

COMMEMORATING 90 YEARS OF  
U.S.-POLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 40, S. Res. 9.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 9) commemorating 90 years of U.S.-Polish diplomatic relations, during which Poland has proven to be an exceptionally strong partner to the United States in advancing freedom around the world.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be added as a cosponsor of this resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to this measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 9) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 9

Whereas the United States established diplomatic relations with the newly formed Polish Republic in April 1919;

Whereas the year 2009 marks the 20th anniversary of democracy in Poland, as well as the 20th anniversary of the fall of communism in Poland;

Whereas the year 2009 marks the 10th anniversary of Poland's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO);

Whereas the year 2009 marks the 50th anniversary of the Fulbright Educational Exchange Program in Poland;

Whereas Poland has overcome a legacy of foreign occupation and period of communist rule to emerge as a free and democratic nation;

Whereas Poland has strongly supported the United States diplomatically and militarily, as well as supporting United States-led efforts in combating global terrorism, and has contributed troops to the coalitions led by the United States in both Afghanistan and Iraq; and

Whereas Poland has cooperated closely with the United States on issues such as democratization, nuclear proliferation, human rights, regional cooperation in Eastern Europe, and reform of the United Nations: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) celebrates the 90th anniversary of U.S.-Polish diplomatic relations;

(2) congratulates the Polish people on their great accomplishments as a free democracy; and

(3) expresses appreciation for Poland's steadfast partnership with the United States.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF NATO

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 41, S. Res. 20.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 20) celebrating the 60th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to this measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 20) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 20

Whereas the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will celebrate its 60th anniversary at a summit to be held on April 4, 2009, in Kehl, Germany, and Strasbourg, France;

Whereas this summit will be held along the border of France and Germany to commemorate the historic post-war reconciliation in Europe that NATO has done so much to facilitate;

Whereas for 60 years, NATO has served as the preeminent organization to defend the territory of its member states against all external security threats;

Whereas the security of the United States is inseparably linked to the peace and stability of the European continent by the participation of the United States in NATO;

Whereas the security of the United States has been significantly enhanced by the integration of security and military structures in the United States and Europe achieved by NATO;

Whereas NATO continues to promote a Europe that is whole, undivided, free, and at peace;

Whereas NATO continues to support an open-door policy of admitting states that can contribute to the promotion and protection of freedom, democracy, stability, and peace throughout Europe;

Whereas, since the end of the Cold War, NATO has continued to redefine and transform itself and to take on new missions, in order to ensure that each NATO member state can defend itself against emerging threats such as terrorism, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, instability caused by failed states, cyber attacks, piracy, and threats to global energy security;

Whereas NATO continues to help stabilize the Balkans through the deployment of troops to Kosovo;

Whereas NATO has deployed naval assets to the Gulf of Aden to address the growing threat of piracy in the region and to help protect the delivery of United Nations food assistance to Somalia;

Whereas after the 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, signed at Washington April 4, 1949 (TIAS 1964), was invoked for the first time in the history of the organization, and NATO deployed 50,000 troops from all 26

NATO member states to Afghanistan to respond to a dangerous insurgency and terrorist threat and to help re-build a shattered country;

Whereas the challenges that continue to be posed by the resurgence of the Taliban and the illicit drug trade in Afghanistan highlight the need for a sustained and strengthened NATO presence in Afghanistan;

Whereas NATO continues to enhance the security of Europe and the world by strengthening partnerships with countries around the world; and

Whereas Congress continues to support NATO, the leadership role of the United States Government in European security affairs, and the continued enlargement of NATO: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) celebrates the 60th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

(2) reaffirms that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is strong, enduring, and oriented for the challenges of the future; and

(3) expresses appreciation for—

(A) the steadfast partnership between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the United States Government; and

(B) the work of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to ensure peace, security, and stability in Europe and throughout the world.

URGING GOVERNMENT OF  
MOLDOVA TO ENSURE A DEMOCRATIC  
ELECTION PROCESS

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 42, S. Res. 56.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 56) urging the Government of Moldova to ensure a fair and democratic election process for the parliamentary elections on April 5, 2009.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements relating to this measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 56) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 56

Whereas Senate Resolution 60, 110th Congress, agreed to February 17, 2005, expressed the support of the Senate for democratic reform in Moldova and urged the Government of Moldova to ensure a democratic and fair election process for the parliamentary elections on March 6, 2005, by ensuring "unimpeded access by all parties and candidates to print, radio, television, and Internet media on a nondiscriminatory basis" and "the right of opposition candidates and workers to engage in campaigning free of harassment, discrimination, and intimidation";

Whereas the Election Observation Mission of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

found that, while the parliamentary elections in 2005 generally complied with most of the OSCE commitments and other international standards, “they fell short of some that are central to a genuinely competitive election process”, in particular “campaign conditions and access to media”, confirming the “negative trends already noted in the 2003 local elections”;

Whereas the Election Observation Mission found that the local elections held in June 2007 in Moldova were generally well administered but “fell short of a number of OSCE commitments central to a competitive electoral process”, in particular by not fully respecting “the right of citizens to seek public office and equitable media access”;

Whereas Freedom House, a non-profit, non-partisan organization working to advance the expansion of freedom, again in 2008 designated the political environment of Moldova as only “partly free”;

Whereas political liberties and civil rights are key indicators of eligibility for support from the Millennium Challenge Corporation, an entity of the United States Government, which is now considering a sizeable grant for the economic and political development of Moldova; and

Whereas recent actions by entities of the Government of Moldova raise serious questions about the readiness of the Government of Moldova to break free from the unfortunate patterns established in the elections in 2003, 2005, and 2007 and to create the campaign conditions and access to media required for truly free and fair elections: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the strong, mutually beneficial relationship that exists between the United States Government and the Government of Moldova;

(2) recognizes that the development of a genuinely democratic political system in Moldova is a precondition for the full integration of Moldova into the Western community of nations and the provision of assistance necessary to attain such integration;

(3) urges the Government of Moldova to meet its commitments to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, especially in respect to the conduct of elections, by guaranteeing—

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

(B) the ability of independent media to cover campaigns on an unrestricted basis;

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

(D) adequate means for citizens of Moldova residing abroad to cast their ballots; and

(4) in light of the steps taken by the Government of Moldova, pledges the continued support of the United States Government for the establishment in Moldova of a fully free and democratic system, the creation of a prosperous market economy, and the assumption by Moldova of its rightful place as a full and equal member of the Western community of democracies.

be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 13, the concurrent resolution on the budget, as under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. Under the previous order, when the Senate resumes consideration of the budget resolution tomorrow, 90 minutes of the statutory time remains. Senators should expect the so-called vote-arama to begin around 11:30 a.m. tomorrow. Votes will occur in a stacked sequence with 2 minutes for debate prior to each vote. In addition, Senators should note that each vote after the first vote will be only 10 minutes in duration.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DURBIN. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator SNOWE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I plan to offer an amendment tomorrow that I would like to discuss this evening very briefly because I do think it is an important matter as we consider the economic climate in which we find ourselves.

My amendment would create a deficit-neutral reserve fund that would extend the 2001 tax cut rates for small business owners so this tax increase does not subtract from the pool of capital that is going to be available to small business. As the Ranking Member of the Small Business Committee and senior member of the Finance Committee, I rise on this critical issue of taxation because I am deeply concerned about how proposed tax rate increases will harm small business capital formation.

There has been a significant debate about the effect on small business of raising tax rates on those making over \$250,000. I do not disagree with some of those efforts, but I do have a deep concern about the impact and the implications that it will have on small businesses and their ability to access affordable capital in this current economic downturn.

The expiration of these tax cuts enacted in 2001 and 2003 for couples making over \$250,000 will directly and indisputably affect small businesses. Hiking taxes from 33 to 36 percent and from 35 to 39.6 percent results in a 9-percent tax increase for either tax rate. So if the Government is subtracting 9 percent from small business owners, obviously, that suggests fewer resources will be available to reinvest in business.

As we know, access to capital is a constant struggle for America's small businesses, particularly at this time of a continuing credit crisis. We have seen the credit crunch that has had a direct effect on small businesses. Lines of credit have been denied. Access to capital is simply not available. Time and time again, we have heard from small businesses, and certainly that was true at a hearing we held recently in the Small Business Committee, because small business owners are saying repeatedly they have had considerable difficulty in being able to access credit from banks.

So we have a serious crisis because if we depend on small businesses to generate the jobs, which they do—70 percent of all the net new jobs in this country; half of all the private-sector employers, 70 percent of the nonfarm gross domestic product—then clearly we have to be concerned about the response of small businesses when we are raising the tax rates for those making over \$250,000.

We simply cannot increase taxes by 9 percent on small businesses and not expect that this tax hike will have an immediate effect on the amount of capital they re-invest in their business. I fear that in lieu of investing their own funds, small businesses will have to, obviously, turn to the frozen credit markets which clearly has impeded any ability of small businesses to secure capital.

Most recently, a Federal Reserve study demonstrated that 70 percent of banks have tightened loans to small businesses. Well, Chairman LANDRIEU of the Small Business Committee and I have been working to free up lending for small business owners. Recently, the President conducted a small business summit at the White House, and we heard directly from small business owners who said their lines of credit have simply dried up.

I know some of the banks have said, some of the TARP recipients said: Well, we are lending money. But the truth is, it is simply not happening. So there are numerous provisions in the stimulus package that I and Chair LANDRIEU had worked to insert because we thought it was important to make sure we took the steps to ensure a Main Street recovery, some of which were in the flagship SBA programs, the 7(a) and 504 programs, to reduce or eliminate the lenders' and borrowers' fees which are going to be instrumental to allowing banks to more freely loan money to small businesses because

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2009

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, April 2; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour