Public Law 101-341
101st Congress

## Joint Resolution

To designate August 1, 1990, as "Helsinki Human Rights Day".

July 31, 1990
[S.J. Res. 339]

Whereas August 1, 1990, is the fifteenth anniversary of the signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) (hereafter in this preamble referred to as the "Helsinki accords");

Whereas on August 1, 1975, the Helsinki accords were agreed to by the Governments of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, the Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Yugoslavia;

Whereas the participating States have committed themselves to balanced progress in all areas of the Helsinki accords;

Whereas the Helsinki accords recognize the inherent relationship between respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the attainment of genuine security;

Whereas the Helsinki accords also express the commitment of the participating States to "respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion";

Whereas the Helsinki accords also express the commitment of the participating States to guarantee the effective exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms which derive from the inherent dignity of humanity and are essential for the free and full development of that dignity;

Whereas the participating States have committed themselves to "protect and create the conditions for the promotion of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities on their territory," as well as to "respect the free exercise of rights by persons belonging to such minorities and ensure their full equality with others";

Whereas the Helsinki accords also express the commitment of the participating States in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms to "act in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and to "fulfill their obligations as set forth in the international declarations and agreements in this field, including inter alia International Covenants on Human Rights, by which they may be bound";

Whereas the participating States have committed themselves to "ensure that their laws, regulations, practices and policies conform with their obligations under international law and are

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brought into harmony with the provisions of the Declaration of Principles and other CSCE commitments";

Whereas the participating States have committed themselves to "respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination, acting at all times in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with the relevant norms of international law, including those relating to territorial integrity of States";

Whereas the participating States have recognized that respect for human rights is an essential aspect for the protection of the environment and for economic prosperity;

Whereas the participating States have committed themselves to respect fully the right of everyone to leave any country, including their own, and to return to their country;

Whereas the participating States have made it their aim 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 connection";

Whereas the Helsinki accords also express the commitment of the participating States to "facilitate the freer and wider dissemination of information of all kinds, to encourage cooperation in the field of information and the exchange of information with other countries";

Whereas the dramatic changes which have occurred within the last year in many signatory States have brought the human rights promises of Helsinki closer to fruition;

Whereas, despite significant improvements, all participating States have not yet fully implemented their obligations under Principle VII of the Helsinki accords to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, and under Basket III of the Helsinki accords to promote free movement of people, ideas and information;

Whereas on January 19, 1989, representatives from the signatory States agreed on the Concluding Document of the Vienna Follow-Up Meeting, a document which has added clarity and precision to the obligations undertaken by the States in signing the Helsinki accords;

Whereas by agreeing to the Concluding Document, the signatory States "reaffirmed their commitment to the CSCE process and underlined its essential role in increasing confidence, in opening up new ways for cooperation, in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus strengthening international security";

Whereas the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe of the thirty-five signatory States of the Helsinki accords has made major contributions to the positive developments in Eastern and Central Europe, including greater respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals and groups; and

Whereas the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe provides an excellent framework for the further development of genuine security and cooperation among the participating States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That—

(1) August 1, 1990, the fifteenth anniversary of the signing of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (hereinafter referred to as the "Helsinki accords") is designated as "Helsinki Human Rights Day";

(2) the President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation reasserting the American commitment to full implementation of the human rights and humanitarian provisions of the Helsinki accords, urging all signatory nations to abide by their obligations under the Helsinki accords, and encouraging the people of the United States to join the President and Congress in observance of the Helsinki Human Rights Day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities;

(3) the President is further requested to continue his efforts to achieve full implementation of the human rights and humanitarian provisions of the Helsinki accords by raising the issue of noncompliance on the part of any signatory nation which may be in violation;

(4) the President is further requested to convey to all signatories of the Helsinki accords that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is a vital element of further progress in the ongoing Helsinki process; and

(5) the President is further requested, in view of the considerable progress made to date, to develop new proposals to advance the human rights objectives of the Helsinki process, and in so doing address the major problems that remain, including the question of self-determination of peoples.

SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Senate is directed to transmit copies of this joint resolution to the President, the Secretary of State, and the Ambassadors of the thirty-four Helsinki signatory nations.

Approved July 31, 1990.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 339:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 136 (1990):
June 28, considered and passed Senate.
July 26, considered and passed House.