Mr. President, I

have in hand an article, titled ‘‘Rights

Group Reports Massacre in Chechnya.’’

The first two paragraphs read:

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent

this article be printed in the

RECORD.

Mr. President, I

hope to have the opportunity to introduce

a freestanding resolution on the

floor of the Senate. I hope this resolution

will receive unanimous support. It

expresses the sense of the Senate that

the Russian Federation should devote

every effort to achieving a peaceful

resolution of the conflict in Chechnya,

allowing to Chechnya an international

monitoring mission to monitor and report

on the situation there and allow

international humanitarian agencies to

make sure there is immediate and full

and unimpeded access to Chechen civilians.

This is a question on which the Senate

should not be silent. It does make

a difference if we speak up. Two weeks

ago, I met with members of the

Chechen Government. They discussed

with me the horrific conditions currently

facing their homeland. I do not

think any of us should be silent while

this is happening.

We in the Senate should express our

distress over the escalating humanitarian

situation in Chechnya, and we

should urge the administration to enlarge

its public demands on Russia to

confront it.

It is clear that the Russian Government

must move immediately to allow

into Chechnya an international monitoring

force to monitor and report on

the situation there. We need that. The

world needs that. The people in

Chechnya need that. It must also immediately

move to assist those persons

who have been displaced from

Chechnya as a result of this conflict,

and the Russian Government must

allow representatives of the international

community access to those

persons in order to provide humanitarian

relief.

Russian authorities agree to permit

the Organization for Security and Cooperation

in Europe to engage in monitoring

in Chechnya, yet it has not permitted

OSCE’s six monitors currently

in Moscow to visit the region. The administration

must demand that Russia

permit the monitoring mission to go

forward and take steps to expand it

substantially.

The administration must urge Russia

to grant human rights monitors access

to the region, including those from our

own diplomatic missions in the area.

The administration must engage Russian

authorities at the highest levels to

secure cooperation in addressing the

humanitarian emergency in Chechnya

and in its neighboring province. It

must demand Russia assist those persons

who have been displaced from

Chechnya as a result of this conflict

and grant humanitarian organizations

access to Chechen civilians to provide

some relief. The civilian population in

Chechnya has been victimized to an extraordinary

degree, and it is in desperate

need of humanitarian aid. The

Senate should not be silent on this

question.

Finally, the administration must

urge the Russian Government to

achieve a peaceful resolution and durable

settlement in a manner consistent

with Russia’s obligation to the international

community.

We must strongly support the OSCE

mediation process. The Russian Government

acknowledged the OSCE’s

competence in serving as a mediator

and achieving a political settlement to

the conflict in Chechnya during the

war of 1994 to 1996. However, to date,

the Russians have rebuffed repeated efforts

by the OSCE to mediate the current

conflict. The administration must

increase its efforts to persuade Russia

to implement an immediate cease-fire

and accept OSCE-mediated negotiations.

As this conflict drags on and the

number and intensity of human rights

abuses by Russian forces in Chechnya

increase, the administration must support

the creation of a United Nations

commission of inquiry to investigate

serious violations of international humanitarian

law by Russian forces.

We must confront the suffering of the

Chechen people. As many of my colleagues

know, the recent Russian assault

on the Chechen capital of Grozny

was one more campaign in a continuing

series of Russian military offensives in

Chechnya. In September, I expressed

my concerns to Yeltsin and Putin

about the humanitarian tragedy that

was, for the second time, unfolding in

Chechnya. It is hard to imagine that

after the use of force in Chechnya from

1994 to 1996, which left over 80,000 civilians

dead, the Russian leadership could

again see the use of force as enhancing

the prospects for a durable settlement

to this conflict. But the Russian leadership

has again chosen use of force,

and the current tragedy before us has

now reached unimaginable heights, as

evidenced by the piece today in the

Washington Post.

Russian forces have used indiscriminate

and disproportionate force in

their bombings of civilian targets. This

has resulted in the deaths of thousands

of innocent civilian and displaced

countless other. Russian authorities

maintain a virtual ban on access to

Chechen civilians by media and international

humanitarian agencies resulting

in our having to rely on the personal

testimony of refugees fleeing the

fighting to determine the nature and

extent of the crisis and best means to

provide humanitarian relief.

These testimonies are horrific: incidents

of widespread looting, summary

executions, detentions, denial of civilians

safe passage from the fighting,

torture, and rape.

Many civilians report being detained

at the Chechen border as they tried to

flee the fighting. They tell of brothers

and fathers who had simply been denied

safe passage out. It is fundamentally

unacceptable to deny any civilian

the right to flee the fighting—to trap

them in this dangerous war. And where

do these trapped civilians go? Into detention

camps. No one needs to be reminded

of the systematic torture that

took place in detention camps set up to

detain Chechens in the 1994–96 Chechen

war. That event stains the memory of

the Chechen people and it is happening

again.

One twenty-one-year-old tells of the

horror in the camps:

In addition to this torture, young

men report that in order to be released

from the camps their family members

must pay outrageous bribes to camp officers

and upon release, must sign papers

saying they suffered no harm in

captivity.

Then there are the numerous reports

of rape. In one Chechen town a sixmonth

pregnant 23-year-old woman was

raped and murdered. Her mother-in-law

was executed in this same incident.

And Mr. President, many incidences of

rape and sexual abuse go unreported.

For many women in towns and villages

all over Chechnya the shame is simply

too great—they won’t come forward to

report these horrible crimes.

Chechnya’s culture and national traditions

make it difficult to document

case of rape and sexual abuse—unmarried

women who are raped are unlikely

to be able to get married, and married

women who are raped are likely to be

divorced by their husbands. The effects

of these rapes on Chechen society will

be profound and long lasting. I remind

the Russian leadership that rape is war

crime.

Two weeks ago I sent a letter to acting

President Putin expressing my deep

concern over the deteriorating situation

in Chechnya and the Russian government’s

response to the humanitarian

tragedy there. I urge the Russian

government to move quickly to resolve

this situation in a manner consistent

with Russia’s obligations to the

international community and urge the

Russian leadership to begin now to investigate

and prosecute those responsible

for human rights abuses in

Chechnya—it promised to do this after

the last Chechen war but failed to do

so.

I urge my colleagues to communicate

their own concerns to the Administration

and the Russian government in

whatever manner you think best. We

cannot remain silent. We must fully

condemn the use of indiscriminate

force against the civilians in Chechnya

and denial of humanitarian relief to

Chechen civilians. We must remind the

Russian leadership that the world is

watching.

This congress and this administration

must express to the Russian government

that it should devote every effort

to achieve a peaceful resolution of

the conflict in Chechnya, allow into

Chechnya an international monitoring

force to monitor and report on the situations

there.

That is what this resolution I have

submitted to the Senate, on which I

hope we will have a vote, calls for. We

must call for allowing international

humanitarian agencies immediate, full,

and unimpeded access to Chechen civilians

in order to provide humanitarian

relief.

This resolution, on which I hope we

will have an up-or-down vote or it will

be unanimously accepted by the Senate,

calls for several things. It calls for

the Russian Federation to devote every

effort to a peaceful resolution, to allow

into Chechnya an international monitoring

mission to monitor and report

on the situation, and to allow international

humanitarian agencies immediate

and full access to Chechen civilians.

The people of Chechnya deserve

no less.

I have no illusions. I do not think

adopting a resolution automatically

turns the situation around, but I do believe

the Senate should not be silent,

that we must support this resolution,

and we must send this message. We

must stand up for human rights.

I yield the floor.