

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 982

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that France and other member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union should decline to sell major weapons systems or offensive military equipment to the Russian Federation.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 16, 2009

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself and Mr. SHIMKUS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that France and other member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union should decline to sell major weapons systems or offensive military equipment to the Russian Federation.

Whereas discussions are currently underway between France and the Russian Federation regarding the possible sale of one or more of France's "Mistral" amphibious assault warships to Russia as well as a license for Russia to produce further such vessels on its territory;

Whereas a Mistral-class amphibious assault warship is capable of transporting and deploying 900 troops, up to 13 tanks, 16 helicopters, and 4 landing craft;

Whereas a Mistral-class assault warship costs between \$600 million and \$750 million;

Whereas, if the contract now being discussed by France and the Russian Federation is finalized, this would be the first instance in which a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) sold such advanced military technology to Russia;

Whereas such a military sale by a NATO member state raises concerns, particularly in light of Russia's military invasion of Georgia in August 2008, which violated Georgia's territorial integrity, caused tens of thousands of persons to be internally displaced, and inflicted massive destruction by the bombing of Georgian infrastructure, including ports, bridges, and railroads;

Whereas, in violation of its international obligations, including the terms of a French-brokered ceasefire agreement between Russia and Georgia, Russia continues to occupy Georgian territory, has built a permanent military infrastructure in the Georgian region of South Ossetia, has announced plans to build a naval base in the Georgian region of Abkhazia, and has vetoed any monitoring presence in those regions by either the United Nations or the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE);

Whereas the Russian Federation has failed to fulfill the commitment it made in 1999 at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul to withdraw its military forces from the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova by the end of 2002;

Whereas a number of European countries, particularly some which have only recently joined NATO and the European

Union, are now understandably concerned about their own political independence and security in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Georgia;

Whereas concerns regarding Russia's intentions toward the independent states of the former Soviet region and of Eastern Europe were further escalated when, in September 2009, Russia and Belarus participated in a military exercise in which the two countries reportedly simulated an air and sea attack on Poland;

Whereas some have argued that providing Russia with a Mistral-class amphibious assault warship would enhance that country's ability to potentially wage aggression against its neighbors;

Whereas the Russian Navy's Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Vladimir Vysotskiy recently made the following statement about the "Mistral" ship, "In the conflict [against Georgia] in August last year, a ship like that would have allowed the [Russian] Black Sea Fleet to accomplish its mission in 40 minutes, not 26 hours, which is how long it took us";

Whereas, when asked where Russia would deploy the "Mistral" ship if the deal is finalized, Russia's Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin, stated that Russia "would use the warships wherever they would be needed";

Whereas, on November 9, 2009, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed into law a bill expanding the use of Russian troops abroad;

Whereas a number of Russia's neighbors, including Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Georgia have raised questions regarding the proposed "Mistral" ship sale to Russia; and

Whereas according to Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas
Paet, “Adding new military technology to the Black Sea
. . . [would] not be a good idea”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that—

3 (1) given Russia’s increasingly aggressive ac-
4 tions and rhetoric, the sale of major advanced weap-
5 onry and offensive military equipment, such as naval
6 warships, to the Russian Federation could have a
7 destabilizing effect on the Baltic and the Black Sea
8 regions and on other parts of the former Soviet re-
9 gion and Eastern Europe;

10 (2) in light of continuing, serious concerns re-
11 garding the Russian Government’s failure to appro-
12 priately enforce the rule of law and protection of
13 human rights within its territory, including the con-
14 tinued failure to halt or properly investigate and
15 prosecute the numerous murders of human rights
16 activists, lawyers, reporters, and others in Russia,
17 the sale of major offensive weapons systems to Rus-
18 sia is inappropriate; and

19 (3) the President and the Secretaries of State
20 and Defense should urge France and the other mem-
21 ber states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
22 (NATO) and the European Union allies not to sell
23 major weapons systems or any offensive military

1 equipment, such as naval warships, to the Russian
2 Federation unless and until that country has—

3 (A) fully and verifiably withdrawn its
4 troops from all of the territory of Georgia and
5 revoked its recognition as sovereign states of
6 the separatist regions within the internationally
7 recognized territory of Georgia;

8 (B) fulfilled its commitments to withdraw
9 its military forces from the Transnistrian re-
10 gion of the Republic of Moldova;

11 (C) ceased any and all actions and policies
12 that currently violate or would threaten the sov-
13 ereignty and territorial integrity of neighboring
14 states;

15 (D) halted sales of advanced conventional
16 weapons, technology, and materials usable in
17 the construction of weapons of mass destruction
18 to state sponsors of terrorism or terrorist orga-
19 nizations; and

20 (E) taken steps to constructively address
21 the serious concerns regarding the Russian
22 Government's failure to properly enforce the
23 rule of law and human rights within the terri-
24 tory of the Russian Federation.

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