

Whereas, under Vladimir Putin, Russian courts are neither independent nor fair in the administration of justice and are entirely beholden to the political whims of Putin;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has refused to provide neither minimal due process nor fair independent legal proceedings for United States citizens Gershkovich, Whelan, Kurmasheva, Fogel, and Khavana;

Whereas the Department of State has called for the release of Gershkovich, Whelan, Kurmasheva, Fogel, and Khavana;

Whereas the arrest and continued detention of Gershkovich, Whelan, Kurmasheva, Fogel, and Khavana amount to hostage taking by the Government of the Russian Federation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns—

(A) the arbitrary arrest and continued detention of United States citizens Evan Gershkovich, Paul Whelan, Alsu Kurmasheva, Marc Fogel, and Ksenia Khavana, and United States permanent resident Vladimir Kara-Murza by the Government of the Russian Federation;

(B) the hostage taking of United States citizens by a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council; and

(C) the ongoing persecution, arrest, and political imprisonment of ordinary Russian citizens and human rights defenders who call for the end of the war in Ukraine and demand freedom in the Russian Federation;

(2) urges the Department of State to determine that Alsu Kurmasheva, Marc Fogel, Ksenia Khavana, and Vladimir Kara-Murza have been wrongfully detained by the Government of the Russian Federation; and

(3) calls on the immediate and unconditional release of United States citizens Evan Gershkovich, Paul Whelan, Alsu Kurmasheva, Marc Fogel, and Ksenia Khavana, and United States permanent resident Vladimir Kara-Murza.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I want to address what can only be called the hostage-taking of Americans by the government of Vladimir Putin of Russia. The list is troubling and growing.

This month marks the 1-year anniversary of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich's dubious arrest in Russia. He has spent more than a year in pretrial detention in a notorious Moscow prison, including in isolation, with limited medical attention. Even during the height of the Cold War, the Soviet police state didn't arrest and hold American journalists in such a brazen and transparently crude manner. The longest was a U.S. News & World Report reporter, who was released after 13 days.

But it is not just Evan whom Vladimir Putin is holding hostage. In 2018, Russia arrested American citizen Paul Whelan and sentenced him to 16 years in prison on fraudulent espionage charges. He has spent 4 years in various Russian high-security jails and labor camps, enduring solitary confinement and forced labor.

Last year, Russia arrested American citizen and Radio Free Europe journalist Alsu Kurmasheva for being a foreign agent. She is facing a 5-year sentence. While in pretrial detention, her

conditions are being described as “inhumane.”

In August 2021, Russia arrested American citizen and international schoolteacher Marc Fogel for possessing medical marijuana prescribed by his physician. Then they sentenced him to a ludicrous 14-year sentence in Russian labor camps.

Earlier this year, Russia arrested American citizen Ksenia Khavana on nonsense charges of high treason after she donated—get this—\$50 to a charity supporting humanitarian aid for Ukraine. For that, she is facing a 20-year sentence in prison.

Two years ago, Russia also arrested U.S. legal permanent resident Vladimir Kara-Murza, sentencing him to 25 years for criticizing Putin's disastrous war in Ukraine.

These are some of the photographs of the individuals whom I have just described.

Mr. Kara-Murza was a visitor in my office. I know him personally. I met with him a month before his arrest. And, despite two murder attempts by poisoning, he was determined to go back to Russia to fight for democracy. Evgenia, his wife, is here this week for a bipartisan event on the anniversary of his arrest.

And let us not forget Brittney Griner, whose arrest in 2022 on trumped-up charges was cynically used to secure the release of notorious Russian arms merchant Viktor Bout.

It is outrageous that Russia, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, is holding hostage American citizens. It is the act of a desperate rogue regime, similar to the criminal actions of countries like Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela.

Today, I am introducing a resolution condemning Russia's hostage-taking, calling for the immediate release of these hostages and urging the administration to consider “wrongfully detained” status.

And, to those detained and their families, I want you to know you are not forgotten. We will continue to advocate for your release.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, this is a very short one tonight.

I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, April 9; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Bazis nomination postcloture; further, that all time on

the Bazis nomination be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. and that following the cloture vote on the White nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings, with all time during recess counting postcloture; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:46 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT TO QUALIFICATIONS PROVIDED BY LAW, THE FOLLOWING FOR DIRECTOR, NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AND OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS.

To be rear admiral

CHAD M. CARY

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. KIMBERLY A. MCCUE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. JOHN A. CLUCK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. JACK R. ARTHAUD
COL. ANTHONY D. BABCOCK
COL. CATHERINE V. BARRINGTON
COL. ARIEL G. BATUNGBACAL
COL. CASSIUS T. BENTLEY III
COL. MICHAEL D. CURRY
COL. LINDSAY C. DROZ
COL. MASON R. DULA
COL. TODD R. DYER
COL. TRAVIS L. EDWARDS
COL. CHAD R. ELLSWORTH
COL. PAUL G. FILCEK
COL. BRIAN A. FILLER
COL. JOHN B. GALLEMORE
COL. TIMOTHY A. HERRITAGE
COL. JAMES V. HEWITT
COL. JAY A. JOHNSON
COL. MATTHEW E. JONES
COL. MICHELE A. LOBIANCO
COL. SEAN E. LOWE
COL. ROBERT P. LYONS III
COL. MARK A. MASSARO
COL. CRAIG D. PRATHER
COL. JOSEPH L. SHEFFIELD

COL. ANDREW J. STEFFEN
COL. KRISTEN D. THOMPSON
COL. SHANE S. VESELY
COL. DOUGLAS P. WICKERT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. BRIAN E. VAUGHN

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601, AND FOR APPOINTMENT AS A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE MILITARY STAFF COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 711:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JOSEPH P. MCGEE

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MICHAEL J. BORGSCHULTE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ROBERTA L. SHEA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. PAUL J. ROCK, JR.

IN THE SPACE FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. DENNIS O. BYTHEWOOD
BRIG. GEN. JAMES E. SMITH

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on April 8, 2024 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

COAST GUARD NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JENNIFER J. ANDREW AND ENDING WITH CHRISTOPHER J. YOUNG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE SENT TO THE SENATE ON NOVEMBER 1, 2023.