

A strong NATO alliance is just as important and relevant today as it was at its founding in 1949. I am pleased that the full Senate is taking up this measure to approve North Macedonia's accession to NATO, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor with a resounding yes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

NOMINATION OF ANDREW P. BREMBERG

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor to express my opposition to the nomination of Andrew Bremberg to be Representative of the United States to the Office of the United Nations in Geneva. He is not qualified for this position, and his views on women's rights and access to reproductive healthcare conflict with longstanding positions of the U.S. Government and more than three-quarters of the American public.

I take my position as ranking member for the Foreign Relations Committee seriously. I have a duty to thoroughly vet all nominees who come before the committee whether they be political nominees like Mr. Bremberg or career civil servants.

The criteria I use to determine their fitness to represent our country abroad include their foreign policy experience, their core values, and whether they will be responsive and honest with Congress as we conduct our oversight. I am disappointed to say that Mr. Bremberg fails even these basic criteria. He has no relevant foreign policy experience.

I repeat, the nominee to represent the United States at Geneva has no foreign policy experience. Mr. Bremberg has served as Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor for Domestic Policy at the White House and as a political appointee to the Department of Health and Human Services in the Bush administration.

When it comes to Mr. Bremberg's core values, his nomination hearing left me deeply troubled. Our voice at Geneva must stand up for the core principle that reproductive rights are human rights; yet Mr. Bremberg made clear that he opposes access to reproductive health services for women and girls who are victims of sexual violence in conflict in the world. This radical view of women's rights and access to reproductive healthcare is totally outside the mainstream, not just for the Democratic Party but the Republican Party and the American people at large. That is why 40 reproductive health groups wrote a joint letter opposing Mr. Bremberg's nomination.

Moreover, in his positions at the White House, Mr. Bremberg led and advanced divisive and incendiary policy proposals, such as the infamous Muslim ban Executive order and the addition of a citizenship question on the census.

When questioned on these subjects, Mr. Bremberg frequently cited confidentiality interests and declined to elaborate further. When pressed by

Senators on whether he was exerting any form of privilege or executive privilege, he insisted he was not; yet he continued to refuse to answer questions. Clearly, we cannot rely on this nominee to be honest and forthright with this body.

Beyond Mr. Bremberg's lack of experience, his extreme far-right views, and his lack of respect for Congress, there is the issue of his erroneous declarations on government documents. Indeed, his nomination was significantly delayed because my staff discovered Mr. Bremberg's claim that he had terminated from his political consulting company—which Trump for America was a client—when the truth is he did not. In fact, Mr. Bremberg did not terminate his political consulting firm until forced to as part of the Foreign Relations Committee's vetting process.

Once again, the Trump administration has displayed a basic inability to conduct even the most cursory vetting to ensure that a nominee is qualified and fit to hold office, free from potential financial or ethical conflicts of interest.

We have nominees with restraining orders, nominees who have failed to mention sexual harassment lawsuits, and nominees whose virulent, troll-like approach to social media should disqualify them from holding any office, much less a Senate-confirmed representative of the American people.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration has decided to advance unqualified and unfit nominees even as it withdraws a number of qualified civil servant nominees from consideration.

The failure of the political leadership at the State Department to stand up and defend qualified, veteran Ambassadors when they come under fire from the White House is nothing short of cowardice.

It was reported last week that Fiona Hill, the former White House foreign policy adviser, concluded that one Trump administration Ambassador was so unprepared for his job that he actually posed a national security risk. Mr. Bremberg is cut from the same mold.

If his performance before the Foreign Relations Committee demonstrated anything, it is that his views are completely outside those of mainstream America. He is unprepared to represent our Nation on the world stage, and he has little to no respect for the Senate and the role of Congress as a coequal branch of government. Surely, we can do better than this. The American people certainly deserve better than this.

I urge my colleagues to oppose his nomination and to demand that this administration nominate an ambassador to the United Nations organization in Geneva who is worthy of representing our country on the world stage.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. CRUZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that amendment Nos. 946 and 947 be withdrawn.

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

The amendments (No. 946 and No. 947) were withdrawn.

PROTOCOL TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON THE ACCESSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise today to support the accession of the Republic of North Macedonia to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and to encourage my Senate colleagues to vote in favor of this protocol.

As we know, this past April marked the 70th anniversary of the NATO alliance, the world's strongest and most successful political military alliance in the history of the world.

In honor of this, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing to reflect on the alliance's successful past and to consider its future. The Senate also passed and recognized NATO's many accomplishments, and the resolution I authored, S. Res. 123, did so. I am grateful to have another opportunity to demonstrate strong Senate support for NATO by welcoming North Macedonia as a new member. As we all know, this matter has been in the works for a long time.

NATO was founded by the United States and 11 other countries after the shock of the Soviet blockade of Berlin. The Berlin airlift in 1948 made us realize the significant and real threat that the Soviet Union posed to peace and prosperity. That conflict is far behind us, but NATO has remained a critical piece of the framework that supports our collective security.

NATO worked to help the United States in Afghanistan after the attacks of September 11 and has ended genocides and maintained peace in the Balkans. It has trained troops of the new Iraqi Government; it has run air policing missions on Europe's eastern flank; it has helped end the genocide in Darfur; and it provided assistance to the United States after Hurricane Katrina. Most importantly, it has maintained a period of unprecedented peace among the major European powers.

NATO has proven to be not only a military success but also a political and economic one. NATO's security umbrella has provided the kind of stable environment necessary for economic growth and investment. Former Soviet bloc countries clamored for—and continue to clamor for—NATO membership, not only for the protection against Russia that they sought and seek but for the economic strength that membership could foster.

U.S. trade with fellow NATO members remains vital to the U.S. economy. NATO allies remain the largest

source of foreign, direct investment to the United States.

NATO is not perfect. It faces several challenges from within. First is the need to invest more in defense. Those of us who serve on the Foreign Relations Committee have for many, many years urged our friends and colleagues—the majority of whom are not in compliance—about the need to invest more in defense. But the number of allies spending 2 percent of their GDP on defense and 20 percent of their defense budget on equipment has increased, adding more than \$100 billion in European defense spending. Eight allies currently meet this pledge, but it is critical that all allies meet their Wales Summit commitment by 2024.

Second, NATO faces different security threats in different parts of the alliance. Southern Europe is understandably worried about migrant flows, while Eastern Europe faces the challenge of Russian military buildup along its borders and domestic disinformation campaigns sowing disorder by the Russians, just as we know Russia has attempted to do here in the USA.

NATO has recently begun to think about security risks that China poses to individual allies and the alliance as a whole.

Tackling all of these security risks will be challenging. But if NATO allies commit to the alliance and needed reforms, NATO will be up to the task.

Bringing a new member into the alliance also prompts us to reassess the status of current members, and I feel compelled to address the growing discussion regarding NATO allies that do not uphold the democratic principles enshrined in the treaty's preamble.

I agree that there are NATO allies whose democracies are weakening instead of strengthening and whose recent behavior does not demonstrate a commitment to the alliance. To fix these issues, the alliance must work from within.

There is no other alliance in the world like NATO. China and Russia do not have allies. They have short-term, transactional-only partners they have bullied into cooperation. NATO's strength and success come from its commitment to the allies and to working through problems when they arise.

On the expansion of NATO itself, which is what we are here to deal with today, since 1949, NATO has expanded 7 times and now includes 29 countries. The entrance of North Macedonia will make 30. Adding a 30th member during the alliance's 70th year sends a strong signal to our fellow allies and enemies alike of the continued strength of this alliance.

The U.S. Senate's consideration of North Macedonia as a member of NATO is a piece of long-delayed and unfinished business. North Macedonia was originally eligible for NATO entry in 2008 and was to have joined the alliance alongside Croatia and Albania. As we know, an ongoing dispute about North

Macedonia's name prevented that from happening. But the leaders of both North Macedonia and Greece demonstrated great political courage in concluding the Prespa agreement earlier this year, which has made today's decision possible.

The courage of Prime Minister Zaev and former Prime Minister Tsipras to move the situation in the Balkans forward should be applauded. I met with both leaders this year to thank and congratulate them.

Not only does Prespa pave the way forward for North Macedonia into both NATO and the European Union, but it is an excellent example of how other conflicts in the region could be resolved.

When the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held its hearing earlier this year to consider North Macedonia's eligibility for alliance, the committee heard strong and unequivocal testimony from top officials at the Departments of State and Defense that North Macedonia would be a strong partner to the allies and is ready for the requirements of NATO membership.

After reviewing all relevant facts and holding hearings and meetings with NATO, U.S., and North Macedonian officials for the better part of this year, I am confident that North Macedonia is ready to fulfill its NATO obligations and will benefit the alliance. It was ready in 2008 and is ready now. North Macedonia has a credible plan to meet the 2-percent spending requirement by 2024 and is already on track to spend 20 percent on equipment. It hosts the Krivolak training area, a top-notch Army training facility that has already been utilized by many U.S. soldiers. Strategically, North Macedonia's membership would provide NATO a direct land path from the Aegean to the Adriatic Sea, facilitating military movements should they ever be needed. It will continue to contribute soldiers to NATO's international mission as it has done in Afghanistan and Iraq since 2002.

North Macedonia isn't perfect. As a small country with a young democracy, it will certainly require further government reforms and military modernization as have most new NATO allies. For example, it will need to continue its transition from legacy Soviet equipment, further reform its intelligence services, and above all, resist Russian interference and continue to strengthen its anti-corruption efforts. I urge North Macedonia to make these reforms and to continue on its positive path inside the alliance with the help of its other democratic NATO allies.

Expanding NATO to include North Macedonia is about what the country will bring to the alliance and what the alliance brings to North Macedonia, but it is not just about North Macedonia and its qualifications for membership. Through its open-door policy, NATO has promised membership to any European country that fulfills the requirements of the alliance. Accepting

North Macedonia as a new member is a strong symbol and a message for European countries with NATO aspirations that with hard work and perseverance, along with the willingness to make tough reform decisions, they can provide a better future for their people. As long as countries honor this commitment, NATO's door should and will remain open.

It is important to note that this is a strong anti-Russian vote. Standing here today, I can tell you the Russians are very much opposed to this, not the least of which is exemplified by the way they resisted this and pushed back against this as North Macedonia attempted to get this done for their people.

I say to the Presiding Officer and colleagues, this day is a long time in the making, and I am pleased it is finally here.

I urge all of my colleagues to support North Macedonia's bid to become our newest NATO ally, No. 30, by voting in favor of this protocol.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will state the resolution of ratification.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

*Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),*

**SECTION 1. SENATE ADVICE AND CONSENT SUBJECT TO DECLARATIONS, AN UNDERSTANDING, AND CONDITIONS.**

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of the Republic of North Macedonia, which was opened for signature at Brussels on February 6, 2019, and signed that day on behalf of the United States of America (the "Protocol") (Treaty Doc. 116-1), subject to the declarations of section 2 and the conditions of section 3.

**SEC. 2. DECLARATIONS.**

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declarations:

(1) REAFFIRMATION THAT UNITED STATES MEMBERSHIP IN NATO REMAINS A VITAL NATIONAL SECURITY INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES.—The Senate declares that—

(A) for 70 years the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has served as the pre-eminent organization to defend the countries in the North Atlantic area against all external threats;

(B) through common action, the established democracies of North America and Europe that were joined in NATO persevered and prevailed in the task of ensuring the survival of democratic government in Europe and North America throughout the Cold War;

(C) NATO enhances the security of the United States by embedding European states in a process of cooperative security planning and by ensuring an ongoing and direct leadership role for the United States in European security affairs;

(D) the responsibility and financial burden of defending the democracies of Europe and North America can be more equitably shared through an alliance in which specific obligations and force goals are met by its members;

(E) the security and prosperity of the United States is enhanced by NATO's collective defense against aggression that may threaten the security of NATO members; and

(F) United States membership in NATO remains a vital national security interest of the United States.

(2) STRATEGIC RATIONALE FOR NATO ENLARGEMENT.—The Senate declares that—

(A) the United States and its NATO allies face continued threats to their stability and territorial integrity;

(B) an attack against North Macedonia, or its destabilization arising from external subversion, would threaten the stability of Europe and jeopardize United States national security interests;

(C) North Macedonia, having established a democratic government and having demonstrated a willingness to meet the requirements of membership, including those necessary to contribute to the defense of all NATO members, is in a position to further the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area; and

(D) extending NATO membership to North Macedonia will strengthen NATO, enhance stability in Southeast Europe, and advance the interests of the United States and its NATO allies.

(3) SUPPORT FOR NATO'S OPEN DOOR POLICY.—The policy of the United States is to support NATO's Open Door Policy that allows any European country to express its desire to join NATO and demonstrate its ability to meet the obligations of NATO membership.

(4) FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERSHIP IN NATO.—

(A) SENATE FINDING.—The Senate finds that the United States will not support the accession to the North Atlantic Treaty of, or the invitation to begin accession talks with, any European state (other than North Macedonia), unless—

(i) the President consults with the Senate consistent with Article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States (relating to the advice and consent of the Senate to the making of treaties); and

(ii) the prospective NATO member can fulfill all of the obligations and responsibilities of membership, and the inclusion of such state in NATO would serve the overall political and strategic interests of NATO and the United States.

(B) REQUIREMENT FOR CONSENSUS AND RATIFICATION.—The Senate declares that no action or agreement other than a consensus decision by the full membership of NATO, approved by the national procedures of each NATO member, including, in the case of the United States, the requirements of Article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States (relating to the advice and consent of the Senate to the making of treaties), will constitute a commitment to collective defense and consultations pursuant to Articles 4 and 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

(5) INFLUENCE OF NON-NATO MEMBERS ON NATO DECISIONS.—The Senate declares that any country that is not a member of NATO shall have no impact on decisions related to NATO enlargement.

(6) SUPPORT FOR 2014 WALES SUMMIT DEFENSE SPENDING BENCHMARK.—The Senate declares that all NATO members should continue to move towards the guideline outlined in the 2014 Wales Summit Declaration to spend a minimum of 2 percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defense and 20 percent of their defense budgets on major equipment, including research and development, by 2024.

(7) SUPPORT FOR NORTH MACEDONIA'S REFORM PROCESS.—The Senate declares that—

(A) North Macedonia has made difficult reforms and taken steps to address corruption, but the United States and other NATO member states should not consider this important

process complete and should continue to urge additional reforms; and

(B) North Macedonia and Greece's conclusion of the Prespa Agreement, which resolved a long-standing bilateral dispute, has made possible the former's invitation to NATO, and the United States and other NATO members should continue to press both nations to persevere in their continued implementation of the Agreement and encourage a strategic partnership between the two nations.

**SEC. 3. CONDITIONS.**

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following condition: Prior to the deposit of the instrument of ratification, the President shall certify to the Senate as follows:

(1) The inclusion of North Macedonia in NATO will not have the effect of increasing the overall percentage share of the United States in the common budgets of NATO.

(2) The inclusion of North Macedonia in NATO does not detract from the ability of the United States to meet or to fund its military requirements outside the North Atlantic area.

**SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

In this resolution:

(1) NATO MEMBERS.—The term "NATO members" means all countries that are parties to the North Atlantic Treaty.

(2) NON-NATO MEMBERS.—The term "non-NATO members" means all countries that are not parties to the North Atlantic Treaty.

(3) NORTH ATLANTIC AREA.—The term "North Atlantic area" means the area covered by Article 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty, as applied by the North Atlantic Council.

(4) NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY.—The term "North Atlantic Treaty" means the North Atlantic Treaty, signed at Washington April 4, 1949 (63 Stat. 2241; TIAS 1964), as amended.

(5) UNITED STATES INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION.—The term "United States instrument of ratification" means the instrument of ratification of the United States of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of North Macedonia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the adoption of the resolution of ratification of Treaty Document No. 116-1.

Mr. RISCH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JOHNSON). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 91, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 327 Ex.]

YEAS—91

Alexander	Gardner	Portman
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Possible	Roberts
Blumenthal	Hassan	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rosen
Boozman	Heinrich	Rounds
Braun	Hirono	Rubio
Brown	Hoeben	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schumer
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Jones	Scott (SC)
Carper	Kaine	Shaheen
Casey	Kennedy	Shelby
Cassidy	King	Sinema
Collins	Klobuchar	Smith
Coons	Lankford	Stabenow
Cornyn	Leahy	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Toomey
Cruz	Menendez	Udall
Daines	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Moran	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Wicker
Enzi	Murphy	Wyden
Ernst	Murray	Young
Feinstein	Perdue	
Fischer	Peters	

NAYS—2

Lee Paul

NOT VOTING—7

Bennet	Isakson	Whitehouse
Booker	Sanders	
Harris	Warren	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 91, the nays are 2.

Two-thirds of Senators present, a quorum being present, have voted in the affirmative. The resolution of the ratification of the protocol of the North Atlantic Treaty of the Republic of North Macedonia is agreed to.

The Senator from Indiana.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess following the cloture vote on the Bremberg nomination until 2:15 p.m. and that if cloture is invoked, the postcloture time expire at 2:45 p.m. and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination; finally, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Andrew P. Bremberg, of Virginia, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Office of the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, with the rank of Ambassador.

Mitch McConnell, Rick Scott, Roger F. Wicker, Tim Scott, John Hoeven, Deb