth, Peace, and Security Act**, along with Representatives Fitzpatrick and Phillips. Youth populations have long been at the forefront of building peace in their communities by creating youth-led movements to mitigate negative effects of conflict and to prevent recurring cycles of violence. After all, it will be the young people who bear the burden of sustaining the peace over generations and lead their society from reconciliation to prosperity. I look forward to introducing this legislation and hope to have this Committee's support.

Finally, I will also reintroduce the **Global Wildlife Trafficking Biosecurity Act** with Representative Jeff Fortenberry. This bill is an entirely international response to end commercial trade in live wildlife for human consumption. It does this by incentivizing governments to address the root causes of zoonotic pandemics through international cooperation and empowers U.S. assistance for health surveillance, wildlife trade enforcement, biodiversity, and food security.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify and for your leadership on critical issues of human rights and national security. I look forward to continue working with this Committee in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Chairman MEEKS. Thank you so much for your remarks, Representative Meng. The committee looks forward, of course, to continuing to work with you. And I just want to thank you for your excellent work reducing the vulnerabilities for women and girls—that women and girls face, and whether it is access to sanitation in refugee camps or protection in humanitarian crises or being excluded from peacebuilding where their voices are so crucial and critical.

And I just want you to know that our foreign policy efforts, through diplomacy, development, and defense, are made stronger with women fully empowered and at the table being heard.

I am so pleased to have marked up, as you indicated, your refugee sanitation bill in our committee yesterday, and it passed with bipartisan support. And I look forward to continuing to partner with you and others on HFAC as we consider our priorities, and yours, as you have just dealt with. Of course, human rights is something that is on the very front burner for us on the committee also. So I thank you so very much.

Mr. Green, anything that you want to add?

Mr. GREEN. No, sir. I just appreciate the member bringing these to us. We look forward to the bills.

Chairman MEEKS. Thank you.

I now recognize—I am trying to see if I see him—Representative Garamendi. Is he with us?

Ms. STILES. No, sir. Not at the moment.

Chairman MEEKS. So who—I cannot see. Who else do we have with us today? Representative Case?

Mr. CASE. I'm here.

Chairman MEEKS. Who do we have?

Mr. CASE. Good to go?

Chairman MEEKS. Yes. Representative Case, you are now recognized.

#### **STATEMENT OF HON. ED CASE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF HAWAII**

Mr. CASE. Chair MEEKS, Mr. Green, Members of the committee, aloha from Honolulu, Hawai'i, Pacific Ocean. Thank you for the opportunity to again testify before the committee.

In my last Member Day testimony to this committee in December 2019, I highlighted the importance of the vast Pacific Islands region and urged this committee and Congress to pursue efforts to broaden and deepen our engagement in this critical part of the world.

A few months prior to that, I had joined several of my colleagues in co-founding the congressional Pacific Islands Caucus, the first-ever such organization of Members focused on this critical region. We followed with the introduction of H.R. 7797, our Boosting Long-Term U.S. Engagement in the Pacific Act, otherwise titled the BLUE Pacific Act, to establish a comprehensive long-term framework for U.S. foreign policy in the Pacific Islands.

Since then, the challenges and opportunities for our country and the Pacific Islands and the broader Indo-Pacific have grown far more acute and urgent.

To continue Congress' leadership in forging the best path, earlier this month we formally reconstituted our Pacific Islands Caucus, co-Chaired on a non-partisan basis by me; the dean of this house, Mr. Young; and Representatives Sherman, Bera, Chabot, and Wagner of this committee.

Today I return to again ask for your full support of our caucus and its goals, including our improved soon-to-be reintroduced BLUE Pacific Act. Our initiative focuses is on three essential pillars: security, development, and shared values.

It would expand diplomatic and development presence, increase maritime security cooperation and assistance, deepen and diversify trade, support regional economic and social development in areas like public health and education, invest in climate adaptation and climate-resilient infrastructure, promote shared values like press freedom and gender equality, and strengthen people-to-people relationships and civil society.

In naming this bill, we pay tribute to the concept of the BLUE Pacific embraced by leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum as a shared identity and platform for collective action. This legislation would integrate our efforts with the work of existing regional institutions and frameworks, including those of our like-minded allies and partners, such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan, and more.

Both our caucus and this legislation have been very well received by our allies and partners throughout the Indo-Pacific. We believe these initiatives are the responsible response by Congress to the significantly increased level of attention in Washington on the Pacific Islands in just the past few years.

Driving much of this increased interest is China's increased activity and influence in this region that has triggered alarm among our foreign policy and national security communities. Yet it would be a big mistake to characterize U.S. interests in the Pacific Islands as purely a response to current changing regional dynamics.

The United States is, and always has been, a Pacific nation. And as such, we share interests, values, and, most of all, a common destiny with the peoples and countries of this region.

We have goodwill and networks in the Pacific Islands built by decades of quiet and consistent engagement at all levels of American society, ranging from government to ordinary Americans. Through programs hosted by the Peace Corps and Hawai'i's own East-West Center, over the past 20 years in particular, the United States has contributed over 5 billion in assistance for the region. The idea that the U.S. is a recent newcomer to the Pacific could not be more wrong.

Nevertheless, a coordinated strategy of U.S. engagement in the Pacific Islands has never been more necessary. COVID-19 has devastated the region's travel and tourism economy, even as longstanding development challenges persist. Regionalism, long a hallmark of the Pacific, faces uncertainty and reasonable demands for reform to ensure all Pacific countries and voices are represented.

Above all, climate change looms over the future of the region as an existential threat to these island nations, their people, and their livelihoods.

Our initiatives in Congress are sending a clear message to the Pacific Islands that we stand with them in the face of these challenges, that the United States is a neighbor and partner to all those who share common aspirations for a regional order built on mutual assistance and benefit, free of coercion and fully respectful of democracy, human rights, and the sovereignty of all nations.

I sincerely look forward to working with the committee and its Members and staff all over again on increasing and sustaining U.S. engagement in the Pacific Islands.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Case follows:]

**Member Day Testimony to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs**

Representative Ed Case (HI-01)

Friday, March 26, 2021

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Chair Meeks, Ranking Member McCaul, members of the Committee:

Aloha from my office in Honolulu, Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to again testify before the Committee.

In my last Member Day testimony in December 2019, I highlighted the importance of the Pacific Islands region and urged this Committee and Congress to pursue efforts to broaden and deepen our engagement in this critical part of the world.

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We believe these initiatives are the responsible response by Congress to the significantly increased level of attention in Washington on the Pacific Islands in just the past few years. Driving much of this surging interest is China's increasing activity and influence in the region that has triggered alarm among our foreign policy and national security community.

Yet it would be a mistake to characterize U.S. interests in the Pacific Islands as purely a response to changing regional dynamics. The United States is a Pacific nation, and as such, we share interests, values and most of all a common destiny with the peoples and countries of this region.

We have goodwill and networks in the Pacific Islands built by decades of quiet and consistent engagement at all levels of American society, ranging from government to ordinary Americans through programs hosted by the Peace Corps and Hawaii's own East-West Center. Over the past 20 years, the United States has contributed over \$5 billion in assistance for the region. The idea that the U.S. is a recent newcomer to the Pacific could not be more wrong.

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Our initiatives are sending a clear message to the Pacific Islands that we stand with them in the face of these challenges, that the United States is a neighbor and partner to all those who share common aspirations for a regional order built on mutual assistance and benefit, free of coercion, and fully respectful of democracy, human rights and the sovereignty of all nations.

I look forward to working with the Committee and its members and staff on increasing and sustaining U.S. engagement in the Pacific Islands.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

[Pause.]

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Chairman, I think you might be unmuted.

Ms. STILES. I think we may be experiencing some technical difficulties with the Chair's account. If we could just pause for 1 second, so we can look into it.

[Pause.]

Mr. MALINOWSKI [presiding]. Hi, everyone. This is Congressman Malinowski. I think I may jump in here, just to move us along while we wait for Chairman Meeks to come back.

And so to do that, I wanted to thank Representative Case for your presentation, sir, and to also—and to recognize Representative Hill for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF HON. FRENCH HILL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARKANSAS**

Mr. HILL. Well, thank you for the time. I want to thank Chairman Meeks and Ranking Member McCaul, and my friend Dr. Green, and the Members of the committee, for giving those of us not serving on the House Foreign Affairs Committee an opportunity to visit on our priorities.

I appreciate the chance today to brief the committee about my resolution H.Res. 117, supporting Coptic Christians in Egypt, which has a diverse and bipartisan coalition of Members that co-sponsor it.

I would also like to give special thanks to my friend and Democratic lead on this measure, Foreign Affairs Committee member Dave Cicilline of Rhode Island. Currently, this bill has 17 co-sponsors. In the last Congress, my resolution had 71 co-sponsors, including 25 on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

I decided to introduce this legislation following a 2017 visit to Egypt. While preparing for the trip, visiting the country, and returning home, I repeatedly heard about the plight of Coptic Christians in Egypt. Although the Copts have been the victims of numerous terrorist attacks by groups like ISIS, what was most disturbing to me were the attacks against Copts carried out by their fellow Egyptians.

That is why on January 16, 2019, I originally introduced this resolution expressing support for Coptic Christians and religious liberty in Egypt. H.Res. 117 acknowledges the importance of the U.S.-Egypt partnership in advancing our common interests, recognizes Egypt's need for certain governmental reforms, and calls on the Egyptian government to end what has become a culture of impunity and makes examples by arresting, prosecuting, and convicting those responsible for attacks on Christians. It also calls on government to hold those local government officials accountable who fail to enforce the law.

In the Minya Province of Upper Egypt, in late November, a mother and her son were stabbed by a Muslim man while sitting out in front of their home after being told that Christians were not allowed outside. Luckily, they were not killed. Sadly, this is a persistent narrative in Minya.

In the 2018 and 2019 State Department reports on religious freedom in Egypt, they each mentioned Minya Province more than any other province in the country.

Also, Ramy Kamel, a Coptic Christian and founder of Coptic Christian Rights Organization, was arrested by Egyptian police and has been accused of numerous terrorism-related charges. It is also reported that he has undergone intensive interrogation and has been given no legal representation.

Unfortunately, cases like this in Egypt are becoming more numerous. Our country and our citizens over the generations have worked mightily to uphold the values and unalienable rights granted to us by God and enshrined in our founding documents.

We offer vocal support of free expression abroad, particularly in the form of advocacy for religious tolerance and freedom, the rule of law, human rights, education for women and minorities. These are fundamental tenets of our foreign policy.

Likewise, I have met with religious leaders from all across the Levant, from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jerusalem, with an eye toward better shaping American and allied support for Christians and other persecuted religious minorities.

In previous years, Pope Francis, together with the Grand Imam from Egypt's most important Al-Azhar Mosque, issued a message on human fraternity inviting, and I quote, "All persons who have faith in God and faith in human fraternity to unite and work together, so it may serve as a guide for future generations to advance a culture of mutual respect in the awareness of the great divine grace that makes all human beings brothers and sisters."

The public coming together of Catholicism and Islam is a powerful statement to all governments around the world, but particularly those in the Middle East, to support religious freedom and religious tolerance. This was on display recently for the whole world to see as Pope Francis toured ancient Mesopotamia, said Mass in Baghdad, and met with the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani.

I have great respect for Egyptian President el-Sisi, and I applaud the changes in message that he has made in the area of religious tolerance. He continues to say and do the right things at the top level of government. This includes having a good relationship with the Coptic Pope, attending Mass on multiple occasions, reconstructing churches that have been destroyed, constructing the largest Christian cathedral in the Middle East in the new administration center, and holding terrorists accountable for their atrocities.

However, since 1978, the United States has provided Egypt with what now totals over \$50 billion in military and \$30 billion in economic assistance. I believe there is more to do. As the fourth-highest receiver of annual American aid in the world, the U.S. Government must use the tools that we have to hold our good allies like Egypt to a higher standard, if they are to continue to receive our sense of aid and partnership.

It is in this regard that I believe one vehicle readily available to this committee is to highlight the U.S. Government's concern over the treatment of Coptic Christians in Egypt. And that is the resolution, H.Res. 117.

In conclusion, let's recall President Reagan's admonition as to our responsibility. He said, "Respect for human rights is not social work. It is not merely an act of compassion. It is the first obligation of government and the source of its legitimacy."



I thank my friends on House Foreign Affairs. I appreciate you, Chairman Meeks. And I appreciate the opportunity to spend a few minutes with you this afternoon. Thank you, and I yield back.  
[The prepared statement of Mr. Hill follows:]

**Congressman French Hill  
House Foreign Affairs Committee Member Day  
Written Testimony  
Friday, March 26, 2021  
3:25PM-3:35PM, WebEx**

Good Afternoon,

I would like to thank Chairman Meeks, Ranking Member McCaul, and fellow members of the Committee for this opportunity.

I appreciate the chance to testify in front of you today about my resolution, H.Res. 117, Supporting Coptic Christians in Egypt, which has a diverse and bipartisan coalition of members that cosponsor it.

I would also like to give special thanks to my friend and Democratic lead on H.Res. 117, Foreign Affairs Committee member, David Cicilline of Rhode Island.

Currently, this bill has 17 cosponsors; last Congress my resolution had 71 cosponsors, including 25 on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

I decided to introduce this legislation following a 2017 visit to Egypt. While preparing for the trip, visiting the country, and returning home, I repeatedly heard about the plight of the Coptic Christians in Egypt. Although the Copts have been victims of numerous terrorist attacks by groups like ISIS, what is most disturbing to me is the attacks against Copts carried out by their fellow Egyptians.

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In the Minya province in Upper Egypt, in late November, a mother and her son were stabbed by a Muslim man while sitting in front of their home after being told that Christians were not allowed outside. Luckily, they were not killed.<sup>1</sup> Sadly, this is a persistent narrative in Minya. The 2018 and 2019 State Department reports on religious freedom in Egypt mention Minya Province more than any other in the province in the country.

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<sup>1</sup> *Morning Star News*. "Coptic Christian Family Attacked in Upper Egypt: Adult Son in Intensive Care." Wednesday, November 20, 2019. <https://www.christianheadlines.com/blog/coptic-christian-family-attacked-in-upper-egypt-adult-son-in-intensive-care.html>

Also, Ramy Kamel, a Coptic Christian and founder of a Coptic Christian Rights organization, was arrested by Egyptian police and has been accused of numerous terrorism related charges. It is also reported that he has undergone “intensive interrogation” and has been given no legal representation.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, cases like this in Egypt are becoming more numerous.

Our country and our citizens over generations have worked mightily to uphold the values and unalienable rights granted to us by God above and enshrined in our founding documents, especially the vocal support of free expression abroad particularly in the form of advocacy for religious tolerance and freedom; the rule of law; human rights; education for women and minorities. These are fundamental tenets of our foreign policy.

Likewise, I’ve met with religious leaders from all across the Levant from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Jerusalem with an eye towards better shaping American and allied support of Christians and other persecuted religious minorities.

In previous years, Pope Francis together with the Grand Imam from Egypt’s important Al-Azhar Mosque, issued a message on Human Fraternity inviting “all persons who have faith in God and faith in human fraternity to unite and work together so that it may serve as a guide for future generations to advance a culture of mutual respect in the awareness of the great divine grace that makes all human beings brothers and sisters.”<sup>3</sup>

This public coming together of Catholicism and Islam is a powerful statement to all governments around the world, but particularly those in the Middle East, to support religious freedom and religious tolerance. This was on display recently for the world to see as Pope Francis toured ancient Mesopotamia, said Mass in Baghdad, and met with Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani.

I have great respect for Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, and I applaud the changes and message that he has made in the area of religious tolerance. He continues to say and do the right things at the top level of government. This includes having a good relationship with the Coptic Pope, attending Mass on multiple occasions, reconstructing churches, constructing the largest Christian Cathedral in the Middle East in the “new” administrative center, and holding terrorists accountable for their atrocities.

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<sup>2</sup> Mbakwe, Tola. *Premier Christianity*. “Christian activist facing terror related charges in Egypt.” <https://www.premierchristianity.com/News/World/Christian-activist-facing-terror-related-charges-in-Egypt>  
<sup>3</sup> <https://catholicoutlook.org/first-anniversary-of-document-on-human-fraternity/#:~:text=It%20is%20a%20document%20that,human%20beings%20brothers%20and%20sisters.>

However, since 1978, the United States has provided Egypt with what now totals over \$50 billion in military and \$30 billion in economic assistance.<sup>4</sup> I believe there is more to do, and as the fourth highest receiver of annual American aid in the world, the United States Government must use the tools we have to hold our allies, like Egypt, to a higher standard if they are to continue to receive our aid.

It is in that regard, that I believe one vehicle readily available to this committee to highlight the U.S. government's concern of the treatment of Coptic Christians in Egypt is my resolution, H.Res. 117.

Let's recall President Reagan's admonition as to our responsibility: "Respect for human rights is not social work; it is not merely an act of compassion. It is the first obligation of government and the source of its legitimacy."

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify to you this afternoon, and I look forward to working with you on this issue going forward.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-egypt/#:~:text=U.S.%20assistance%20to%20Egypt%20has,%2430%20billion%20in%20economic%20assistance.>

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you so much, Congressman Hill. And we very much look forward to working with you on Egypt and human rights in general. I very much appreciate those words from President Reagan. I think those speak for all of us.

I see Chairman Meeks has gotten back on. Welcome back, Chairman.

Chairman MEEKS [presiding]. Thank you. Thank you for stepping in. Technology. I thought something else was happening, but I did hear much of what Congressman Hill had to say. And like you, I just want to thank him. You know, I have known Congressman Hill for a while. I thank him for his leadership on the issue of protecting the rights and the safety of the Coptic Christians in Egypt.

And as you know, the Coptic community has been the victim of discrimination, harassment, and deadly violence, and I intend to keep this issue high on the agenda of the State Department. I am happy to work with my good friend, Representative Hill, as he moves forward this Congress on this important issue.

So thank you, French, for that. It was unfortunate I could not see you, but I could hear you.

Mr. HILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the time, and my best wishes.

Chairman MEEKS. Very good.

And I do not know whether I missed it, did Mr. Garamendi—was he able to join us? I know he was Chairing another hearing, but I know he wanted to be on. So I do not know whether or not he was able to join us.

Ms. STILES. He was not able to, sir.

Chairman MEEKS. Okay. So I think Mr. Hill was our last witness. So I want to thank all of you for testifying today, as well as all of the Members on the Foreign Affairs Committee. We appreciate the testimony, and we will consider them as the Foreign Affairs Committee considers its legislative priorities for next year.

Again, I hope everyone has had, and will have, a good weekend, and I now adjourn this hearing.

[Whereupon, at 3:36 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

**FULL COMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128**

**Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY), Chair**

March 26, 2021

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held virtually via Cisco WebEx. The meeting is available via live webcast on the Committee website at <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/>:

**DATE:** Friday, March 26, 2021

**TIME:** 3:00 p.m., EDT

**SUBJECT:** Member Day Hearing

**WITNESSES:** The Honorable Grace Meng (D-NY)  
The Honorable John Garamendi (D-CA)  
The Honorable Ed Case (D-HI)  
The Honorable French Hill (R-AR)

**By Direction of the Chair**

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day Friday Date 03/26/2021 Room Cisco WebEx

Starting Time 3:08 p.m. Ending Time 3:36 p.m.

Recesses 0 (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_) (\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_)

**Presiding Member(s)**

*Chairman Gregory W. Meeks  
Rep. Tom Malinowski*

*Check all of the following that apply:*

Open Session ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Televised ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Stenographic Record ☒

**TITLE OF HEARING:**

*Member Day Hearing*

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*See attached.*

**NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*N/A*

**HEARING WITNESSES:** Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☒ No

*(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)*

**STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD:** *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

*SFR - Sessions, Griffith*

**TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE** \_\_\_\_\_

or

**TIME ADJOURNED** 3:36 p.m.

  
Full Committee Hearing Coordinator

# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## FULL COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
	Brad Sherman, CA
	Albio Sires, NJ
	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
	Karen Bass, CA
	William Keating, MA
	David Cicilline, RI
	Ami Bera, CA
	Joaquin Castro, TX
	Dina Titus, NV
	Ted Lieu, CA
	Susan Wild, PA
	Dean Phillips, MN
	Ilhan Omar, MN
	Colin Allred, TX
	Andy Levin, MI
	Abigail Spanberger, VA
	Chrissy Houlahan, PA
X	Tom Malinowski, NJ
X	Andy Kim, NJ
	Sara Jacobs, CA
	Kathy Manning, NC
	Jim Costa, CA
	Juan Vargas, CA
	Vicente Gonzalez, TX
	Brad Schneider, IL

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
	Michael T. McCaul, TX
X	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
	Steve Chabot, OH
	Joe Wilson, SC
	Scott Perry, PA
	Darrell Issa, CA
	Adam Kinzinger, IL
	Lee Zeldin, NY
	Ann Wagner, MO
	Brian J. Mast, FL
X	Brian K. Fitzpatrick, PA
	Ken Buck, CO
	Tim Burchett, TN
X	Mark Green, TN
	Andy Barr, KY
	Greg Steube, FL
X	Dan Meuser, PA
	Claudia Tenney, NY
X	August Pfluger, TX
	Nicole Malliotakis, NY
	Peter Meijer, MI
	Ronny Jackson, TX
	Young Kim, CA
	Maria Elvira Salazar, FL



## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD

PETE SESSIONS  
17TH DISTRICT, TEXAS  
  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT  
AND REFORM  
  
RANKING MEMBER  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES  
  
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE,  
SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY  
  
COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY  
  
COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS AND OVERSIGHT



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-4317

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March 26, 2021

Chairman Meeks and Ranking Member McCaul, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee on the occasion of its annual "Member Day Hearing." I would like to address the decades long alliance between the United States and the Republic of Turkey. While there are a number of challenges in the US-Turkey bilateral relationship, I hope that the committee will take into consideration the importance of recognizing and advancing our common interests with our NATO ally, Turkey.

Turkey is of critical strategic importance to our interests in its region and beyond. Turkey stands out as a key actor in Black Sea, Caucasus, Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Mediterranean.

Turkey has the second largest military in the NATO alliance, and has been among the top five contributors to all NATO operations and activities. Turkey has made last ditch defense against Russian aggression in Syria and Libya. Iranian influence cannot be counterbalanced without Turkish efforts in the broader Middle East.


Turkey bears the brunt of the Syria conflict. They are taking care of 9 million Syrians on their own, more than the population of some European countries. All UN cross-border humanitarian operations are carried out through Turkey. Over the course of last five years, Turkey has provided thousands of overflight permissions for the D-ISIS efforts. Like us, they put troops in harm's way to defeat ISIS. Along with the US, Turkey serves as one of the four Framework Nations in the NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. Moreover, Turkey will host the Afghan Peace Talks in April 2021.

Turkey is among few allies and partners pursuing deepened defense partnership with Ukraine, despite intense Russian criticism. Turkey has always been vocal and firm in its stance against Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea.

On a personal note, energy is important to my home state of Texas. Turkey has emerged as the second largest importer of US LNG in Europe. This fits with our long-term strategy to decrease Europe's dependence on Russia, and benefits US strategic and commercial interests.

No matter how deep our disagreements are, Turkey has always been a long-standing and valued ally. Secretary Blinken and NSA Sullivan reaffirmed this out loud. The candid and constructive dialogue with Turkey is the only way forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these brief comments on the bilateral relationship with Turkey. I look forward to working with the Committee on Foreign Affairs to this effect.

  
Pete Sessions  
Member of Congress

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Congressman H. Morgan Griffith  
9<sup>th</sup> District of Virginia  
Written Testimony  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
Friday, March 26, 2021

Thank you for holding this hearing today, I appreciate the Committee's willingness to provide me the opportunity to draw attention to pressing foreign policy issues regarding Congress's constitutional role in waging war.

This year will be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) of 2001. The so-called "forever war", enabled by this resolution, has put our youngest soldiers in the peculiar situation of fighting in a conflict that began before they were alive.

Specifically, I hope that this Committee, and Congress as a whole, will debate and consider the repeal of obsolete AUMFs and revisions to previous resolutions.

The 2001 and 2002 AUMF resolutions used to justify American military involvement are broad and have been applied in several situations where the connection to the circumstances of the original AUMF seems to have been interpreted in the most liberal manner.

Any new or replacement AUMFs should have a narrowly defined scope of operations and reflect the will of Congress.

It is also important for any new AUMFs to include a sunset date. This provision will force periodic debate and ensure that Members of Congress must articulate firm goals for any military activity. I am hopeful that more clearly defined objectives will lead to purposeful resolutions that are tailored to the country's most compelling needs.

Currently, only 57 of the 435 Members of the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress have had an opportunity to vote on the 2001 AUMF. This is a shameful abdication of our responsibility; I do not believe that

a vote from one Congress should touch off a forever war. Amendments to the War Powers Act may be another area of fruitful bipartisan cooperation.

I was pleased to participate in debates and help pass War Powers resolutions during the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress on the use of U.S. troops in conjunction with Saudi forces in Yemen. I am however still frustrated that Congress did not debate a War Powers resolution or pass an AUMF when our soldiers were initially deployed to Yemen. I look forward to working with you to take back Congress's war powers and reinforce our Article I prerogatives.

Congress should not take the easy way out. Our constituents deserve a deliberative and open debate carried out by a varied group of elected representatives, not an abrupt presidential announcement of hostilities justified by executive branch lawyers. I believe we were elected to take tough votes and to decide the important matters of state such as war and peace. Thank you.

**CONGRESSMAN JOHN GARAMENDI (D-CA)**  
HFAC Member Day  
March 26, 2021

**Peace Corps Reauthorization**

**CJG:** Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify before the full Committee today. I am here to speak on my "Peace Corps Reauthorization Act" (H.R. 1456) and respectfully request that you schedule my bipartisan bill for a hearing and markup.

In addition, I request that you include my H.R. 1456 in any upcoming hearing with the Director of the Peace Corps. I would personally like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for cosponsoring this bipartisan reauthorization bill again this Congress. The bill is endorsed by the National Peace Corps Association and the National Whistleblower Center.

Like successive generations of young Americans, my wife Patti and I answered President John F. Kennedy's call and served in the Peace Corps in Ethiopia from 1966-1968. Since the establishment of the Peace Corps in 1961, more than 240,000 American volunteers have served in 142 countries around the world. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were nearly 8,000 Peace Corps volunteers serving in 61 countries. Today, Peace Corps volunteers stand ready to return to their crucial work once conditions are safe to do so.

However, Congress last reauthorized the Peace Corps in 1999 (Public Law 106-30), which expired at the end of fiscal year 2003. Now more than ever, Congress must support the Peace Corps' mission and realize President Kennedy's vision of generations of young Americans, ready to serve their nation and make the world a better place.

Our "Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2021" would do just that by providing additional federal resources to better support current, returning, and former Peace Corps volunteers by:

- Authorizing \$600 million in annual funding by fiscal year 2025 for the Peace Corps to support the goal of deploying 10,000 volunteers worldwide. Congress has provided flat funding at \$410 million in recent years.

- Expediting re-enrollment of volunteers whose service ended involuntarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic and allows volunteers to resume in-country service, once safe and prudent to do so.
- Directing the Peace Corps to provide benefits to volunteers whose service ended involuntarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Guaranteeing 3 months of health insurance coverage for returned volunteers paid by the Peace Corps, with the option to renew for additional 3 months at individual expense. Currently, the Peace Corps only offers automatic enrollment for 2 months of paid health insurance coverage, with the option to renew for another month at individual expense.
- Extending whistleblower and anti-retaliatory protections that currently apply to Peace Corps contractors to Peace Corps volunteers, including protections against reprisals by any Peace Corps employee, volunteer supervisor, or outside contractor.
- Extending Peace Corps volunteers' 12-month hiring preference for most federal job openings during any federal hiring freeze, government shutdown, public health emergency (such as COVID-19 pandemic), or while a volunteer receives federal worker's compensation benefits for any injury during their Peace Corps service.
- Directing the Peace Corps and U.S. State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security to update plans and protocols for Peace Corps volunteer security support and protection in foreign countries.
- Increasing the federal workers' compensation rate for all Peace Corps volunteers injured or disabled during their service from a GS-7 to a GS-11 level, the same rate provided for Peace Corps volunteers with dependent children under current law.

As co-chair of the Congressional Peace Corps Caucus, I am proud to continue working in support of the Peace Corps' mission, its volunteers, and the indelible impact their service has on the lives of so many. I hope to work with you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member McCaul, and other Members of the Committee to advance the "Peace Corps Reauthorization Act" this Congress.

So, Mr. Chairman, will you please commit to working with us and holding a hearing?

Thank you again for allowing me to share my priorities with the full Committee today.

