

BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, November 28, 2018

U.S. SENATE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

1 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:07 p.m., in Room S-116, The
2 Capitol, Hon. Bob Corker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

3 Present: Senators Corker [presiding], Risch, Rubio, Flake, Gardner,
4 Barrasso, Isakson, Portman, Menendez, Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Udall, Murphy,
5 Kaine, Markey, and Merkley.

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

6 THE CHAIRMAN. I call the meeting to order. I want to thank everybody at
7 the meeting here. I realize we need a few more people here to vote today, but I
8 am going to go ahead and do the precursor that we need to do to pass these bills,
9 and again, thank everybody at the meeting here.

10 On the agenda today we have 7 pieces of legislation, 6 FSO lists, and 19
11 nominations. First on the agenda is S. 3247, the Women's Entrepreneurship and
12 Economic Empowerment Act of 2018. I would like to recognize Senators

1 Boozman, Cardin, Rubio, Menendez, and the other cosponsors of the bill for their
2 support of this legislation.

3 In many parts of the world today, women do not enjoy equal access to
4 economic opportunity. They may face constraints and barriers to accessing the
5 financial system, acquiring an education, or protecting their rights to property.
6 Such barriers to full participation in the economy certainly limit the
7 opportunities of individuals and families. They also constrain growth in these
8 countries.

9 I want to thank Ivanka for being here, who has worked with us very, very
10 closely to make this happen.

11 Promoting women's empowerment and economic opportunities in the
12 developing world is an important foreign policy goal, and I encourage my
13 colleagues to support this effort.

14 We will also consider S. 3654, the United States Agency for Global Media
15 and Public Diplomacy Modernization Act. This bill will build upon reforms
16 made to the Broadcasting Board of Governors in 2016 by maintaining a strong
17 CEO and ensuring that the agency's advisory board has the tools necessary for

1 the agency to remain independent and not improperly influenced by political
2 considerations.

3 This bill also contains various provisions related to public diplomacy that
4 this committee considered as part of the State Department Authorization Bill that
5 we reported out last year. The bill would require the department to modernize
6 its approach to the research and the evaluation of our public diplomacy efforts
7 around the world.

8 I would like to thank Senator Menendez for introducing this important
9 legislation.

10 Next on the agenda is S. Res. 562, a resolution expressing the sense of the
11 Senate that the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, NPT, continues
12 to make an invaluable contribution to United States and international security, 50
13 years after it opened for signature on July 1st, 1968.

14 This resolution was held over from the last business meeting. I would like
15 to thank, in particular, Senators Rubio and Merkley for working together with
16 others on this committee to reach agreement on the revised text of the resolution.

17 We will also consider H.R. 1872, the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of
18 2018. Some Americans may not be aware of the degree to which the Chinese

1 government restricts access by U.S. diplomats, journalists, and tourists to the
2 Tibetan areas in China. This bill seeks to highlight China's restrictive and
3 harmful policies related to Tibetans, including by providing the tools to the
4 Executive Branch to deny or revoke visas to individuals engaged in efforts to
5 restrict access by U.S. citizens to Tibetan areas in China.

6 I would like to thank Senators Rubio and Menendez for highlighting this
7 important issue, and urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

8 Next on the agenda is H.R. 4819, the DELTA Act. This bill prioritizes
9 assistance for a regional approach to fight wildlife trafficking and poaching for
10 the nations that share the Okavango Delta in southern Africa. This assistance to
11 developing nations such as Angola, Botswana, and Namibia will help conserve
12 and protect their national resources in a manner that contributes to economic
13 growth. By preserving unique wildlife and habitats in the Delta region, these
14 nations can promote tourism and advance their economic development efforts.

15 I would like to thank Senators Portman and Coons for their leadership on
16 this bill, and urge my colleagues to support it.

17 We will also consider H.R. 2646, the United States-Jordan Defense
18 Cooperation Extension Act. This bill affirms and solidifies our longstanding

1 partnership with Jordan, one of our most important allies in the Middle East.
2 The legislation authorizes the extension of U.S. assistance to Jordan through 2022,
3 and it reflects our interest in bolstering security cooperation between our two
4 nations.

5 I would like to thank our colleagues in the House for passing this bill, and
6 urge the members of this committee to support it.

7 Finally, we will consider H.R. 4989, the Protecting Diplomats from
8 Surveillance Through Consumer Devices Act. This bill requires the secretary to
9 develop a comprehensive policy on how diplomats, locally employed staff, and
10 other U.S. Government personnel use GPS-enabled personal devices overseas.

11 Also on the agenda are six FSO Lists, as modified, and 19 nominations. If
12 you do not mind, I am not going to read those out, and save you the pain of me
13 reading those out. They are in your agenda, if that is okay. I do know we had a
14 letter to hold over the nomination of Mr. Litzenberger to be the Ambassador to
15 Azerbaijan. We will consider his nomination at the next business meeting.

16 With that, Senator Menendez, I am sorry for such a long monologue there.

17 SENATOR MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman.

18 THE CHAIRMAN. I turn to you, sir.

1 SENATOR MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, my monologue may be a tad longer.

2 [Laughter.]

3 SENATOR MENENDEZ. But you will understand why in a moment.

4 Before we consider today's agenda, I want to take the opportunity at what
5 may be one of our last meetings of this Congress, to thank you for your
6 leadership on the Committee, and, more importantly, for your friendship. We
7 have certainly had our differences at times, but you have been a strong and fair
8 leader for the committee. We are better as a result of your chairmanship, and as I
9 told you privately, I am sad to see you go.

10 Throughout your tenure as ranking member and chairman, you have
11 spoken truth to power. We have worked in a bipartisan matter to advance
12 important oversight and foreign policy priorities. And as I said this morning,
13 your commitment to combatting modern slavery, human trafficking, which is, I
14 think, an issue for you, and will continue for this committee, has shaped this
15 committee's efforts, and I believe the work that you have done, that we have
16 often done together, has helped strengthen the United States government's
17 efforts to put an end to this scourge.

1 I know you care deeply about the State Department, and about the foreign
2 and civil service who do the hard work of diplomacy. And unlike some in the
3 Administration, I believe you know the power that American leadership, rooted
4 in moral clarity, in democratic values, in a commitment to peace, can have all
5 over the world.

6 You have spoken forcefully against what you see as an abandonment of
7 American values on the global stage. And I know your voice will be missed in
8 this room and on the Senate floor.

9 But most importantly, I want to again thank you for your friendship. I
10 know that we will continue to be in contact with each other. I know you are not
11 disappearing into the sunset, and that you will not be a stranger here in the
12 Senate.

13 Finally, I would be remiss if I did not thank your staff for their service,
14 their hard work, and collegiality. I have gotten to know Todd Womack, in
15 particular, and appreciate what an asset he has been to the chairman and to the
16 committee as chief of staff. Even on the most difficult issues, most the time --

17 [Laughter.]

1 SENATOR MENENDEZ. -- Todd's practical approach and good humor have
2 helped pave the way for bipartisan solutions. He will be missed. So we want to
3 thank Todd and the entire staff.

4 With that, in recognition of your contributions and achievements, we will
5 be presenting a resolution to you, Mr. Chairman, once all the members have had
6 an opportunity to sign it.

7 But it basically says the following: "Whereas the Honorable Bob Corker
8 has been a member of the --

9 [Laughter.]

10 SENATOR MENENDEZ. -- Foreign Relations Committee since 2007, serving as
11 chairman since 2015, and ranking member from 2013 to 2015. Whereas his
12 leadership of the committee has been marked by his determination to restore the
13 committee to its proper role, as both a resolute overseer and co-equal part of the
14 development of U.S. foreign policy. Whereas he set an example for fairness,
15 comity, and bipartisanship, serving as the embodiment of former committee
16 chairman Senator Arthur Vandenberg's statement, "We must stop partisan
17 politics at the water's edge."

1 Whereas his willingness to set aside the everyday political concerns that
2 too often afflict Washington has enabled him to become one of the Congress's
3 most effective legislators. Whereas he led a dedicated and successful fight to
4 dramatically increase the resources that are dedicated to combatting the scourge
5 of modern slavery that continues to hold 27 million people in its grip globally.

6 Whereas he passed into law the first U.S. State Department authorization
7 legislation in 14 years, something that I had a little something to do with my --

8 [Laughter.]

9 SENATOR MENENDEZ. Whereas he spearheaded the effort to reassert
10 Congress's authority in the debate over the 2015 Iran Joint Comprehensive Plan
11 of Action, ensuring that Congress had a say in whether the agreement could
12 move forward. Whereas he guided endeavors to combat international aggression
13 by placing comprehensive new sanctions on North Korea, Russia, and Iran.

14 Whereas he has fought to improve the lives of the less fortunate around
15 the world, passing into law legislation to help provide additional electrical power
16 to those without it in Africa, reform food aid, reauthorize the president's
17 emergency plan for AIDS relief, and overhaul U.S. foreign assistance activity to
18 take a more market-oriented approach.

1 Whereas Senator Corker will retire from the Senate at the conclusion of the
2 115th Congress on January 3rd, 2019, now therefore be it resolved that the
3 Committee on Foreign Relations expresses to Bob Corker its admiration, its
4 appreciation, and its high regard.

5 And be it further resolved the committee extends to Senator Corker its
6 most sincere best wishes for the future.

7 Thank you very much.

8 [Applause.]

9 SENATOR MENENDEZ. Now I am sitting down, because I know you do not
10 want to lose the quorum. So --

11 [Laughter.]

12 SENATOR MENENDEZ. -- let me turn briefly to today's meeting.

13 We have a full agenda today at what I understand could be our last
14 business meeting of the Congress. I support the legislation on the agenda. I will
15 speak to only a few of the bills. Before doing so, however, I feel compelled to
16 note the absence of two critical pieces of legislation from our markup today.

17 First, the Saudi Arabia Accountability and Yemen Act that Senators
18 Young, Shaheen, and others, Senator Murphy has been a stellar voice on this, a

1 singular voice on the committee all along. Senator Cardin, on Global Magnitsky,
2 that we introduced before Thanksgiving. There are not enough adjectives to
3 describe the incomplete inadequacy of the briefing the senators just attended a
4 few hours ago.

5 This Administration, in my view, has no strategy for ending the war in
6 Yemen, nor for exerting meaningful pressure on the stakeholders in this conflict
7 to get to a political process. Moreover, the Administration is clearly laying the
8 groundwork to avoid genuine accountability in the investigation of responsibility
9 for Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, a United States permanent
10 resident, whose murder at the Saudi consulate in Turkey haunts us all. How else
11 can we understand the refusal to send an official from the Intelligence
12 Community to provide its assessment?

13 Now is the time for the Committee to take a firm stand and advance this
14 bipartisan bill, and I hope, as I know, Mr. Chairman, you share a commitment to
15 accountability, as is evidenced in our joint invoking of the Global Magnitsky Act
16 for Khashoggi's murder, both in a general determination more recently, as it
17 relates to the Crown Prince, and I hope that we can find an opportunity before
18 this Congress ends.

1 Secondly, I am deeply disappointed that after several months of
2 introduction we have not marked up the Defending American Security From the
3 Kremlin Aggression Act, the comprehensive bill that I introduced with Senator
4 Graham and others, to better equip the United States and our allies against
5 Putin's unceasing assault on our democratic values, security and economic
6 interests, and the rules-based international order we have long championed.

7 The need for a bill like DASKA is critically clear when we look at what just
8 happened in the Kerch Strait. If there is any inclination to consider Russia's
9 blatant aggression in Crimea old news, its violent attack against three Ukrainian
10 vessels in the Kerch Strait demonstrates that the threat from Russia is as grave as
11 ever. The lives of 23 Ukrainian crew members, whom Russian forces have
12 seized, now hang in the balance, as does the fate of a sovereign, independent
13 Ukraine, and a Crimean Peninsula free of Russian menace. That is why we need
14 a vote on DASKA, and I hope we can get that before the end of the Congress.

15 Finally, I support all the legislation on the agenda. With regard to that
16 legislation let me thank you and your staff for working diligently on the U.S.
17 Agency for Global Media and Public Diplomacy Modernization Act. I think it is
18 critically important. You have described it well. And it is this agency that

1 provides the only alternative to state-run news in the world, or an absence of
2 news coverage. Independent press and a well-informed public are foundational
3 to free and democratic societies. They also present a terrible threat to autocrats,
4 dictators, and other extremists. And the mission of that agency is promoted in
5 this.

6 I want to express my strong support for S. 3247, the Women's
7 Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act. Without a question,
8 women around the world face discrimination and unprecedented obstacles to
9 education, opportunities to grow their earning potential, and the ability to
10 provide for their families. I thank the sponsors of the bill, as well as the
11 chairman, for working with me to ensure that education and financial literacy are
12 eligible activities supported by the programs of the bill.

13 Lastly, I also support S. Resolution 562. I want to thank Senator Merkley
14 for his hard work in introducing and refining this important resolution, and
15 commend him and Senator Rubio for working together to produce an excellent
16 final product.

1 We are voting on a large number of nominees before us today to serve as
2 ambassadors, as well as six Foreign Service promotion lists. I will vote in favor
3 of all the nominees we are considering today, and will speak only about one.

4 I have long believed that with respect to Cyprus, unless we reconcile
5 ourselves with the past, it is difficult to move forward. This reconciliation must
6 acknowledge that Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974, and continues to occupy it to
7 this day. Turkey should withdraw its troops to contribute to peace and stability
8 in Cyprus. If U.S. diplomats and the international community fail to address this
9 fact as a reality, it will impede efforts to reach a doable negotiated settlement. I
10 will support Ambassador Garber's nomination, but I expect to have a close and
11 fulsome dialogue with her on these issues going forward.

12 With that, Mr. Chairman, again thank you for your leadership. I look
13 forward --

14 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

15 SENATOR MENENDEZ. -- to voting on these issues.

16 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

17

1 SENATOR ISAKSON. Mr. Chairman?

2 THE CHAIRMAN. Yes, sir?

3 SENATOR ISAKSON. Would it be too rude of me to ask for a minute?

4 THE CHAIRMAN. For what?

5 SENATOR ISAKSON. Could I be recognized for --

6 THE CHAIRMAN. Yes, sir.

7 SENATOR ISAKSON. I want to thank you, the chairman of the committee, for
8 what you have meant to this committee and each of its members. We talk when
9 you are not around a lot.

10 [Laughter.]

11 SENATOR ISAKSON. Being a senator from the state that is to the south of you,
12 I know what a great job you do for Tennessee and for the South. I know your
13 interest that you have taken in foreign relations has been remarkable. You and I
14 traveled, I believe, on your first trip, went to Darfur and to Sudan, and made
15 some visits to Africa, and I enjoyed that those visits My wife and I enjoyed
16 traveling with you, and I look forward to seeing you many, many years in the
17 future, and I thank you for what you have done.

1 Senator Menendez, I want to say something about you. You are coming
2 back to this committee, which we delight of, and I am, too. You and I, and Ms.
3 Shaheen, and Mr. Coons, Senator Coons, were thrown into a difficult situation
4 last year as individual citizens.

5 We are on the Ethics Committee, and you had a case there. I want to
6 commend you on the way you acquitted yourself and Mr. Coons on the way he
7 acquitted himself, tell you how proud I am of the committee, and all the
8 members..

9 And I think a difficult situation got handled right. And those people of
10 good will did the right thing, and handled it the right way, rather than having
11 something become a news story, and I want to commend you on that, and
12 congratulate you on your reelection, coming here, and I look forward to serving
13 with you the next 4 years while I am here.

14 SENATOR MENENDEZ. Thank you.

15 [Applause.]

16 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

17 SENATOR KAINE. Mr. Chair.

18 THE CHAIRMAN. Yes.

1 SENATOR KAINE. If this is the appropriate time, I do not want to lose the
2 quorum, but I --

3 [Laughter.]

4 SENATOR KAINE. -- know many of us probably want to say good things
5 about you. Would you rather have votes first, and then do that, or --

6 [Laughter.]

7 THE CHAIRMAN. Well, that is a tough choice.

8 SENATOR MARKEY. Mr. Chairman, I think we should hear all the good
9 things about you. I am sure people will not leave that quickly.

10 SENATOR KAINE. Well, I just want to say what a great colleague you are,
11 and I told you this the other night, how much I am going to miss you. I tell
12 people about you that, well, if you can convince Bob Corker on merits, he will
13 stick with you no matter what anybody says, what the polls say, what leadership
14 says. You cannot always convince him on the merits, he is a smart guy, he has
15 got his own point of view, but if you can convince somebody on the merits, he
16 will stick with you, and what more would you want to say about any colleague.
17 And so I am really going to miss that. And I also remember, I think you were
18 just the chair of this committee, and you and I went to Israel, and I saw this, the

1 rest of you saw this happen. We were there to talk to Israel about a whole series
2 of issues related to the potential Iran nuclear deal, and we were going to meet
3 with Knesset, we were going to meet the prime minister, we were going to meet
4 with the Mossad.

5 And the leadership tried to cancel the meeting of senators with the
6 Mossad. Fancy that, not wanting senators to talk to an intel head.

7 [Laughter.]

8 SENATOR KAINE. But they tried to --

9 THE CHAIRMAN. That was the Israeli leadership.

10 SENATOR KAINE. They tried to cancel our meeting with the Mossad, and
11 this brand new chair said, "If you cancel the meeting with the Mossad, we are
12 going home. We are not going to do any of the rest of the meetings."

13 And so then they hastefully put the meeting with the Mossad back on.
14 And it turned out that that was an important meeting for us to hear in full view
15 of what the situation was. But he was essentially a brand new chairman. I am not
16 even sure there had even been a meeting with the Foreign Relations Committee
17 yet under your chairmanship. But when somebody tried to muscle you in a very

1 diplomatic way, you said, "Look, we need to do our job, and if you try to screw
2 around with us, we are leaving and going home."

3 And that was such a classy and important thing that you did, and the
4 meeting turned out to be some important information that we needed. And that
5 is very characteristic of who you are. So definitely, definitely going to miss you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

7 SENATOR CARDIN. It is amazing that there looks like there are more
8 democrats that will speak about you than republicans.

9 [Laughter.]

10 SENATOR CARDIN.

11 THE CHAIRMAN. It is actually not that amazing.

12 [Laughter.]

13 THE CHAIRMAN. Hopefully, that does not tell us anything.

14 SENATOR CARDIN. Senator Corker and I came to the Senate at the same
15 time. We were part of the class that arrived here in 2007. It was a little lonely for
16 Bob Corker then, because he was the only republican, and we had nine
17 democrats that were elected for the first time in 2007. But our class became very
18 close, and to this day we are still close.

1 And the first thing I recognized about Senator Corker is that he wanted to
2 be an expert and have impact on foreign policy. There are not a lot of senators
3 who will pick foreign policy as their number one objective as far as where they
4 are going to invest their time, because we all understand that it is difficult to
5 convince the people of our state the importance of foreign policy as it relates to
6 the views of their own state.

7 But Bob was willing to make that commitment. He was good at it. And
8 the traveling that you have heard of was done so that he would better
9 understand the issues. He clearly was most interested in understanding what is
10 in the best interest of our country.

11 Senator Menendez mentioned the staff. I had a chance to work with his
12 staff up close and personal when I was ranking, and I could not agree more with
13 Senator Menendez. You have an incredibly loyal staff. But they are motivated
14 because of the chairman. They recognize that they have a serious person who is
15 really trying to understand what to do right, and that they can have impact
16 through their chairman in the work that they are doing, so they want to get to the
17 truth.

1 And Tim mentioned that the experience in Israel, it is a shame we do not
2 record the exchanges we have in this room with foreign leaders, because I will
3 tell you there have been times where Bob Corker spoke direct truth to world
4 leaders in a tone that you would never find coming out of a diplomat. And it
5 was not any misunderstandings. I can assure of that. But the message was
6 clearly delivered. And I think that was so important for our national security.

7 So I will cherish these times, these 10 years, the 12 years that we have had
8 together in the United States Senate, and in this committee, and admire greatly
9 your professionalism and your -- and wish you well. I know we will continue to
10 see you, but we know that you have made an incredible impact on this
11 committee, and on the United States Senate.

12 [Applause.]

13 THE CHAIRMAN. You do not have to do this. Thank you. Thank you so
14 much.

15 SENATOR PORTMAN. I have to.

16 [Laughter.]

17 SENATOR PORTMAN. I have to. I want to talk about Okavango Delta. I am
18 sorry.

1 [Laughter.]

2 SENATOR PORTMAN. So when I got here in this body, I had to choose a
3 mentor, and, you know, there are some great opportunities. I could have chosen
4 any of you, but I chose Bob Corker.

5 [Laughter.]

6 SENATOR PORTMAN. And he could tell you how well he mentored me, but
7 the fact is, I would not be on this committee, but I am an accidental member. I
8 was on the powerful and influential budget committee, and Bob approached me
9 and said, "We would like you to join the committee." And the only reason I am
10 here is because of Bob. And it turned out, as much as I missed the excitement of
11 the budget committee, this has been my favorite committee. And I think it is
12 because of your leadership, because you were focused on finding a solution for
13 tough issues, and although you are fair-minded, you are also tough and
14 courageous, and willing to take on the administration.

15 So I have learned from you again. You continue to be a mentor. I know
16 we will continue to get your counsel, because you are not shy. And I am sure Jim
17 Risch will appreciate that, right?

18 SENATOR RISCH. Mostly.

1 SENATOR PORTMAN. Yeah. And I just want to thank you for not just your
2 service, but your friendship, and the model that you have been for me and for
3 others.

4 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you so much.

5 SENATOR RISCH. Well, Mr. Chairman, I, too, will miss you, and you have
6 been a great mentor for me, and I sincerely appreciate it. We have spent a lot of
7 years together on this committee, and I truly appreciate that. I really do.

8 What I will not miss is your almost funny jokes about needing a food
9 taster every time we sat down --

10 [Laughter.]

11 THE CHAIRMAN. That is no longer necessary.

12 [Laughter.]

13 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

14 SENATOR COONS. Mr. Chairman.

15 THE CHAIRMAN. Yes, sir.

16 SENATOR COONS. My very first trip overseas as a senator was with you,
17 and Bernie Sanders, and Joe Manchin, a truly memorable foursome.

18 [Laughter.]

1 SENATOR COONS. If they had but recorded our arguments in the back of
2 that C-130, they would have had a reality T.V. show clips for years to come.

3 [Laughter.]

4 SENATOR COONS. And in the way that Senator Cardin just referenced, we
5 sat with Karzai the afternoon that the FBI had briefed us that his half-brother had
6 stolen a billion dollars. And I will tell you, Chairman Corker gave a talking to
7 like I have never seen or heard before. And I was looking around to see whether
8 there were more people with weapons that liked us rather than liked him.

9 I have really admired, and appreciated, and valued your leadership, your
10 friendship, your mentorship. Our trip to the Bidi Bidi refugee camp touched me
11 deeply. I will never forget watching you in Davos not hobnobbing with, you
12 know, celebrities, but working relentlessly and tirelessly to figure out how to
13 raise money, and engagement, and action to fight human slavery.

14 You have a huge heart. You have made a lasting difference. You have
15 been a terrific friend. It is my hope we will continue to work together after your
16 time here. You have been a great chairman.

17 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

1 SENATOR COONS. Let me also briefly, if I might, say to Senator Flake, for
2 who this will also be his last Foreign Relations meeting, we have been chased by
3 elephants together, we have dined with dictators together. It has been a great
4 honor to work with you from Zimbabwe, to matters just today on the floor. You
5 have been a great colleague and partner, and I appreciate it. Thank you.

6 [Applause.]

7 [Standing Ovation.]

8 SENATOR UDALL. Senator Corker, just one more word.

9 I just want to also thank Senator Flake. He took me to Cuba several times.
10 He always got me out of there safely.

11 [Laughter.]

12 Senator Udall. I very much appreciate that. And I will never forget the
13 Flake CODEL that we went on, Senator Corker, where you kind of really
14 threaded the needle in terms of common ground. There was another CODEL
15 that went to Russia. And all that happened to them was they got -- You went
16 right out on the edge of Russia, and we did Finland, and Latvia, and Denmark,
17 and Sweden. And everybody applauded what we did. And it was really a
18 terrific trip. And it emphasized very much the rules-based order that has come

1 up since World War II, and that that is the common ground that we can find.
2 And once again, I think it just emphasizes that your desire to seek common
3 ground on this committee is what we really need to do with our foreign policy.
4 Thank you very much.

5 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you. So with that, first of all, thank -- you took my
6 thunder relative to Flake, and I want to thank him for his tremendous service. A
7 student, especially on Cuba, and other issues. Fair-minded. You have been a
8 great colleague. I personally want to thank you, and we will miss you.

9 I want to thank Menendez and others for recognizing our staff. Okay.

10 THE CHAIRMAN. All right.

11 SENATOR FLAKE. Bob, if I could just say I think we all got a taste today
12 hearing Bob's questions down at the SCIF of why he has been so valuable on this
13 committee. I saw heads nodding from democrats and republicans, all, at your
14 line of questioning, because it just reflected who you are, and your mastery of the
15 issues, and your care for the country. So thank you.

16 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

1 SENATOR GARDNER. Mr. Chairman, we did not have enough time. I wrote
2 a resolution on here that says, "Whereas we like Jeff, too," if you would like to
3 sign it.

4 [Laughter.]

5 THE CHAIRMAN. Very good. Very good. All right. Very good. Well, thank
6 you all for the remarks about Jeff and myself, and our outstanding staffs. It has
7 been a tremendous pleasure. I am not going to say any more for a lot of reasons,
8 but --

9 SENATOR MARKEY. If you want to hear them again, they are recorded.

10 THE CHAIRMAN. No.

11 [Laughter.]

12 THE CHAIRMAN. I wondered what that was, actually.

13 To the issue at hand, Yemen, as I understand what is going to happen is
14 that today there is going to be a vote as to whether to discharge from our
15 committee the Lee-Sanders bill. What then happens is the executive calendar
16 burns off. We have clotures that have already been filed on numbers of
17 nominees. So that will burn off. We will not take action on Lee-Sanders until the
18 cloture votes that are now pending burn off.

1 There will then be a second vote, and that will be the vote to proceed.
2 And both of those will be at a 51-vote threshold. And so there are actually two
3 bites at the apple, if you will, to get on this piece of legislation, in the event we
4 decide we want to vote on this legislation. Then everything is at a 51-vote
5 threshold. And because of the way the War Powers Act was written, it is my
6 understanding, there is no test of germaneness. So you basically go into what
7 would be the Wild, Wild West. The difference is, it is a vote-a-thon, but you are
8 firing with real bullets, because it is not a budget resolution. These are real
9 amendments.

10 And so it is my hope, as was said today down in the SCIF, and Jeff, thank
11 you for your comments. It is my hope that the Administration can somehow re-
12 create the balance that needs to exist around this issue, that somehow -- I do not
13 think we do things especially well here legislatively, because things move and
14 change. We have to act legislatively, because that is the only tool that we have.
15 But the Administration will be much better off to try to rebalance not just our
16 American interests, but also our American values.

17 The President could do that this afternoon. Pompeo could do that this
18 afternoon. There are ways that this could be addressed that might cause people,

1 if we do discharge this, to say, "Okay. This has been handled in an appropriate
2 manner. Maybe we do not need to proceed with this bill now, because the
3 Administration has taken proper steps." That is what I hope happens.

4 I am going to vote to discharge it. It is our committee. That is unusual for
5 a committee chairman to vote to discharge something from their own committee.
6 But I am going to do that. I may not vote to proceed with the bill. I hope the
7 message that the Administration heard today down in the SCIF is one that they
8 will act upon. And I mean this truly. I would much rather them deal with this
9 issue in the appropriate manner than to us get into a Wild, Wild West situation,
10 where we actually have a constitutional challenge over the War Powers Act that
11 may be unnecessary.

12 So that is the state of play. I hope something changes dramatically
13 between now and then. But today at 4:00 or 4:30 will be the first vote to
14 discharge.

15 So as it relates to Menendez's first of many complaints, he will have the
16 opportunity -- if we get on this bill, you will have the opportunity to offer,
17 actually, the bill that you have. I know that is not the way you would like to deal
18 with it, but I did say that might be a possibility.

1 However, again, the only way to narrow what we do is to do so by
2 unanimous consent, which I realize is not going to happen. We are not going to
3 have unanimous consent on how to go forward.

4 I guess I do not have any other comments as it relates to the votes that we
5 have before us.

6 SENATOR RUBIO. Mr. Chairman --

7 THE CHAIRMAN. Yes?

8 SENATOR RUBIO. I think after you walked out -- first of all, I need to say I --
9 it is your fault I am here, because you are the one that talked me into running for
10 re-election.

11 THE CHAIRMAN. That is exactly right.

12 [Laughter.]

13 SENATOR RUBIO. And you did not tell me you were leaving as soon as I got
14 here, but anyway --

15 THE CHAIRMAN. It will be all right. It will be all right.

16 [Laughter.]

1 SENATOR RUBIO. And I have not gone on any CODELs with Jeff or you,
2 because, frankly, you guys go to countries that I am not allowed into to begin
3 with --

4 [Laughter.]

5 SENATOR RUBIO. And they may not let me out, if I go in. And then we
6 would have to send Tillis down there to rescue me, and he is not even on the
7 committee. But I want to thank both of you for your service. We are friends, and
8 I appreciate very much what you do.

9 And on the issue of the legislation, what we heard at the back end of it is
10 that while the amendments to it are not -- there is no germane test, if the
11 amendments filed to it are not within the context of the War Powers Act, then
12 they lose the privilege. And at the back end of the end-product, if adopted, you
13 would need 60 votes. So, in essence --

14 THE CHAIRMAN. Yeah.

15 SENATOR RUBIO. -- you can get amendments on it, but at the back end you
16 will need 60, because it is no longer privileged. If the amendments are not
17 germane -- if the amendments are not within the confines of the War Powers Act
18 protection.

1 Again, I do not know if that matters to anybody in terms of their thinking.

2 Some people might be viewing this as a vehicle to do other stuff.

3 THE CHAIRMAN. Yeah.

4 SENATOR MARKEY. Mr. Chairman, if I may very briefly.

5 THE CHAIRMAN. Yeah. Yeah.

6 SENATOR MARKEY. Very briefly, because I know we have to vote on this
7 legislation.

8 I am always reticent to vote to discharge from the committee's jurisdiction,
9 because I believe in preserving the committee's jurisdiction. I will vote to
10 discharge this time. I believe it is appropriate.

11 On the question, I have no intention nor desire, as much as I do want to
12 move the legislation, to use the Sanders-Lee, and others, effort to start an ending.
13 I think there should be a clear up-and-down vote. And while that will require
14 unanimous consent, I would hope that this body can come together and give
15 unanimous consent to allow that to happen. And the fate will be what it is.
16 Because I do not know that talking about medical devices, or immigration, or
17 anything else on an open-ended process at this stage of this Congress would
18 make sense. But I do think expressing the will of the Senate on an up or down

1 vote on our relationship with Saudi Arabia in this war is worthy. And I hope
2 that we can get consent on that.

3 And I did not have that many complaints. I had two.

4 THE CHAIRMAN. I know.

5 [Laughter.]

6 SENATOR MARKEY. After a glowing, glowing introduction of the chairman's
7 accomplishments.

8 SENATOR KAINE. Mr. Chair --

9 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Yes, sir?

10 SENATOR KAINE. -- can I just ask a procedural question in light of both of
11 the -- Senator Menendez's comments.

12 Amendments can be offered, but in any event, we are still subject to a
13 tabling motion. So even if we could not get unanimous consent, or up or down,
14 if there were enough of us who would vote to table every amendment, essentially
15 get to an up or down, we could block, you know --

16 THE CHAIRMAN. Yeah. Well, again, it is my hope that the Administration's
17 understanding that, you know, legislation is not perfect, and I do not think Lee-
18 Sanders certainly is perfect. No offense to the authors. I hope that they

1 somehow will address this themselves in the time that exists between now and
2 the actual procedural motion next week. With that, thank you all again.

3 We will now move to S. 3247, the Women's Entrepreneurial and Economic
4 Empowerment Act of 2018. Are there any additional comments on this
5 legislation before we vote on it? Yes, sir?

6 SENATOR COONS. Just in a sense, it is a great bill. When you invest in
7 women, you invest in development.

8 SENATOR CARDIN. My thanks to all involved. There is a lot of people
9 involved. The House members, the outside groups, the Administration, we
10 thank them. It is an important bill, and it is the right message, and it is the right
11 policy for this country.

12 SENATOR MARKEY. Move to -- oh, I am sorry.

13 SENATOR SHAHEEN. I agree. I am a co-sponsor, and I applaud everybody
14 who has done such a great job to get this bill passed. But at the risk of being the
15 skunk at the garden party here, given all of the glowing responses, I do think it is
16 important to point out that there are a lot of other issues that affect women that
17 are going on right now at the State Department that we should not lose sight of.

1 It does not make sense that we should be debating whether we can use the
2 term "reproductive health" when it comes to women. And that is one of the
3 things that is being debated at the State Department.

4 So I do think it is an important step forward. I think we should all
5 applaud it, but I think we need to recognize that it is only a step towards
6 addressing what continues to be very difficult circumstances for women in so
7 many places around the world.

8 THE CHAIRMAN. Okay. Without objection --

9 SENATOR MARKEY. We moved the --

10 THE CHAIRMAN. Without objection, we will now consider the revised
11 substitute amendment. All those in favor, say aye.

12 [A chorus of ayes.]

13 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

14 [No response.]

15 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. The revised substitute
16 amendment is agreed to. Is there a motion to approve S. 3247, as amended?

17 SENATOR MARKEY. So moved.

1 THE CHAIRMAN. There is a motion. A second? So moved and seconded.

2 The question is on the motion to approve S. 3247. All those in favor, say aye.

3 [A chorus of ayes.]

4 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

5 [No response.]

6 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. And the legislation is agreed

7 to. And, again, thank you for personally being here and shepherding this

8 through from the White House perspective. Thank you very much.

9 SENATOR GARDNER. I would like to be added as a cosponsor of the bill.

10 THE CHAIRMAN. Without objection, Senator Gardner.

11 Now we will move to S. 3654, the United States Agency for Global Media

12 and Public Diplomacy Modernization Act. Are there any further comments on

13 this bill?

14 SENATOR FLAKE. Just one. I just want to thank the Chairman and ranking

15 member for working with me on the amendment with regard to the Office of

16 Cuba Broadcasting. They produced the program a while ago. It was rife with

17 anti-Semitic messages, and they have done the right thing since then. They have

1 suspended, and put on leave the two individuals responsible. They are in
2 disciplinary proceedings right now.

3 This just simply ensures that they report back to Congress on a routine
4 basis when they have issues like this. So thank you.

5 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you.

6 SENATOR MARKEY. Mr. Chairman?

7 THE CHAIRMAN. Yes, sir?

8 SENATOR MARKEY. I want to thank you and Senator Menendez for working
9 with me, including language that requires the Agency for Global Media to
10 comprehensively report when there are restrictions on journalists in countries
11 around the world. We have seen one of those results at the Turkish Embassy. It
12 is something I think is very important to be publicly commented on, and
13 revealed by our own government and the world, and I thank you for inclusion of
14 that language in this bill. And I just want to thank you is all.

15 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

16 SENATOR MARKEY. I appreciate it, and Senator Flake.

17 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

18 SENATOR MARKEY. I appreciate that and I am grateful for our country.

1 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you so much.

2 So without objection, we will first consider the manager's amendment,
3 which makes a number of technical changes and incorporates elements of the
4 Flake and Markey 1st degree amendments. I would also like to thank Senators
5 Menendez, Flake, and Markey for working with us on the manager's
6 amendment, which I support.

7 All those in favor of the manager's amendment, say aye.

8 [A chorus of ayes.]

9 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

10 [No response.]

11 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. The manager's amendment is
12 agreed to.

13 Is there a motion to approve S. 3654, as amended?

14 SENATOR MARKEY. So moved.

15 THE CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

16 SENATOR ISAKSON. Second.

17 THE CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

18 The question is on the motion to approve S. 3654, as amended.

1 All those in favor, say aye.

2 [A chorus of ayes.]

3 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

4 [No response.]

5 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. The legislation is agreed to.

6 Next, we will move to S. Res. 562, the NPT resolution on the agenda. Are
7 there any senators who would like to comment on this resolution?

8 SENATOR MERKLEY. Mr. Chairman, much appreciation to you and your
9 team, Senator Marco Rubio and his team, for working to massage the language.

10 Here is where we stood.

11 It was back in 1963 that President Kennedy estimated that there would be
12 25 nuclear powers by the end of the decade, and nations went to work, led by the
13 United States, to say that is a huge risk to our world. And it led to the treaty
14 being opened for signatures in 1968.

15 And this has been -- these three pillars have been such an important part
16 of containing the nuclear threat and risk. There are three pillars, of peacefulness
17 through energy, of non-nuclear weapons states refraining from acquiring them,
18 and that the nuclear weapon states working in good faith to reduce their arsenals

1 towards the goal of eventually -- it is important here on the 50th anniversary that
2 we recognize it, and as we go into the future, and in kind of a new Cold War
3 with Russia, and we will have many challenges to sustain this framework.

4 Thank you.

5 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you very much.

6 SENATOR COONS. Can I be added as a co-sponsor to the bill?

7 THE CHAIRMAN. Without objection. Without objection.

8 Without objection, we will now consider the preamble and revised
9 resolving clause amendments. All those in favor, say aye.

10 [A chorus of ayes.]

11 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

12 [No response.]

13 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it, and the preamble and revised
14 resolving clause and amendments are agreed to.

15 Is there a motion to approve S. Res. 562, as amended?

16 Senator Markey. So moved.

17 SENATOR COONS. Second.

18 THE CHAIRMAN. So moved, and seconded.

1 The question is on the motion to approve S. Res. 562, as amended. All
2 those in favor, say aye.

3 [A chorus of ayes.]

4 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

5 [No response.]

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

7 Now we will move to H.R. 1872, the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act.

8 Would any senator like to comment on this bill further? Senator Rubio?

9 SENATOR RUBIO. This is pretty straightforward. I think we are all aware of
10 what happens in Tibet, where the Chinese government is literally undertaking an
11 effort to strip a people of their identity, of everything. And then this has become
12 commonplace in a number of other regions.

13 So one of the things they do is they do not allow our officials, journalists,
14 Tibetan, Americans, or others, to visit these regions. And all it says that any
15 officials from China who are responsible for that policy, we are going to place
16 similar restrictions on them when they come here, or when they try to come here.

17 As the title says, it is a reciprocal access deal, and it is designed to punish
18 key individuals responsible for implementing these policies.

1 THE CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much for your efforts in this regard.

2 Is there a motion to approve H.R. 1872?

3 SENATOR MARKEY. So moved.

4 THE CHAIRMAN. So moved. And a second? The question is on the motion
5 to approve H.R. 1872. All those in favor, say aye.

6 [A chorus of ayes.]

7 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

8 [No response.]

9 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it, and the legislation is agreed to.

10 While Johnny is still here and leaving, I was going to do this before the
11 noms, but I want to thank our staff, as many others have, for being, in my
12 opinion, the most outstanding group of people I have ever worked with. This
13 will be their last meeting, in some cases.

14 But I also want to thank all of the staffs. You know, we may not agree on
15 lots of topics, but I have to say, what a great group of people to work together
16 towards our country's end. I hope all of us, as senators, will thank all of the
17 staffs, both the committee staffs, but also your personal staff, who have worked

1 on Foreign Relations, because we have done a lot together, especially over these
2 last 2 years. So thank you all --

3 [Applause.]

4 THE CHAIRMAN. Next on the agenda is H.R. 4819, the Delta Act. Are there
5 any further comments on this bill?

6 SENATOR PORTMAN. Mr. Chairman, quick comment.

7 As you know, the House bill, the Senate bill. We picked up the House bill.
8 The Senate contained the bill. It does the same thing the House bill does, in the
9 sense of make sure that the Okavango Delta, which is this magnificent preserve,
10 is protected. We coordinated efforts with five different countries.

11 We did include in the Senate bill language with regard to a really
12 important regional group that we worked with as the U.S. government, and I
13 want to mention that, to get it in the legislative record. It is called the Kavango-
14 Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, or KAZA. And it was established by
15 a treaty between these five countries.

16 Again, we already worked with them, USAID, and others. In fact, we have
17 provided \$17.6 million on an initiative to combat wildlife trafficking, which has

1 resulted in a lot of reduction in elephant poaching, which has been very
2 successful.

3 So I want to thank my colleague, Senator Udall, for co-authoring this with
4 me. And I want to thank you all in advance for helping us with this legislation.
5 It does not provide additional federal funding, but it does help us to deal more
6 effectively, and help these five countries. And again, I want to be sure that we do
7 continued to partner with KAZA.

8 THE CHAIRMAN. Very good. Thank you for your efforts in this regard.

9 Is there a motion to approve H.R. 4819?

10 SENATOR MARKEY. So moved.

11 THE CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

12 SENATOR COONS. Second.

13 THE CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

14 The question is on the motion to approve H.R. 4819. All those in favor,
15 say aye.

16 [A chorus of ayes.]

17 THE CHAIRMAN. Any opposed?

18 [No response.]

1 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. The legislation is agreed to.

2 Next is H.R. 2646, the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation

3 Extension Act. Are there any additional comments on this bill?

4 [No response.]

5 Without objection, we will now consider the substitute amendment. All
6 those in favor, say aye.

7 [A chorus of ayes.]

8 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

9 [No response.]

10 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. The substitute amendment is
11 agreed to.

12 Is there a motion to approve H.R. 2646, as amended?

13 SENATOR MARKEY. So moved.

14 THE CHAIRMAN. Is there a second?

15 SENATOR COONS. Second.

16 THE CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded.

17 The question is on the motion to approve H.R. 2646, as amended. All
18 those in favor, say aye.

1 [A chorus of ayes.]

2 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

3 [No response.]

4 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it, and the legislation is agreed to.

5 Next up is H.R. 4989, the Protecting Diplomats from Surveillance Through
6 Consumer Devices Act. Would any senators like to speak to this bill?

7 [No response.]

8 THE CHAIRMAN. Is there a motion to approve H.R. 4989?

9 SENATOR MARKEY. So moved.

10 THE CHAIRMAN. Second?

11 SENATOR COONS. Second.

12 THE CHAIRMAN. So moved and seconded. Thank you.

13 The question is on the motion to approve H.R. 4989. All those in favor,
14 say aye.

15 [A chorus of ayes.]

16 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

17 [No response.]

18 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it, and the legislation is agreed to.

1 Finally, without objection, we will consider, en bloc, the FSO lists on the
2 agenda, as modified, and all the nominations on the agenda, except for the
3 nomination of Mr. Litzenberger to be Ambassador to Azerbaijan, which has been
4 held over.

5 The question is on the approval of the FSO lists, as modified, and the
6 nominations, en bloc.

7 So all those in favor, say aye.

8 [A chorus of ayes.]

9 THE CHAIRMAN. Opposed?

10 [No response.]

11 THE CHAIRMAN. With that, the ayes have it. The FSO lists, as modified,
12 and the nominations are agreed to.

13 That completes our committee's business. I ask unanimous consent that
14 staff be authorized to make technical and conforming changes; without objection,
15 so ordered.

16 And thank you again for your kind comments, and a great pleasure to
17 serve. Thank you.

18 [Applause.]

[Whereupon, at 2:54 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.]