

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor to reflect on the troubling foreign policy 1 year into President Donald Trump's administration.

A recent poll out from Gallup showed a dramatic reduction in global public opinion toward the United States. Confidence in the United States by the global community has plummeted to 30 percent under President Trump. A low public opinion of our great country, among other nations, is not a good thing, and it is not something to celebrate. In fact, it makes the world less safe for America and Americans. It limits our economic opportunities, and it undermines our ability to promote our values of portraying President Reagan's vision of a city on a hill. In just 1 year, the Trump administration has betrayed America's values, abandoned our allies, and appeased our enemies.

America's alliances, for example, with the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization keep our country safe and prosperous while they also build a more secure world, but President Trump has repeatedly questioned the worthiness of both organizations and has attacked leading members of each body—almost always key American allies.

These concerns were made much worse when, early in the administration, Secretary Tillerson said that America's interests would no longer be dictated by our values. It was almost unfathomable to hear the Nation's top diplomat speak in such a narrow, myopic way. Also, the games the administration has played with the mission statements of the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development have been clear attempts to depart from the values that define who we are—support for democracy, human rights, transparency, and good governance.

President Trump has praised strongmen leaders in Russia, China, Turkey, Egypt, and the Philippines even as they imprison, torture, or kill their own citizens. If support for world leaders who lack almost all of our values is not bad enough, President Trump's attacks on some of America's closest friends have undermined the credibility of America's word and America's commitment to its values. Launching verbal broadsides against the United Kingdom, Australia, and South Korea—the latter during the ongoing standoff with North Korea—are deeply regrettable and completely counterproductive.

Speaking of verbal mistakes, you cannot conduct high stakes diplomacy through the use of Twitter. We should never normalize such conduct by a President of the United States. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson conceded last week that he, essentially, learns about the President's foreign policy statements—or even of his positions—because his staff at Foggy Bottom prints off the President's tweets for him. That should give everyone a moment for pause.

Besides the nuclear crisis with North Korea, nowhere have the President's statements been more damaging than in the tenuous relationship between Washington and Moscow. Frankly, the President's words and actions send a clear signal to Mr. Putin that he can continue to attack democratic institutions and values with impunity. Each time Mr. Putin denies to Mr. Trump that the Kremlin was involved in attempting to influence the 2016 election—a bald-faced lie—the American President races to say that he believes him. Never before in history has such a clear threat to our national security been so clearly ignored by a President of the United States.

Last week, I released a report through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that documented Mr. Putin's pattern of 20 years of attacks against democratic institutions in Europe. In order to best understand what he did here in the United States in 2016—a matter still under investigation—as well as to protect ourselves in 2018, 2020, and beyond, we need to understand the big picture and respond accordingly. We will never be fully protected or have a robust enough response with the President's repeated public appeasement of Mr. Putin.

We have seen again this week how that has been playing out in a matter that is being debated in Congress. The Russian Government continues to interfere in our political debates here in the United States. There are reports that Russian internet bots and trolls are working to support Congressman NUNES's efforts to produce and release a Republican staff report on the investigation into Russia's interference in our 2016 elections. We know that Russian bots and trolls are vigorously promoting these attacks and corroding our political institutions and norms of behavior, seeking to paralyze our government and undermine our democracy. This sort of behavior carries a possible grave risk to our democratic system and our very way of life.

I am not surprised to find that Russian services are attacking us, as a recent report that we released made it clear that it was part of their strategy, but I do hope that all of us—Democrats and Republicans—will stand up for our democratic institutions and speak out against Russia's interference in our political system.

The President refers to his foreign policy strategy as “America first.” “America first” is a risky and chaotic

proposition and will, certainly, lead to America alone. The Muslim ban, hastily handed down not 1 week into his administration, was the early defining moment of President Trump's tenure—the clearest sign yet he would actively work to denigrate our values and isolate us from the rest of the world.

President Trump's rhetoric has made a multifaceted conflict with China more likely at a time when we need to work with the Chinese on stronger diplomatic ties between our nations to improve regional stability in East Asia.

The President's decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris climate agreement—an accord that every nation on Earth is a member of and which the majority of the President's senior advisers recommended against—is a gross abdication of American leadership and a narrow-minded rejection of basic science and fact.

I and other Members of this body are engaged in an attempt to prevent the President from withdrawing without reason from another major international agreement—the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, otherwise known as the Iran nuclear deal. The President has jeopardized the agreement by not certifying Iran's compliance and without his producing any evidence that Iran is in violation of the agreement. He has now made a number of aggressive demands of Congress and of our European allies, once again demonstrating that he is no negotiator.

America first, supposedly, but as communities in Maryland and across the country struggle with a nationwide epidemic of opioids, heroin, and fentanyl overdoses, President Trump's budget has proposed a 27-percent reduction in America's global counter-narcotics efforts, which will directly weaken our ability to work with international partners to stem the illegal flow of drugs that are entering our country.

The President sought to slash \$1 billion from America's global efforts to fight HIV/AIDS in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere. Thanks to bipartisan American leadership, we have made enormous strides against this disease. We should not turn back from that progress. This kind of fear, insecurity, and even xenophobia are damaging our reputation abroad and corroding our core identity as Americans here at home.

The President has doubled down on the disastrous wall rhetoric and continues to belittle Mexico, one of our closest friends and partners in the world. Even the White House Chief of Staff's attempt to clean up the President's wall position ended embarrassingly for him.

President Trump's campaign to undermine American values resulted in slashing refugee resettlement into the United States, while asking other countries to do more. His policies damage our moral leadership, condone other countries' rejection of refugees on their borders, and strengthen the

hand of those who wish to do us harm through recruitment and radicalization. U.S. leadership on this issue is key to our counterterrorism strategy.

President Ronald Reagan admitted 140,000 refugees in just 1 year of his Presidency. By contrast, at a time of extraordinary international need—far greater than when President Reagan was in office—President Trump capped refugee resettlement at 45,000 this fiscal year. Since he announced that policy, refugee admissions in this country have fallen to a level unseen in modern history. At the current rate, the United States may grant entry to fewer than 20,000 refugees—the lowest number since the program was established in 1980. The President's stealth attack on refugee resettlement is a war on a program that has embodied America's compassion and global leadership.

Much attention has been drawn to the despicable uncertainty that President Trump has injected into the lives of hundreds of thousands of Dreamers, preparing to deport young people who are essentially American citizens to countries they have never known. But equally as troubling is the President's denial of temporary protected status, or TPS, for hundreds of thousands of people from Haiti and El Salvador. Many more from Honduras and Syria sit in the President's crosshairs. These people have lived in our country, sometimes for decades, contribute to our economy, and many have American citizen children. Sending them back to their home nations at this time—countries that are already destabilized to various degrees—will exacerbate local and regional problems.

I am proud of the legislation I have written with Senators FEINSTEIN and VAN HOLLEN that is supported by numerous colleagues to create a legal pathway to residency for TPS recipients who only seek a better life for themselves and their families, enriching our country and all that it stands for in the process.

The U.S. military is the finest in the world, but increasingly, President Trump wants our men and women in uniform to do what should be the responsibility of our diplomatic and development corps—our forces for peace. And it is not just a slow and steady transfer of responsibilities from Foggy Bottom to the Pentagon; President Trump has failed to fill critical national security jobs and is gutting our development and diplomatic institutions.

It infuriates me when the President or his team dares to accuse the Senate of failing to do its constitutional responsibilities regarding nominations. Of 163 Senate-confirmed positions across the State Department and USAID, the administration does not have nominees for 72 of those jobs—just under 50 percent—1 year into office of this administration.

The administration has proposed an illogical and ideological cut of over 30

percent to the State Department and USAID budgets, attempting to disembowel critical national security tools. Secretary Tillerson has maintained an unexplained hiring freeze at the Department and Agency. Diplomats are leaving the government in large numbers, and his attempt to reorganize the Department many view as a solution in search of a problem. The President has little interest in how diplomacy advances our interests, promotes our values, and makes us safer and more prosperous.

To make matters worse, the President and his family continue to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes their business interests, making our foreign policy more difficult. In his dealings with China alone, the writing is on the wall. Candidate Trump said that on day one of his Presidency, he would declare China a currency manipulator. American businesses are still waiting. Did he sacrifice the American worker in order to appease the Chinese banker who paid him rent at Trump Tower? Or perhaps it was so he could secure those long sought after business trademarks with China—38 in all.

The American people should not lose sight of the fact that the President has refused to divest himself from the Trump Organization, ignoring decades of ethical norms and precedent. The President of the United States is engaged in foreign policy while maintaining unprecedented business interests in about 20 countries. Today, the President has a financial stake in real estate projects in India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and elsewhere—developments that require approval and intervention from governments, financing from banks, and cooperation from local partners. He continues to earn royalties from properties located throughout the world, from Panama to the United Arab Emirates.

Reaping a financial profit while serving as President begs the question of whether he is working in his own best interest or the Nation's best interest—exactly why the Constitution's emoluments clause exists and of which I believe he is in violation. President Trump could easily rectify this by cutting his financial ties and leaving no doubt that his first and foremost priority is serving the Nation's interests.

In closing, let me say that American foreign policy led by our values, support for our allies, and a desire to make the world a better place, keeps us safe at home and advances our country's prosperity and security. President Trump has not put the strategies in place to deal with the complicated national security crises facing our country. Instead, he has made international security challenges more difficult to solve, including the crisis with Iran, the nuclear weapons dilemma with North Korea, and the Kremlin activities sowing discord in our country and throughout the world. President Trump has been unwilling to engage in the delicate diplomacy and tough na-

tional security decisions that are required to keep this country safe and maintain our global leadership.

The role of Congress in shaping and advancing U.S. foreign policy has never been more important, and I will continue to advance legislation, conduct oversight, and speak out about these important issues in the name of the American people and the values and norms that define us and our place in this complicated world. I am proud that there are many Members on both sides of the aisle who share these concerns, and we will work together for America's national security interests.

With that, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SENATE PRIORITIES

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, now that the government is up and running again, we need to look ahead at what our legislative priorities should be. I can't speak for everybody, but I can speak for myself. My priorities are threefold.

First, we need to expedite disaster relief. In December, the House passed an \$81 billion disaster relief bill designed to address the natural disasters caused by Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Harvey, as well as the wildfires out West. That has been sitting in the Senate since December. We need to act and act with dispatch.

Everybody remembers Hurricane Harvey—we certainly do in Texas—which pummeled us last August. It was last August; this is February. Most of the media attention in the months since has focused on the city of Houston, which quite literally was torn apart. This was the most intense rain event in American history—more than 50 inches of rain fell in 5 days.

Other areas beyond Houston fared worse—I am thinking of cities like Rockport and Port Author on the Texas coast. I am thinking of cities like Victoria and Beaumont. More than 28,000 square miles were flooded. Crops rotted, livestock died, and almost 6 months later people are still piecing together their lives.

In addition to Hurricane Harvey, as I said, there was Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, and there were the wildfires that burned across California that later resulted in mudslides after the rains fell. I know the Federal Government is not the only entity charged with ensuring help gets to these places, but it certainly has an important part to play.

This morning, I attended the U.S. Conference of Mayors and saw a number of my mayors from Texas who were part of the success or at least the management of this natural disaster in