

(14) the Department of Housing and Urban Development;

(15) the Central Intelligence Agency; and

(16) the United States Postal Service;

Whereas the bald eagle is an inspiring symbol of the spirit of freedom and the sovereignty of the United States;

Whereas the image and symbolism of the bald eagle has played a significant role in art, music, literature, architecture, commerce, education, and culture in the United States, and on United States stamps, currency, and coinage;

Whereas the bald eagle was once endangered and facing possible extinction in the lower 48 States, but has made a gradual and encouraging comeback to the lands, waterways, and skies of the United States;

Whereas the dramatic recovery of the national bird of the United States is an endangered species success story and an inspirational example to other environmental, natural resource, and wildlife conservation efforts worldwide;

Whereas, in 1940, noting that the species was "threatened with extinction", Congress passed the Bald Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668 et seq.), which prohibited killing, selling, or possessing the species, and a 1962 amendment expanded protection to the golden eagle, thereby establishing the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act;

Whereas, by 1963, there were only an estimated 417 nesting pairs of bald eagles remaining in the lower 48 States, with loss of habitat, poaching, and the use of pesticides and other environmental contaminants contributing to the near demise of the national bird of the United States;

Whereas the bald eagle was officially declared an endangered species in 1967 under the Endangered Species Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-669; 80 Stat. 926) in all areas of the United States south of the 40th parallel due to the dramatic decline in the population of the bald eagle in the lower 48 States;

Whereas the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) was signed into law in 1973 and, in 1978, the bald eagle was listed as "endangered" throughout the lower 48 states, except in Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, Washington, and Wisconsin, where it was designated as "threatened";

Whereas, in July 1995, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service announced that bald eagles in the lower 48 States had recovered to the point where populations of bald eagles previously considered "endangered" were now considered "threatened";

Whereas, by 2007, bald eagles residing in the lower 48 States had rebounded to approximately 11,000 pairs;

Whereas the Department of the Interior and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service removed the bald eagle from Endangered Species Act protection on June 28, 2007, but the species continues to be protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (16 U.S.C. 668 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.), and the Lacey Act and the amendments thereto (16 U.S.C. 3371 et seq.);

Whereas the trained, educational bald eagle "Challenger" of the American Eagle Foundation in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, was invited by the Department of the Interior to perform a free-flight demonstration during the official bald eagle delisting ceremony held at the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, DC;

Whereas experts and population growth charts estimate that the bald eagle population could reach 15,000 pairs, even though a physical count has not been conducted by State and Federal wildlife agencies since 2007;

Whereas caring and concerned agencies, corporations, organizations, and people of the United States representing the Federal, State, and private sectors passionately and resourcefully banded together, determined to save and protect the national bird of the United States;

Whereas the recovery of the bald eagle population in the United States was largely accomplished due to the dedicated and vigilant efforts of Federal and State wildlife agencies and non-profit organizations, such as the American Eagle Foundation, through public education, captive breeding and release programs, hacking and release programs, and the translocation of bald eagles from places in the United States with dense bald eagle populations to suitable locations in the lower 48 States which had suffered a decrease in bald eagle populations;

Whereas various non-profit organizations, such as the Southeastern Raptor Center at Auburn University in the State of Alabama, contribute to the continuing recovery of the bald eagle through rehabilitation and educational efforts;

Whereas the bald eagle might have been lost permanently if not for dedicated conservation efforts and strict protection laws like the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (16 U.S.C. 668 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.), and the Lacey Act and the amendments thereto (16 U.S.C. 3371 et seq.); and

Whereas the sustained recovery of the bald eagle population will require the continuation of recovery, management, education, and public awareness programs to ensure that the population numbers and habitat of the bald eagle will remain healthy and secure for generations to come: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates June 20, 2016, as "American Eagle Day";

(2) applauds the issuance of bald eagle commemorative coins by the Secretary of the Treasury as a way to generate critical funds for the protection of the bald eagle; and

(3) encourages—

(A) educational entities, organizations, businesses, conservation groups, and government agencies with a shared interest in conserving endangered species to collaborate and develop educational tools for use in the public schools of the United States; and

(B) the people of the United States to observe American Eagle Day with appropriate ceremonies and other activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 503—RECOGNIZING JUNE 20, 2016, AS "WORLD REFUGEE DAY"

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COONS, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. REED, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. KAINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 503

Whereas World Refugee Day is a global day to acknowledge the courage, strength, and determination of women, men, and children who are forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, and persecution;

Whereas according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (referred to in this preamble as "UNHCR")—

(1) there are more than 65,300,000 displaced people worldwide, the highest levels ever recorded, including almost 21,300,000 refugees, 40,800,000 internally displaced people, and 3,200,000 people seeking asylum;

(2) children account for 51 percent of the refugee population in the world, millions of whom are unable to access basic services including education;

(3) nearly 4,800,000 refugees have fled Syria since the start of the Syrian conflict and more than 6,600,000 people are internally displaced within Syria;

(4) since January 2014, more than 3,300,000 Iraqis fleeing violence have been internally displaced, and 277,000 refugees have fled to neighboring countries;

(5) ongoing conflict, violence, and persecution have resulted in the displacement of millions across South Sudan, Ukraine, Colombia, and the Central African Republic;

(6) since April 2015, sporadic outbursts of violence in Burundi have prompted more than 265,000 Burundians to flee to the neighboring countries of Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(7) violent insurgent attacks in Nigeria have forced 220,000 people to flee to the neighboring countries of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, and have internally displaced nearly 2,200,000 people;

(8) between January and June of 2016, more than 206,000 refugees and migrants have crossed the Mediterranean Sea attempting to reach Europe and at least 2,800 women, men, and children have died during such crossings or are missing after such attempts; and

(9) approximately 95,000 women, men, and children, including many persecuted Rohingya refugees from Burma, have departed on the boats of smugglers in the Bay of Bengal since 2014, more than 1,100 of whom have died at sea;

Whereas refugees who are women and girls are often at a greater risk of sexual violence and exploitation, forced or early marriage, human trafficking, and other forms of gender-based violence;

Whereas the United States is the largest donor to UNHCR and provides critical resources and support to international and nongovernmental organizations working with refugees around the world; and

Whereas since 1975, the United States has welcomed more than 3,000,000 refugees who are resettled in communities across the country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to promote the safety, health, and well-being of the millions of refugees, including the education of refugee children and displaced persons who flee war, persecution, or torture in search of peace, hope, and freedom;

(2) calls upon the United States Government—

(A) to continue its international leadership role in response to those who have been displaced, including the most vulnerable populations who may endure sexual violence, human trafficking, forced conscription, persecution, or exploitation;

(B) to find solutions to existing conflicts and prevent new conflicts from beginning;

(C) to provide humanitarian and development support to countries around the world that are hosting millions of refugees to alleviate social and economic strains placed on host communities; and

(D) to encourage the international community to increase resources to address current and projected refugee crises;

(3) commends those who have risked their lives working individually and for nongovernmental organizations and international agencies such as UNHCR who have

provided life-saving assistance and helped protect those displaced by conflict around the world; and

(4) reiterates the strong commitment of the United States to protect and assist millions of refugees and other forcibly uprooted persons worldwide, consistent with the values of the United States and with the interests of national security.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I submit a resolution to mark World Refugee Day, June 20, and to address the unprecedented humanitarian crisis of millions of men, women, and children who are forced to flee from their homes due to conflict, violence, persecution, or human rights violations.

According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, UNHCR, the numbers of refugees and internally displaced people in 2015 uprooted from their home outstripped even the catastrophic levels of displacement following World War II. By the end of last year, 65.3 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide. Fifty percent of the displaced are children. These individuals and families have been uprooted by violence and persecution in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Burundi, South Sudan, Ukraine, and Afghanistan. These brutal conflicts churning through entire regions are shattering nations, and scattering an unprecedented number of people. Yet, we cannot allow these suffering people to become an abstraction or mere grim statistics. We cannot allow the wearying repetition of the horrors to numb our ability to think of each individual and each family as people just like ourselves, struggling to cope with unbearable circumstances.

Closer to home, rising numbers of people fleeing gang and other violence in Central America have contributed wider displacement across the wider region. Nearly 110,000 refugees and asylum seekers have come from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to Mexico and the United States, representing a more than five-fold increase over three years.

The relentless, horrifying violence of the Syrian conflict is perhaps the most shocking. By the end of 2015, there were close to 5 million Syrian refugees worldwide, an increase of 1 million men, women, and children within one year. After 5 years of war, the situation is increasingly desperate for both the refugees and host countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq. It is hard to comprehend the demographic, economic, and social impact of millions of refugees on these host countries. The number of refugees in Lebanon, for instance, would be equivalent to 88 million new refugees arriving in the United States.

The futures of millions of Syrian children are being stolen because they have no access to education. In the tiny country of Lebanon alone, there are over 300,000 Syrian refugee children who have no access to school. Over 2 million Syrian women are in the neighboring countries trying to survive. Dangerous coping mechanisms are on

the rise. More and more families are forced to send their children to work or marry off their young daughters.

While contributing generously to humanitarian funding, the United States has only accepted about 2,850 Syrian refugees to date. Because Syrians are finding it increasingly difficult to find safety, they are being forced to move further afield. Hundreds of thousands of people, most from Syria, have crossed the Mediterranean in boats in search of protection in Europe. Since January 2015, almost 5,000 mothers, fathers, and children lost their lives in their desperate bid to escape violence.

We know that the Syrian humanitarian disaster, which has destabilized an entire region, is not the accidental byproduct of conflict. It is, rather, one result of the strategy pursued by the Assad regime. The UN's Commission of Inquiry on Syria has documented that the Assad regime intentionally engages in the indiscriminate bombardments of homes, hospitals, schools, and water and electrical facilities to terrorize the civilian population. The terrorist groups Islamic State of Iraq & the Levant, ISIL, and Al-Nusra have also deliberately shelled areas with high concentrations of civilians.

There is also a grave and escalating humanitarian crisis in Yemen. That country was particularly vulnerable even before the current conflict, and now civilians throughout the country are facing alarming levels of suffering and violence. By the end of 2015, almost 200,000 people had fled to other countries, and about 2.5 million people were forced from their homes and live in empty schools, and other public buildings, or along highways.

We are also witnessing violent conflict that has pushed millions of people out of regions in Sub-Saharan Africa. The outbreak of violence in Burundi forced over 200,000 people to flee their country last year. In Libya, smuggling and trafficking networks thrive as the country has become a major transit route for sub-Saharan Africans seeking safety and security in Europe. Most of these refugees are fleeing Boko Haram in Nigeria, and decades of armed conflict and al-Shabaab in Somalia and Eritrea, where the government carries out extrajudicial killings, torture, and other serious human rights violations. In the Lake Chad Basin region, more than 2.4 million people—1.5 million of them children—have fled their homes due to violence and attacks by the terrorist group Boko Haram. The conflict has forced more than 200,000 Nigerians to flee to Cameroon, Chad, and Niger following attacks on their villages. While violence persists in Somalia, I am deeply concerned about the recent announcement by the government of Kenya that it would seek to close Dadaab, the largest refugee camp in the world and home to almost 400,000 Somali refugees. Shutting down the camp will mean increased protection risks for the thousands of refugees, the majority of who are women, children

and unaccompanied minors. Moreover, Somalia is faced with a severe drought and other security risks which will increase the vulnerability of its displaced people.

The international community must get serious about protecting the most vulnerable refugees—women and children. Women are facing ferocious threats in conflicts across the globe where rape and sexual assault are being used as weapons of war, and as vulnerable refugees they continue to be targets of gender-based violence. Children now make up one-half of all refugees worldwide. We must do more to protect them from sexual exploitation and abuse, from recruitment as child soldiers, and from being forced into early marriage. Organizations such as the United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA, Mercy Corps, Catholic Relief Services, and others know how to provide targeted support and protection to women and children refugees. But we in the international community must fund them adequately to help them do the job. The United States has lead in terms of humanitarian assistance, but we must encourage other nations to do more.

Against this tragic backdrop, we have all listened recently to divisive political rhetoric and hate speech on refugee and migration issues which is feeding rising levels of xenophobia. Instead of burden-sharing, we see borders closing; instead of political will, there is political paralysis. Humanitarian organizations and their field staff, overstretched and exhausted, are left to deal with consequences while, at the same time, they are trying to save lives on shrinking budgets. As the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has noted, "Yet, there is cause for hope. In contrast to the toxic narrative repeatedly played out in the media we have often witnessed an outpouring of generosity; by host communities, by individuals, and by families opening their homes. These ordinary people see refugees not as beggars, competitors for jobs, or terrorists—but as people like you or me whose lives have been disrupted by war."

In closing, we must recognize that as these conflicts proliferate, no corner of the world will be left unaffected. Today, on World Refugee Day, we recognize that every person fleeing his or her home deserves compassion and help; displaced people should be able to live their lives in safety and dignity. We must recommit ourselves to work smarter and harder to assist the world's most vulnerable people. Next year, on this day, I want to stand before the Senate to speak of the progress we have made and the lives we have saved by our collective efforts.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 4768. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 4685 proposed by Mr. SHELBY (for himself