

(A) submit each report prepared under paragraph (1) to Congress; and

(B) make each report available to the public on the website of the Department of Commerce.

(4) INCLUSION OF LARGE METROPOLITAN AREAS.—Not later than 90 days after the submission of the first report under this subsection, the Secretary of Commerce shall submit a study to Congress on the feasibility and advisability of including, in future reports, information about the effect of local laws and ordinances on the formation and growth of new businesses in large metropolitan areas within the United States.

(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.

(n) NEW BUSINESS FORMATION REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce shall regularly compile quantitative and qualitative information on businesses in the United States that are not more than 1 year old.

(2) DATA COLLECTION.—The Secretary shall—

(A) regularly compile information from the Bureau of the Census' business register on new business formation in the United States; and

(B) conduct quarterly surveys of business owners who start a business during the 1-year period ending on the date on which such survey is conducted to gather qualitative information about the factors that influenced their decision to start the business.

(3) RANDOM SAMPLING.—In conducting surveys under paragraph (2)(B), the Secretary may use random sampling to identify a group of business owners who are representative of all the business owners described in paragraph (2)(B).

(4) BENEFITS.—The Secretary shall inform business owners selected to participate in a survey conducted under this subsection of the benefits they would receive from participating in the survey.

(5) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—Business owners selected to participate in a survey conducted under this subsection may decline to participate without penalty.

(6) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 3 months thereafter, the Secretary shall use the data compiled under paragraph (2) to prepare a report that—

(A) lists the aggregate number of new businesses formed in the United States;

(B) lists the aggregate number of persons employed by new businesses formed in the United States;

(C) analyzes the payroll of new businesses formed in the United States;

(D) summarizes the data collected under paragraph (2); and

(E) identifies the most effective means by which government officials can encourage the formation and growth of new businesses in the United States.

(7) DISTRIBUTION.—The Secretary shall—

(A) submit each report prepared under paragraph (6) to Congress; and

(B) make each report available to the public on the website of the Department of Commerce.

(8) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.

(o) RESCISSION OF UNSPENT FEDERAL FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, of all available unobligated funds for fiscal year 2013, the amount necessary to carry out this section and the amendments made by this section in appro-

priated discretionary funds are hereby rescinded.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall determine and identify from which appropriation accounts the rescission under paragraph (1) shall apply and the amount of such rescission that shall apply to each such account. Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit a report to the Secretary of the Treasury and Congress of the accounts and amounts determined and identified for rescission under the preceding sentence.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 7, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Human Rights, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on January 7, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH-216 of the Hart Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "The Syrian Refugee Crisis."

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

SUPPORTING ENHANCED MARITIME SECURITY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to Calendar No. 270, S. Res. 288.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 288) supporting unenhanced maritime security in the gulf of Guinea and encouraging increased cooperation between the United States and West and Central African countries to fight armed robbery at sea, piracy, and other maritime threats.

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

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 288) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 288

Whereas, although the number of armed robbery at sea and piracy attacks worldwide dropped substantially in recent years, such

acts in the Gulf of Guinea are increasing, with more than 40 reported through October 2013 and many more going unreported;

Whereas the United States imported more than 315,000,000 barrels of oil through the region in 2012, and United States businesses have extensive fixed assets in the region that are important to United States energy security;

Whereas the nature of attacks in the Gulf of Guinea demonstrates an ongoing pattern of cargo thefts and robbery, often occurring in the territorial waters of West and Central African states;

Whereas there are countries in West and Central Africa that are susceptible to acts of armed robbery at sea and piracy that lack adequate law enforcement and naval capabilities to stop or deter such attacks;

Whereas acts of maritime crime raise the costs and risks of trade and commerce in Africa and beyond because the security of vessels, crews, and cargoes cannot be guaranteed;

Whereas shipping insurance premiums increase after such attacks, and in so doing, create disincentives for local, regional, and international investors and companies seeking to do business in the region;

Whereas imports provide indispensable goods and services for the people of West and Central Africa, generate port fees and customs duties for their governments, and are essential in spurring economic growth and development in the region;

Whereas the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa issued by President Barack Obama in June 2012 states, "It is in the interest of the United States to improve the region's trade competitiveness, encourage the diversification of exports beyond natural resources, and ensure that the benefits from growth are broad-based.;"

Whereas a vibrant trade relationship between Africa and its partners, including the United States, can lead to expanded economic opportunities that can spur competition, raise productivity, and facilitate job creation in the economies of all participating countries;

Whereas the African Union, in collaboration with numerous official and nongovernmental stakeholders, developed the "2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Security" strategy (the 2050 AIM STRATEGY) which seeks "to address contending, emerging and future maritime challenges and opportunities in Africa . . . with a clear focus on enhanced wealth creation from a sustainable governance of Africa's oceans and seas";

Whereas the African Union's 2050 AIM STRATEGY seeks to combat "diverse illegal activities which include . . . arms and drug trafficking, human trafficking and smuggling, piracy, and armed robbery at sea", among other objectives;

Whereas the June 24–25, 2013, meeting of the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Security Heads of State Summit held in Cameroon marked the culmination of a United States Government-supported Economic Communities of Central African States (ECCAS) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)-led initiative and process that produced an approved ECOWAS-ECCAS Memorandum of Understanding for regional cooperation, and adopted a Gulf of Guinea Code of Conduct to address maritime crime and a Heads of State Political Declaration;

Whereas ECOWAS and ECCAS states are working to cooperate and build their joint capacities in order to increase maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and are working to achieve this goal with such partners as the United Nations Offices for West and Central Africa, the Gulf of Guinea Commission, the International Maritime Organization,

the Maritime Organization for West and Central Africa, and the African Union;

Whereas the United States Government in the Gulf of Guinea has focused on encouraging multi-layered regional and national ownership in developing sustainable capacity building efforts, including working with partners through the G8++ Friends of Gulf of Guinea Group, to coordinate United States Government maritime security activities in the region;

Whereas the United States Government has assisted the countries of West and Central Africa to enhance regional maritime security through programs such as the "African Partnership Station", operated by United States Naval Forces Africa "to build maritime safety and security by increasing maritime awareness, response capabilities and infrastructure", and the "African Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership", which "enables African partner nations to build maritime security capacity and improve management of their maritime environment through real world law enforcement operations, and through provision of diverse types of training and equipment assistance and participation in diverse regional maritime military exercises", as well as by employing analytical tools such as the Maritime Security Sector Reform Guide; and

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 2039, "expressing its deep concern about the threat that piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea pose to international navigation, security and the economic development of states in the region", was unanimously adopted on February 29, 2012: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns acts of armed robbery at sea, piracy, and other maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea;

(2) endorses and supports the efforts made by United States Government agencies to assist affected West and Central African countries to build capacity to combat armed robbery at sea, piracy, and other maritime threats, and encourages the President to continue such assistance, as appropriate, within resource constraints; and

(3) commends the African Union, sub-regional entities such as the ECOWAS and ECCAS, and the various international agencies that have worked to develop policy and program frameworks for enhancing maritime security in West and Central Africa, and encourages these entities and their member states to continue to build upon these and other efforts to achieve that end.

REGARDING CRITICAL NEED FOR POLITICAL REFORM IN BANGLADESH

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 273, S. Res. 318.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 318) expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the critical need for political reform in Bangladesh, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to the title.

Mr. REED. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed

to, the preamble be agreed to, the committee reported title amendment be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 318) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 318

Whereas the nation of Bangladesh was established in 1971 after a bitter war in which it split from Pakistan, and for many of the ensuing years until 1990, it was ruled by military governments;

Whereas political tensions have at times turned to violence in Bangladesh, undermining the democratic process;

Whereas the last parliamentary elections in Bangladesh originally scheduled for January 2007, were postponed indefinitely after the military intervened amid rising violence and questions about the electoral process's credibility;

Whereas a military-backed civilian caretaker government held power until December 2008 when Bangladeshis returned to the polls to elect a new parliament for the first time in many years;

Whereas ongoing antagonism between the country's two ruling parties, the Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, distracts from the important needs of the country;

Whereas concerns have grown about religious extremism in the otherwise usually tolerant country;

Whereas the United States-Bangladesh relationship is strong and involves many shared interests, including regional economic integration, counterterrorism, counter-piracy, poverty alleviation, food security, regional stability, and mitigation of natural disasters;

Whereas bilateral trade between the United States and Bangladesh now tops \$6,000,000,000 annually, with major United States companies making significant long-term investments in Bangladesh;

Whereas the economy of Bangladesh has grown six percent per year over the last two decades, despite a range of challenges;

Whereas the poverty rate in Bangladesh dropped from 40 percent to 31 percent between 2005 and 2010—a notable accomplishment in a country in which poverty has been deep and widespread;

Whereas the Grameen Bank's revolutionary microfinance lending to the poor has helped reduce poverty not only in Bangladesh, but has served as an innovative and powerful model for helping the poor elsewhere in the world;

Whereas the Department of State, Congress, and other high profile international voices have recognized the Grameen Bank's innovative work and expressed great concern over actions by the Government of Bangladesh that undermine the Bank's independence;

Whereas Bangladesh, an example of a moderate and diverse Muslim-majority democracy, is scheduled to have national elections on January 5, 2014;

Whereas, in 2013, hundreds of Bangladeshis died in violent clashes as a result of political violence and unrest, and some opposition and human rights activists have been arrested;

Whereas trials held by the International Crimes Tribunal in Bangladesh—set up to prosecute those responsible for atrocities committed during Bangladesh's war of lib-

eration with Pakistan in 1971—have fallen short of international standards;

Whereas the Government of Bangladesh eliminated a constitutional provision requiring the governing party to cede power to a neutral caretaker government three months before an election;

Whereas the 18-member opposition coalition in Bangladesh called for numerous nationwide strikes and transportation blockades in 2013, resulting in dozens of deaths;

Whereas Bangladeshi students cannot attend school and complete mandatory exams due to the strikes and blockades and related violence;

Whereas many citizens of Bangladesh have had their work and daily activities disrupted due to the strikes and related violence, which come at a cost to the economy and stability of Bangladesh;

Whereas a stable, moderate, secular, Muslim-majority democracy with the world's seventh-largest population, and the world's fourth-largest Muslim population, will have lasting positive impacts in the region and beyond;

Whereas the success of the democratic process in Bangladesh is of great importance to the United States and the world; and

Whereas during the week of December 8, 2013, United Nations Assistant Secretary General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco visited Bangladesh to foster political dialogue between Bangladeshi political parties and leaders in order to bring a halt to violence and allow for a credible peaceful election: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the political violence in Bangladesh and urges political leaders in that country to engage directly and substantively in a dialogue toward free, fair, and credible elections;

(2) expresses great concern about the continued political deadlock in Bangladesh that distracts from the country's many important challenges;

(3) urges political leaders in Bangladesh to take immediate steps to rein in and to condemn the violence as well as to provide space for peaceful political protests;

(4) urges political leaders in Bangladesh to ensure the safety and access of observers in its upcoming elections;

(5) supports ongoing efforts by United Nations Assistant Secretary General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco to foster political dialogue between political factions in Bangladesh; and

(6) urges the Government of Bangladesh to ensure judicial independence, end harassment of human rights activists, and restore the independence of the Grameen Bank.

The title was amended so as to read: "A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the critical need for political dialogue in Bangladesh, and for other purposes."

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 274, S. Res. 319.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 319) expressing support for the Ukrainian people in light of President Yanukovich's decision not to sign an Association Agreement with the European Union.