SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 143—RECOGNIZING THE THREATS TO FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND EXPRESSION AROUND THE WORLD AND REAFFIRMING FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AS A PRIORITY IN THE EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY ON MAY 3, 2013

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

S. RES. 143

Whereas Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted at Paris December 10, 1948, states that ''everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers'';

Whereas, in 1993, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed May 3 of each year as World Press Freedom Day to celebrate the fundamental principles of freedom of the press, to evaluate freedom of the press around the world, to defend the media from attacks on its independence, and to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession;

Whereas 2013 is the 20th anniversary of World Press Freedom Day, which focuses on the theme ''Safe to Speak: Securing Freedom of Expression in All Media'';

Whereas the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act of 2009 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note; Public Law 111–166), which was passed by unanimous consent in the Senate and signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2010, expanded the examination of freedom of the press around the world in the annual human rights report of the Department of State;

Whereas, according to Freedom House, the percentage of people in the world who live in countries with a free media environment fell to 14 percent in 2012, the lowest percentage in more than a decade;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, 88 journalists and 47 citizen journalists were killed in 2012 in connection with their collection and dissemination of news and information, an increase of 33 percent and 840 percent, respectively, compared to 2011;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, the five deadliest countries for journalists in 2012 were Syria, Somalia, Pakistan, Mexico, and Brazil;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 593 journalists have been murdered since 1992 without the perpetrators of those crimes facing punishment;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, the five countries with the highest number of unsolved journalist murders since 2003 as a percentage of the population of that country are Iraq, Somalia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Colombia;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, 879 journalists and 144 citizen journalists were arrested in 2012;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, there were a record 232 journalists in prison worldwide on December 1, 2012;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, the five countries in which the most journalists are imprisoned are Turkey, China, Eritrea, Iran, and Syria;

Whereas the abuse of anti-terrorism and cybercrime laws to incarcerate journalists and suppress freedom of the press occurred on numerous occasions abroad in 2012;

Whereas freedom of the press is a key component of democratic governance, the activism of civil society, and socio-economic development;

Whereas, in the ongoing political transition of Burma, notable progress was made in advancing freedom of the press in 2012, although certain problems remain; and

Whereas freedom of the press enhances public accountability, transparency, and participation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses concern about the threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2013;

(2) commends journalists around the world for the essential role they play in promoting government accountability, defending democratic activity, and strengthening civil society, despite threats to their safety;

(3) pays tribute to the journalists who have lost their lives carrying out their work and calls on governments abroad to thoroughly investigate and seek to resolve all cases while ensuring the protection of witnesses;

(4) condemns all actions around the world that suppress freedom of the press;

(5) reaffirms the centrality of freedom of the press to efforts by the United States Government to support democracy, mitigate conflict, and promote good governance domestically and around the world; and

(6) calls on the President and the Secretary of State—

(A) to improve the means by which the United States Government rapidly identifies, publicizes, and responds to threats against freedom of the press around the world; and

(B) to highlight the issue of threats against freedom of the press year-round.

SENATE RESOLUTION 144—CONCERNING THE ONGOING CONFLICT IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO AND THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS SUPPORTING LONG-TERM PEACE, STABILITY, AND OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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

S. RES. 144

Whereas, since the 1990s, an estimated 5,000,000 people have died due to repeated cycles of conflict, lack of governance, and atrocities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly those in North and South Kivu provinces, and, since the beginning of 2012, more than 2,000,000 people have been displaced;

Whereas the United Nations and humanitarian groups have reported staggering rates of sexual violence indicating tens of thousands of cases perpetrated by security forces of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and non-state armed groups, which continue to operate with nearly total impunity;

Whereas human rights defenders in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been subject to intimidation and attack;

Whereas the Democratic Republic of the Congo's wealth of natural resources, including minerals, have been a key driver of instability and violence;

Whereas the deeply flawed November 2011 presidential election in the Democratic Republic of the Congo presented significant political, economic, and social challenges, and provincial and local elections still have not been conducted despite plans to hold such elections in 2012;

Whereas the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains subject to recurring conflict despite one of the world's longest-running, largest, and most expensive international peacekeeping operations and extensive bilateral and multilateral efforts to address longstanding humanitarian crises, forge lasting peace, and pursue security sector reform and accountability;

Whereas members of civil society and political parties from both the majority and the opposition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo created the National Preparatory Committee (Comité National Préparatoire or CNP) to lay the groundwork for convening a national forum and dialogue with the goal of putting an end to the multifaceted crisis that afflicts the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Whereas, on November 15, 2012, the United Nations Group of Experts provided compelling evidence that the crisis in eastern Congo had been fueled and exacerbated by regional actors, including through provision of significant military and logistical assistance and of operational and political support to the armed group known as the M23;

Whereas the United Nations and United States Government have imposed sanctions on the M23 and its leaders for human rights atrocities including rape, massacres, and the recruitment and physical and psychological torture of child soldiers;

Whereas, on March 18, 2013, International Criminal Court (ICC) indictee and leader of a faction of the M23 rebel group, Bosco Ntaganda, turned himself in to the United States Embassy in Kigali, asking to be transferred to the ICC in The Hague, where he voluntary surrendered on March 22, 2013;

Whereas the Lord's Resistance Army continues to perpetrate attacks against civilian populations in affected areas of northeastern Congo, creating widespread insecurity and displacement;

Whereas the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and 9 other countries on February 24, 2013, signed the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework that provides for a comprehensive approach to the ongoing conflict;

Whereas the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2098 on March 28, 2013, extending the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission (MONUSCO) and authorizing the creation of an intervention brigade tasked with neutralizing armed groups; and

Whereas, on March 18, 2013, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon appointed former President of Ireland and High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, to serve as Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's commitment and leadership to resolving the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and his appointment of Mary Robinson as United Nations Special Envoy to the Great Lakes;

(2) supports the commitments agreed to by the signatories of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (in this resolution, the ''Framework''), and encourages them to work closely with the United Nations, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Southern African Development Community, as guarantors of

the Framework, and the United Nations Special Envoy, MONUSCO, and relevant international bodies and governments to develop, implement, and enforce a comprehensive peace process for the region;

(3) notes that the adoption of the Framework, the appointment of Mary Robinson as United Nations Special Envoy to the Great Lakes, and the expanded MONUSCO mandate provide an opportunity to make meaningful and sustained progress toward ending the recurrent cycles of violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially in eastern Congo;

(4) urges the signatories of the Framework and the international community to engage and consult with representatives of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and civil society representatives engaged in the ongoing effort to convene an inclusive national forum and dialogue;

(5) urges the President to appoint a Special Envoy to the Great Lakes in the near-term in order to represent the United States in international and regional efforts to end the conflict and secure sustainable peace, stability, and safety for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by—

(A) working with United Nations Special Envoy Mary Robinson and the broader international community to promote a transparent and inclusive process to implement the regional and national commitments under the Framework, including the development of clear benchmarks for progress and appropriate follow-on measures;

(B) strengthening international efforts to mobilize and support justice for victims and accountability for perpetrators of sexual and gender based violence and other human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(C) expanding efforts to develop conflict-free and responsible mining and supply chains for the region's vast mineral resources, in coordination with other government, private industry, and international and local organizations;

(D) coordinating with international and regional partners to expand unhindered access to life-saving humanitarian assistance to populations in need, particularly displaced persons and conflict-affected communities;

(E) pressing for fulfillment of the commitment of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as other regional actors, to ending the threat posed by the M23, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), and other armed groups in the Great Lakes region, and to facilitate enhanced coordination of regional efforts to counter these groups; and

(F) mobilizing and facilitating United States and international support for electoral reforms in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the goal of encouraging free, fair, and credible provincial and local elections in the near-term, and presidential elections in 2016;

(6) calls on the President to support the creation of a World Bank Fund for the Great Lakes Region, as part of a coordinated international investment and development strategy aimed at deepening regional economic integration and stability and leveraging reform;

(7) calls on the President, in close coordination with international and regional partners, to work with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to develop and implement recommendations to improve accountability for serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including by considering imposition of sanctions authorized under section 1284 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112–239; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note);

(8) calls on governments of the Great Lakes region of Africa to immediately halt and prevent any and all forms of support to non-state armed groups, including support provided by individuals independent of government policy;

(9) calls on all relevant nations, including destination and transit countries, to increase cooperation on ending the illicit trade in conflict minerals, wildlife, and wildlife parts, which continues to fuel and fund violence and to deprive citizens of economic opportunity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the broader region;

(10) calls on the signatories of the Framework to cooperate in the arrest and prosecution of those responsible for violating international humanitarian law and for serious human rights violations, including gender-based violence;

(11) calls on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to engage in meaningful and inclusive electoral reforms, prepare and hold impartially administered local and provincial elections as soon as technically possible, continue to participate in ongoing efforts to provide a platform for inclusive dialogue within the Democratic Republic of the Congo to address critical internal political issues, and strengthen processes of state institution building;

(12) calls on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in coordination with the international community, to undertake significant security sector reform, which is a necessary component for lasting stability, and renewed disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) efforts that ensure that any rebel troops, especially commanders, responsible for human rights violations are held accountable and not reintegrated into the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC); and

(13) urges the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to improve efforts to protect civilians from armed groups, in cooperation with MONUSCO and the African Union's Regional Cooperation Initiative on the LRA.

SENATE RESOLUTION 145—PROMOTING MINORITY HEALTH AWARENESS AND SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH IN APRIL 2013 TO BRING ATTENTION TO THE HEALTH DISPARITIES FACED BY MINORITY POPULATIONS SUCH AS AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES, ASIANS, BLACKS OR AFRICAN AMERICANS, HISPANICS OR LATINOS, AND NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDERS

Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 145

Whereas in 2011, the Department of Health and Human Services released the ''National Stakeholder Strategy for Achieving Health Equity'' and the ''Disparities action Plan'' to reduce health care disparities in the United States;

Whereas a recent analysis estimates that the economy of the United States loses an estimated $309,000,000,000 a year due to the direct and indirect costs of health disparities;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services has identified 6 main categories in which racial and ethnic minorities experience the most disparate access to health care and health outcomes, including infant mortality, cancer screening and management, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, HIV and AIDS infection, and immunizations;

Whereas African-American women are more than twice as likely to die of cervical cancer than White women and are more likely to die of breast cancer than women of any other racial or ethnic group;

Whereas the rate of death from coronary heart disease is 30 percent higher among African Americans than among Whites;

Whereas the death rate from stroke is 50 percent higher among African Americans than among Whites;

Whereas in 2012, as compared to non-Hispanic Whites living in Hawaii, Native Hawaiians had more than twice the rate of medically-diagnosed diabetes and were 5.7 times more likely to die of diabetes;

Whereas compared to non-Hispanic White men, African American men are 9.5 times more likely to die of AIDS and Hispanic men are 2.5 times more likely to die of AIDS;

Whereas in 2010, 84 percent of children born with HIV infection belonged to minority groups;

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services has identified diseases of the heart, malignant neoplasm, unintentional injuries, diabetes, and cerebrovascular disease as some of the leading causes of death among American Indians and Alaska Natives;

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives die at higher rates than other people in the United States from tuberculosis, diabetes, unintentional injuries, and suicide; and

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives have a life expectancy that is 5.2 years shorter than the life expectancy of the overall population of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports the goals and ideals of National Minority Health Month in April 2013 to bring attention to the severe health disparities faced by minority populations such as American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

SENATE RESOLUTION 146—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF MAY 12 THROUGH MAY 18, 2013, AS ''NATIONAL POLICE WEEK''

Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. COONS, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BURR, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 146

Whereas, in 1962, John Fitzgerald Kennedy proclaimed May 15 to be ''Peace Officers Memorial Day'', and designated the calendar week in which May 15 falls as ''National Police Week'';

Whereas law enforcement officers are charged with pursuing justice and protecting communities in the United States;

Whereas State and local police officers, sheriffs, and other law enforcement officers across the United States serve with dignity and integrity;

Whereas law enforcement officers serve as first responders to natural disasters such as Hurricane Isaac and Hurricane Sandy;

Whereas law enforcement officers serve as first responders to terrorist attacks such as