

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 530

Calling on President George W. Bush and other leaders attending the 2006 Group of Eight (G–8) Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia, to engage in a frank dialogue with the President of Russia concerning actions of the Government of the Russian Federation that appear inconsistent with the Group’s objectives of protecting global security, economic stability, and democracy, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 14, 2006

Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. DODD, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. FRIST) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Calling on President George W. Bush and other leaders attending the 2006 Group of Eight (G–8) Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia, to engage in a frank dialogue with the President of Russia concerning actions of the Government of the Russian Federation that appear inconsistent with the Group’s objectives of protecting global security, economic stability, and democracy, and for other purposes.

Whereas the leaders of 6 major industrialized democracies including France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, gathered in 1975 for a summit meeting in Rambouillet, France, and for annual

meetings thereafter under a rotating presidency known as the Group of Six (G-6);

Whereas the G-6 was established based on the mutual interest of its members in promoting economic stability, global security, and democracy;

Whereas, in 1976, membership of the G-6 was expanded to include Canada;

Whereas the members of the G-7 share a commitment to promote security, economic stability, and democracy in their respective nations and around the world;

Whereas Russia was integrated into the Group in 1998 at the behest of President William Jefferson Clinton as a gesture of appreciation to then-President of Russia Boris Yeltsin for pursuing reforms and assuming a neutral position with respect to the eastward expansion of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO);

Whereas, in 2002, Russia was selected to hold the rotating presidency of the G-8 and to host the Summit of the G-8 in 2006;

Whereas the official G-8 statement issued on June 26, 2002, in Kananaskis, Canada regarding the selection of Russia as host of the 2006 Summit stated that the decision reflected “the remarkable economic and democratic transformation that has occurred in Russia in recent years and in particular under the leadership of President Putin”;

Whereas in the intervening 4 years since Russia was selected to host the 2006 G-8 Summit, the Government of the Russian Federation has pursued policies that raise serious concerns about the commitment of the Government

of the Russian Federation to upholding democratic values both at home and abroad;

Whereas the United States Department of State 2005 Country Report on Human Rights Practices noted that trends in Russia, including the “centralization of power in the executive branch . . . continuing corruption and selectivity in enforcement of the law, political pressure on the judiciary, and harassment of some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) [have] resulted in an erosion of the accountability of government leaders to the people” in Russia;

Whereas, in 2005, the independent non-governmental organization Freedom House reclassified Russia from “partly free” to “not free” in its global survey of political rights and civil liberties;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has placed onerous restrictions and monitoring requirements on non-profit organizations operating in Russia that limit the ability of both Russians and non-Russians to create a vibrant civil society in the country;

Whereas the freedom of the media in Russia has been seriously compromised due to the Government of the Russian Federation’s continuing control and censorship of major mass media outlets and efforts to obstruct the reporting of independent journalists;

Whereas regulators from the Ministry of Culture of the Government of the Russian Federation have reportedly threatened radio stations with revocation of their broadcast licenses if they continue airing material from the Voice of America (VOA) and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), thereby precipitating the largest de-

crease in the number of outlets for VOA and RFE/RL reporting since the end of the Cold War;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has sought to interfere in the electoral processes and democratic governance of neighboring countries including Georgia and Ukraine;

Whereas Russia was the only member of the G–8 to applaud the outcome of fraudulent presidential elections in Belarus that were characterized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as evidencing “a disregard for the basic rights of freedom of assembly, association, and expression”;

Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom and other monitoring organizations have reported increased evidence of racism, anti-Semitism, nationalism, and xenophobia among segments of Russian society;

Whereas, in late 2005, Gazprom, a company majority owned and operated by the Government of the Russian Federation, insisted on a more than four-fold increase in the price charged for natural gas sold to Ukraine and subsequently shut off gas supplies to Ukraine, causing cascading energy shortages in many countries throughout Europe;

Whereas there have been interruptions in the supply by Russia of energy to Georgia and Moldova;

Whereas the March 2006 report of the Independent Task Force on Russia of the Council on Foreign Relations stated that “to protect the credibility of the G–8 at a time when many are questioning Russia’s chairmanship, the United States should make clear that this role does

not exempt Russian policies and actions from critical scrutiny”;

Whereas the United States recognizes and applauds the proud history of achievement, creativity, and sacrifice of the people of Russia;

Whereas the United States seeks the development of Russia as a strong, responsible, democratic partner in promoting global peace and security; and

Whereas the United States believes that both the people of Russia and the Government of the Russian Federation will be shackled in their efforts to build a strong society domestically and contribute to the work of the international community so long as the Government of the Russian Federation fails to fully embrace the values of democracy: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

2 (1) in order to preserve the integrity of the G—
3 8 as a forum of the leading industrialized democ-
4 racies of the world, President George W. Bush and
5 other heads of state attending the G–8 Summit
6 should explicitly, frankly, and honestly engage Rus-
7 sian Federation President Vladimir Putin in a dia-
8 logue about the anti-democratic behavior of the Gov-
9 ernment of the Russian Federation;

10 (2) the United States and other democratic
11 countries should reaffirm their support for civic and
12 non-governmental organizations working to promote
13 democracy and the rule of law in Russia;

1 (3) the Government of the Russian Federation
2 should take action to ensure that it guarantees the
3 full range of civil and political rights to its citizens,
4 as it is obligated to do under the International Cov-
5 enant on Civil and Political Rights;

6 (4) consistent with its obligations under the
7 International Covenant, the Government of the Rus-
8 sian Federation should take steps to cease its inter-
9 ference with foreign news organizations, including
10 the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio
11 Liberty;

12 (5) the Government of the Russian Federation
13 should take action to combat rising racism, anti-
14 Semitism, and xenophobia in Russian society; and

15 (6) the United States and countries of the G-
16 8 should reaffirm their support for new democracies
17 on the borders of Russia and, where applicable, ex-
18 pedite their integration into Euro-Atlantic institu-
19 tions to provide a bulwark for democracy in eastern
20 Europe and the Caucasus.

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