

Public Law 99-314
99th Congress

Joint Resolution

May 20, 1986
[S.J. Res. 323]

To designate May 21, 1986, as "National Andrei Sakharov Day".

- Whereas Andrei Sakharov has earned world-wide admiration and respect for his courageous and energetic efforts to secure fundamental human freedoms for the peoples of the Soviet Union, including those rights guaranteed in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe signed at Helsinki, Finland on August 1, 1975;
- Whereas Andrei Sakharov has been awarded the 1975 Nobel Peace Prize for "his love of truth and strong belief in the inviolability of human beings . . . his courageous defense of the human spirit . . ." and for his life which has made him "the conscience of mankind";
- Whereas Andrei Sakharov, due to his selfless work for human rights and world peace, has been illegally banished by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the closed city of Gorky, where on May 21, 1986, he will spend his sixty-fifth birthday in almost total isolation;
- Whereas Andrei Sakharov has been subjected to cruel and unusual medical procedures by the Soviet authorities when he conducted hunger strikes to protest repeated denials of his wife's, Elena Bonner's, request to be permitted to go to the West for medical treatment;
- Whereas the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has undertaken extraordinary measures, including confiscation of personal and professional correspondence and intensive physical and electronic surveillance, to isolate Andrei Sakharov and Elena Bonner in Gorky;
- Whereas the Soviet Union as signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has committed itself to respect the rights to freedom of movement and of residence within the borders of each state as well as the right to leave one's own country and return to it;
- Whereas the Soviet Union and other signatories of the Helsinki Final Act stated their desire "to contribute to the strengthening of peace and understanding among peoples and to the spiritual enrichment of the human personality" and were "conscious that . . . contacts between people, and the solution of humanitarian problems will contribute to the attainment of these aims," further made it their objective "to facilitate freer movement and contacts, individually and collectively, whether privately or officially, among persons, institutions and organizations of the participating states, and to contribute to the solution of the humanitarian problems that arise in that connexion";
- Whereas the participating states of the Helsinki Final Act are convened in Bern, Switzerland, at the Human Contacts Experts Meeting inter alia to discuss implementation of those Helsinki Final Act provisions concerning the resolution in a positive and

humanitarian spirit questions related to family visits, the reunification of families, binational marriage and promotion of other personal and professional contacts between people and between organizations; and

Whereas Andrei Sakharov continues to advocate full compliance by all signatory states with the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That May 21, 1986, is designated "National Andrei Sakharov Day" and that the President of the United States is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

SEC. 2. The President of the United States is authorized and requested to urge the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to permit Andrei Sakharov and Elena Bonner freely to choose their place of residence.

Approved May 20, 1986.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 323:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 132 (1986):

Apr. 29, considered and passed Senate.

May 12, considered and passed House.