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Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon, and was called to order by the Honorable AL FRANKEN, a Senator from the State of Minnesota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the authority granted by section 2 of S. Con. Res. 22 of the 113th Congress, the majority leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, acting jointly in consultation with the minority leaders of the Senate and House respectively have determined that the public interest warrants the convening of the Senate at this time, notwithstanding the previous orders.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray. Immortal, invisible God only wise, we look to You today for wisdom as our lawmakers seek to do what is best for our Nation and world. Lord, we admit that our human intellects have limits, for we know not what tomorrow holds, but You do. So guide us, sovereign king. We are pilgrims on planet Earth. We are weak but You are mighty; lead us with Your powerful hand. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 6, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable AL FRANKEN, a Senator from the State of Minnesota, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. FRANKEN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S.J. Res. 21. An original joint resolution to authorize the limited and specified use of the United States Armed Forces against Syria; from the Committee on Foreign Relations; placed on the calendar.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S.J. Res. 21. An original joint resolution to authorize the limited and specified use of the United States Armed Forces against Syria; from the Committee on Foreign Relations; placed on the calendar.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the joint resolution be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the joint resolution was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S.J. RES. 21

Whereas Syria is in material breach of the laws of war by having employed chemical weapons against its civilian population;

Whereas the abuses of the regime of Bashar al-Assad have included the brutal repression and war upon its own civilian population, resulting in more than 100,000 people killed in the past two years, 2,000,000 Syrian refugees

in neighboring countries, and 4,500,000 internally displaced persons in Syria, creating an unprecedented regional crisis and instability;

Whereas the Assad regime has the largest chemical weapons programs in the region and has demonstrated its capability and willingness to repeatedly use weapons of mass destruction against its own people, including the August 21, 2013, attack in the suburbs of Damascus in which the Assad regime murdered over 1,000 innocent people, including hundreds of children;

Whereas there is clear and compelling evidence of the direct involvement of Assad regime forces and senior officials in the planning, execution, and after-action attempts to cover-up, the August 21, 2013, attack, and hide or destroy evidence of such attack;

Whereas the Arab League has declared with regards to the August 21, 2013, incident to hold the "Syrian regime responsible for this heinous crime";

Whereas the United Nations Security Council, in Resolution 1540 (2004), affirmed that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons constitutes a threat to international peace and security;

Whereas in the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-175), Congress found that Syria's acquisition of weapons of mass destruction threatens the security of the Middle East and the national security interests of the United States;

Whereas the actions and conduct of the Assad regime are in direct contravention of Syria's legal obligations under the United Nations Charter, the Geneva Conventions, and the Protocol to the Hague Convention on the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, done at Geneva June 17, 1925, and also violate the standards set forth in the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, done at Paris January 13, 1993;

Whereas Syria's use of weapons of mass destruction and its conduct and actions constitute a grave threat to regional stability, world peace, and the national security interests of the United States and its allies and partners;

Whereas the objectives of the United States use of military force in connection with this authorization are to respond to the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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use, and deter and degrade the potential future use, of weapons of mass destruction by the Government of Syria;

Whereas, on May 21, 2013, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate passed by a 15-3 vote the Syria Transition Support Act (S. 960), which found that the President's goals of Assad leaving power, an end to the violence, and a negotiated political settlement in Syria are prerequisites for a stable, democratic future for Syria and regional peace and security, but absent decisive changes to the present military balance of power on the ground in Syria, sufficient incentives do not yet exist for the achievement of such goals; and

Whereas the President has authority under the Constitution to use force in order to defend the national security interests of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This joint resolution may be cited as the "Authorization for the Use of Military Force Against the Government of Syria to Respond to Use of Chemical Weapons".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The President is authorized, subject to subsection (b), to use the Armed Forces of the United States as the President determines to be necessary and appropriate in a limited and specified manner against legitimate military targets in Syria, only to—

(1) respond to the use of weapons of mass destruction by the Government of Syria in the conflict in Syria;

(2) deter Syria's use of such weapons in order to protect the national security interests of the United States and to protect United States allies and partners against the use of such weapons;

(3) degrade Syria's capacity to use such weapons in the future; and

(4) prevent the transfer to terrorist groups or other state or non-state actors within Syria of any weapons of mass destruction.

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR DETERMINATION THAT USE OF MILITARY FORCE IS NECESSARY.—Before exercising the authority granted in subsection (a), the President shall make available to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate the President's determination that—

(1) the United States has used all appropriate diplomatic and other peaceful means to prevent the deployment and use of weapons of mass destruction by Syria;

(2) the Government of Syria has conducted one or more significant chemical weapons attacks;

(3) the use of military force is necessary to respond to the use of chemical weapons by the Government of Syria;

(4) it is in the core national security interest of the United States to use such military force;

(5) the United States has a military plan to achieve the specific goals of—

(A) responding to the use of weapons of mass destruction by the Government of Syria in the conflict in Syria;

(B) deterring Syria's use of such weapons in order to protect the national security interests of the United States and to protect United States allies and partners against the use of such weapons;

(C) degrading Syria's capacity to use such weapons in the future; and

(D) preventing the transfer to terrorist groups or other state or non-state actors within Syria of any weapons of mass destruction; and

(6) the use of military force is consistent with and furthers the goals of the United States strategy toward Syria, including achieving a negotiated political settlement to the conflict.

(c) WAR POWERS RESOLUTION REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) SPECIFIC STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION.—Consistent with section 8(a)(1) of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1547(a)(1)), Congress declares that this section is intended to constitute specific statutory authorization within the meaning of section 5(b) of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1544(b)), within the limits of the authorization established under this section.

(2) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—Nothing in this resolution supersedes any requirement of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1541 et seq.).

SEC. 3. LIMITATION.

The authority granted in section 2(a) does not authorize the use of the United States Armed Forces on the ground in Syria for the purpose of combat operations.

SEC. 4. TERMINATION OF THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE USE OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES.

The authorization in section 2(a) shall terminate 60 days after the date of the enactment of this joint resolution, except that the President may extend, for a single period of 30 days, such authorization if—

(1) the President determines and certifies to Congress, not later than 5 days before the date of termination of the initial authorization, that the extension is necessary to fulfill the purposes of this resolution as defined by section 2(a) due to extraordinary circumstances and for ongoing and impending military operations against Syria under section 2(a); and

(2) Congress does not enact into law, before the extension of authorization, a joint resolution disapproving the extension of the authorization for the additional 30-day period; provided that any such joint resolution shall be considered under the expedited procedures otherwise provided for concurrent resolutions of disapproval contained in section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546).

SEC. 5. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

(a) CHANGING OF MOMENTUM ON BATTLEFIELD.—It is the policy of the United States to change the momentum on the battlefield in Syria so as to create favorable conditions for a negotiated settlement that ends the conflict and leads to a democratic government in Syria.

(b) DEGRADATION OF ABILITY OF REGIME TO USE WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.—A comprehensive United States strategy in Syria should aim, as part of a coordinated international effort, to degrade the capabilities of the Assad regime to use weapons of mass destruction while upgrading the lethal and non-lethal military capabilities of vetted elements of Syrian opposition forces, including the Free Syrian Army.

SEC. 6. SYRIA STRATEGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this resolution, the President shall consult with Congress and submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives an integrated United States Government strategy for achieving a negotiated political settlement to the conflict in Syria, including a comprehensive review of current and planned United States diplomatic, political, economic, and military policy towards Syria.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) the provision of all forms of assistance to the Syrian Supreme Military Council and

other Syrian entities opposed to the government of Bashar Al-Assad that have been properly and fully vetted and share common values and interests with the United States;

(2) the provision of all forms of assistance to the Syrian political opposition, including the Syrian Opposition Coalition;

(3) efforts to isolate extremist and terrorist groups in Syria to prevent their influence on the future transitional and permanent Syrian governments;

(4) security coordination with allies and regional partners including Israel, Jordan and Turkey;

(5) efforts to limit support from the Government of Iran and others for the Syrian regime;

(6) planning for securing existing chemical, biological, and other weapons supplies; and

(7) efforts to address the ongoing humanitarian challenges presented by 2,000,000 Syrian refugees in neighboring countries, and 4,500,000 internally displaced persons in Syria, and related humanitarian needs.

SEC. 7. CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING.

(a) NOTIFICATION AND PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—Upon the President's determination to use the authority set forth in section 2, the President shall notify Congress, including the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, of the use of such authority and shall keep Congress fully and currently informed of the use of such authority.

(b) REPORTS.—Not later than 10 days after the initiation of military operations under the authority provided by section 2, and every 20 days thereafter until the completion of military operations, the President shall submit to Congress, including the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, a report on the status of such operations, including progress achieved toward the objectives specified in section 2(a), the financial costs of operations to date, and an assessment of the impact of the operations on the Syrian regime's chemical weapons capabilities and intentions.

SEC. 8. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

The authority set forth in section 2 shall not constitute an authorization for the use of force or a declaration of war except to the extent that it authorizes military action under the conditions, for the specific purposes, and for the limited period of time set forth in this resolution.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment:

S.J. Res. 21. An original joint resolution to authorize the limited and specified use of the United States Armed Forces against Syria.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, first of all, I appreciate very much the presiding officer's willingness to come in today. I was all prepared this coming Monday to tell everybody "welcome back". But I do that a few days early. So welcome back everyone. I hope you had a good break. I hope it was as productive as

mine. I am grateful for everyone's cooperation in getting us to this point.

I ask unanimous consent that a letter of notification relating to section 2 of S. Con. Res. 22 be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, September 5, 2013.

DEAR COLLEAGUE: Pursuant to section 2 of Senate Concurrent Resolution 22 of the 113th Congress, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, we hereby notify the Members of the Senate to reassemble at 12:00 noon on Friday, September 6, 2013, and the Members of the House

of Representatives to reassemble at 12:00 noon on Friday, September 6, 2013.

Sincerely,

HARRY REID,
Majority Leader of the Senate.
JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we convened the Senate today in order to enable the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to put a joint resolution in the RECORD which authorizes the use of military force, limited in nature against Syria, in response to the Syrian regimes and their use of chemical weapons.

As we know, many, many people have been killed, including almost 500 children. The reported resolution was signed by committee leaders Senators

MENENDEZ and CORKER. They have set a tremendous model of bipartisanship and cooperation for the Senate. I admire both of these good men for the work that they have done, the leadership that they have showed in allowing us to be at the point where we are now in this difficult situation.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
SEPTEMBER 9, 2013, AT 2 P.M.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate adjourn until 2 p.m. Monday, September 9, 2013.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:04 p.m., adjourned until Monday, September 9, 2013, at 2 p.m.