

HIV and AIDS cases, and in sub-Saharan Africa, young girls aged 15 through 24 are three times more likely to be infected with HIV than young men. Not only are women and girls more vulnerable to infection, they are also shouldering much of the burden of caring for sick and dying relatives and friends. In addition, in the vast majority of cases, they are the caretakers of the estimated 14 million children who have been orphaned by this pandemic. Often, widows and orphans have difficulties asserting their inheritance rights, even when those rights are spelled out in law. This often leaves the most vulnerable women and children impoverished and homeless.

The inequality that is devastating the lives of women around the world requires our commitment to ending it. Last year, I co-sponsored with Senator BIDEN the Protection of Vulnerable Populations During Humanitarian Emergencies Act of 2005, which the Committee on Foreign Relations supported as an amendment to our Foreign Affairs Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007. Our bill seeks to ensure that U.S. foreign assistance programs are a force for protecting women, children, and other vulnerable populations in the wake of military conflict and natural disasters.

In addition, last year the President signed into law the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Act, which I authored and introduced in 2004. This law requires the Administration to develop a comprehensive strategy to assist the millions of orphans left behind by the AIDS pandemic. The strategy must include programs to remove barriers to education, such as school fees, that keep orphans, and especially girls, out of the classroom. The law also requires the Administration to support programs that protect the inheritance rights of orphans and widows with children, and to support programs that assist village-based organizations, the main infrastructure for the care of orphans and the millions of women taking care of them.

International Women's Day is a day for each of us to reflect upon the remarkable progress that women around the world have made, and to remember that much remains to be done. I am hopeful that Senators will join me in recognizing this important day.

SENATE RESOLUTION 393—DESIGNATING MARCH 8, 2006, AS “INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY”

Mr. BIDEN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 393

Whereas all over the world women are contributing to the growth of economies, participating in the fields of diplomacy and politics, and improving the quality of the lives of their families, communities, and nations;

Whereas discrimination continues to deny women full political and economic equality

and is often the basis for violations of basic human rights against women;

Whereas the health and life of women and girls worldwide continues to be endangered by violence that is directed at them simply because they are women;

Whereas worldwide violence against women includes rape, genital mutilation, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, honor killings, human trafficking, dowry-related violence, female infanticide, sex selection abortion, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, and forced abortion;

Whereas at least 1 in 3 females worldwide has been beaten or sexually abused in her lifetime;

Whereas 1 in 4 women in the United States has been raped or physically assaulted by an intimate partner at some point in her life;

Whereas 20 percent to 50 percent of women worldwide experience some degree of domestic violence during marriage;

Whereas, on average, 3 women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the United States every day;

Whereas it is estimated that 1 in 5 adolescent girls in the United States becomes a victim of physical or sexual abuse, or both, in a dating relationship;

Whereas an estimated 135,000,000 women and girls of the world have undergone genital mutilation, and 2,000,000 girls are at risk of mutilation each year;

Whereas worldwide, women account for ½ of all cases of the human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (referred to in this preamble as “HIV/AIDS”);

Whereas young women in Africa are 3 times more likely to contract HIV/AIDS than men;

Whereas worldwide sexual violence, including marital rape, has been cited as a major cause of the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS among women;

Whereas between 75 percent and 80 percent of the 27,000,000 refugees and internally displaced persons of the world are women and children;

Whereas illegal trafficking for forced labor, domestic servitude, or sexual exploitation victimizes 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 women and girls throughout the world each year;

Whereas ¾ of the nearly 1,000,000,000 illiterate individuals of the world are women;

Whereas ¾ of children worldwide who are denied primary education are girls;

Whereas throughout the world, girls are less likely to complete school than boys;

Whereas that educational failure has real consequences for the global economy and the security of the United States, and especially for the millions of girls with limitless potential who continue to lose the chance to discover their worth and importance as global citizens;

Whereas girls who are educated are more likely to enjoy healthy and stable families, lower mortality rates, higher nutrition levels, delayed sexual activity, less chance of contracting HIV/AIDS, and less chance of having unwanted pregnancies;

Whereas it is estimated that women and girls make up more than 70 percent of the poorest people in the world;

Whereas in most nations, women work approximately twice the amount of unpaid time that men do;

Whereas women work ¾ of the working hours of the world, and produce ½ of the food in the world, yet earn only 10 percent of the income in the world, and own less than 1 percent of the property in the world;

Whereas rural women produce more than 55 percent of all food grown in developing countries;

Whereas women worldwide still earn less, own less property, and have less access to

education, employment, and health care than do men;

Whereas there are 82,500,000 mothers of all ages in the United States;

Whereas approximately 3 in 10 United States households are maintained by women with no husband present;

Whereas women comprise almost 15 percent of the active duty, reserve, and guard units of the Armed Forces;

Whereas it is not enough to say women deserve a voice in politics;

Whereas nations should take steps to ensure the full participation and representation of women in their conferences and committees, plenaries, and parliaments;

Whereas social investment, particularly investments in women and girls, should be an integral part of foreign policy;

Whereas the dedication and success of those working all over the world to end violence against women and girls and fighting for equality should be recognized;

Whereas special recognition is owed to 10 women fighting to make a difference in their communities and around the globe, including the following: Brigadier General Sheila R. Baxter, Commander, Madigan Army Medical Center, Western Regional Medical Command; Sheryl Cates, Executive Director of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the Texas Council on Family Violence; Lora Jo Foo, Civil rights, labor activist, and Managing Attorney at the Asian Law Caucus; Salma Hayek, Actress and Domestic Violence Advocate; Asma Jahangir, Pakistani human rights activist, author, and lawyer; Liz Lerman, Founder and leader of the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange; Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize-winning environmentalist and founder of the Green Belt Movement; Kavita N. Ramdas, President and Chief Executive Officer of Global Women's Fund; Bernice Johnson Reagon, singer, scholar, activist, and founder of Sweet Honey in the Rock; and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, newly-elected President of Liberia;

Whereas March 8 became known as “International Women's Day” during the last century, and is a day on which people, often divided by ethnicity, language, culture, and income, come together to celebrate a common struggle for equality, justice, and peace for women; and

Whereas the people of the United States should be encouraged to participate in “International Women's Day”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 8, 2006, as “International Women's Day”;

(2) reaffirms the commitment of the Senate to—

(A) improve access to quality health care;

(B) end and prevent violence against women, including the trafficking of women and girls worldwide, and ensure that the criminals who engage in those activities are brought to justice;

(C) end discrimination and increase participation of women in decision-making positions in the government and private sectors;

(D) extend full economic opportunities to women, including access to microfinance and microenterprise; and

(E) strengthen the role of women as agents of peace, because women are among the best emissaries when it comes to easing religious, racial, and ethnic tensions, crossing cultural divides, and reducing violence in areas of war and conflict; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe “International Women's Day” with appropriate programs and activities.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, today I am submitting a resolution honoring 10

extraordinary women in celebration of International Women's Day.

There is no doubt that women have made tremendous strides towards equality and justice in the last century. International Women's Day provides an important moment to acknowledge the role that women have played in pioneering change and paving the way for millions of women and girls to access equal education, employment and opportunity.

The resolution I submit highlights the achievements of women from all over the world who have made strides as stateswomen, activists and advocates.

They are women who have overcome discrimination, abuse and political oppression to make a difference in the communities in which they live. Women like Kavita Ramdas, the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Global Women's Fund, the largest foundation in the world that exclusively centers on advocating women's rights. Her work has helped to improve women's economic independence and increased girls' access to education.

Salma Hayek plays a leading role in helping battered women in the United States and her native country, Mexico. Serving as chief spokeswoman for the Avon Foundations "Speak Out Against Domestic Violence" campaign, she continues to stay committed to helping educate and empower women to bring an end to this type of violence. She has donated her time and money to overcoming the horrifying statistic that one in three women worldwide has been raped, sexually abused or beaten in their lifetime, inspiring others to help spread awareness concerning domestic violence.

As Executive Director of the Texas Council on Family Violence and National Domestic Violence Hotline, Sheryl Cates is leading our country in empowering women by offering information and referrals to victims of domestic violence. Since the Hotline started 10 years ago, it has taken over 1.6 million calls in 140 languages and provide support for women across the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Domestic violence is often unseen and unreported because the victims are often too scared to seek help. The Hotline provides a place for victims to turn for assistance, providing individualized support to ensure these women that they are not alone.

At age 11, Lora Jo Foo was a garment worker in San Francisco, California. She is now an accomplished civil rights and labor activist. Having dedicated her life to improving sweatshop conditions, she represents and advocates for low wage industry workers throughout the world. Many garment industry workers are denied public benefits because they do not speak English and government agencies fail to provide them with interpreters or translated documents. A large number of Asian women are pushed into dead-end workfare jobs where they learn no

skills and are denied the option of English-language training. The result has been an increase in hunger and illness among Asian immigrant women and their families. Lora Jo Foo represents those women, giving them a voice to advocate for change.

Women like these are why we celebrate International Women's Day, commemorating their selfless achievements in advocating for equal rights and educating others. This past year, the global community has taken significant strides forward towards gender equality and the pursuit of human rights. On January 16, 2006, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was elected as Prime Minister of Liberia, becoming the first elected female head of state in Africa. Germany elected its first female Chancellor, Angela Merkel. Chancellor Merkel overcame her childhood in North Berlin under communism and triumphed in her role as a leader. This past spring, Kuwait transformed the very structure of their country by amending their electoral laws and allowing women both to vote and to run in parliamentary elections. In Afghanistan, women are gaining equality in representation, overcoming years of severe gender discrimination and gender-based violence. There are now 68 female parliamentarians in the lower house of parliament, making up 27 percent of the representatives; women make up 15 percent of the representatives in the upper house.

Despite the achievements in women's rights during the past year, there is still more to be done, both domestically and internationally. In our own country, the wage gap between genders still exists. Although it has slightly decreased, women make an average of 76.5 percent as much as men do for identical jobs. Internationally, young women are three times more likely to be infected with HIV/AIDS than men because they know less about how to prevent infection and how to protect themselves from violence and discrimination. And while the laws of some countries in the Middle East have been changed to allow women the right to vote and hold office, much remains to be done to ensure they have equal access and opportunity to freely express their political will.

We value the progress that has been made in ending discrimination and advocating gender equality. On International Women's Day, we thank all those who have contributed to our successes. I urge my colleagues to support the immediate passage of the resolution.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2933. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, to provide greater transparency in the legislative process; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2934. Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. LOTT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra.

SA 2935. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2936. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2937. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2938. Mr. SANTORUM (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2939. Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2940. Mr. SANTORUM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2941. Mr. SANTORUM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2942. Mr. DODD (for himself, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra.

SA 2943. Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. LAUTENBERG) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2944. Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra.

SA 2945. Mr. BURNS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2946. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. COBURN, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. KYL, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. SUNUNU, and Mr. GRAHAM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2947. Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself and Mr. DAYTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2948. Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KOHL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. SALAZAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2949. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2950. Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mr. OBAMA) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2951. Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mr. OBAMA) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2952. Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mr. OBAMA) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2953. Mr. KYL (for himself and Mr. PRYOR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2349, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2954. Mr. BAUCUS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the