

(B) merged with amounts in the fund or account to which the amounts were credited under subparagraph (A); and

(C) available for the same purposes as, and subject to the same conditions and limitations applicable to, amounts in the fund or account to which the amounts were credited under subparagraph (A).

(d) **DESCRIPTION OF FEDERAL LAND AND NON-FEDERAL LAND.**—The exact acreage and legal description of the Federal land and non-Federal land to be exchanged under this section shall be determined by surveys that are determined to be satisfactory by the Secretary and the Post.

(e) **CONVEYANCE AGREEMENT.**—The exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land under this section shall be—

(1) carried out through a quitclaim deed or other legal instrument; and

(2) subject to such terms and conditions as are mutually satisfactory to the Secretary and the Post, including such additional terms and conditions as the Secretary considers to be appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(f) **VALID EXISTING RIGHTS.**—The exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land authorized under this section shall be subject to valid existing rights.

(g) **TITLE APPROVAL.**—Title to the Federal land and non-Federal land to be exchanged under this section shall be in a form acceptable to the Secretary.

(h) **TREATMENT OF ACQUIRED LAND.**—Any non-Federal land and interests in non-Federal land acquired by the United States under this section shall be administered by the Secretary as part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

(i) **MODIFICATION OF BOUNDARY.**—On completion of the exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land under this section, the Secretary shall modify the boundary of the Gulf Islands National Seashore to reflect the exchange of Federal land and non-Federal land.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to and the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 2615), as amended, was passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

## STUDY OF UNDERREPRESENTED CLASSES CHASING ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE SUCCESS ACT OF 2018

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consider-

ation of H.R. 6758, which was received from the House.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6758) to direct the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, in consultation with the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, to study and provide recommendations to promote the participation of women, minorities, and veterans in entrepreneurship activities and the patent system, to extend by 8 years the Patent and Trademark Office's authority to set the amounts for the fees it charges, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 6758) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

## IRAQ AND SYRIA GENOCIDE EMERGENCY RELIEF AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 227, H.R. 390.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 390) to provide emergency relief for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Iraq and Syria, for accountability for perpetrators of these crimes, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act of 2017”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings; sense of Congress.

Sec. 3. Sense of Congress on the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis in Syria.

Sec. 4. Definitions.

Sec. 5. Statement of policy.

Sec. 6. Actions to promote accountability in Iraq and Syria for acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

Sec. 7. Identification of and assistance to address humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of certain persons in Iraq and Syria.

Sec. 8. Reports.

Sec. 9. Technical assistance authorized.

Sec. 10. Department of State Rewards for Justice Program.

Sec. 11. Syria Study Group.

Sec. 12. Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic.

Sec. 13. Prohibition on additional funding.

### SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) Religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria are persecuted groups. The Secretary of State of State declared on March 17, 2016, and August 15, 2017, that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), is responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and other atrocity crimes against several of these groups, including Christians and Yazidis.

(2) The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic stated in its February 3, 2016, report, “The Government has committed the crimes against humanity of extermination, murder, rape or other forms of sexual violence, torture, imprisonment, enforced disappearance and other inhuman acts. Based on the same conduct, war crimes have also been committed. Both Jabhat Al-Nusra and some anti-Government armed groups have committed the war crimes of murder, cruel treatment, and torture.”

(3) The International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program and the Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training of the Department of Justice have provided technical assistance to governmental judicial and law enforcement entities in Iraq, including with funding support from the Department of State.

(4) According to the Department of State's annual reports on international religious freedom—

(A) the number of Christians living in Iraq has dropped from an estimated 800,000 to 1,400,000 in 2002 to fewer than 250,000 in 2016; and

(B) the number of Yazidis living in Iraq has dropped from 500,000 in 2013 to between 350,000 and 400,000 in 2016.

(5) The annual reports on international religious freedom also suggest that—

(A) Christian communities living in Syria, which had accounted for between 8 and 10 percent of Syria's total population in 2010, are now considerably smaller as a result of the civil war; and

(B) the population of approximately 80,000 Yazidis in 2010 may now be larger because of refugees from Iraq.

(6) On December 21, 2016, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution to establish the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Those Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

(7) Local communities and entities have sought to mitigate the impact of violence directed against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria, including the Chaldean Catholic Archdiocese of Erbil (Kurdistan Region of Iraq), which has used private funds to provide assistance to internally displaced Christians, Yazidis, and Muslims throughout the greater Erbil region, while growing needs and diminishing resources have made it increasingly difficult to continue these efforts.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—Congress—

(1) strongly condemns—

(A) the ongoing violence, the use of chemical weapons, targeting of civilian populations with barrel, incendiary, and cluster bombs and SCUD missiles, and the systematic gross human rights violations carried out by the Government of Syria and pro-government forces under the direction of President Bashar al-Assad; and

(B) all abuses committed by violent extremist groups and other combatants involved in the civil war in Syria;

(2) expresses its support for the people of Syria seeking democratic change;

(3) urges all parties to the conflict—  
(A) to immediately halt indiscriminate attacks on civilians; and

(B) to allow for the delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance; and

(C) to end sieges of civilian populations;

(4) calls on the President to support efforts in Syria, and on the part of the international community, to ensure accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed during the conflict; and

(5) supports the request in United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), and 2191 (2014) for the Secretary-General to regularly report to the Security Council on the implementation of the resolutions, including paragraph 2 of Resolution 2139, which “demands that all parties immediately put an end to all forms of violence [and] cease and desist from all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights”.

### SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE URGENT NEED FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS IN SYRIA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The transnational Salafi-jihadi organizations Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and al Qaeda are utilizing the conflict in Syria and the actions of the Assad regime to recruit and mobilize fighter and popular support.

(2) The crisis in Syria has led to the creation of terrorist safe havens controlled by ISIS and al Qaeda, along with other extremist groups, which have become bases from which to plan, direct, and inspire attacks against the United States and its allies and partners.

(3) The spread of violence perpetuated by the civil war in Syria and the flow of refugees is a threat to the security of our allies in the Middle East and Europe, placing immense domestic and humanitarian burdens on Syria's neighbors, most notably Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iraq.

(4) The Syrian conflict has allowed Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and its proxies to increase their influence in parts of Syria and potentially threaten Israel's borders.

(5) The United Nations Security Council resolutions 2332 (2016), 2268 (2016), and 2139 (2014) call for the implementation of a cessation of hostilities in Syria and reaffirm the international community's support for the immediate, direct, and uninhibited access of humanitarian workers throughout the Syrian Arab Republic.

(6) The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that the Syrian conflict has created over 5,000,000 refugees and 6,300,000 internally displaced persons.

(7) Widespread and systematic attacks on civilians, schools, hospitals, and other civilian infrastructure, in violation of international humanitarian law, continue in Syria, in particular as result of the actions of the Assad regime and its Russian and Iranian supporters.

(8) Amnesty International has documented evidence of mass human rights abuses of detainees at the Assad Regime's Saydnaya Military Prison, including the summary execution by hanging of an estimated 5,000 to 13,000 detainees between September 2011 and December 2015.

(9) The regime of Bashar al-Assad has repeatedly blocked civilian access to or diverted humanitarian assistance, including medical supplies, from besieged and hard-to-reach areas, in violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions.

(10) The Assad regime is subject to and in violation of both United Nations Security Council Resolution 2118 (2013) on the Framework for Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2209 (2015) Condemning the Use of Chlorine Gas in Syria.

(11) The Governments of the Russian Federation and Iran have supported the Assad regime,

perpetuated the conflict, and deployed tactics and strategies that have caused grave harm to civilians, including their conduct in the siege of eastern Aleppo which may constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.

(12) The United States Government has provided nearly \$6,000,000,000 since 2011 in humanitarian assistance to communities and people directly impacted by the Syrian conflict, including \$364,000,000 that will be provided in fiscal year 2017 for refugees and other people displaced by the Syrian conflict.

(13) The United States Armed Forces are leading the Global Coalition to Counter ISIS and are deployed with Coalition allies within the territory of Syria and are working by, with, and through local Syrian partner forces to defeat ISIS and stabilize territory taken from it.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—Congress—

(1) urges all parties to the conflict in Syria, particularly the Russian Federation, Iran, and Iranian-backed militias, to immediately halt indiscriminate attacks, the imposition of starvation sieges, and other forms of warfare directed against civilians and civilian infrastructure;

(2) strongly urges all parties to the conflict to respect the safety, security, independence, and impartiality of humanitarian workers and medical professionals, ensuring freedom of movement to deliver aid, particularly in areas of Syria controlled by opposition forces;

(3) encourages the President to make it the policy of the United States Government to continue to coordinate a comprehensive and generous response to the humanitarian crisis in Syria, including assistance and development and protection of human rights inside Syria and in the region;

(4) urges all parties in Syria to support the immediate and full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2268 (2016), which calls for a cessation of hostilities in the conflict, except with respect to ISIS and al Qaeda and their affiliated organizations, and to facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of war-affected communities in Syria;

(5) affirms that the elimination of al Qaeda and ISIS safe havens in Syria from which those organizations can plan and launch attacks against the United States and its partners is a vital national security interest of the United States;

(6) affirms that the stability of key European and Middle Eastern partners is vital to the national security of the United States, and preventing the Syrian conflict from undermining that stability is a top priority for the United States;

(7) calls on the international community to continue to support neighboring countries and host communities who are generously supporting refugees and internally displaced persons fleeing the conflict in Syria;

(8) calls on the President to continue the active participation of the United States Government in a robust and effective diplomatic process to achieve a political agreement to the Syrian conflict; and

(9) urges the President to develop and submit to the Committees on Foreign Relations and Armed Services of the Senate and the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Armed Services of the House of Representatives within 90 days a strategy for providing long-term stability and security in areas seized from ISIS in Syria.

### SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(E) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives; and

(F) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(2) GENOCIDE.—The term “genocide” means any offense described in section 1091(a) of title 18, United States Code.

(3) HUMANITARIAN, STABILIZATION, AND RECOVERY NEEDS.—The term “humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs”, with respect to an individual, includes water, sanitation, hygiene, food security, nutrition, shelter, housing, reconstruction, medical, education, and psychosocial needs.

(4) HYBRID TRIBUNAL.—The term “hybrid tribunal” means a temporary criminal tribunal that involves a combination of domestic and international lawyers, judges, and other professionals to prosecute individuals suspected of committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide.

(5) INTERNATIONALIZED DOMESTIC COURT.—The term “internationalized domestic court” means a domestic court with the support of international advisers.

(6) TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE.—The term “transitional justice” means the range of judicial, non-judicial, formal, informal, retributive, and restorative measures employed by countries transitioning out of armed conflict or repressive regimes—

(A) to redress legacies of atrocities; and

(B) to promote long-term, sustainable peace.

(7) WAR CRIME.—The term “war crime” has the meaning given the term in section 2441(c) of title 18, United States Code.

### SEC. 5. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States to ensure that assistance for humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of individuals who are or were nationals and residents of Iraq or Syria, and of communities from those countries, is directed toward those individuals and communities with the greatest need, including those individuals from communities of religious and ethnic minorities.

### SEC. 6. ACTIONS TO PROMOTE ACCOUNTABILITY IN IRAQ AND SYRIA FOR ACTS OF GENOCIDE, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND WAR CRIMES.

(a) ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development are authorized, in consultation with the government of Iraq, to provide assistance, including financial and technical assistance, as may be necessary and appropriate to support the efforts of entities, including nongovernmental organizations with expertise in international criminal investigations and law, to undertake the following activities to address crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes in Iraq by ISIS since January 2014:

(1) Conducting criminal investigations.

(2) Developing indigenous investigative and judicial skills, including by partnering, directly mentoring, and providing equipment and infrastructure, as necessary, to effectively adjudicate cases in accordance with due process and respect for the rule of law.

(3) Collecting and preserving evidence and the chain of evidence, including for use in prosecutions in domestic courts, hybrid tribunals, and internationalized domestic courts, consistent with the activities described in subsection (b).

(b) ACTIONS BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, shall encourage governments of foreign countries to include in appropriate security databases and security screening procedures of such countries information to identify suspected ISIS members for whom credible evidence exists of having committed acts of genocide, crimes

against humanity or war crimes in Iraq and Syria since January 2014, and to prosecute such individuals for acts of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, as appropriate.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary of State shall consult with, and consider credible information from, entities described in such subsection.

**SEC. 7. IDENTIFICATION OF AND ASSISTANCE TO ADDRESS HUMANITARIAN, STABILIZATION, AND RECOVERY NEEDS OF CERTAIN PERSONS IN IRAQ AND SYRIA.**

(a) IDENTIFICATION.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and the Director of National Intelligence, shall seek to identify—

(1) the threats of persecution and other early-warning indicators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes against individuals—

(A) who are or were nationals and residents of Iraq or Syria, are members of a religious or ethnic minority group in either such country, and against whom ISIS has committed acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes since January 2014, as determined by the Secretary of State; or

(B) who are members of another religious or ethnic minority group in Iraq or Syria that the Secretary of State has identified as a persecuted group;

(2) the religious and ethnic minority groups in Iraq or Syria identified pursuant to paragraph (1) that are at risk of forced migration within or across the borders of Iraq, Syria, or a country of first asylum, and the primary reasons for such risk;

(3) the humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of individuals and groups described in paragraphs (1) and (2), including the assistance provided by the United States and by the United Nations, respectively, to address the humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs, and mitigate the risks of forced migration, of individuals and groups described in paragraphs (1) and (2), and assistance provided through the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization and Funding Facility for Expanded Stabilization; and

(4) to the extent practicable and appropriate, the entities, including faith-based entities, that are providing assistance to address the humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of individuals and groups described in paragraphs (1) and (2), and the extent to which the United States is providing assistance to or through such entities.

(b) ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary of State shall consult with, and consider credible information from—

(1) individuals and groups described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of such subsection; and

(2) entities described in paragraph (4) of such subsection.

(c) ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development are authorized to provide assistance, including financial and technical assistance as necessary and appropriate, to support entities described in subsection (a)(4) that the Secretary and the Administrator determine have access, and are capable of effectively managing and delivering such assistance, to the individuals and groups described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of such subsection.

**SEC. 8. REPORTS.**

(a) IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(1) a detailed description of the efforts taken, and efforts proposed to be taken, to implement the provisions of this Act;

(2) an assessment of—

(A) the feasibility and advisability of prosecuting suspected ISIS members for whom cred-

ible evidence exists of having committed acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes in Iraq since January 2014, in domestic courts in Iraq, hybrid tribunals, and internationalized domestic courts; and

(B) the measures needed—

(i) to ensure effective criminal investigations of such individuals; and

(ii) to effectively collect and preserve evidence and preserve the chain of evidence, for prosecution;

(3) recommendations for legislative remedies and administrative actions to facilitate the implementation of this Act.

(b) SUPPORT FOR THE INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF WAR CRIMES.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(1) a detailed description of the efforts taken, and efforts proposed to be taken, by the Secretary of State to implement subsections (a) and (b) of section 5; and

(2) an assessment of—

(A) the feasibility and advisability of prosecuting suspected ISIS members for whom credible evidence exists of having committed genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes in Iraq since January 2014, in domestic courts in Iraq, hybrid tribunals, and internationalized domestic courts; and

(B) the capacity building, and other measures, needed to ensure effective criminal investigations of such individuals.

(c) REPORT ON ACCOUNTABILITY FOR WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND GENOCIDE IN SYRIA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees on war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Syria. The Secretary of State shall submit another such report not later than 180 days after the Secretary determines that the violence in Syria has ceased.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The reports submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) a description of alleged war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide perpetrated during the civil war in Syria, including—

(i) incidents that may constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide committed by the regime of President Bashar al-Assad and all forces fighting on its behalf;

(ii) incidents that may constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide committed by violent extremist groups, anti-government forces, and any other combatants in the conflict;

(iii) any incidents that may violate the principle of medical neutrality and, if possible, the identification of the individual or individuals who engaged in or organized such incidents; and

(iv) if possible, a description of the conventional and unconventional weapons used for such crimes and the origins of such weapons; and

(B) a description and assessment by the Office of Global Criminal Justice of the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of Justice, and other appropriate agencies of programs that the United States Government has undertaken to ensure accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide perpetrated against the people of Syria by the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, violent extremist groups, and other combatants involved in the conflict, including programs—

(i) to train investigators within and outside of Syria on documenting, investigating, developing findings of, and identifying and locating alleged perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide, including—

(I) the number of United States Government or contract personnel currently designated to work full-time on such issues; and

(II) identifying the authorities and appropriations being used to support such training efforts;

(ii) to promote and prepare for a transitional justice process or processes for the perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Syria beginning in March 2011;

(iii) to document, collect, preserve, and protect evidence of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Syria, including support for Syrian, foreign, and international nongovernmental organizations, and other entities, including the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic; and

(iv) to assess the influence of accountability measures on efforts to reach a negotiated settlement to the Syrian conflict during the reporting period.

(3) FORM.—The reports required under paragraph (1) may be submitted in unclassified or classified form, but shall include a publicly available annex.

(d) TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE STUDY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State (acting through appropriate officials and offices, which may include the Office of Global Criminal Justice), after consultation with the Department of Justice, the United States Agency for International Development, and other appropriate Federal agencies, shall—

(1) complete a study of the feasibility and desirability of potential transitional justice mechanisms for Syria, including a hybrid tribunal, to address war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide perpetrated in Syria beginning in March 2011; and

(2) submit a detailed report of the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1), including recommendations on which transitional justice mechanisms the United States Government should support, why such mechanisms should be supported, and what type of support should be offered, to—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(e) FORM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (c)(3), each report required under this section shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex, if necessary.

(2) PROTECTION OF WITNESSES AND EVIDENCE.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary of State shall take due care to ensure that the identification of witnesses and physical evidence are not publicly disclosed in a manner that might place such persons at risk of harm or encourage the destruction of evidence by the Government of Syria, violent extremist groups, anti-government forces, or any other combatants or participants in the conflict.

**SEC. 9. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State (acting through appropriate officials and offices, which may include the Office of Global Criminal Justice), after consultation with the Department of Justice and other appropriate Federal agencies, is authorized to provide appropriate assistance to support entities that, with respect to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide perpetrated by the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, all forces fighting on its behalf, and all non-state armed groups fighting in the country, including violent extremist groups in Syria beginning in March 2011—

(1) identify suspected perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(2) collect, document, and protect evidence of crimes and preserve the chain of custody for such evidence;

(3) conduct criminal investigations;

(4) build Syria's investigative and judicial capacities and support prosecutions in the domestic courts of Syria, provided that President Bashar al-Assad is no longer in power;

(5) support investigations by third-party states, as appropriate; or

(6) protect witnesses that may be helpful to prosecutions or other transitional justice mechanisms.

(b) **ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary of State, after consultation with appropriate Federal agencies and the appropriate congressional committees, and taking into account the findings of the transitional justice study required under section 7(d), is authorized to provide assistance to support the creation and operation of transitional justice mechanisms, including a potential hybrid tribunal, to prosecute individuals suspected of committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide in Syria beginning in March 2011.

(c) **BRIEFING.**—The Secretary of State shall provide detailed, biannual briefings to the appropriate congressional committees describing the assistance provided to entities described in subsection (a).

#### **SEC. 10. DEPARTMENT OF STATE REWARDS FOR JUSTICE PROGRAM.**

Section 36(b)(10) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2708 (b)(10)) is amended by inserting “(including war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide committed in Syria beginning in March 2011)” after “genocide”.

#### **SEC. 11. SYRIA STUDY GROUP.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is hereby established a working group to be known as the “Syria Study Group” (in this section referred to as the “Group”).

(b) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of the Group is to examine and make recommendations with respect to the military and diplomatic strategy of the United States with respect to the conflict in Syria.

(c) **COMPOSITION.**—

(1) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The Group shall be composed of 8 members, who shall be appointed as follows:

(A) One member appointed by the chair of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

(B) One member appointed by the ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

(C) One member appointed by the chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(D) One member appointed by the ranking minority member of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(E) One member appointed by the chair of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

(F) One member appointed by the ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

(G) One member appointed by the chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(H) One member appointed by the ranking minority member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(2) **CO-CHAIRS.**—

(A) The chair of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, the chair of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, the chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and the chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives shall jointly designate 1 member of the Group to serve as co-chair of the Group.

(B) The ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, the

ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, the ranking minority member of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives shall jointly designate 1 member of the Group to serve as co-chair of the Group.

(3) **PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.**—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Group. Any vacancy in the Group shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(d) **DUTIES.**—

(1) **REVIEW.**—The Group shall review the current situation with respect to the United States military and diplomatic strategy in Syria, including a review of current United States objectives in Syria and the desired end state in Syria.

(2) **ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—The Group shall—

(A) conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current situation in Syria, its impact on neighboring countries, resulting regional and geopolitical threats to the United States, and current military, diplomatic, and political efforts to achieve a stable Syria; and

(B) develop recommendations on a military and diplomatic strategy for the United States with respect to the conflict in Syria.

(e) **COOPERATION FROM UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Group shall receive the full and timely cooperation of the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, and the Director of National Intelligence in providing the Group with analyses, briefings, and other information necessary for the discharge of the duties of the Group.

(2) **LIAISON.**—The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, and the Director of National Intelligence shall each designate at least 1 officer or employee of their respective organizations to serve as a liaison officer to the Group.

(f) **REPORT.**—

(1) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than November 30, 2018, the Group shall submit a report to the President, the Secretary of Defense, the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that describes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Group under this section, including—

(A) an assessment of the current security, political, humanitarian, and economic situation in Syria;

(B) an assessment of the current participation and objectives of various external actors in Syria;

(C) an assessment of the consequences of continued conflict in Syria;

(D) recommendations for a resolution of the conflict in Syria, including options for a gradual political transition to a post-Assad Syria and actions necessary for reconciliation;

(E) a roadmap for a United States and coalition strategy to reestablish security and governance in Syria, including recommendations for the synchronization of stabilization, development, counterterrorism, and reconstruction efforts; and

(F) any other matters with respect to the conflict in Syria that the Group considers appropriate.

(2) **INTERIM BRIEFING.**—Not later than June 30, 2018, the Group shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives on the status of its review and assessment under subsection (d) and a discussion of any interim recommendations developed by the Group as of the date of the briefing.

(3) **FORM OF REPORT.**—The report submitted to Congress under paragraph (1) shall be submitted

in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(g) **FACILITATION.**—The United States Institute of Peace shall take appropriate actions to facilitate the Group in the discharge of its duties under this section.

(h) **TERMINATION.**—The Group shall terminate on the date that is 6 months after the date on which the Group submits the report required under subsection (f)(1).

#### **SEC. 12. INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC.**

The Secretary of State, acting through the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, should use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations to advocate that the United Nations Human Rights Council, while the United States remains a member, annually extend the mandate of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry in the Syrian Arab Republic until the Commission has completed its investigation of all alleged violations of international human rights laws beginning in March 2011 in the Syrian Arab Republic.

#### **SEC. 13. PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.**

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act. This Act shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized and appropriated.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be withdrawn; that the Corker amendment at the desk be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; that the title amendment at the desk be agreed to; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 4055) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 390), as amended, was passed.

The amendment (No. 4056) was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the title)

Amend the title so as to read: “An Act to provide relief for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes who are members of religious and ethnic minority groups in Iraq and Syria, for accountability for perpetrators of these crimes, and for other purposes.”.

#### **RENAMING THE STOP TRADING ON CONGRESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE ACT OF 2012 IN HONOR OF REPRESENTATIVE LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER**

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 6870 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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