

President Obama has made clear that he intends to make this issue a priority and invest in alternative energy technologies that do not emit greenhouse gases.

Indonesia, like Brazil and Central Africa, is fortunate to possess among the last significant expanses of tropical forests on Earth. The example set by President Yudhoyono and his government will profoundly affect the lives of people everywhere, as well as future generations. I join those in the environmental and scientific communities in urging the Minister of Agriculture to reconsider his position.

Finally, it is important to note that American companies are among those that import Indonesian palm oil. China and Singapore are other major importers. They should consider the consequences of using a product that is produced in a manner that causes serious harm to the environment. It is time for corporate America to review its manufacturing and marketing practices to ensure they are consistent with our collective responsibility to stop global warming.

I ask unanimous consent to have the Jakarta Post article printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Jakarta Post, Feb. 13, 2009]

GOVT TO ALLOW PEATLAND PLANTATIONS
(By Adianto P. Simamora)

The Agriculture Ministry will issue a decree to allow businesses to dig up the country's millions of hectares of peatland for oil palm plantations.

Gatot Irianto, the ministry's head of research and development, said his office was currently drafting a ministerial decree that would explain in detail the mechanism to turn the peatland areas into oil palm plantations, a move that many say will further damage the country's environment.

"We still need land for oil palm plantations. We must be honest: the sector has been the main driver for the people's economy," he said Thursday on the sidelines of a discussion about adaptation in agriculture, organized by the National Commission on Climate Change.

The draft decree is expected to go into force this year.

"We've discussed the draft with stakeholders, including hard-line activists, to convince them that converting peatland is safe," he said.

"We promise to promote eco-friendly management to ward off complaints from overseas buyers and international communities."

Indonesia is currently the world's largest crude palm oil (CPO) producer, and is expected to produce about 19.5 million tons this year.

Overseas buyers, however, have complained about Indonesia's CPO products, saying they are produced at the expense of the environment.

Activists point to the massive expansions of plantations, including in peatlands, for the deaths of large numbers of orangutans in Kalimantan and Sumatra and for releasing huge amounts of carbon emissions into the atmosphere.

Indonesia has about 20 million hectares of dense, black tropical peat swamps—formed when vegetation rots—that are natural carbon storage sinks.

A hectare of peatland can store between 3,400 and 4,000 tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂), but emits a much larger amount when burned.

Asked about the contribution to global warming, Gatot said trees planted in peatlands would absorb greenhouse gas emissions.

"The peatland will produce emissions only in the opening of the land, but this will be reabsorbed after new trees are planted," he said.

However, a World Bank report from 2007 showed Indonesia was the world's third biggest carbon emitter after the US and China, thanks mainly to the burning of peatlands.

A Wetlands International report from 2006 said Indonesia's peatlands emitted around 2 billion tons of CO₂ a year, far higher than the country's emissions from energy, agriculture and waste, which together amount to only 451 million tons.

The country would have ranked 20th in the global carbon emitter list if emissions from peatlands were not counted.

The ministerial decree is being drafted at a time when President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono is still preparing a decree on peatland management in an effort to help combat global warming.

The draft of the presidential decree, drawn up in 2007, calls for tightened supervision on the use of peatlands across the country.

COLOMBIA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the abuses perpetrated against civilians by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, popularly known as the FARC, are too numerous to list. From kidnappings to bombings, torture and summary executions, the FARC have lost whatever credibility and popular support they may once have had. They are a criminal enterprise, despised by the vast majority of Colombians, funded with proceeds from the production and sale of cocaine, who show no respect for the laws of armed conflict.

The FARC have kidnapped hundreds of people, many of whom remain in their custody, their health and welfare unknown. From what we have learned from the few who have escaped or been released, they suffer severe hardship and deprivation.

The FARC have also targeted Colombia's vulnerable indigenous people, whose traditional lands are often located in conflict zones. They have also been victimized by other armed groups, including the Colombian army.

Two recent incidents illustrate the dangers these people face. According to the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia, on February 11, 2009, the FARC killed 10 members of the Awá tribe in Nariño department. This followed the killing of 17 Awá on February 4, also in Nariño, and also reportedly carried out by the FARC. There are reports that an unknown number of Awá have been abducted.

The killing of defenseless indigenous civilians can best be described as a crime against humanity. It is utterly without justification, and those who engage in such atrocities should pay for their crimes.

For years I have worked to help improve respect for human rights in Co-

lombia and to strengthen Colombia's judicial system. I have also supported efforts to protect the rights of Colombia's indigenous people. When we get reports of the FARC attacking and summarily executing members of the Awá, including women and children, we are reminded how much remains to be done to protect these vulnerable groups and before real justice and peace can come to Colombia.

In recent years there have been notable improvements in security in some parts of Colombia, particularly Bogota, Medellin, and other cities. There has also been progress in expanding the presence of the state into areas which previously had been ungoverned. We are seeing some promising results from projects that provide coca farmers with titles to land, technical assistance to grow licit crops like coffee and cacao, and access to markets, in return for voluntarily stopping growing coca. These projects deserve our continued support.

But many rural areas remain conflicted or controlled by the FARC or other armed groups, some of whose members are demobilized paramilitaries. After more than \$7 billion in U.S. aid and 8 years since the beginning of Plan Colombia, the amount of coca under cultivation is close to what it was before. It is now grown in smaller, more isolated plots, in many more parts of the country. More than 200,000 rural Colombians were displaced from their homes as a result of drug-related violence last year alone.

Another issue that requires the attention of the Colombian Government is reparations for victims of the conflict. There are tens of thousands of people who had members of their families killed or injured by paramilitaries, the FARC, or the army. Many had land or other property stolen by paramilitaries who often had the active or tacit support of the army. The Colombian Government established mechanisms for returning stolen assets, but for the most part it has not yet happened. Very little of the land has been returned to its previous occupants. This process needs to be urgently invigorated if reconciliation is to succeed in Colombia.

Whether a family member was killed or their property stolen by the FARC, paramilitaries, or members of the army, the loss is the same. The judicial process in Colombia is wholly incapable of adjudicating the large number of cases or claims. It is critical that, as was finally done in the United States when Congress appropriated funds to compensate victims of the Japanese internment camps during World War II, the Colombian Government take the necessary steps to provide reparations for the victims so they can rebuild their lives.

The issue of extra judicial killings, or "false positives" as they have been called, is another major concern.

Human rights groups warned repeatedly that Colombian soldiers were luring poor young men with the promise of jobs, summarily executing them, and then dressing the bodies to appear as FARC combatants in order to obtain higher pay, time off, promotions, or other benefits. I also expressed concern about this. Instead of investigating, top Colombian officials, including the President, responded by accusing the human rights groups of being FARC sympathizers. After the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights confirmed these crimes and it was revealed that they were the result of official army policy, the government acknowledged the problem, but the verbal attacks against human rights defenders and journalists who wrote articles about the issue have continued.

To his credit, the Minister of Defense has taken some steps to address it, including issuing decrees disavowing the policy of rewarding body counts and dismissing army officers who were implicated in some cases. But few if any have been prosecuted and punished, and there are reportedly hundreds of these cases.

Throughout this period, despite report after report that these atrocities were occurring, former Secretary of State Rice continued to certify that the Colombian army was meeting the human rights conditions in U.S. law. That was as shameful as the Colombian Government blaming human rights defenders. The Congress had no responsible alternative to withholding a portion of the military aid for Colombia. Whether or when those funds are released will depend, in part, on how thoroughly the government addresses the problem of false positives, whether the officers involved are held accountable, and whether those who had the courage to report these crimes continue to be the target of government attacks.

I also want to mention the recently appointed Army Chief of Staff, GEN González Peña, who replaced General Montoya. General Montoya resigned under pressure due to the false positives scandal and was "punished," as too often occurs in Colombia, by being appointed an ambassador. Not long ago, General González Peña commanded the 4th Brigade in Antioquia which has one of the worst rates of reported extra judicial killings. It is difficult to believe that he was unaware of what his troops were reportedly doing, and it raises a concern about his qualifications for such an important position.

This year, the Appropriations Committee will again review our aid programs in Colombia. We want to continue helping Colombia because we share many interests—in addition to stopping the traffic in illegal drugs to the United States which has not succeeded to the extent some had predicted. We need to determine what has worked and deserves continued U.S. support, whether the Colombian Gov-

ernment is meeting the conditions in U.S. law and what costs should be shifted to the Colombian Government as U.S. aid is ratcheted down in the coming years.

CENTENNIAL OF THE RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I wish today to pay tribute not to a person, or an agency, or an institution, but to a building. That building, the Russell Senate Office Building, turns 100 years old today.

The Russell Building has graced Capitol Hill for a century. Some of us have been fortunate to have our Senate office located in Russell. But all of us have had an occasion to attend a hearing, a meeting, or gathering in one of the building's rooms. If we take the time to stop and consider what is before us, we are struck by the beauty of an earlier era in American history. Step into the Russell Rotunda, the Caucus Room, the Rules Committee hearing room, or any of other committee hearing rooms or special function rooms in the building. You can't help but feel that you are stepping back in time when you gaze at the high ceilings, the columns, the marble, the crystal chandeliers, and the mahogany and walnut furniture.

Architects refer to its style as beaux arts, a design popular in America in the early 20th century. Many Government buildings constructed during the late 1800s through the 1920s were of this design, and the Russell Building stands today as an excellent example of this style of architecture.

To commemorate this centennial, the curatorial staff of the Secretary of the Senate's office has created an outstanding exhibit in the Russell Building and a booklet about its history. I urge you to visit the display of original Russell furniture in the Russell rotunda basement or stop by the information kiosks in the rotunda basement, the second floor of the Rotunda area outside the Caucus Room, SR-318, the Rules Committee hearing room, SR-301, the Veterans Affairs' Committee hearing room, SR-418, the basement visitors entrance on Delaware Avenue, and the 2nd floor visitors entrance on Constitution Avenue. Along the way, you'll learn about the naming of the building, the old subway, and the hearings held in the committee rooms.

As a New Yorker, I am especially pleased that there are so many connections between the Russell Building and my home State. New York architects, Carrere & Hastings, designed the building; New York cabinetmaker Thomas Wadelon manufactured full-scale models of "very American" furniture in his studio located in Tuckahoe, NY; New Yorker George W. Cobb, Jr., was awarded the furniture contract for the building; and much of the original mahogany furniture was manufactured by the Standard Furniture Company of Herkimer, NY. The New York associa-

tion continued when in 1933 the last wing of the building opened, equipped with walnut furniture manufactured by three New York firms—the W.H. Gunlocke Chair Company, the Company of Master Craftsmen, Inc., and the Sikes-Cutler Desk Corporation.

New York is not alone in being represented in the design, construction, and furnishing of the building. From the Vermont marble to the Indiana limestone, to the Pennsylvania steelwork, to the Kansas cement, and to the elevators manufactured in Ohio, many states contributed their natural resources and the industry of their people to this historic place. It's a testament to the skills of these early 20th century architects and craftsmen that the building and its furniture and furnishings are still in use today.

The Russell Building was constructed because of the growing challenge in the early 1900s to find suitable office space to accommodate the needs of Senators. Prior to the opening of the Russell Building in 1909, Senators and their staffs conducted the business of the Nation in whatever space was available—the aisles of the Senate Chamber, the Capitol's marble hallways, nearby hotel lobbies, and local boarding houses. Constituents waited in the corridors of the Capitol when they came to meet their Senators and Congressman. As more States joined the Union, the number of lawmakers working in Washington grew. By the turn of the century, the Capitol was literally overflowing with people. The need for space to house Senators and their growing staffs was finally recognized in 1903, when the sites for the first congressional office buildings were acquired and construction of the buildings were authorized. One of these buildings so authorized would later become the Russell Senate Office Building. Once construction was complete, it was considered to be one of the grandest and most impressive buildings in all of Washington. It would later be named in honor of a former colleague from Georgia, the Honorable Richard Russell, who served in the Senate for 38 years.

There is an old saying there is nothing new under the Sun. And when it comes to the Senate and space, how true the saying is. As one of its areas of jurisdiction, the Rules Committee, on which I have the honor of serving as chairman, continues to search for space to meet the needs of Senators, committees, and support offices to this day—an administrative task not unlike the struggle to find space for the Senate in 1909.

During the past century, much has happened to us as a country. We added four States to the United States of America. We have experienced world wars, international conflicts, and tough economic times again and again. We have landed a man on the Moon and saw the beginning of the information age. Through all this time, the American people have persevered and thrived.