

respect to the remaining POWs and MIAs and the fallen servicemembers, and in celebrating America's freedom, which has for so long been guaranteed by our fighting men and women.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today in celebration of the 145th anniversary of Juneteenth, the oldest commemoration of the end of slavery in the United States. On June 19, 1865, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, TX, to inform the slaves that they were free. Although the Emancipation Proclamation took effect on January 1, 1863, it was 2 years later before the message reached slaves in Texas and the Union troops enforced the President's order. Eighty-nine years after America's Independence Day, Africans in America finally obtained their independence from slavery. Juneteenth is a day when all Americans should celebrate Black Americans' freedom and heritage.

In 2008, Congress apologized for the injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery and Jim Crow laws. The congressional resolution acknowledged that African Americans continue to suffer from the complex interplay between slavery and Jim Crow long after both systems were formally abolished. This suffering is both tangible and intangible, including the loss of human dignity, the frustration of careers and professional lives, and the long-term loss of income and opportunity.

On Wednesday, Congress honored the African-American slaves who built the U.S. Capitol by dedicating plaques to their memory. Historians have discovered that slaves worked 12-hour days, 6 days a week on the construction of the Capitol. The Federal Government rented over 400 slaves from local slave owners at a rate of \$5 per person per month, but the slaves were not paid for their work.

On this day, it is fitting to remember our Nation's painful history. Millions of Africans were torn from their homeland and brought to the Americas as chattel. While it is unknown how many died during the middle passage, it is estimated that 645,000 arrived in the United States. My own State of Maryland had slaves. In 1790, more than 100,000 slaves, which would have been about a third of the State's total population, lived in Maryland. Seventy years later, the 1860 census indicated that there were more than 4 million slaves nationwide.

Despite Maryland's history of slavery, many Marylanders led the fight for abolition. The underground railroad was a secret network that helped enslaved men, women, and children escape to freedom. Its route through Maryland took passengers by boat up the Chesapeake Bay. Ships departed from the many towns located directly on the bay and from cities on rivers that flowed into the bay, including Baltimore. Many ships' pilots hid fugitives and helped them on their way.

Another route led slaves by land up along the eastern shore of Maryland

and into Delaware, where they could cross into Pennsylvania and go north to freedom in Massachusetts, New York, and Canada. This was the route used by Harriet Ross Tubman, a native of Dorchester County, MD. Tubman not only guided herself and her family to freedom through the underground railroad, she also made more than 19 trips to the South to lead more than 300 slaves to freedom. She never lost a "passenger" along the route.

The abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass was born in Talbot County on Maryland's eastern shore. At age 20 he escaped from slavery and spent the rest of his life advocating racial equality throughout the United States and the United Kingdom. Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and countless others who led slaves to freedom and fought to abolish slavery are the heroes who inspire us to persevere in the fight for equality and justice in this country and worldwide.

In 1865, June 19 marked the end of slavery in America, but not the end of de jure racial discrimination. My own State of Maryland passed 15 Jim Crow laws between 1870 and 1957. Maryland's schools, swimming pools, movie houses and other facilities were segregated. Notably, in 1930, the University of Maryland Law School denied admission to Baltimore native Thurgood Marshall, a man who would two decades later argue the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case, outlawing legally segregated schools, and who would soon after become the Nation's first Black Supreme Court Justice.

While our Nation has made considerable progress over the past century and a half, many challenges remain. Discrimination, disparities, and racially motivated hate persist. We must confront these issues. We cannot ignore the disparities in health care that result in higher premature birth rates and reduced life expectancy for minority populations. We cannot ignore discriminatory sentencing in our courts or discriminatory lending practices by financial institutions. Racially motivated police brutality and hate crimes cannot stand. We must continue to pursue justice in each of these areas, and for all Americans.

We owe it to the legacy of our predecessors in the battle for racial equality to keep fighting injustice until the Declaration that "all men are created equal" rings true. We cannot be complacent. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "We will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."

We must continue to strive toward elimination of inequality so we can truly honor the spirit of Juneteenth.

REMEMBERING ARKANSAS FLOOD VICTIMS

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, my home State of Arkansas is known for its natural beauty, drawing thousands of visitors each year for camping, fish-

ing, and outdoor recreation. Tragically, 20 visitors to Camp Albert Pike lost their lives last weekend after severe rain resulted in flash flooding early Friday. My heartfelt condolences go out to their families, friends, and loved ones, many of whom I met as I toured the devastation. I will continue to pray that they find peace and consolation.

I have always had the utmost respect for our law enforcement, first responders, search and rescue teams and offices of emergency management. I have never been more impressed than in seeing their monumental effort during this tragedy. These brave men and women put their own safety at risk to search for survivors and victims, and they demonstrated amazing competence and dedication.

I was personally moved, as once again, Arkansans rallied to help their neighbors. While most of the victims of this disaster were from outside the boundaries of our State, local citizens embraced them with love and true compassion.

It was heartbreaking to hear the stories of those who struggled to make it out alive and those who were not so fortunate. There were many true heroes—of all ages—who continued to rescue others even when they knew members of their own families had perished and in the face of unbelievable personal danger.

Mr. President, I ask that we remember those who lost their lives in this tragic event:

ARKANSAS

Kaden Jez, 3, Foreman; Leslie Anne Jez, 23, Foreman; Debra McMaster, 43, Hope; Sheri Wade, 46, Ashdown.

LOUISIANA

Shane Basinger, 34, Shreveport; Kinsley Basinger, 6, Shreveport; Jadyn Basinger, 8, Shreveport; Anthony Smith, 30, Gloster; Katelynn Smith, 2, Gloster; Joey Smith, 5, Gloster; Bruce Roeder, 51, Luling; Kay Roeder, 69, Luling; Deborah Roeder, 52, Luling.

TEXAS

Robert Lee Shumake, 68, DeKalb; Wilene Shumake, 67, DeKalb; Nicholas Wade Shumake, 8, DeKalb; Eric Wayne Schultz, 38, Nash; Gayble Y. Moss, 7, Texarkana; Kylee Sullivan, 6, Texarkana; Julie Freeman, 53, Texarkana.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY 2010

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this Sunday, June 20, is World Refugee Day. On June 20, 2001, we recognized World Refugee Day for the first time, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

At the end of the last century, war and ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia left many people without a home or the protection of their country of origin. The Rwandan genocide of 1994 and the subsequent wars in the Democratic Republic of Congo forced refugees to flee to Tanzania and other neighboring states. As of last fall, over 300,000 individuals in Tanzania were

still waiting for safe, third country resettlement. The dissolution of the former Soviet Union, followed by war and ethnic strife in Chechnya, the Caucasus, and Central Asian successor states, created millions of refugees and internally displaced persons. Some of these former Soviet citizens were left stateless and remain so, unable to claim the rights or protection of any nation.

Despite these tragic events, the first World Refugee Day was an occasion of great hope. It provided an opportunity to celebrate the perseverance of refugees as they begin new lives in foreign lands, join new communities, learn new languages, and help their families adjust. The inaugural World Refugee Day celebrated the hard work of organizations such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other voluntary agencies dedicated to serving refugees. The day also acknowledged the personal contributions of volunteers in the United States and around the world to help refugees resettle in their communities. Finally, World Refugee Day raised awareness about the challenging conditions faced by refugees, whether they are fleeing violence and persecution, or waiting in a camp, hoping that a safe nation will welcome them and provide them security.

The last 10 years have not been easy for refugees. War and conflict around the globe have produced more refugees, yet the financial crisis and global economic downturn have made it more difficult for comparatively wealthy countries to contribute funds to support refugees and resettlement programs. For refugees recently resettled in the United States, the high unemployment rate, increased demand for low income housing, and strain on community service providers has made it more difficult for these new Americans to start to build their new lives.

After the September 11, 2001, attacks, certain changes to U.S. asylum law were enacted that have the effect of denying protection to genuine refugees, such as child soldiers and women forced into sexual slavery, if their coerced actions are labeled as “material support” for terrorism.

Throughout this difficult time, I have remained proud of the role that our country plays in supporting refugees and internally displaced persons abroad and helping refugees resettle in the United States. Since the 1980 Refugee Act was enacted, more than 2.6 million refugees and asylum seekers have been resettled in the United States.

My home State of Vermont has welcomed more than 5,300 refugees since 1989. In 2001, the same year as the first World Refugee Day, the first group of the “Lost Boys” of Sudan was resettled in Vermont. These boys had traveled hundreds of miles by foot to escape war and ethnic- and religious-based persecution. They were warehoused in refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia be-

fore being resettled in the United States. In the 9 years since they have arrived in Vermont, many have graduated from college, and some have gone on to attend graduate school.

Vermont has received refugees from across the globe, including Bosnia, Burundi, Vietnam, Somalia, and Russia. Hundreds of Vermonters have volunteered to help these refugees adapt to life in Vermont, welcoming them into their homes, schools, and places of worship. The newcomers have had a profound effect on life in Vermont, starting small businesses, excelling in local soccer teams, creating art, running community gardens, and sharing their cultures. In one Vermont school district, all signs are in English, Vietnamese, and Serbo-Croatian, reflecting just a few of the many languages spoken by the diverse student population. Not only do the Vermont-born students learn a little more about the world from their classmates who are refugees, but they also learn an important lesson about the resolve and durability of the human spirit.

While I am proud of the United States’ long-standing commitment to refugees, I believe that we as lawmakers can do better for the world’s most vulnerable populations. That is why I introduced S.3113, the Refugee Protection Act of 2010. The bill will bring the United States back into compliance with the Refugee Convention. Through modifications to the statute and misinterpretations of law in court decisions, the United States is falling short in some areas of refugee protection. The bill corrects serious problems in our law, such as the material support provision, which can prevent innocent victims of persecution from gaining protection. It also repeals the one-year filing deadline for asylum seekers in the United States. The deadline was unnecessary when it was added to the law in 1996, and remains unnecessary now. The bill also improves due process protections for asylum seekers without lowering the standards that one must meet in order to gain refugee status.

For resettled refugees in the United States, the bill ensures that per capita grants to assist these new Americans are adjusted every year to reflect the cost of living and inflation. The Obama administration raised the per capita grant level this year after it had languished at an unacceptably low level for years. I commend that action, but want to ensure the number does not remain stagnant.

I thank Senators LEVIN, AKAKA, DURBIN, and BURRIS for their support of the Refugee Protection Act. I hope that on World Refugee Day, others will join us in helping victims of persecution worldwide.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this Sunday, June 20, the world will observe the tenth annual World Refugee Day. On this day, we call attention to humanity’s efforts, through the United Nations, the work of individual governments, and of nongovernmental organi-

zations, to alleviate the plight of those forced from their homes by conflict or hatred.

Sadly, while the world’s commitment to these refugees is great, the scope of the problem is even greater. Last year, more than 43 million people were forcibly displaced from their homes, the largest number since the mid-1990s. At the same time, data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees show that the number of refugees who resettled in 2009 was at the lowest level in two decades.

These figures, just for 2009, include more than 2.8 million people who have fled homes in Afghanistan, more than 1.7 million people from Iraq, more than half a million in Somalia, nearly half a million from the Democratic Republic of Congo. These stunning numbers represent the human cost of humanity’s inability to live in peace. These seemingly endless millions represent mothers who struggle to feed their babies, children unable to go to school, families without dependable access to clean water or food or medical care. They are without homes, and if the world is silent to their pleas for aid, they will be without hope.

Fortunately, this human tragedy has prompted global action, with the United States in the lead. The Refugee Act of 1980 guides U.S. policy with regards to refugees, and since its passage, more than two and a half million people forced from their homes have been resettled in the United States. Of the more than 112,000 refugees who found refuge in countries other than their home in 2009, about 80,000, or nearly three-quarters, were resettled in the United States.

Despite our commitment to aiding refugees and to finding them new homes, our current policies often stand in the way of fulfilling our responsibility to help. Current law and administrative practice too often put unnecessary burdens on those seeking asylum here, even barring some who hope to escape the worst sorts of violence and persecution from entering the United States.

Seeking to address these problems, I have joined Senators LEAHY and DURBIN in sponsoring the Refugee Protection Act of 2010. Our legislation would extend protections for those seeking asylum in the United States; reform the process by which asylum seekers can be expelled from this country; modify existing law to ensure that legitimate asylum-seekers are not inadvertently caught up in antiterrorism protections while ensuring that terrorists are unable to manipulate the system to gain entry; and ease the path to resettlement for asylum-seekers and their families. Failing to remedy these gaps in our refugee law would carry a great human cost. As Dan Glickman, the president of Refugees International, testified to the Judiciary Committee during a hearing on our bill last month, “The Refugee Protection Act will help us do the right thing by

creating a more efficient and fair process for providing safe haven to the world's most vulnerable."

We face this continuing challenge without one of the world's most eloquent and effective advocates for the world's refugees. Senator Ted Kennedy led the drive to pass the original Refugee Act of 1980. He was a tireless advocate for the innocent victims of conflict, religious persecution and ethnic hatred. As we approach another World Refugee Day, we would benefit enormously from his leadership, but we can gain inspiration from his example. So long as there are people forced from their homes by war and persecution, this Nation will have a responsibility to act, and the Refugee Protection Act is an important opportunity to do so.

UIGHUR PROTESTS IN URUMQI

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, it has been nearly a year since deadly ethnic rioting between ethnic Han Chinese and the native Uighur population engulfed the city of Urumqi in China's vast, far-western region of Xinjiang—one of the worst ethnic clashes in China in decades.

Last year, after the protests began, I spoke on the floor, expressing my concern about human rights abuses and a lack of press freedom in Xinjiang, as demonstrated by the decision by the Chinese government to block access to journalists, which prevented the world from knowing the truth of what was occurring. Unfortunately, it is now clear that things were even worse than we knew at the time.

The Chinese police, the People's Armed Police, and the military responded with a heavy hand, conducting many large-scale sweep operations in two mostly Uighur areas of the city, operations that reportedly continued at least through mid-August of 2009. Internet and text-messaging services were immediately limited or cut off, and were only restored last month, depriving the people of Xinjiang from access to news, information, means of communication, and other benefits of connective technology.

The official death toll from the July 5, 2009, rioting was reportedly 197—though human rights observers say the actual number of casualties is higher. At least 1,700 people were injured, and some 1,500 people, by the government's own account, were detained. According to an insightful article published in the Washington Post this week, as of early March, there have been 25 death sentences among the 198 people officially sentenced. Twenty-three of those 25 were ethnic Uighurs.

The Post, which sent a reporter to Urumqi for a look at the city 1 year after the riots, reports that residents "seem most terrified of talking," and not just with journalists but also with each other. Uniformed and plainclothes police officers are pervasive, the newspaper reports. Most Uighurs are Sunni Muslims, but their religious freedoms

have been sharply curtailed. Economically, they lag well behind the ethnic Han population.

I condemn the continued repression of the Uighurs, as well as the violence perpetrated against all innocent civilians in China, and I call on the Chinese government to bring this reprehensible behavior to an end. I also reiterate my call from last year on the Chinese government to open Internet and mobile phone access, end jamming of international broadcasting, and lift the grave and growing restrictions on the press. If China is going to assume a position of leadership in the international community on par with its economic standing, it must lead by example in granting essential freedoms and human rights to its citizens.

I ask unanimous consent that the Washington Post article entitled "One year later, China's crackdown after Uighur riots haunts a homeland" published on June 15 be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Washington Post Foreign Service, June 15, 2010]

ONE YEAR LATER, CHINA'S CRACKDOWN AFTER UIGHUR RIOTS HAUNTS A HOMELAND (By Lauren Keane)

URUMQI, CHINA.—A hulking shell of a department store towers over this city's Uighur quarter, a reminder of what can be lost here by speaking up.

For years, it was the flagship of the business empire of Rebiya Kadeer, an exiled leader and matriarch of the Uighur people. If Chinese government accounts are accurate, she helped instigate fierce ethnic riots that killed hundreds and injured thousands here last July—an accusation she vehemently denies.

Still a prominent landmark even in its ruin, the Rebiya Kadeer Trade Center was partially confiscated by the government in 2006 when Kadeer's son was charged with tax evasion, although tenants were allowed to stay. After the riots, it was shuttered and slated for destruction. The government said the building had failed fire inspections, but it seems in no hurry to set a demolition date.

The forsaken structure makes for an effective deterrent. Last summer's chaos has been replaced with a level of fear that is striking even for one of China's most repressed regions. Residents are afraid of attracting any attention, afraid of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. But they seem most terrified of talking.

"Every single family on this block is missing someone," said Hasiya, a 33-year-old Uighur who asked that her full name not be used. Her younger brother is serving a 20-year prison sentence for stealing a carton of cigarettes during the riots. "Talking about our sorrow might just increase it. So we swallow it up inside."

Fear is not unwarranted here. For years now, those caught talking to journalists have been questioned, monitored and sometimes detained indefinitely. More striking is that residents now say they cannot talk even with one another.

The Turkic-speaking Muslim Uighurs consider Xinjiang their homeland but now make up only 46 percent of the region's population, after decades of government-sponsored migration by China's Han ethnic majority.

The riots started as a Uighur protest over a government investigation into a Uighur-Han brawl at a southern Chinese factory. Several days of violence brought the official death toll to 197, with 1,700 injured, though observers suspect the casualty count to be much higher. Most of the dead were Han, according to authorities. The government officially acknowledged detaining nearly 1,500 people after the riots. As of early March, Xinjiang had officially sentenced 198 people, with 25 death sentences. Of those 25, 23 were Uighur.

The events forced China's national and regional governments to address, at least superficially, taboo issues of ethnic conflict, discrimination and socioeconomic inequality. The central government in April named a different Communist Party secretary for Xinjiang, Zhang Chunxian, who promptly announced that he had "deeply fallen in love with this land." In May, the government announced a new development strategy to pour \$1.5 billion into the region. It also restored full Internet and text-messaging access to the region after limiting or blocking it entirely for 10 months.

The riots "left a huge psychic trauma on the minds of many people of all ethnicities. This fully reflects the great harm done to the Chinese autonomous region by 'splittist' forces," said Wang Baodong, a spokesman for the Chinese Embassy in the United States.

The ability to confront what happened last July, and why, still eludes people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang. White-knuckled, they hold their spoons above steaming bowls of mutton stew, poking nervously at the oily surface. They fiddle with their watchbands until they break. They repeat questions rather than answer them. They glance through doorways, distracted, and shift side to side in their chairs. Summer's full swelter has yet to arrive, but everyone starting to speak to a reporter begins to sweat. One man leaves the table six times in half an hour to rinse the perspiration from his face. He returns unrefreshed.

When asked what changes the riots had brought, Mehmet, a former schoolteacher who resigned last year because he opposed requirements that he teach his Uighur students primarily in Chinese, took a long glance around the room before pointing halfheartedly out the door. "They built a new highway overpass," he said.

Suspicion of fellow citizens is still common throughout China but seems especially acute here. Academics accept interviews only if they can avoid discussing the conflict's lingering effects. An apologetic professor backed out of a planned meeting after his supervisor discovered his plan, called him and threatened his job. A businessman said that he believed government security agents often trained as journalists, and asked how he could be sure that he would not be turned in.

"We're seeing increasingly intrusive modes of control over religious and cultural expression," said Nicholas Bequelin, a Hong Kong-based senior researcher at Human Rights Watch. "They live in fear of being overheard."

The Kadeer Trade Center is at the center of a protracted conflict. The Urumqi government said that compensation talks with tenants were still ongoing, and that it had moved the tenants to a nearby location. A spokesman for Kadeer, who now lives in Fairfax, said she had not been offered compensation.

Although the government says it is striving for stability, getting there is uncomfortable. On a single street near this city's main bazaar, four different types of uniformed police were on patrol one recent day—not counting, of course, an unknown number of