

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 269

Expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to United States relations with the Russian Federation, given the Russian Federation's conduct in Chechnya, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 9, 2000

Mr. HELMS submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to United States relations with the Russian Federation, given the Russian Federation's conduct in Chechnya, and for other purposes.

Whereas the Senate of the United States unanimously passed Senate Resolution 262 on February 24th, 2000, to condemn the indiscriminate use of force by the Government of the Russian Federation against the people of Chechnya, to prompt peace negotiations between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of Chechnya led by elected President Aslan Maskhadov, and to prompt the Government of the Russian Federation to immediately grant international organizations full and unimpeded access in Chechnya and the surrounding regions so that they can provide much needed humani-

tarian assistance and investigate alleged atrocities and war crimes;

Whereas the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate received credible evidence and testimony reporting that Russian forces in Chechnya caused the deaths of countless thousands of innocent civilians; caused the displacement of well over 250,000 innocents; forcibly relocated refugee populations; and have committed widespread atrocities, including summary executions, torture, and rape;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has repeatedly violated the principles of the freedom of the press by subjecting journalists, such as Radio Free Liberty/Radio Europe correspondent Andrei Babitsky, who oppose or question its policies to censorship, intimidation, harassment, incarceration, and violence;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation continues its military campaign in Chechnya, including the use of indiscriminate force, causing further dislocation of people from their homes, the deaths of noncombatants and widespread suffering;

Whereas this war contributes to ethnic hatred and religious intolerance within the Russian Federation, jeopardizes prospects for the establishment of democracy in the Russian Federation, undercuts the ability of the international community to trust the Russian Federation as a signatory to international agreements, generates political instability within the Russian Federation, and is a threat to the peace in the region; and

Whereas the Senate expresses its concern over the war and humanitarian tragedy in Chechnya, and its desire for a

peaceful and durable settlement to the conflict: Now, therefore, be it

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

2 (1) the indifference of most Western govern-
3 ments, including that of the United States, toward
4 this conflict has encouraged the Government of the
5 Russian Federation to intensify and expand its mili-
6 tary campaign in Chechnya, further contributing to
7 the suffering of the Chechen people;

8 (2) the Acting President of the Russian Federa-
9 tion, Vladimir Putin, is directly responsible for the
10 conduct of Russian troops in and around Chechnya
11 and accountable for war crimes and atrocities com-
12 mitted by them against the Chechen people;

13 (3) the Acting President of the Russian Federa-
14 tion should—

15 (A) immediately cease the military oper-
16 ations in Chechnya and initiate negotiations to-
17 ward a just peace with the leadership of the
18 Chechen government, including President Aslan
19 Maskhadov;

20 (B) grant international missions immediate
21 full and unimpeded access into Chechnya and
22 surrounding regions so that they can monitor
23 and report on the situation there and inves-
24 tigate alleged atrocities and war crimes;

1 (C) allow international humanitarian agen-
 2 cies immediate full and unimpeded access to
 3 Chechen civilians, including those in refugee,
 4 detention and so-called “filtration camps” or
 5 any other facility where citizens of Chechnya
 6 are detained; and

7 (D) investigate fully the atrocities com-
 8 mitted in Chechnya, including those alleged in
 9 Alkhan-Yurt and Grozny, and initiate prosecu-
 10 tions against officers and soldiers accused of
 11 those atrocities;

12 (4) the President of the United States should—

13 (A) affirm respect for human rights, demo-
 14 cratic rule of law, and international account-
 15 ability as a foundation of United States foreign
 16 policy;

17 (B) affirm respect for human rights, demo-
 18 cratic rule of law, and international account-
 19 ability as a precondition to United States-Rus-
 20 sian cooperation;

21 (C) reevaluate United States foreign policy
 22 toward the Russian Federation given its con-
 23 duct in Chechnya, remilitarization, and ques-
 24 tionable commitment to democracy;

1 (D) support societal forces in the Russian
2 Federation fighting to preserve democracy
3 there, including empowering human rights ac-
4 tivists and promoting programs designed to
5 strengthen the independent media, trade
6 unions, political parties, civil society, and the
7 democratic rule of law;

8 (E) promote peace negotiations between
9 the Government of the Russian Federation and
10 the leadership of the Chechen government, in-
11 cluding President Aslan Maskhadov, through
12 third-party mediation by the Organization for
13 Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE),
14 the United Nations, or other appropriate par-
15 ties;

16 (F) endorse the call of the United Nations
17 High Commissioner for Human Rights for an
18 investigation of alleged war crimes committed
19 by the Russian military in Chechnya; and

20 (G) take tangible steps to demonstrate to
21 the Government of the Russian Federation that
22 the United States strongly condemns its con-
23 duct in Chechnya and its unwillingness to find
24 a just political solution to the conflict in
25 Chechnya, including—

1 (i) a refusal to participate in bilateral
2 summit meetings with the Government of
3 the Russian Federation;

4 (ii) a call for the suspension of the
5 Russian Federation from the forum of G-
6 7 plus 1 state; and

7 (iii) a suspension of financial assist-
8 ance to the Russian Federation provided
9 through the International Monetary Fund,
10 the World Bank, the Export-Import Bank
11 of the United States, and the Overseas
12 Private Investment Corporation; and

13 (5) the President of the United States should
14 not reverse the actions taken under paragraph
15 (4)(G) until the Government of the Russian Federa-
16 tion has—

17 (A) ceased its military operations in
18 Chechnya and initiated negotiations toward a
19 just peace with the leadership of the Chechen
20 government led by President Aslan Maskhadov;

21 (B) provided full and unimpeded access
22 into and around Chechnya to international mis-
23 sions to monitor and report on the situation
24 there and to investigate alleged atrocities and
25 war crimes;

1 (C) granted international humanitarian
2 agencies immediate full and unimpeded access
3 to Chechen civilians, including those in refugee,
4 detention, and so-called “filtration camps” or
5 any other facility where citizens of Chechnya
6 are detained; and

7 (D) investigated fully the atrocities com-
8 mitted in Chechnya including those alleged in
9 Alkhan-Yurt and Grozny, and initiated prosecu-
10 tions against officers and soldiers accused of
11 those atrocities.

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