

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. J. RES. 48

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 6, 2000

Referred to the Committee on International Relations

JOINT RESOLUTION

Calling upon the President to issue a proclamation recognizing the 25th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act.

Whereas August 1, 2000, is the 25th anniversary of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), renamed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in January 1995 (in this joint resolution referred to as the “Helsinki Final Act”);

Whereas the Helsinki Final Act, for the first time in the history of international agreements, accorded human rights the status of a fundamental principle in regulating international relations;

Whereas during the Communist era, members of nongovernmental organizations, such as the Helsinki Monitoring Groups in Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Georgia, and Armenia and similar groups in Czechoslovakia and Poland, sacrificed their personal freedom and even their lives in

their courageous and vocal support for the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act;

Whereas the United States Congress contributed to advancing the aims of the Helsinki Final Act by creating the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe to monitor and encourage compliance with provisions of the Helsinki Final Act;

Whereas in the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the participating states declared, “Human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthright of all human beings, are inalienable and are guaranteed by law. Their protection and promotion is the first responsibility of government”;

Whereas in the 1991 Document of the Moscow Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE, the participating states “categorically and irrevocably declare[d] that the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension of the CSCE are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned”;

Whereas in the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the participating states committed themselves “to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government of our nations”;

Whereas the 1999 Istanbul Charter for European Security and Istanbul Summit Declaration note the particular challenges of ending violence against women and children as well as sexual exploitation and all forms of trafficking in human beings, strengthening efforts to combat corruption, eradicating torture, reinforcing efforts to end dis-

crimination against Roma and Sinti, and promoting democracy and respect for human rights in Serbia;

Whereas the main challenge facing the participating states remains the implementation of the principles and commitments contained in the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE documents adopted on the basis of consensus;

Whereas the participating states have recognized that economic liberty, social justice, and environmental responsibility are indispensable for prosperity;

Whereas the participating states have committed themselves to promote economic reforms through enhanced transparency for economic activity with the aim of advancing the principles of market economies;

Whereas the participating states have stressed the importance of respect for the rule of law and of vigorous efforts to fight organized crime and corruption, which constitute a great threat to economic reform and prosperity;

Whereas OSCE has expanded the scope and substance of its efforts, undertaking a variety of preventive diplomacy initiatives designed to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict within and among the participating states;

Whereas the politico-military aspects of security remain vital to the interests of the participating states and constitute a core element of OSCE's concept of comprehensive security;

Whereas the OSCE has played an increasingly active role in civilian police-related activities, including training, as an integral part of OSCE's efforts in conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation; and

Whereas the participating states bear primary responsibility
for raising violations of the Helsinki Final Act and other
OSCE documents: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That Congress calls upon the President to—

4 (1) issue a proclamation—

5 (A) recognizing the 25th anniversary of the
6 signing of the Final Act of the Conference on
7 Security and Cooperation in Europe;

8 (B) reasserting the commitment of the
9 United States to full implementation of the
10 Helsinki Final Act;

11 (C) urging all signatory states to abide by
12 their obligations under the Helsinki Final Act;
13 and

14 (D) encouraging the people of the United
15 States to join the President and the Congress
16 in observance of this anniversary with appro-
17 priate programs, ceremonies, and activities; and

18 (2) convey to all signatory states of the Hel-
19 sinki Final Act that respect for human rights and
20 fundamental freedoms, democratic principles, eco-
21 nomic liberty, and the implementation of related
22 commitments continue to be vital elements in pro-
23 moting a new era of democracy, peace, and unity in

- 1 the region covered by the Organization for Security
- 2 and Cooperation in Europe.

Passed the Senate July 27, 2000.

Attest:

GARY SISCO,
Secretary.