
**BUSINESS
MEETING**

Thursday, November 14, 2013

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS
113TH Congress, First Session

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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

1 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:49 a.m., in Room S-116, Capitol
2 Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

3 Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Boxer, Coons, Udall, Kaine, Corker,
4 Risch, Rubio, and Flake.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY

5 **THE CHAIRMAN.** This business meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
6 will come to order.

7 Let me thank those of you who have made the effort to be here. I appreciate
8 when members offer a proxy either to the majority or to the Republican side. But the
9 fundamental problem is that if we don't have enough members to conduct business,
10 that proxy isn't of any value to us.

11 So I know we had to move, because of other circumstances and other committee
12 hearings that are going on, this a little back, and that may have upset people's
13 schedules. But I really would say to the staff who is here whose members are not, that if
14 you can just urge your member to try — on a business meeting at least to try to

1 accommodate us, it would be helpful because, otherwise, we just can't move
2 nominations or legislation forward.

3 We can have a discussion on it, but we can't have an actual vote on it. So we may
4 get there today. So what I would like to do in order to accommodate those who have
5 come and to be in a position, should we get to the 10 people that we need to actually
6 cast votes, is to have a discussion on all the legislation and the nominees and be poised
7 to move if that moment comes.

8 So let us start off with the Foreign Assistance Transparency and Accountability
9 Act of 2013 (S. 1271). I commend Senator Rubio and Senator Cardin for introducing and
10 all of their hard work, along with the State Department and the White House, to
11 develop legislation we can support. It is an effort to provide greater transparency for
12 our foreign assistance.

13 It is a much-needed effort to help further lean, effective, and results-oriented
14 diplomacy and development efforts that I believe both the ranking member and I share
15 in terms as a goal. And it would help us focus our diplomacy and development efforts
16 in the most effective ways possible, getting maximum leverage for what are scarce
17 foreign assistance dollars.

18 So I would be happy to recognize Senator Rubio on behalf of this legislation.

19 **SENATOR RUBIO:** And I will be brief because I know people have time constraints. I
20 want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the ranking member and your staff on the

1 committee for working with us to make this possible. Of course, Senator Cardin, who
2 has really been a driving force behind this.

3 I also want to thank Congressmen Poe and Connolly in Virginia, who also have a
4 similar measure, and the State Department, and the administration for working with us
5 on it.

6 My only thing I would like to add is one of the reasons why I thought this was
7 important is because what I hear a lot from constituents is "Why are we doing so much
8 foreign aid?" And I think it is important to justify it because it is an important part of
9 our national security. It is an important part of our foreign policy.

10 And in order to do that, in order to give us a stronger hand, the American people
11 deserve to know how the money is being spent. Greater accountability, greater
12 transparency — that is what this legislation endeavors to do. So I am grateful to all of
13 you for — hopefully for your support.

14 But thanks especially to the chairman, the ranking member, and the staff for
15 working with us to bring it to this point.

16 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Senator Corker?

17 **SENATOR CORKER:** I want to thank you for the way you have worked with us and
18 the way you have done so also on a bicameral basis. And I look forward to supporting
19 the legislation. I appreciate it.

1 **THE CHAIRMAN:** And I understand you are going to have — you and Senator
2 Cardin have an amendment that you are going to offer?

3 **SENATOR RUBIO:** Which reflect some of the accommodations that we reached with
4 the State Department.

5 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Anyone else wish to be heard on this?

6 **SENATOR COONS:** Simply, I would like to join as a cosponsor, and I would simply
7 ratify the value of the work that Senator Rubio has done and say that a variety of these
8 improvements, I think, are efforts that are already underway in some elements of the
9 administration and in other areas would be welcome additions to their toolkit.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN:** And without objection, you shall be a cosponsor.

11 Next, so we will wait to see if we can get a quorum to — I mean a voting quorum
12 to move forward on that.

13 Next is the bill S. 1683 which authorizes a transfer of decommissioned U.S. Perry
14 class frigates to four foreign countries — Mexico, Thailand, Taiwan, and Pakistan.
15 Transfers to Pakistan are subject to stated certifications regarding their cooperation with
16 the United States on counterterrorism, IEDs, and other policies.

17 In addition, this bill includes other provisions to improve the oversight of
18 Congress and this committee on various arms sales, national security, and
19 counterterrorism matters with foreign countries.

20 Senator Corker? Is there anything you want to say?

1 **SENATOR CORKER:** No.

2 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay. Anyone who wishes to speak to the naval transfer, vessels
3 transfer?

4 [No response.]

5 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay. Third is our resolution on the Philippines (S. Res. 292), and
6 this is obviously a terrible tragedy that is unfolding in that nation following Typhoon
7 Haiyan. I know, having a very large Filipino community in my State, the enormous
8 grief that is going on and the enormous challenges that the Filipino people are facing.
9 They are enduring a tragedy of indescribable scale right now, and our hearts go out to
10 them.

11 I know that a number of members of the committee have cosponsored the
12 resolution and have the same sentiment. And the U.S. Government's response, which
13 has included \$20 million in upfront aid and the deployment of an aircraft carrier group,
14 will go some way toward mitigating the fallout of a horrible disaster.

15 The international community, especially our allies Britain and Japan, have also
16 stepped up to provide much-needed assistance at this critical time. And the resolution
17 supports those efforts and encourages further assistance, which no doubt will be
18 needed.

19 This is an important country in our rebalancing towards Asia, our strategic
20 interests as well, and the humanitarian thing to do.

1 So, Senator Corker?

2 **SENATOR CORKER:** I think you summarized it well. I think all of us are glad for the
3 times when our country, in its greatness, is able to help people who are going through
4 such a crisis. And I am glad that we are recognizing that through this resolution.

5 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Anyone else who wishes to speak to the resolution?

6 [No response.]

7 **THE CHAIRMAN:** If not, there are a series of nominees to be considered, and when
8 we get one more member — when we get one more member, I would seek to move
9 them en bloc.

10 They are Daniel Yohannes, to be the Representative to the Organization for
11 Economic Cooperation and Development.

12 Anthony Gardner, to be the Representative of the U.S. at the European Union.

13 Amy Hyatt, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Palau.

14 Elizabeth Bagley, to be an Alternative Representative to the U.N. General
15 Assembly.

16 Ted Strickland, to be an Alternative Representative to the General Assembly.

17 Steve Zack, to be an Alternative Representative to the General Assembly.

18 Michael Carroll, to be Inspector General of the USAID.

19 Heather Higginbottom, to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and
20 Resources.

1 Sarah Sewall, to be Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy,
2 and Human Rights.

3 Richard Stengel, to be the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy.

4 And finally, Carolyn Radelet, to be Director of the Peace Corps.

5 Senator Corker, do you want to address any of those or —

6 **SENATOR CORKER:** I really don't. I appreciate the way all of our staffs have worked
7 together to move these through. I know we had a big rush right before the August
8 recess, and I know one of our jobs is to make sure these are fully vetted. I think that has
9 been done well, and I appreciate the way you have worked with us and others on the
10 committee.

11 So thank you.

12 **SENATOR RISCH:** Mr. Chairman, I certainly have no objection to voting all en bloc,
13 but I assume you are going to allow us to be recorded "no" on any one of these that we
14 want to? I appreciate that.

15 Thank you.

16 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Anyone else wish to be recognized on any of the nominees?

17 **SENATOR COONS:** Mr. Chairman, if we have a few minutes? I just wanted to
18 comment on Daniel Yohannes, who I have gotten to know well in his role leading the
19 Millennium Challenge Corporation. I think he has done an outstanding job.

1 I hope that we will not leave the MCC for long without a confirmed leader. I
2 think he would be an excellent Ambassador to the OECD, but I also think that the MCC
3 deserves to have continuous leadership and is an institution that I think has made
4 significant progress in how we deliver foreign aid and making our foreign assistance
5 more effective.

6 So I just want to speak up for him and for Anthony Gardner. He and his family I
7 know, and I think he will represent us very well at the EU.

8 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Senator Coons.

9 **SENATOR RISCH:** Mr. Chairman?

10 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Yes, Senator Risch?

11 **SENATOR RISCH:** While we are treading water here, do you have any objection to
12 talking about a resolution that I have had with the committee on —

13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I don't have any objections.

14 **SENATOR RISCH:** Okay. Quickly, for the committee, I have a resolution regarding a
15 gentleman by the name of Pastor Saeed Abedini, and he is a constituent of mine. He is
16 in prison in Iran. He was tried and convicted and has an 8-year sentence.

17 His crime has been for practicing Christianity in Iran, and he was originally
18 placed in a more open prison. Just recently within the last couple of weeks, he has been
19 transferred to a much higher security prison. He can't see — he can't have visitors
20 anymore in his new place.

1 He said he has health considerations. They won't let the Red Cross see him, and
2 this is a human rights violation that is a prime example of the kinds of things we don't
3 want to see done around the world.

4 So I have a resolution which details what has happened to him and the reason
5 that he was convicted and urging that the State Department do all that it can — and I
6 know that they will — to try to get him resolved. But the purpose of the resolution is
7 simply to raise the level on it.

8 I am told your staff has no issues with it.

9 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I see Senator Boxer here now. If we can just —

10 **SENATOR RISCH:** Sure.

11 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I will respond to your request, and we will work with you to get it
12 done.

13 My understanding that the request to have it on just came in this morning. We
14 are going to read it. Assuming from what I hear, I would be happy working with the
15 ranking member to discharge it from the committee and allow you to —

16 **SENATOR RISCH:** Thank you very much.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN:** — bring it to the floor.

18 **SENATOR RISCH:** And Senator Leahy is a cosponsor.

19 **THE CHAIRMAN:** We won't hold that against him.

20 **SENATOR RISCH:** Thank you.

1 [Laughter.]

2 **THE CHAIRMAN:** So thanks to Senator Boxer for helping us get here. First is a vote
3 on the Rubio first degree, which is an amendment in the nature of a substitute to the
4 Foreign Assistance Transparency Act, which is supported by the majority and the
5 minority. Is there a second?

6 [Second.]

7 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Second. All those in favor, say aye.

8 [A chorus of ayes.]

9 **THE CHAIRMAN:** All opposed, say nay.

10 [No response.]

11 **THE CHAIRMAN:** The ayes have it.

12 Let us proceed now to a final vote on the Foreign Assistance Transparency Act,
13 as amended.

14 Those in favor will say aye.

15 [A chorus of ayes.]

16 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Those opposed will say nay.

17 [No response.]

18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** The ayes have it, and I ask unanimous consent to allow committee
19 staff to make technical and conforming changes to the text. Is there any objection?

20 [No response.]

1 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Without any objection, so ordered.

2 I want to move a vote on the Naval Vessels Transfer Act of 2013. Is there a
3 second?

4 **SENATOR BOXER:** Yes.

5 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Second. All those in favor, say aye.

6 [A chorus of ayes.]

7 **THE CHAIRMAN:** All those opposed will say nay.

8 [No response.]

9 **THE CHAIRMAN:** They ayes have it. I ask unanimous consent to allow committee
10 staff to make technical and conforming changes to the text. Is there any objection to
11 that?

12 [No response.]

13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** If not, so ordered.

14 Let me move a vote on the resolution supporting — expressing support for the
15 victims of the typhoon in the Philippines.

16 All those in favor will say aye.

17 [A chorus of ayes.]

18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** All those opposed will say nay.

19 [No response.]

1 **THE CHAIRMAN:** The ayes have it, and the resolution is adopted. I ask unanimous
2 consent to allow committee staff there, too, to make technical and conforming changes
3 to the text. Is there any objection?

4 [No response.]

5 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Without objection, so ordered.

6 Finally, nominations en bloc. We have read through all the nominations.

7 I move for a voice vote on the nominations en bloc. Is there a second?

8 [Second.]

9 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Second. All those in favor will say aye.

10 [A chorus of ayes.]

11 **THE CHAIRMAN:** All those opposed will say nay.

12 [No response.]

13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** The ayes have it, and anyone who wishes to be registered in any
14 specific other than that —

15 **SENATOR RISCH:** Mr. Chairman?

16 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Yes?

17 **SENATOR RISCH:** I want to be registered as a "no" on Heather Higginbottom, please.

18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Senator Risch will be so recognized.

19 Thanks to all the members, and we appreciate your help in making this happen.

20 With that —

1 **SENATOR CORKER:** Senator Johnson wants to be recorded "no" on Heather
2 Higginbottom.

3 **THE CHAIRMAN:** And Senator Johnson wants to be recorded "no" on Higginbottom
4 as well.

5 And with that, hearing no other requests, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]