
BUSINESS MEETING

Thursday, June 25, 2015

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS

114TH Congress, First Session

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

1 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:08 a.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen
2 Senate Office Building, Hon. Bob Corker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

3 **PRESENT:** Senators Corker, Risch, Flake, Gardner, Perdue, Isakson, Cardin,
4 Menendez, Coons, Murphy, and Markey.

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

5 **THE CHAIRMAN.** We thank our witnesses for being here. We have a business
6 meeting that will take just a moment. I think you are all aware of that.

7 We do not have enough members yet to take action, but what I thought I would
8 do to speed things along is to begin discussing what we are going to do, to get that out
9 of the way. And I want to thank all the members who are here.

10 The business meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to
11 order. We have a number of items on the agenda today, including five pieces of
12 legislation and a number of nominations, in addition to moving forward on resolutions
13 that are bringing attention to important concerns like the growing number of displaced
14 people around the world and continued threats to a free and independent press in
15 many countries.

1 I am pleased that we were able to work with some of our colleagues to consider
2 legislation they previously sought to include in the NDAA.

3 It also appears we will be able to move closer to having a confirmed legal adviser
4 at the State Department, as well as several new ambassadors.

5 I want to thank my colleagues for helping the committee work through these
6 nominees in an appropriate fashion and to allow us to take these steps to move forward
7 today.

8 With that, I would like to recognize the distinguished ranking member for any
9 comments.

10 Senator Cardin?

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

11 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

12 I very much appreciate your cooperation in the agenda we have today.

13 Let me start with the nominations, if I might, because you have accommodated
14 the full committee consideration of nominees that were heard as recently as this week,
15 and I thank you for that. These are career diplomats who are heading toward
16 important countries, and our action today will allow us to have those ambassadors in
17 place I think at an earlier stage. And I thank you very much for accommodating the full
18 committee consideration of these important positions, and also the adviser to the
19 Department of State, Brian James Egan, and I thank you for including those, and also

1 Janet Yellen in her capacity to be the U.S. alternate governor of the International
2 Monetary Fund.

3 In addition, we do have some resolutions and legislation that are before us. I
4 particularly want to thank you for accommodating the World Refugee Day in a timely
5 way. With Senator Rubio, I introduced this resolution.

6 I would just point out to the members of this committee, the number of refugees
7 today — I took to the floor of the Senate to talk about this — we are at the levels of after
8 World War II. This is a shocking number, 60 million people are displaced today. And
9 those numbers are growing, they are not getting smaller, because of the ongoing
10 conflicts.

11 I think all of us have seen the direct impact. We have been to Jordan. We have
12 been to Turkey. We know what the refugees are causing in other countries. And this is
13 a humanitarian crisis, and it is a regional stability crisis. And I thank you for allowing us
14 to act on that resolution today.

15 I am also pleased we are acting on the resolutions to reaffirm freedom of the
16 press and recognizing those who are involved; the risk factors to ensuring the safety
17 and security of the Iranian dissidents; and to deal with Srebrenica 10th anniversary, that
18 resolution.

1 In regards to the resolution and issues in Srebrenica, there will be an amendment
2 offered that I will call up on behalf of Senator Shaheen that I think strengthens it. And I
3 will ask consideration of it.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Very good. In order, again, to move along and be ready when we
5 have our 10th person here, I am going to go ahead and mention the nominees.

6 I guess I actually cannot move to proceed. I will wait just one second.

7 In the interest of time, I would ask the committee to proceed en bloc, voice vote,
8 in consideration of the eight nominations before the committee, the Honorable Janet
9 Yellen to be the U.S. alternate governor to the IMF, Mr. Brian Egan to be the legal
10 adviser to the State Department, Ms. Jennifer Galt to be Ambassador to Mongolia, the
11 Honorable Glyn Davies to be Ambassador to Thailand, Mr. William Heidt to be
12 Ambassador to Mongolia, Mr. Atul Keshap to be Ambassador to Sri Lanka and
13 Moldives, Ms. Alaina Teplitz to be Ambassador to Nepal, the Honorable David Hale to
14 be the Ambassador to Pakistan. I want to thank all these nominees for their willingness
15 to serve in these positions.

16 Senator Cardin, I know you have addressed this. Do you have anything else you
17 would wish to say?

18 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Let us move them.

19 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Okay.

20 Is there any Senator who would like to speak to these nominees?

1 If not, if there is no further discussion, is there a motion to approve all of these en
2 bloc?

3 **SENATOR PERDUE.** So moved.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a second?

5 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Second.

6 **THE CHAIRMAN.** There is a motion and a second. So moved and seconded.

7 The question is on the motion to approve the nominations.

8 All those in favor, say aye.

9 All opposed?

10 Hearing none, the ayes have it. The nominations are recommended to the full
11 Senate.

12 Next we will consider S.R. 204, a resolution recognizing the occasion of World
13 Refugee Day. We thank Senator Cardin for bringing this resolution to the committee.
14 As we have seen, the international systems for addressing the plight of refugees and
15 other displaced persons have been overwhelmed by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, in
16 particular, but the other situations that Senator Cardin notes, such as in Ukraine, the
17 Mediterranean, or Nigeria, also need to speak to this crisis.

18 World Refugee Day calls upon us to reflect on what more can and should be
19 done in the face of these overwhelming needs.

20 Senator Cardin, would you like to make any additional comments?

1 **SENATOR CARDIN.** I have already commented about it. Again, I thank you for
2 bringing this forward. This is an area that will require our committee's attention in
3 order to deal with this humanitarian crisis.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a motion to approve this resolution?

5 **SENATOR PERDUE.** So moved.

6 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a second?

7 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Second.

8 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

9 The question is on the motion to approve S.R. 204.

10 All those in favor, say aye.

11 All opposed?

12 Hearing none, the ayes have it. The resolution is approved.

13 Next we will consider S.R. 207, a resolution recognizing threats to the freedom of
14 press and expression around the world. Reaffirming the freedom of the press is a
15 priority in efforts of the United States Government to promote democracy and good
16 governance.

17 We thank Senators Casey and Rubio for bringing this resolution to the committee
18 on the occasion of World Press Day. We do well remember that journalists face real
19 threats from criminal groups and conflicts and, in a number of countries, their own
20 governments.

1 Senator Cardin, would you like to make any additional comments?

2 **SENATOR CARDIN.** I have commented about this. And again, I thank you for
3 bringing this forward.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a motion to approve the legislation?

5 Senator Menendez?

6 **SENATOR MENENDEZ.** Mr. Chairman, certainly, I strongly support this. And when
7 Reporters Without Borders talk about 69 journalists who were killed in 2014 in
8 connection with their collection and dissemination of news and information, it is
9 incredibly important.

10 I just point out that sometimes when we pass resolutions like this in broad
11 strokes, we do not think about the specifics of where this is meaningful. It is
12 meaningful in many parts of the world, including in Cuba, where, in fact, independent
13 journalists and bloggers are consistently arrested and jailed simply because of the views
14 they express.

15 So as people in the Senate seek to visit Cuba and to change our policies, and I
16 know they will be strongly supportive of this resolution, I would hope that they would
17 take the time and the opportunities to meet with independent journalists, human rights
18 activists, political dissidents.

1 The problem is that, very often, if you do that, then you do not get to meet with
2 the high regime officials. And that seems to be the choice, and people make the choice,
3 therefore, not to pursue human rights activists, independent journalists, and bloggers.

4 So on the day that we are going to recognize World Press Freedom Day, it is
5 important to actually more than cast a vote. It is important to actually act in a way in
6 which we are promoting global press freedom.

7 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I thank the Senator for making that point. It is a fact, and I
8 appreciate you highlighting that. And as we move ahead, it is, certainly, something that
9 we need to continue to be cognizant of.

10 I will stop right there. I know that we are going to have other discussions about
11 this soon.

12 Would anyone else like to speak to this resolution?

13 Is there a motion to approve it?

14 **SENATOR MENENDEZ.** So moved.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a second?

16 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Second.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

18 The question is a motion to approve S.R. 207.

19 All those in favor, say aye.

20 Opposed?

1 With that, the ayes have it. The resolution is approved.

2 Our last resolution today is a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate
3 regarding Srebrenica.

4 We thank Senator Cardin for bringing this resolution to the committee. It is
5 important never to forget what took place there.

6 I commend Senator Cardin. He took a leadership role regarding this massacre
7 and has a sustained commitment toward making sure we remember it.

8 Senator Cardin, do you have any comments that you would like to make
9 regarding this?

10 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Mr. Chairman, again, thank you for bringing this forward.

11 It has been 20 years since nearly 8,000 Muslim men and boys were murdered at
12 the hands of the Bosnian Serbs during the Bosnian war. The Srebrenica massacre must
13 be always remembered, and I appreciate your willingness to consider this resolution
14 acknowledging the 20th anniversary of the massacre.

15 Mr. Chairman, there is an amendment that I would like to call up at the
16 appropriate time by Senator Shaheen that encourages a more active U.S. role in the
17 Western Balkans and calls for a permanent role for the International Commission for
18 Missing People at The Hague.

19 I believe this amendment is constructive, and I would encourage my colleagues
20 to accept it.

1 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So you are bringing up the Shaheen amendment for her.

2 Is there a second?

3 **SENATOR COONS.** Second.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

5 The question before us is a motion to approve the Shaheen amendment.

6 All those in favor, say aye.

7 All opposed?

8 With that, the ayes have it, and the Shaheen amendment is agreed to.

9 Are there any further amendments?

10 Seeing none, is there a motion to approve the legislation, as amended?

11 **SENATOR CARDIN.** So moved.

12 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a second?

13 **SENATOR COONS.** Second.

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

15 The question is on the motion to approve S.R. 211, as amended.

16 All those in favor, say aye.

17 All opposed?

18 With that, the ayes have it. The resolution is approved.

19 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Mr. Chairman, I should have said that Senator Coons is added as
20 a cosponsor.

1 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you. Duly noted.

2 Next we will turn to S. 1643, the Ensuring the Safety and Security of Iranian
3 Dissidents and Iraq Act of 2015.

4 With the current situation in Iraq as tumultuous as it is, a reporting requirement
5 on Camp Liberty will be helpful to understand the current relationship between the
6 dissidents housed there and the Iraqi Government. The more information we can
7 obtain regarding the current situation in Iraq, the better.

8 The bill is originally a Senator Blunt amendment to the NDAA. Although we
9 approved the policy, we did not clear it as an amendment because it did not come
10 through the committee. I hope we can pass this bill out of committee today, which we
11 will consider with an amendment that I have offered with Senator Blunt's support.

12 Senator Cardin, do you have any comments?

13 **SENATOR CARDIN.** No. Again, I thank you for bringing this forward.

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Anyone else?

15 **SENATOR MENENDEZ.** Mr. Chairman, this is something I have pursued for quite
16 some time, and it is important in the context of whether the United States, when it goes
17 into a country and says that it is going to do certain things, actually follows through,
18 because then the message globally is, in this case, the residents now at Camp Liberty
19 were told, "Give up your weapons, and we will protect you by our military." And they
20 were given a document to that effect. And then, of course, they did that.

1 They, actually, had provided us with information about the hearing that you are
2 about to have on Iran on one of the facilities we did not know about.

3 And at the end of the day, then we left them on their own, and many of them
4 were killed. That is just fundamentally wrong.

5 So while I would have preferred seeing the certification, because we need to be
6 serious about our commitment to individuals, so that when we go into another conflict
7 or another place in the world, people will actually give up their arms or, in the case of
8 Ukraine, give up their nuclear weapons, and then ultimately believe that we are going
9 to do what we say we are going to do.

10 So I support the resolution. I think it is incredibly important, and I look forward
11 to an opportunity in which the United States shows leadership on this by accepting
12 some of the residents of Camp Liberty as well, as we try to resettle them so that they can
13 safely be out of Iraq once and for all.

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I could not agree more. I have met with many of the families
15 affected, and I think when we send signals like this where we do not follow through on
16 commitments that have been made, and I could list a series of those in recent times, it
17 does harm us. It, certainly, harms the people that we have made commitments to. And
18 with many of the complexities that we already have in the world, it makes them even
19 more difficult to resolve.

1 So I thank you for bringing continual attention to this as chairman and as ranking
2 member, and, certainly, I support this very strongly.

3 I do have an amendment.

4 Does anyone else want to speak to this legislation?

5 I do have a second degree. Does anyone else have a second degree?

6 If not, I would entertain a motion that we consider the Corker amendment.

7 **SENATOR CARDIN.** So moved.

8 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a second?

9 **SENATOR PERDUE.** Second.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you. So moved and seconded.

11 The question is on the motion to approve the Corker amendment.

12 All those in favor, say aye.

13 Opposed?

14 With that, the ayes have it. The Corker amendment is agreed to.

15 Are there any further amendments?

16 Hearing none, is there a motion to approve the legislation, as amended?

17 **SENATOR CARDIN.** So moved.

18 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a second?

19 **SENATOR MENENDEZ.** Second.

20 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

1 The question is on the motion to approve S. 1643, as amended. That is the
2 question.

3 All those in favor, say aye.

4 All opposed?

5 With that, the ayes have it.

6 We have one more piece of legislation. This is the Collins amendment to the
7 NDAA. It is my understanding that there is still a one-sentence disagreement. I know
8 Senator Flake and Senator Cardin have been working on this.

9 It is my sense that, based on where we are today, we want to hold this over until
10 the next meeting. I do hate to get the wrath of Senator Collins on this over the next
11 couple of weeks, but I understand that is my job. But I do hope we will be able to work
12 out this one-sentence disagreement in the interim and, hopefully, speedily pass this
13 through and, hopefully, pass it on the floor by unanimous consent.

14 I think that concludes our business for the business meeting.

15 I ask unanimous consent the staff be authorized to make technical and
16 conforming changes.

17 Without objection, so ordered.

18 With that, the committee will stand adjourned, as it relates to the business
19 meeting.

[Whereupon, at 10:25 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.]