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S. RES. 640

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding United States engagement
with ASEAN and its member-states.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2010

Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. WEBB) submitted the following resolution;
which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding United States
engagement with ASEAN and its member-states.

Whereas the Association of Southeast Asian Nations
(ASEAN) was founded in 1967 “to strengthen further
the existing bonds of regional solidarity and cooperation”;

Whereas ASEAN membership has now expanded to include
10 countries, which together span over half the size of
the continental United States, with a total population of
nearly 600,000,000 persons;

Whereas ASEAN is an important contributor to stability and
prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas ASEAN partners with the United States Govern-
ment and others in the international community to ad-
dress transnational problems like terrorism, environ-

mental degradation, the international financial crisis, and maritime security;

Whereas the ASEAN Charter, approved by Southeast Asia's leaders in November 2007, codified norms for the behavior of ASEAN member-states toward their own citizens, covering such subjects as individual rights, democracy, the rule of law, and good governance;

Whereas the combined economy of ASEAN's member countries, valued at approximately \$1,500,000,000,000 in 2008, constitutes the fourth largest market for United States exports, and two-way United States-ASEAN trade in goods and services totaled over \$200,000,000,000 in 2008;

Whereas Southeast Asia is the largest destination for United States foreign direct investment in Asia;

Whereas almost 40,000 students from ASEAN countries studied in the United States in 2008, and an increasing number of United States citizens are studying abroad in these countries;

Whereas the United States Government recognizes the centrality of ASEAN to regional cooperation and problem-solving in the Asia Pacific;

Whereas the United States was the first country to appoint an Ambassador to ASEAN;

Whereas the United States acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia during the July 2009 ASEAN ministerial meetings in Thailand;

Whereas the United States launched a new collaboration with the Lower Mekong Countries—Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam—in the areas of the environment, health, and education in July 2009 in Thailand;

Whereas President Barack Obama stated at the first meeting of the leaders of ASEAN and the United States held in Singapore in November 2009, “The United States is committed to strengthening its engagement in Southeast Asia both with our individual allies and partners, and with ASEAN as an institution.”;

Whereas Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said at the July 2010 ASEAN ministerial meetings in Vietnam that the United States was “committed to assisting the nations of Southeast Asia to remain strong and independent, and [to helping ensure] that each nation enjoys peace, stability, prosperity, and access to universal human rights”;

Whereas Secretary of State Clinton and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates have stated the intention of the United States to increase participation in regional institutions, including the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus Eight, both to be held in October 2010 in Vietnam; and

Whereas the second meeting of ASEAN and United States Government leaders, and the first to be hosted by the United States, will take place in New York City, New York on September 24, 2010: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate—
- 2 (1) to welcome the leaders of ASEAN to the
- 3 United States for the second ASEAN-United States
- 4 summit meeting;
- 5 (2) that the decision to host the second
- 6 ASEAN-United States summit in New York City re-
- 7 flects the importance of ASEAN and its member-

1 states to the United States, and the importance of
2 the United States to ASEAN and its member-states;

3 (3) that the United States Government should
4 continue to seek ways to broaden and deepen its eco-
5 nomic, political-security, social, and cultural engage-
6 ment with the countries in Southeast Asia toward a
7 closer partnership with ASEAN and its member-
8 states, as well as other regional institutions in the
9 Asia-Pacific region;

10 (4) that the United States Government is com-
11 mitted to working with all ASEAN member-states to
12 encourage the development of open and free demo-
13 cratic institutions in Burma that allow for the full
14 participation of political opposition and ethnic mi-
15 nority groups; and

16 (5) that a stronger, more integrated ASEAN
17 serves shared interests in regional peace, stability,
18 and prosperity.

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