

Whereas Freedom House, a non-profit, non-partisan organization working to advance the expansion of political and economic freedom, has designated Moldova's political environment as "partly free" and, using a scale of 1 to 7 (with 1 being the most free), assigned a rating of 3 for political rights in Moldova and 4 for civil liberties in Moldova;

Whereas a genuinely free and fair election requires a period of political campaigning conducted in an environment in which administrative action, violence, intimidation, or detention do not hinder the parties, political associations, and candidates from presenting their views and qualifications to potential voters;

Whereas, in a genuinely democratic election, parties and candidates are free to organize supporters and conduct public meetings and events;

Whereas ensuring that parties and candidates enjoy unimpeded access to television, radio, print, and Internet media on a nondiscriminatory basis is fundamental to a free, fair, and democratic election;

Whereas a genuinely free and fair election requires that citizens be guaranteed the right and effective opportunity to exercise their civil and political rights, including the right to vote and to seek and acquire information upon which to make an informed vote in a manner that is free from intimidation, undue influence, attempts at vote buying, threats of political retribution, or other forms of coercion by national or local authorities or others;

Whereas Moldova is scheduled to conduct parliamentary elections on March 6, 2005;

Whereas reports indicate that national and local officials in Moldova are increasing their control and manipulation of the media as the election date approaches;

Whereas there have been widespread reports of harassment of opposition candidates and workers by the police in Moldova;

Whereas other reports indicate that intimidation of independent civil society monitoring groups by authorities in Moldova is occurring on an increasingly frequent basis;

Whereas such actions are inconsistent with Moldova's history of the holding of free and fair elections and raise grave concerns regarding the commitment of the authorities in Moldova to conducting free and fair elections;

Whereas the parliamentary elections scheduled for March 6, 2005 will provide a test of the extent to which the Government of Moldova is committed to democracy, free elections, and the rule of law; and

Whereas the holding of truly free and fair elections in Moldova, including a free and democratic campaign preceding an election, are vital to improving the relationship between Moldova and the United States and to the United States providing support for resolution of the Transnistria conflict and for the provision of assistance to Moldova through the Millennium Challenge Account: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges and welcomes the strong relationship formed between the United States and Moldova since Moldova declared independence from the Soviet Union on August 27, 1991;

(2) recognizes that a precondition for the full integration of Moldova into the Western community of nations is the establishment of a genuinely democratic political system in Moldova;

(3) supports the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Moldova;

(4) encourages all political parties in Moldova to offer genuine solutions to the serious problems that face Moldova, including human trafficking, corruption, unemployment, and territorial issues;

(5) expresses its strong and continuing support for the efforts of the people of Moldova to establish full democracy, including the rule of law and respect for human rights;

(6) urges the Government of Moldova to meet its commitments to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) for the holding of democratic elections;

(7) urges the Government of Moldova to ensure—

(A) the full transparency of election procedures before, during, and after the parliamentary elections scheduled to be held on March 6, 2005;

(B) the right to vote for all citizens of Moldova;

(C) unimpeded access by all parties and candidates to print, radio, television, and Internet media on a nondiscriminatory basis; and

(D) the right of opposition candidates and workers to engage in campaigning free of harassment, discrimination, and intimidation; and

(8) pledges its enduring support and assistance to the people of Moldova for the establishment of a fully free and open democratic system that is free from coercion, the creation of a prosperous free market economy, the establishment of a secure independence, and Moldova's assumption of its rightful place as a full and equal member of the Western community of democracies.

SENATE RESOLUTION 61—RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION ON ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY AND ITS MEMBERS' VITAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. INHOFE submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 61

Whereas the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association was founded and incorporated in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on the 26th day of December, 1930;

Whereas the founders of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association possessed the leadership and vision to establish a single voice for the ready mixed concrete industry;

Whereas the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association represents and acts on behalf of the industry before all divisions of government and those public and private organizations whose work affects the ready mixed concrete business;

Whereas the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association has been a pioneer in the field of concrete technology through groundbreaking research and advanced scientific methods in the practical use and applications of ready mixed concrete;

Whereas the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association has gained national distinction by developing innovative breakthroughs in engineering, aggressive market promotion, and its contribution toward the creation of the first undergraduate degree in concrete industry management in the United States;

Whereas the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association leads the concrete industry through its education and certification programs;

Whereas the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association today represents 1,300 producer member companies, both national and multinational, that employ thousands of workers and operate in every congressional district in the United States;

Whereas the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association continues today to assist producers in the ready mixed concrete community through the introduction of innovative safety procedures, modern health initiatives, and progressive environmental control programs in an effort to enhance the performance level of the industry; and

Whereas the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association will continue to look toward the future by forging alliances within the ready mixed community, and by becoming more educated in business operations and more knowledgeable about the product and the role of ready mixed concrete in the construction and building of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association for its 75 year history and its contributions to the construction of the infrastructure of the United States, including homes, buildings, bridges, and highways;

(2) recognizes that the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association has been and will continue to be an invaluable asset in developing the history and character of the United States; and

(3) directs the Secretary of the Senate to transmit a copy of this resolution to the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association as an expression of appreciation and for public display at the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association's 2005 national convention.

SENATE RESOLUTION 62—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF A "ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DAY" AND CELEBRATING AND HONORING ROTARY INTERNATIONAL ON THE OCCASION OF ITS CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. STEVENS, and Mr. FEINGOLD) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 62

Whereas Rotary International, founded on February 23, 1905, in Chicago, Illinois, is the world's first service club and 1 of the largest nonprofit service organizations;

Whereas there are more than 1.2 million Rotary International club members comprised of professional and business leaders in more than 31,000 clubs in more than 165 countries;

Whereas the Rotary International motto, "Service Above Self", inspires members to provide humanitarian service, meet high ethical standards, and promote international good will;

Whereas Rotary International funds club projects and sponsors volunteers with community expertise to provide medical supplies, health care, clean water, food production, job training, and education to millions in need, particularly in developing countries;

Whereas in 1985, Rotary International launched Polio Plus and spearheaded efforts with the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and UNICEF to immunize the children of the world against polio;

Whereas polio cases have dropped by 99 percent since 1988, and the world now stands on the threshold of eradicating the disease;

Whereas Rotary International is the largest privately-funded source of international scholarships in the world and promotes international understanding through scholarships, exchange programs, and humanitarian grants;

Whereas since 1947, more than 35,000 students from 110 countries have studied abroad as Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars;

Whereas Rotary International's Group Study Exchange program has helped more than 46,000 young professionals explore career fields in other countries;

Whereas 8,000 secondary school students each year experience life in another country through Rotary International's Youth Exchange Program;

Whereas over the past 5 years, members of Rotary International in all 50 States have hosted participants in Open World, a program sponsored by the Library of Congress, and therefore have earned the honor of serving as Open World's most outstanding host;

Whereas there are approximately 400,000 Rotary International club members in more than 7,700 clubs throughout the United States sponsoring service projects to address critical issues such as poverty, health, hunger, illiteracy, and the environment in their local communities and abroad; and

Whereas February 23, 2005, would be an appropriate date on which to observe Rotary International Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of a "Rotary International Day" to celebrate the centennial anniversary of Rotary International; and

(2) recognizes Rotary International for 100 years of service to improving the human condition in communities throughout the world.

SENATE RESOLUTION 63—CALLING FOR AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ASSASSINATION OF PRIME MINISTER RAFIQ HARIRI AND URGING STEPS TO PRESSURE THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA TO WITHDRAW FROM LEBANON

Mr. REID (for Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. REID, Mr. FRIST, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DODD, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. CHAFEE)) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 63

Whereas on February 14, 2005, Rafiq Hariri, the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, was assassinated in a despicable terrorist attack;

Whereas the car bomb used in the assassination killed 16 others and injured more than 100 people;

Whereas the intent of the terrorists who carried out the assassination was to intimidate the Lebanese people and push Lebanon backward toward chaos;

Whereas Rafiq Hariri served as Prime Minister of Lebanon for a total of 10 years since the end of the Lebanese war in 1991;

Whereas Rafiq Hariri helped revitalize the economy of Lebanon and rebuild its shattered infrastructure and pioneered and directed the rebirth of Beirut's historic downtown district;

Whereas Rafiq Hariri stepped down as Prime Minister on October 20, 2004;

Whereas Syria maintains at least 14,000 troops and a large number of intelligence personnel in Lebanon;

Whereas there is widespread opposition in Lebanon to the continuing Syrian presence in Lebanon;

Whereas the United Nations Security Council issued a Presidential Statement (February 15, 2005) condemning the terrorist bombing that killed Rafiq Hariri and calling on "the Lebanese Government to bring to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of this heinous terrorist act";

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 (September 2, 2004) calls for

the political independence and sovereignty of Lebanon, the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon, and the disarmament of all militias in Lebanon;

Whereas Syria is the main supporter of the terrorist group Hezbollah, the only significant remaining armed militia in Lebanon;

Whereas Hezbollah supports Palestinian terrorist groups and poses a threat to the prospects for peace in the Middle East;

Whereas the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note) was enacted into law on December 12, 2003; and

Whereas the President has recalled the United States Ambassador to Syria for urgent consultations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the cowardly and despicable assassination of Rafiq Hariri, the former Prime Minister of Lebanon;

(2) extends condolences to Prime Minister Hariri's family and the people of Lebanon;

(3) supports United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 (September 2, 2004), which calls for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon;

(4) urges the President to seek a United Nations Security Council resolution that establishes an independent investigation into the assassination;

(5) urges the President to consider imposing sanctions under the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note); and

(6) supports the call of the Lebanese people for an end to Syria's presence in Lebanon, and for free and fair elections monitored by international observers.

SENATE RESOLUTION 64—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD PREPARE A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR ADVANCING AND ENTERING INTO INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ON A BINDING AGREEMENT THAT WOULD SWIFTLY REDUCE GLOBAL MERCURY USE AND POLLUTION TO LEVELS SUFFICIENT TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. JEFFORDS (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 64

Whereas mercury is a persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic heavy metal;

Whereas mercury is found naturally in the environment but is also emitted into the air, land, and water in various forms in the United States and around the world during fossil fuel combustion, waste incineration, chlor-alkali production, mining, and other industrial processes, as well as during the production, use, and disposal of various products;

Whereas mercury air pollution has the ability to both deposit locally and travel thousands of miles in a global atmospheric pool of emissions before eventual deposition, crossing national boundaries and becoming a shared global burden;

Whereas the United Nations Environment Programme reported that, on average, anthropogenic emissions of mercury since pre-industrial times have resulted in 50- to 300-percent increases in deposition rates around the world;

Whereas the United Nations Environment Programme reported that global consumption of mercury equaled 3,337 tons in 1996, and that all mercury releases to the global environment total approximately 5,000 tons each year;

Whereas mercury air pollution can deposit into lakes, streams, and the oceans where it is transformed into toxic methylmercury and bioaccumulates in fish and fish-eating wildlife;

Whereas the National Academy of Sciences confirmed that consumption of mercury-contaminated fish and seafood by pregnant women can cause serious neurodevelopmental harm in the fetus, including such detrimental effects as intelligence quotient deficits, abnormal muscle tone, decreases in motor function, attention, or visuospatial performance, mental retardation, seizure disorders, cerebral palsy, blindness, and deafness;

Whereas the 1997 Mercury Study Report submitted by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to Congress found that every region of the United States is adversely affected by mercury deposition;

Whereas the Food and Drug Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and 44 States currently have advisories warning the public to limit consumption of certain fish that are high in mercury content;

Whereas, of the 4,000,000 children born every year in the United States, a scientist at the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that approximately 630,000 are exposed to mercury levels in the womb above the safe health threshold, caused primarily by maternal consumption of mercury-tainted fish;

Whereas these health and environmental effects of mercury contamination can impose significant social and economic costs in the form of increased medical care, special educational and occupational needs, reduced economic performance, and disruptions in recreational and commercial fishing and hunting, and can create disproportionate health, social, and economic impacts among subpopulations dependent on subsistence fishing;

Whereas the Environmental Protection Agency has estimated that the United States is a net emitter of mercury in that the United States contributes 3 times as much mercury to the global atmospheric pool of air emissions as it receives through deposition;

Whereas the United States Geological Survey has not reported mercury consumption figures for key sectors in the United States economy since 1996, thereby creating important information gaps relating to domestic mercury use and trade;

Whereas the quantity of domestic fugitive chlor-alkali sector emissions has been labeled an enigma by the Environmental Protection Agency;

Whereas, in accordance with Public Law 101-549 (commonly known as the "Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990") (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.), the Environmental Protection Agency determined in December 2000 that a maximum achievable control technology standard for mercury and other air toxic emissions for electric utility steam generating units in the United States is appropriate and necessary, and listed coal- and oil-fired electric utility steam generating units for regulation, thereby triggering a statutory requirement that maximum achievable controls be implemented at every existing coal- and oil-fired electric utility steam generating unit by not later than December 2005;