

BUSINESS MEETING

THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 2016

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U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Bob Corker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Corker [presiding], Rubio, Johnson, Gardner, Isakson, Barrasso, Cardin, Boxer, Menendez, Shaheen, Coons, Udall, Murphy, and Kaine.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE

The CHAIRMAN. The business meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

On the agenda for today, we have 10 pieces of legislation, seven treaties, three nominations, and a number of Foreign Service officer lists.

First, we will consider four Foreign Service officer lists, over 200 personnel referred to the committee. I support these appointments and promotions and thank all of the officers for their service.

We will also consider three nominations. And I want to thank my colleagues for helping the committee to take steps forward on all of these nominations today.

We also have before us seven treaties. The first is the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. Strongly supported by U.S. agriculture and research universities, the Plant Genetics Treaty is critical to sustaining the plant breeding revolution that has saved more than a billion people from starvation in the last half century. Our food security and future U.S. agriculture depend upon open access to plant material that will be made available under this treaty.

The treaty's mechanisms are modeled on our own national system that has been in operation for decades.

Without U.S. participation, our farmers and researchers are placed at a competitive disadvantage with 140 countries that enjoy the treaty's benefit.

This committee approved the treaty on voice vote in December 2010 but did not ratify it before the end of the 111th Congress. I recommend the committee approve this treaty today.

I want to thank all of you on this committee that are pushing that. I know Johnny has been working on this for some time.

We are also considering the Convention on the Law Applicable to Certain Rights in Respect of Securities Held with an Intermediary, or Hague Convention. Today's securities trading is global. The treaty establishes a simple method for resolving conflicts of law, risk faced by our financial sector. This treaty adopts existing U.S. legal standards under the U.S. Uniform Commercial Code. The treaty is broadly supported by the U.S. financial community and is in our national interests. I recommend this committee approve its ratification.

We also have before us five law enforcement treaties, three mutual legal assistance treaties with Algeria, Jordan, Kazakhstan, and two extradition treaties with Chile and the Dominican Republic. The MLATs provide a road map for law enforcement collaboration with other countries that reflects our values and aids in criminal investigations. The extradition treaties ensure that fugitives from justice are apprehended and tried appropriately while preserving our due process checks and balances.

These treaties are all consistent with longstanding U.S. practice regarding law enforcement cooperation with foreign governments. I urge the committee to approve these treaties, as they are, as they are an important step to strengthening our global law enforcement capabilities.

Next, we will consider the resolutions on the agenda. I will note that Senator Boxer—thank you for being here—has formally requested to hold over S. Con. Res. 41, expressing the sense of Congress on the Peshmerga of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to the next business meeting.

The first resolution we will consider is S. Res. 432, supports respect for human rights, encourages inclusive governance in Ethiopia. I want to thank Senator Cardin for introducing this resolution, Senators Markey, Coons, Menendez, and Rubio for cosponsoring. This resolution serves to emphasize the opportunities and the expectations that we continue to hold important in our bilateral relationship with Ethiopia. Much remains to be done in Ethiopia to achieve inclusive governance and improved human rights performance.

We will also consider S. Res. 482, a resolution urging the EU to designate Hizbollah in its entirety as a terrorist organization and to increase pressure on the organization and its members to the fullest extent possible. I thank Senator Shaheen and other cosponsors on the committee for bringing this important resolution before us today. Europe has been the victim of a Hizbollah terror attack. Yet, only the military wing of Hizbollah has been designated as a terrorist organization by the EU. This resolution calls on the European Union to designate the entire group as a terrorist organization.

Next, we will consider S. Res. 506 in support of NATO and the NATO summit and committing NATO to a security posture capable of deterring threats to the Alliance. This resolution highlights the need for NATO to transition from simple reassurance to deterrence in the face of a resurgent Russia. And I want to thank Senator Cardin for working with me on this resolution.

We will also consider S. Res. 505 regarding compliance enforcement of the Russian violations of the Open Skies Treaty. I want to

thank Senator Cardin again for your help in developing this bipartisan measure. The United States should take measures as are necessary in response to Russia's violations of the treaty, including the imposition of restrictions upon Russian overflights of the United States.

Next, we will consider S. Res. 503, recognizing June 20, 2016 as World Refugee Day. The unprecedented number of refugees across the globe and particularly from Syria has led to unprecedented suffering and has strained our collective capacity to govern. I appreciate Senator Cardin working with us to bring a good balanced resolution forward to mark World Refugee Day.

We also have S. Res. 501, expressing the sense of Congress on Russian military aggression. I want to thank Senators Perdue, Johnson, Gardner, Menendez, Risch, and Shaheen for working together to bring attention to Russia's reckless aggressive military behavior.

We also have S. Con. Res. 38, a concurrent resolution reaffirming the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances as cornerstones of U.S.-Taiwan relations. I would like to thank Senators Rubio, Menendez, Perdue, and Gardner for introducing this important and timely bipartisan resolution. Taiwan is a good friend and partner of the United States, and it is critical that our U.S. Congress continues to demonstrate support for the Taiwan people and our shared democratic values.

The last resolution considered today will be S. Res. 504, recognizing the anniversary of the Fulbright Program. This program not only promotes U.S. higher education abroad, but also remains a diplomatic tool. I thank Senators Boozman and Leahy for introducing this legislation.

Today we will also consider S. Res. 1605, the M-CORE Act. I want to commend Senators Cardin, Isakson, Coons, and Flake for bringing this bipartisan legislation to the committee. It is an important step for the Millennium Challenge Corporation. It is something that I know we have been trying to reform for some time. M-CORE will ensure that the agency takes a coordinated and thoughtful approach in implementing regional compacts. Additionally, this legislation establishes necessary reforms that will safeguard democratic values and foster good governance overseas.

Lastly—I am sure you are glad to hear that word.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. I am glad to hear it.

We will consider S. 2201, Global Gateways Trade Capacity Act of 2015. Current U.S. trade capacity building assistance is unfocused. It is really unbelievable how is spread through so many different departments and it is inefficient and it lacks a comprehensive strategy. This legislation is designed to bring a focused and coordinated effort to trade capacity assistance for developing countries. It also will provide resources to help developing countries implement the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement, TFA. I thank the ranking member for his role in this effort. I urge my colleagues to support a bill that I believe reflects how we should be using existing foreign assistance dollars to advance U.S. economic interests.

Let me just say this on this one. If you look at much of our foreign aid today, it is built around a Cold War mentality where what we are trying to do is buy influence—buy influence—in countries. We have got to move to something that generates economic growth. Almost every single issue we work on around here relative to other countries is hoping that they are going to generate the economic growth that will improve the standard of living in their countries and cause them to be less receptive to ISIS and other entities that take advantage of people that are not moving along. And I hope that we can move our foreign aid in a direction that promotes economic growth. I look at this as a step in that direction.

With that, I would like to recognize our distinguished ranking member, Senator Cardin.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator CARDIN. Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you for that very lengthy introduction—

The CHAIRMAN. I apologize for that.

Senator CARDIN. No, no, no. Because it means we have a very full agenda. And I thank you very much for the accommodations not only for me but for many members of this committee and the United States Senate, in working to get legislation ready for approval by this committee, as well as the resolutions and the treaties. In addition, of course, we have the nominations and the Foreign Service lists. So I thank you very much for accommodating this lengthy agenda today, and I hope we can move through it rather quickly.

I just really want to emphasize the last issue you talked about, the Global Gateways bill that through your leadership, we have before us today. I could not agree with you more. We invest a lot of U.S. taxpayer dollars and efforts on world security and stability. And we spend a lot of money on foreign assistance. And what your legislation will do is assist us in helping countries develop transparent, predictable, and simplified trade procedures so that we can get growing economies and economies that can provide stability for the people of the region. So I thank you for your legislation on Global Gateways, and I was proud to work with you on that legislation.

Thank you for also accommodating the Millennium Compact for Regional Economic Integration. I do thank my colleagues, Senator Flake and Senator Isakson and Senator Coons, for their help in developing this. It is a very simple bill that says to the Millennium Compact that we can use regional in addition to country. This gives us greater flexibility in dealing with issues such as in Africa where we have energy issues. In Central America, we have economic challenges where we can use the larger region in order to be able to achieve even greater results in the individual countries.

Mr. Chairman, you mentioned the different resolutions that we are considering. I am going to be very, very brief.

Thank you for bringing up the Ethiopia resolution. I thank Senator Rubio and Senator Gardner for their help, as well as Senators Markey, Coons, and Menendez. Since 2005, the Ethiopian Government has been using tactics to stifle free speech and debate, includ-

ing using anti-terrorism efforts in the name of anti-terrorism to block free expression. And we know of specific cases, such as the Zone 9 bloggers, and there are many other examples that have been used in Ethiopia. And this resolution speaks, I think, clearly to that issue.

Thank you on the World Refugee Day resolution. It is widely supported in our caucus and I think it is bipartisan. I want to thank Senator Rubio. I want to thank Coons, Kaine, Markey, Menendez, and Murphy. There are 65 million displaced people globally, and this resolution states our responsibilities in regards to that humanitarian crisis.

The NATO resolution—I am glad to work with you on that. The summit is coming up soon, and we are going to have a hearing in a few minutes that will emphasize the need for us to be able to use NATO effectively to deal with the challenges presented by Russia, as well as the challenges presented by the increased terrorist threat in Europe and in our region.

Russia military aggression resolution—I want to thank Senator Perdue. I strongly support his resolution. I think it speaks to the major challenges we are having with Russia today.

Taiwan—Glad we had that resolution. The concerns in that region are very, very challenging and the resolution restates our firm commitment to Taiwan.

The Open Skies resolution—An area that you helped take the lead on. I want to thank Senator Cotton for his efforts in that regard, and we have come together with a very strong resolution speaking to what we believe needs to be our policies in regards to Russia and the Open Skies Treaty.

And also thank you for Senator Boozman's Fulbright resolution, it is also important.

The treaties are all important. You mentioned the Plant Genetic Resources. That helps developing countries. It helps develop new crop outcomes.

Another treaty you mentioned is the Convention on the securities held with an intermediary. What that treaty does is take basically the Uniform Commercial Code that U.S. states are bound by and uses that to make sure that we can have a little bit more uniformity on the securities held globally.

Extradition treaties are important.

And the Mutual Legal Assistance in criminal matters treaties are important. Five countries overall are involved in those law enforcement treaties.

And also, we have nominations and foreign service lists. We have a busy agenda.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

There is going to be a lot of time for people to comment on individual pieces. So if people could maybe wait until that time, I think Senator Boxer may want to speak, though, to the Kurdistan issue.

Senator BOXER. I do and thank you so much.

First, I want to congratulate both of you on what is a really full and important agenda.

I am so disappointed, though, that my chairman and my ranking member were going to change—had a substitute amendment that

would have undermined the Ernst-Boxer resolution to give arms directly to the Kurds.

Now, I want to point out that we have been trying to do this for a while, for a long while. And in NDAA, we got 54 votes for an authorization to directly arm—54 votes. We needed 60. But a majority of the United States Senate wants this done. And I am sad to say I do not believe we have a majority of this committee and we do not have the administration. And I think in all due respect, it is a huge mistake.

The Kurds have been our most effective partner on the ground. I do not think there is any disagreement with that. They took back Mount Sinjar from ISIS, rescuing tens of thousands of Yazidis, cutting off the main supply lines between ISIS' strongholds of Raqqa in Syria and Mosul in Iraq. They played a crucial role in retaking the Mosul dam, and they will be absolutely critical in the fight to retake the City of Mosul.

The Kurdish regional government has also provided refuge to over 1 million refugees from Iraq and Syria.

Beyond these headlines, Kurdish forces are fighting on the front lines facing ISIS every single day. Everybody around here goes to the floor and rightly so condemning these monsters. So the people who are out there are getting, I think, the back of the hand here in many ways.

Kurdish leaders have expressed concern that their forces are overstretched and they lack the necessary equipment to combat ISIS' forces in Iraq. This includes medium and heavy weaponry that they need to defend themselves particularly against vehicle-mounted improvised explosive devices used by ISIS.

In April, their Deputy Prime Minister Talibani said, quote, unless we get direct support, we will not be able to continue the way we are currently in the fight against ISIS. He said that the KRG is facing drastic and unprecedented fiscal and economic challenges which, if unresolved, will, quote, undoubtedly impact the ability of our forces to keep on the front line.

It is clear they are in desperate need of financial assistance. And I was pleased that the U.S. has pledged \$415 million in April, and we must make it a priority to ensure that the KRG quickly receives these funds and future assistance.

The Deputy Prime Minister's statements underscore why Senator Ernst and I introduced a bill last year to provide the President with the temporary emergency authority to provide weapons, equipment, and training directly to Kurdish military forces for their fight against ISIS.

So we are not considering this bill today because of the substitute amendment that was going to be offered that would call for the explicit approval of the Iraqi Government. You know, if anyone has been there and discussed the Kurds with either the Sunni or the Shia, as I did, the attitude toward the Kurds is horrific. And I am telling you this is a big historic mistake, and I am criticizing Democrats and some Republicans here—some Democrats and some Republicans. It is a bipartisan disagreement that I have and with the administration.

So I think we need to make a commitment to the Kurds in their fight against ISIS who is raping and torturing and killing innocent

civilians, who has forced thousands of women and girls into sexual slavery, who have sent children out on the battlefield as suicide bombers, who have committed genocide against the groups in areas under its control.

The Kurds are fearless. They need our help. And to set up a circumstance where they need to get approval from some people who are so prejudice against them that it sends chills up and down my spine, I just am really sorry about it.

So I am hoping to work with my colleagues to see if in the week ahead—you know, we pulled it off today, and Senator Ernst and I are in full agreement that this should not have happened, that we should have supported this. But I am so happy to work with you because maybe I am misreading where you are coming from, but I hope there is a way that we do not have to get the approval of the Iraqi Government to—where we have lost so many people for them. Now we need their approval to help our best allies in the area who are going after ISIS? I am sorry to go on so long. I will stop, but I hope we can work something out, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I thank you for your passion.

And I too am very close to the Kurdish people and spent a lot of time with President Barzani and his foreign minister and have been to Irbil many times. And just for what it is worth, we worked with them on this resolution. They support the resolution.

And I just want you to know, I know that they are moving towards greater independence.

I just met with them within the last 10 days. I think Senator Cardin did too. And they support what we are doing. They want the United States Senate to fully endorse this resolution because they believe it puts them in the right place. So, look, we have gone through how the weaponry is getting to the Kurdish people. There is language in here that points to that. We are giving them economic aid which again, by the way, is going through the Iraqi Government.

And by the way, this is being done because I think the Kurdish people understand that while they want greater independence—and they are great friends and they are supported by the United States—that to begin a separation process right now where they are dealing with ISIS on one hand and then will have the wrath of the rest of the people of Iraq on the other is not the right place for them to be there.

So I just want you to know again Joni Ernst, who worked with you on the floor, fully supports our resolution today. Fully supports our resolution today. The Kurdish government fully supports our resolution today. And I am disappointed that we are going to have to wait a little while to do it again. I think we may have the same result.

But I thank you for your passion. I really do and want you to know that we would not be doing this in a vacuum. We would be doing it as we have before, working really, really closely with the Kurdish people. And I thank you for your passion.

Senator CARDIN. If I could just have a word first, Senator Boxer, and then certainly we want to hear your comments.

First, I join the chairman in expressing our appreciation for your commitment to the Kurdish people, your commitment to security in

that region, and to the protection of all communities in Iraq. And I understand the conversations you had in April.

Senator Corker and I had conversations just a couple weeks ago with leaders of the Kurdish community. Their number one concern today is whether they can make payroll, their economic circumstances. That is their number one concern. Another concern is that we strengthen the Iraqi central government at this particular moment.

Chairman Corker is correct. The long-term issues on either the ability of the Kurdish population to self-determine their future and what state that will be, is it a full independence, is it a part of Iraq—that is an issue that is going to be debated and is not resolved.

But the immediate concern for Iraq is to have a government that can protect all of the ethnic communities and can work effectively, including in the Kurdish areas. So, yes, we very much want to make sure that the Kurds who have been our most reliable fighters in the region—you are absolutely right about that—have the equipment that they need in order to defend themselves in order to help us in our fight against ISIL. We do want to make sure they have that. And there have been problems, and we have worked out some of those problems.

But you do not undermine the central government in an effort to resolve that issue. You work with the parties, and that is exactly what we have done, worked with the Kurdish leaders in an effort to make sure that they have a true ally in the United States and that this resolution that we worked out was done with that in mind. It is more involved than just arming the Kurds.

Senator BOXER. If I could respond. I stand on every single thing I said. I double down. I know about what people say. I know when people are desperate, what they want. I have been around here a long time to understand it. But I am just saying to you we know the situation. And you are absolutely right. They need the financial aid, and that is absolutely critical. But they also need the military help or they will not be able to sustain against ISIS. And if that is one of our greatest priorities, the way should be clear.

Now, I want you to know that I have been in very close touch with Senator Ernst. She gets the whole situation as well, and what we are hoping is in this little time since we took this down, we will have a chance to perhaps improve it in a way that the signal is very, very clear because you know all politics is local. I do not have to tell you that. We all know that. And in Iraq, all you have to do is know the history. We all know it. We have been super involved. And the pain of that history comes back and the pain of that history is the incredible rivalries and problems and prejudices within Iraq.

So the bottom line is if this group is doing our work of going after ISIL, which is indeed what all of us have said we want—and I think we all want them to continue—and they are in desperate shape in terms of military equipment, it seems to me pretty clear.

And it does not have anything to do in my view—I disagree with my leaders here, which is rare, very rare. It has nothing to do with the idea that we want one Iraq. Of course, we want one Iraq. People died for that for God's sake, 4,000 soldiers.

The CHAIRMAN. I would just ask that we—

Senator BOXER. I will stop and you will not have to hear this anymore.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator BOXER. But the bottom line is when we stand up and make these speeches about going after ISIL and we see what happens with the lone wolves and the rest of it, we ought to be a little more direct about our feelings towards the Kurds. And I would rest my case on that. I lost it, but will come back and hope that we can renegotiate something.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me just reiterate. The Kurdish government fully supports our resolution. President Barzani has told me he is getting every piece of equipment we have committed to him. I think there are some myths out there relative to what is actually happening in the transfers from Baghdad.

But with that, let me move on.

The first order of business today will be four Foreign Service lists. Senator Cardin, do you have any comments you want to make on these lists?

Senator CARDIN. No. Thank you for bringing them forward. I move we approve them.

The CHAIRMAN. Would anyone like to speak to these lists?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. If there is no further discussion on these lists, I would entertain a motion to approve these lists en bloc by voice vote.

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator BOXER. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve four Foreign Service lists en bloc. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. All opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. The ayes have it.

With that, the appointments and promotions are agreed to.

Next, in the interest of time, I would ask the committee to proceed with an en bloc voice vote in consideration of the following nominees before the committee: the Honorable Geeta Pasi, to be Ambassador to Chad; the Honorable Mary Beth Leonard, to be Representative of the U.S. in the African Union with rank of Ambassador; and Ms. Anne Casper to be Ambassador to Burundi. I thank all these nominees for being willing to settle into these positions.

Senator Cardin, do you have any comments on these nominees?

Senator CARDIN. I move the nominations.

Senator BOXER. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there any member who wishes to speak to these nominees?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. If there is no further discussion on the nominations, I would entertain a motion to approve them by voice vote en bloc.

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator BOXER. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve the nominations. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. The nominations are agreed to.

Next, I would like to consider the seven treaties on the agenda. Senator Cardin, do you have any comments on any of these treaties?

Senator CARDIN. No. I support them all.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, sir.

Is there any member who wishes to speak to any of these treaties?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. If there is no further discussion on these, I would entertain a motion to approve them by voice vote en bloc.

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator BOXER. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve the seven treaties. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. All opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. The treaties are agreed to.

Next, we will consider S. Res. 506, the NATO resolution. Senator Cardin, do you have any comments on this?

Senator CARDIN. No. I have already commented on it. I strongly support the resolution, and again thank you for your help and leadership in putting this together.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Anyone else like to speak?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. If there is no further discussion—

Senator SHAHEEN. Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, ma'am.

Senator SHAHEEN. I would like to be added as a cosponsor.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely. Thank you. Without objection.

If there is no further discussion on this resolution, I would entertain a motion to approve the Rubio amendment number 1 by voice vote.

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator BOXER. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve the Rubio amendment 1 by voice vote. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. All opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it and the amendment is agreed to.

Next, I would entertain a motion to approve the Corker-Cardin second degree amendment to the Rubio amendment number 2. Is there a second?

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

Senator BOXER. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve the Corker-Cardin second degree amendment to the Rubio second degree by voice vote—Rubio amendment 2 by voice vote. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. All opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it and the amendment is agreed to.

Next, I would entertain a motion to approve Rubio amendment number 2, amended by the Corker-Cardin second degree.

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator RUBIO. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve Rubio number 2, as amended by Corker-Cardin second degree. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that the ayes have it, and the amendment is agreed to.

Are there any further amendments?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. Hearing none, is there a motion to approve this resolution, as amended?

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator RUBIO. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. Moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve S. Res. 506, as amended. All in favor will say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it, and the resolution, as amended, is agreed to.

Next, we will consider S. Res. 505, the Russian violations of the Open Skies Treaty resolution. Senator Cardin, any comment?

Senator CARDIN. I have already commented about it. Thank you for your leadership on this.

The CHAIRMAN. If it is okay, I just want to speak to this. I am going to go through a procedure, if I could, to put Senator Cotton

at the top of this since he really raised this issue. I know he is on it already.

Senator CARDIN. I have no objections. Senator Cotton was the one who worked with us and urged us to do this.

The CHAIRMAN. I just think it is an appropriate way for us to go about it.

Are there any members who wish to speak to this resolution?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thankfully.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. If there is no further discussion on this resolution, I would entertain a motion to approve this by voice vote.

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator COONS. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve S. Res. 505. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it and the resolution is agreed to.

Our next order of business that I also ask we consider en bloc by voice vote are the remaining resolutions before the committee: S. Res. 432, S. Res. 482, S. Res. 503, S. Res. 501, S. Con. Res. 38, S. Res. 504.

Senator Cardin, do you have any comments?

Senator CARDIN. No. I support them all.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any members that wish to speak to these resolutions? Senator Menendez?

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, you all did such a great job of going through them all. I just want to briefly synthesize on two.

On the Russian S. 501, I think it is very important that the Senate express its sentiment about where Russian aggression is going because in my mind unchecked Russian aggression without consequences at the end of the day by both diplomacy, sanctions, and other diplomatic tools is a concern. They went over and took over Crimea, and the world lamented and scolded but that was the end of that. Then they did eastern Ukraine, creating an effort to create another frozen conflict. They are still not pursuing their elements of the Minsk Agreement. Then they enter into Syria and change the dynamics of Syria to prop up the Assad regime. Then they constantly seek to create friction with our own forces by their flyovers and whatnot.

I just think it goes on and on and on. I will not belabor it except to say that Putin is someone who only understands strength at the end of the day, and unless he has a sense that there will be consequences for his actions, he will continue to take them.

So I am glad that we have come together on a resolution at least that speaks towards that, and I appreciate the leadership of both you and Senator Cardin on it.

And secondly, on the Taiwan Relations Act, which has had enormous support, there could not be a more important moment at this

time with the efforts of China to create such an overwhelming presence in the region and to try to dwarf all of the other countries in the region in a way that is intimidating than to reassert our support and relationship with Taiwan so that China also understands that there are consequences as well.

There are other resolutions that are important, but in the interest of time and your hearing, I will reserve that for the record. But I did think these two are important and thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I do think we have some very strong resolutions here, and I think they make more of a difference than I fully realized when I first came on the committee.

Any other comments?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. If there is no further discussion on these resolutions, I would entertain a motion to approve these en bloc by voice vote.

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator UDALL. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve six resolutions en bloc. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. All opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it and the resolutions are agreed to.

Next, we will consider S. 2201, Global Gateways Trade Capacity Act of 2015. Senator Cardin, do you have any comments?

Senator CARDIN. I support it and thank you for your leadership on it.

The CHAIRMAN. Would anyone else like to speak to this legislation? Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. I will just talk for one sentence of thanks and compliment both you and Senator Cardin for your great leadership on both of these bills, which make a real contribution to development in Africa. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Senator BARRASSO. Mr. Chairman, I would like to call up Barrasso amendment number 1 to the Global Gateways bill. The purpose of the amendment is straightforward if this is the appropriate time to do that.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, sir.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you.

This amendment strikes section 7 of the bill which does create a brand new \$300 million trade facilitation pilot program. With over 95 percent of the world's consumers living outside the U.S., we should be aggressively pursuing new trade opportunities wherever they arise, and we must work to identify and eliminate barriers to trade whenever possible.

To that end, this bill points out some very important facts. According to the U.S. Trade Representative, the United States is one of the largest single country providers of trade-related assistance. There is no single coordinating agency for trade capacity building

activities in our government. And according to the GAO, in 2012, we spent nearly \$1 billion in trade capacity building efforts in 120 countries which were implemented by 20 different agencies and departments.

I believe we can do better. So while I recognize we may have international obligations, we also have an obligation to the American taxpayer to make wise decisions in the face of over \$19 trillion in debt facing the country. So I do not believe that putting an additional \$300 million towards trade facilitation on the taxpayers' credit card is a wise decision. Until we properly prioritize and coordinate current spending, we should not be discussing new spending.

So I support many of the stated objectives of the legislation. I support the smart, streamlined, the whole-of-government approach to trade capacity assistance, but I just cannot support creating a pilot program spending \$300 million on top of the nearly billion we are already spending in trade-related assistance. So as I see it, pilot programs are a first step toward permanent spending. It is a step I am not willing to take at this time.

So I would urge my colleagues to support the amendment, and I ask for a roll call vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

If I could just respond. As you mentioned, we are spending \$1 billion at least on trade programs throughout the U.S. Government. They are uncoordinated, unfocused, and the purpose of this pilot program is to do away with that, is to consolidate, is to create something that actually works. There are \$300 million, by the way, being authorized—not spent, authorized—over the next 5 years.

And if we actually had a State Department authorization bill, which we do not have, unfortunately, we would be more than willing to offset against that State Department authorization. But as the Senator rightly knows, because there is not an authorization that exists right now—we have not done one since 2002—there is nothing to offset against. So this is actually going to save taxpayers over time.

It is not unlike, by the way, on the Veterans bill, if you remember, there was a clause to create a Choice program. It was a pilot program to really transform the way that veterans' benefits are delivered to people around the country so that people could actually seek services in other places. Well, this pilot program has much of that same mentality, and that is to make what we are doing far better.

I appreciate the Senator's concerns about fiscal issues. Actually that is why we created this was to save our government money over time, to do away with the Cold War model of foreign aid that we have right now that does nothing but buy influence, and to try to create a program that actually encourages—creates a possibility that these countries' standard of living is going to increase.

So I understand, based on just the number, why you might raise this issue. I strongly oppose this amendment and hope that we will vote it down.

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, if I might just very briefly. I know Senator Barrasso's intentions in filing this amendment, but

I strongly agree with the chairman and urge our colleagues to reject the amendment.

Whether you believe that we have to do more in this area in foreign policy or whether you think that we need to be much smarter in how we spend our foreign dollars, you should reject the Barrasso amendment. I will tell you why.

We are not going to grow the size of our budgets. We know that. We have got to get more effective with the resources we are currently using. And we have too much fragmentation of programs, and we have to be able to use these programs more effectively to accomplish our missions.

And that is exactly what this bill attempts to do, to take our current presence in this area and focus it in a more effective way so that we can get the results in the country that are in the best interests of U.S. foreign policy. And that is what this bill is intended to do, and I would just urge my colleagues to reject the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Any other comments?

I will say this. The committee to me has got about as good a membership as anyone would want. And I appreciate Senator Barrasso raising this. We have a difference of opinion. I appreciate the passion that Senator Boxer expressed earlier today. And I am going to miss her after January.

Senator BOXER. I will call you.

The CHAIRMAN. Call me. Good.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. And I am glad we can have a debate like this and have passion and people disagree or agree.

But after saying that, if we could, let us move on with this. So you are moving the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. I will second it so you can have a vote.

Senator BARRASSO. Appreciate it.

The CHAIRMAN. Even though I hate the amendment, I second it.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. I want everybody to be heard today.

So with that, did you want a roll call vote?

Senator BARRASSO. I will settle for a voice vote.

The CHAIRMAN. With that, all in favor of the Barrasso amendment say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. All opposed to it?

[Chorus of nays.]

The CHAIRMAN. The nays have it. Thank you for bringing this issue forth.

Would anyone else want to be recorded as a no?

Senator CARDIN. Aye on the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Aye. Excuse me.

Okay. Senator Rubio and Senator Barrasso.

Thank you very much.

If there is no further discussion, I would entertain a motion to consider the Corker substitute amendment by voice vote.

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator BOXER. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve the Corker substitute amendment. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it, and the amendment is agreed to.

Any further amendments?

Senator BARRASSO. Can I be recorded as no?

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Barrasso will be recorded as a no. Anyone else?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. If there is not, is there a motion to approve the legislation, as amended?

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Second?

Senator BOXER. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve S. 2201, as amended. All in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it, and the legislation, as amended, is agreed to.

Lastly, we will move to S. 1605, M-CORE Act. Senator Cardin, do you have any comments you want to make?

Senator CARDIN. I have already commented about it. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

The CHAIRMAN. Would anyone else like to speak to this legislation?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. If there is no further discussion, I would entertain a motion to consider the Corker amendment by voice vote.

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator BOXER. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve the Corker amendment substitute. All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it, and the amendment is agreed to.

Are there further amendments?

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, we have an amendment that changes the reporting requirement, and I would move that amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. There is a motion to move the Cardin substitute. Is there a motion?

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

Senator MENENDEZ. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. It has been moved and seconded. All in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. All opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it, and the amendment is agreed to.

Is there a motion to approve the legislation, as amended?

Senator CARDIN. So moved.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

Senator UDALL. Second.

The CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

The question is on the motion to approve S. 1605, as amended. All in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. The legislation, as amended, is agreed to.

That completes the committee's—

Senator BARRASSO. Mr. Chairman, can I be recorded as a no?

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Barrasso is recorded as no.

Anyone else?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. I ask unanimous consent that staff be authorized to make technical and conforming changes. Without objection, so ordered.

And without objection, this outstanding committee business meeting is coming to a close. We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:47 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]
