

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 136

Expressing the sense of the Senate condemning the seizure by the Government of Iran of 15 British naval personnel in Iraqi territorial waters, and calling for their immediate, safe, and unconditional release.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 29, 2007

Mr. COLEMAN (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. DeMINT, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BROWNBACK, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. KERRY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. DODD, Mrs. CLINTON, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. VOINOVICH, and Mr. SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate condemning the seizure by the Government of Iran of 15 British naval personnel in Iraqi territorial waters, and calling for their immediate, safe, and unconditional release.

Whereas, on March 23, 2007, a naval vessel of the United Kingdom, the HMS Cornwall, was conducting routine operations in Iraqi territorial waters pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1723 (2006) and in support of the Government of Iraq;

Whereas, on March 23, 2007, a boarding team consisting of 7 Royal Marines and 8 sailors embarked in 2 of the boats of the HMS Cornwall to conduct a routine boarding of

Whereas, on March 23, 2007, a boarding team consisting of 7 Royal Marines and 8 sailors embarked in 2 of the boats of the HMS Cornwall to conduct a routine boarding of an Indian flagged merchant vessel pursuant to the authorization of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1723 (2006);

Whereas, as Vice Admiral Charles Style, Deputy Chief of the British Defense Staff (Commitments), demonstrated in a presentation on March 28, 2007, “the merchant vessel was 7.5 nautical miles south east of the Al Faw Peninsula, . . . 29 degrees 50.36 minutes North 048 degrees 43.08 minutes East. This places her 1.7 nautical miles inside Iraqi territorial waters. This fact has been confirmed by the Iraqi Foreign Ministry.”;

Whereas at some point shortly after completion of the successful inspection of the merchant ship, the two United Kingdom vessels were surrounded and escorted by Iranian Islamic Republican Guard Navy vessels toward the Shatt ‘Al Arab Waterway and into Iranian territorial waters;

Whereas, as Margaret Beckett, the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, stated to the House of Commons on March 28, 2007, even the coordinates of the seizure event that were given by Iran’s Ambassador to the United Kingdom at the Ambassador’s first meeting with United Kingdom officials were themselves in Iraqi waters;

Whereas Foreign Secretary Beckett noted in that same statement that authorities of the Government of Iran provided “corrected” coordinates of the incident on March 25, 2007, claiming that the event took place in Iranian waters;

Whereas the merchant vessel that was boarded had remained anchored since the time it was boarded, and on March 25, 2007, its location was verified to be in Iraqi waters;

Whereas Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Tony Blair stated on March 25, 2007, that “there is no doubt at all that these people were taken from a boat in Iraqi waters. It is simply not true that they went into Iranian territorial waters.”; and

Whereas the Government of Iran has yet to release the 15 British sailors it has been holding captive since seizing the sailors from Iraqi waters on March 23, 2007: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) condemns in the strongest possible terms
3 the seizure by the Government of Iran of 15 British
4 naval personnel from Iraqi territorial waters as a
5 provocative and illegal act; and

6 (2) calls for the immediate, safe, and uncondi-
7 tional release of the personnel from captivity.

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