

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 480

Expressing condolences and supporting assistance for the victims of the historic flooding in the Western Balkans.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 19, 2014

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing condolences and supporting assistance for the victims of the historic flooding in the Western Balkans.

Whereas record rainfall beginning on May 13, 2014, has led to widespread flooding in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and the Republic of Serbia, causing thousands of landslides, massive destruction, and loss of life;

Whereas by May 22, 2014, the flooding caused over 40 deaths and impacted over 500,000 people across the region, particularly in western Serbia and eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina;

Whereas the equivalent of 3 months of rain fell during the course of 3 days, making this the worst flooding event in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in 120 years;

Whereas the flooding has left thousands of people stranded in their homes waiting for assistance, displaced, or without shelter;

Whereas according to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 300,000 people in Serbia and 50,000 people in Bosnia and Herzegovina were left without clean water or electricity;

Whereas the Foreign Ministry of Bosnia and Herzegovina has reported that the flooding rendered 100,000 buildings unusable, caused 500,000 people to evacuate or flee their homes, and prompted 14 municipalities to declare a state of emergency;

Whereas the Government of Serbia has described the situation in that country as “catastrophic”, and estimates that at least 25,000 people have been forced to evacuate, particularly in the town and municipality of Obrenovac, and that the flooding has caused over 100,000,000 Euros (\$140,000,000) in damage to the Kolubara coal mine that supplies the Nikola Tesla power plants;

Whereas soldiers and energy workers scrambled to erect sandbag barriers to protect the Kostolac power plant and the Nikola Tesla power plants, which provide half of the country’s electricity, from the waters of the flooded Sava, Kolubara, and Tamnava Rivers;

Whereas, according to the International Medical Corps, as many as 120,000 landmines remaining from the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s may have been lost or dislodged due to landslides, causing great concern for public safety;

Whereas the United States Government has approved or provided \$2,060,000 in funds through the United States Agency for International Development’s Office of United

States Foreign Disaster Assistance, the Department of Defense, and the Under Secretary of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs for the Republic of Serbia;

Whereas the United States Government has provided \$2,740,000 in humanitarian assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina; and

Whereas the governments and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and the Republic of Serbia share an increasing commitment to core democratic values, reconciliation, and European integration: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) expresses deep sympathy to all those af-
3 fected by the flooding in the Western Balkans for
4 the terrible loss of life and massive destruction;

5 (2) expresses solidarity with the people of Bos-
6 nia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and
7 the Republic of Serbia, as well as a continued desire
8 to provide assistance to help their countries recover
9 from this natural disaster;

10 (3) expresses ongoing support for humanitarian
11 and reconstruction assistance provided by relief
12 agencies and the international community as imme-
13 diate and long-term needs are identified;

14 (4) commends local authorities, first responders
15 and rescue personnel, NGOs, volunteers, and every-
16 day citizens for their efforts to organize and deliver

1 disaster relief to communities in need across Bosnia
2 and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and the
3 Republic of Serbia;

4 (5) commends the United States Government
5 agencies, including USAID and the Department of
6 Defense, for their response to the natural disaster;
7 and

8 (6) urges additional assistance by other nations
9 and organizations as needed to alleviate the difficult
10 circumstances and suffering of the people of Bosnia
11 and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and the
12 Republic of Serbia, and to assist them in their recovery efforts.
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