

Business Meeting

Wednesday, June 17, 2026

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:03 a.m., in Room S-116, The Capitol,

Hon. James E. Risch, Chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Risch, Ricketts, McCormick, Daines, Hagerty, Barrasso, Lee, Cruz, Scott, Curtis, Cornyn, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Merkley, Schatz, Van Hollen, Duckworth, and Rosen.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

The Chairman: The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

I want to thank everyone who is here and showed up today. We have a robust agenda we can get through relatively quickly, I believe. I want to thank Senator Shaheen and the Senators from both sides of the Foreign Relations Committee for their work in putting together this very robust, bipartisan slate of legislation for us to consider today. We have many bills to work through. Putting a legislative markup like this together is no small feat, but very important work, and the staff needs to be recognized for all the work they are doing.

I would like to give some short remarks on just a few of the bills because we have a number. First, the PEACE in Sudan Act: this is a bipartisan piece of legislation championed by myself, Senators Coons, Shaheen, and Cornyn. The war in Sudan is currently the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, a source of instability in Africa and beyond, and a threat to our national security. We cannot allow Sudan to continue to evolve into chaos, causing uncontrolled migration, human suffering, and serving as a

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gateway to terrorists. This bill is an effort to provide the Trump administration the tools to raise the cost of this war for the SAF, the RSF, and their proxies. I hope we can get it one step closer to the Senate floor today.

We will also consider a bill to reauthorize the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. As we all understand, religious freedom is the cornerstone of American society, and the Commission helps to safeguard this most inherent right around the world. This bill is supported by several members of this committee. I hope we can all vote to reauthorize this important Commission today.

Lastly, I would like to note that we have several pieces of legislation focused on China today, aimed at addressing its human rights abuses, its aggression against Taiwan, and other bully tactics it employs in the South China Sea. That is not a coincidence. While Iran has been the focus in the media lately, this committee understands that we cannot take our eyes off of the Indo-Pacific. We have consistently passed legislation to support Taiwan and counter Chinese aggression in our business meetings, and I expect we will do the same today.

I will now turn it over to the Ranking Member, Senator Shaheen.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Senator Shaheen: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and before we get to today's agenda, I just really wanted to recognize the work of the committee. Since last year, we have held four markups. We have actually passed 50 bills out of this committee. It would be nice if we could get some of them on the floor at some point, but I think it is an impressive change from the work of the committee in some of the years past, and I think it is really a tribute to all the members of the committee and their willingness to try and work together. I also want to recognize the partnership with Chairman Risch. Our ability

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to work together, I think, has been important to moving legislation. And I particularly want to recognize the staff, both on the Democratic and the Republican side, that it is really their hard work that has contributed to where we are on the committee, and I feel like it is a model for a lot of the committees within the Senate. I wish we had passed as many bills out of

[Cross-talking.]

Senator Shaheen: -- all of the other committees that I have been on as we have out of Foreign Relations. So I just want to thank everybody, including the Chair, for where we are.

The Chairman: Well, thank you, Senator Shaheen. That door swings both ways. Our ability to work together and get these things done is displayed in what we were able to do here. And this is a tremendous amount of work coming out of this committee, not only today, but previously.

So, we are going to take up, en bloc, 22 bills. I would rather not read them if I do not have to. Does everyone have in front of them a list of those 22 bills? We are going to take those up en bloc, and then we are going to take up the Sudan bill separately, then we are going to take up Senator Cruz's bill separately by request of the committee, but in any event, we have the 22 items that are on the agenda. Is there -- there is some very significant legislation in here, but does anyone want to speak to any?

Senator Coons.

Senator Coons: Just briefly, Mr. Chairman, if I could, to clarify H.R. 4726, the PEACE in Sudan Act, and S. 3018, relating to Taiwan and China, those are the two we will address separately, and all the others will be bundled together?

The Chairman: We are going to -- you have that exactly right.

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Senator Coons: If I could just briefly --

The Chairman: We are going to do the 22 first, and then --

Senator Coons: -- thank you and compliment you and the Ranking Member. This committee did not have anything like this legislative tempo for several Congresses, and Senator Shaheen, I just commend you for really working hard to find common ground with the Chairman and to get all of this through. Four of these are bills where I am the lead co-sponsor. I just want to thank Senator Cornyn and Senator Ricketts, in particular, for their partnership on them. Many of these are great bills that deserve enactment, so I hope we will move forward quickly today. Thank you.

The Chairman: And let -- before we get off of that of, everybody thanking everybody, it truly is important to recognize before -- to recognize staff here.

Senator Shaheen: Excellent.

The Chairman: I mean, staff is -- when you are dealing with this amount of legislation, this technical legislation, the majority staff, the minority staff, plus your individual staffs have been incredibly hardworking to get this done, and it has been a real give-and-take.

Senator Shaheen: I echo that, so hear, hear.

The Chairman: Senator Cornyn.

Senator Cornyn: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to slow things down, but briefly, I want to mention something about S. 3050, which has paid off as part of this package. We have been working for a long, long time to try to add to the transparency that members of Congress have in knowing who they are dealing with and who is paying folks from K Street to become lobbyists. I have had personal experiences where foreign governments have, basically, come to me under the guise of a veterans organization and try to lobby me on a

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piece of legislation, and I did not know who they were working for. And so, this provides additional transparency by making sure that they cannot hide behind the Lobby Disclosure Act, but actually have to register under FARA. So, I appreciate your including this. I think it is really important, transparency. And we know our adversaries are happy to use any opportunity they have to influence us, and this, I think, will allow us to know who we are dealing with. Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you, and when I got here, I was amazed at how easily a foreign government could get to Congress and actually lobby Congress. I was really amazed with that. I think this will go a long ways to help us understand it.

Senator Van Hollen: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Yes?

Senator Van Hollen: Very briefly, and I commend you and the Ranking Member as well for putting together this package. There is a bipartisan bill I have introduced called the BRAVE Burma Act to address the terrible situation in Burma. Again, it is bipartisan: Senator Young, Senator McConnell, a couple Democrats. I do not know of any opposition from any member of this committee. My understanding, we heard recently that the Trump administration may have some concerns. I hope that in and of itself is not a reason for the committee not to proceed on that bill. I am not asking that it be put on the agenda today. I just want to flag that because it is a bipartisan bill that, I think, falls in the category of these other bills, and I hope we will take it up in the coming weeks.

The Chairman: Senator, legitimate question and legitimate concern. You are correct, the White House does have concerns. However, what we try to do is -- when we are doing all the negotiations, we try to get their concerns into the mix. Now, sometimes we do, sometimes we do not. Sometimes it is not even there until after we have passed it,

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but we will continue to attempt to resolve that and see if we cannot get it in a package like this --

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you.

The Chairman: -- or by itself. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: I wanted to speak to two of the bills that are on the agenda today. The first one is S. 3172, which repeals other sanctions on Syria. I think for all of us who -- as you may remember last year, we repealed the Caesar sanctions on Syria because as Syria is moving forward and making progress, we want to see that they can actually get investments and get development, and that has made a difference, but not enough because they are still on a number of other sanctions lists. So, what this bill would do is repeal those sanctions as well, and given the progress that Syria has made, I hope that we can support this, and that it can move forward and get added to other legislation that is moving because I do think we want to reward Syria for the progress that they have made.

The Chairman: Are you to moving to --

Senator Shaheen: I am, but go ahead.

The Chairman: Would you mind if speak on that one?

Senator Shaheen: No, please.

The Chairman: Senator Shaheen and I have worked together on Syria since day one, since we woke up one morning on December 8 and found out we had a change, and it surprised us and everybody else. In any event, we all know the history of that. We celebrated and then found out who it was, and then choked a couple times, but we -- our joint position has been that we wanted to wait and see and give them an opportunity to try to make it work.

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We met with the foreign minister quite soon after that, the new foreign minister. Al-Sharaa himself sat right here as Jeanne and I pummeled him with things that we thought needed to be done. And we also meet regularly with the diaspora here who stayed very closely connected to their family and friends back home. And they lobbied us so hard to get the Caesar sanctions, which I drew, in concert with Jeanne, with a lot of other people, and they were just as anxious to get it off after the revolution took place. We did that, and I -- they had expectations that I think were way too high.

They thought when the sanctions came off, that all this industry was going to move in and invest in Syria. We explained to them as clearly as we could from day one that that was not going to happen. There were things that they had to do, and we gave them a list of things to do. They now feel that, again, if we take the remaining sanctions off, that there is going to be an explosion of investment. I think we have got them -- disabused them of that, but they are committed to put one foot in front of the other, and this is certainly one step in that regard. So, I am going to support this, and I hope everyone else supports it. If sanctions come off, they can go back on just as easily as they come off, as we have explained to them, very quickly.

Senator Shaheen, go ahead.

Senator Shaheen: Well, I also wanted to speak to S. 4577, Reassessing the United States-Tanzania Bilateral Relationship Act. And I wanted to highlight this because we are offering a manager's amendment, which incorporates an amendment from Senator Booker that adds a sense of Congress language, a Coons amendment that narrows the prohibition on Tanzania receiving U.S. foreign assistance, a Kaine amendment adding requirements to assess the impact of the bill on national security, and a Rosen amendment requiring an evaluation of Tanzania's relationship with China and Russia.

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And I wanted to mention it because it has clearly gotten the attention of Tanzania, this legislation, because the foreign minister called and asked to meet with us -- with me. I am sure he has asked to meet with a number of other members of this committee as well, but I think that is probably a good sign given the violence around their elections, that we are responding and that they are paying attention to the concerns that we have. So, I just wanted to highlight that for everybody in case you do hear from someone in the Tanzanian government because, hopefully, this will help to change their behavior.

The Chairman: And you probably will hear from somebody in the Tanzanian government.

Senator Shaheen: Yes. Well, I have.

The Chairman: This is a robust piece of --

Senator Shaheen: I am sure everybody else will, too.

The Chairman: This is a robust piece of legislation.

Senator Schatz: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Yeah, Senator Schatz.

Senator Schatz: Just very briefly, I will -- I will insert remarks in the record, but I wanted to thank Senators McCormick, Coons, and Curtis, and the Chair and Ranker for moving the Pacific Power Act. The basic idea is this: there are two trends. One is that geothermal energy presents a real opportunity to the Asia-Pacific Region, and the United States is already a leader in this space. And then, of course, because we have an energy crisis, specifically because of the Strait of Hormuz, you are talking about some of our island nation partners quadrupling the price of their fuel oil as they are getting deliveries.

And so, Secretary Rubio has articulated that he believes that this war -- obviously there is a short-term question, but there is a longer-term question about energy

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diversification in the region, and this will allow the United States' private sector and public sector to project political power in the area of geothermal energy. So, thank you.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BRIAN SCHATZ,
U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII**

1 Energy demand is rising globally and countries are experiencing shortages, made worse by
2 the Iran war. Our partners across the Indo-Pacific have been hit particularly hard. Taiwan
3 imports 98 percent of its energy. The Philippines declared a national emergency; so have the
4 Marshall Islands, where it went from \$4M to \$12M to import 3 months' worth of fuel. South
5 Korea says its energy crisis is a "war-like situation."
6

7 At the Quad energy summit last month, Secretary Rubio endorsed energy diversification in
8 Asia. Our Pacific POWER Act is one way to support that goal.
9

10 The United States leads the world in installed capacity for geothermal electricity generation,
11 and innovative American companies are using skills and technology from our oil and gas
12 industry to advance next-generation geothermal. Our bill will secure our leadership in
13 geothermal energy and create markets for U.S. technology exports, which in turn helps our
14 allies and partners become more energy secure. This supports our economic and national
15 security interests.
16

17 Taiwan is excited about this; the Kiwis are excited, as is the Philippines. And so are U.S.
18 companies that want to grow their businesses. I want to thank Senator McCormick for being
19 a great partner and co-lead on this.

The Chairman: Anyone who has not seen a geothermal plant work needs to. It is
the closest thing I have ever seen to a perpetual motion machine.

Senator Rosen: Yeah. We have them in --

The Chairman: The --

Senator Rosen: -- Idaho and Nevada. They are, like, number one.

The Chairman: That is right. There is geothermal.

Senator Curtis: They are in Utah.

Senator Rosen: Oh, and Utah. Sorry.

[Laughter.]

Senator Rosen: We got the triad of geothermal right there.

The Chairman: There is geothermal energy everywhere in the planet directly below
us. It is just how hard it is to get it down here.

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Senator Rosen: Yes, that is right.

The Chairman: The good news is for Idaho, Nevada, and Utah, the closer you are to Yellowstone, the closer that hot water is to the ground. So, we have -- we have some operating in Idaho, and like I said, it is just --

Senator Rosen: Fascinating.

The Chairman: It is amazing how it works. Is there further --

Senator Merkley: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Yes, Senator?

Senator Merkley: I want to thank very much Senator Curtis for leading the Uyghur Policy Act. The oppression of the Uyghurs remains a horrific situation of state surveillance and oppression, and really slave-like labor conditions for a million-plus people. And Senator Cruz has led the Falun Gong and Victims of Forced Organ Harvesting, and the testimony from the China Commission from people who have been in those settings and see, like, the prisoners disappearing day after day. And it is really one of the most horrific abuses on earth, just the steady supply of people being basically killed for their organs.

And thank you to both Senator Cruz and Senator Curtis for partnering on the Blue Skies for Taiwan Act. Enabling Taiwan to have a manufacturing system for drones in which they do not depend upon Chinese subcomponents and, therefore, qualify for us to be able to buy their drones is a -- kind of one of those things on the side that you may not think of in the context of the porcupine policy for Taiwan to defend itself and hopefully prevent a Chinese invasion, but it could be something that really actually creates a robust drone industry that plays a very significant role in the future.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator.

Are there further comments?

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[No response.]

The Chairman: There being none, the --

Senator Ricketts: I am just going to -- I just want to -- I was kind of waiting to see if Senator Kaine would join us, but he is not here, but let him know I said nice things about him, and I appreciate --

[Laughter.]

The Chairman: We will pass it on.

Senator Ricketts: So, thank you to Senator Kaine.

The Chairman: Appreciate that.

The Chair will consider a motion to adopt and send out of the committee, with a do-pass recommendation, Items Number 1 through 22 on the agenda for today. Is there such a motion?

Voice: Second.

The Chairman: Is there such a motion? Is there a second?

Senator Shaheen: I thought Number 1 was --

The Chairman: Is there a second?

Voices: Second.

Senator Coons: What is exactly --

Senator Shaheen: One. We don't want 1 on that list.

The Chairman: I had it on the list. Did you want to pull that off and do it -- the only two I had that we were going to do by -- do separately was the Sudan bill and the --

Senator Shaheen: Yes, that is Number 1 on this list.

Senator Rosen: Number 1 on this list.

Senator Shaheen: Number 1 on this list.

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Senator Coons: Oh, really. I am looking at a different list. That is why I thought to be specific exactly.

Senator Rosen: Which list?

The Chairman: I got a different list.

Senator Rosen: This list only has 15 on it.

The Chairman: All right. Let me list -- let me read the 22 for the purposes of the motion.

Senator Shaheen: OK.

[Cross-talking.]

Senator Coons: You are going to read them all without taking a breath?

[Laughter.]

The Chairman: I will try. All right. Well, mine starts with 398 --

Senator Coons: That is the -- that is the manager's.

The Chairman: -- 3984.

Senator Rosen: But this only has 15, not 22. He is saying 22 of 24 because this --

Senator Shaheen: There should be --

[Cross-talking.]

Senator Coons: This is the --

Voice: This is it right here.

Senator Rosen: This is the correct one.

Senator Shaheen: Do you have a list that you are -- you should have a list that you are --

[Cross-talking.]

Senator Cruz: Well, the agenda has 24.

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Senator Rosen: I think that is it.

Senator Shaheen: The agenda has 24.

The Chairman: The motion referred to the agenda.

[Laughter.]

Voice: Yes.

The Chairman: Are we clear now that we are talking about the 22?

Senator Rosen: Yes.

The Chairman: There is a motion for the first 22 on today's agenda.

Senator Shaheen: But it is not the first one. That is the problem.

[Cross-talking.]

The Chairman: Let me read --

Senator Cruz: Just read them all.

The Chairman: All right.

[Laughter.]

The Chairman: Number 1 is S. 3984; Number 2 is S. 4570; Number 3 is S. 4259; Number 4 is S. 2578; Number 5 is S. 3050; Number 6 is S. 2252; Number 7 is S. 4610; Number 8 is 3172; Number 9 is 3676; Number 10 is S. 4708; Number 11 is S. 4009; Number 12 is S. 1542; Number 13 is S. 3900; Number 14 is S. 4709; Number 15 is S. 4392; Number 16 is S. 4600; Number 17 is S. 4577; Number 18 is S. 4443; Number 19 is S. 4723; Number 20 is S. 4680.

Voices: No, no.

Senator Shaheen: That is backwards, 4860.

The Chairman: 4680. Number 20 --

Senator Shaheen: No, 4860.

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The Chairman: I got 4680 --

Senator Shaheen: Yes, it is --

The Chairman: -- which is the Expanded Consular Fellows.

Senator Rosen: It is 4860.

Senator Shaheen: 4860.

The Chairman: Correct that on the agenda, 4860. Number 20 is S. 4860; Number 21 is S. 4665; Number 22 is S. 3733.

For clarity, the motion is those 22 I have just read to send to the floor with a do-pass recommendation.

Voice: So move.

The Chairman: First and second?

Senator Shaheen: Second.

The Chairman: All right. Is there further debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: I am going to do a voice -- I am going to do a voice vote unless there is objection.

[No response.]

The Chairman: All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The Chairman: Opposed, nay.

[No response.]

The Chairman: The ayes have it, and the motion is passed.

Senator Hagerty: Mr. Chairman, may I be recorded no on two of these votes?

The Chairman: You may.

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Senator Hagerty: First, Number 7, S. 2252; second, Number 17, S. 4382.

The Chairman: You will be recorded as a no. The Chairman is going to allow anyone who wants to be recorded as a no hereafter, if you request it.

Now, we will turn to S. 4726, Preventing External Aggression and Conflict Escalation, PEACE in Sudan Act of 2026, the Risch, Coons, Cornyn, and Shaheen bill. Is there discussion on the bill?

Senator Coons.

Senator Coons: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have worked a long time to get this bill to markup. It is a strong bill. This is the greatest humanitarian crisis in the world. It is the result of a number of outside countries providing arms and support to the RSF and the SAF. This bill will provide crucial support to the people of Sudan. We authorize a much-needed special envoy position for Sudan, allow the President to levy sanctions on foreign malign actors contributing to the war, and push the Administration to determine how best to prevent the flow of illicit arms into Sudan. And I hope that we will take it up and pass it because, frankly, this is the first credible bipartisan bill we have had to tackle this crisis in Sudan in some time.

I will also express my personal opinion that the UAE support for the RSF is egregious, it is something I have raised with senior Emiratis, and I think we need a path towards holding them accountable. There is also a wide range of other countries providing support to both the SAF and the RSF, and I hope we can move this bill forward so at least we make progress on the points that I just articulated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Coons, and I could not agree more. I think this is an incredibly important piece of legislation. You know, every day, you turn on the TV or internet or pick up a newspaper, all kinds of stories about Ukraine, all kinds of stories

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about Iran. Nobody talks about this, and this is an incredibly significant human catastrophe on the planet, and so I think it is important that we pass this. I understand there are some -- and it is complicated, and there are -- and there are issues in here that would keep us from passing it. I think everybody has been able to negotiate those where we all come together on a -- on a bill that I think we can all support.

So, is there further -- Senator Van Hollen.

Senator Van Hollen: Yeah. Mr. Chairman, I have two amendments, and let me just first agree entirely with what both you, Mr. Chairman, and Senator Coons have said about Sudan being the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, a source of great instability, and I appreciate this legislation. I would submit, however, that we do not need some of these reports to find out what is going on with respect to at least certain external actors. We know, based on lots of recent information and ongoing information, that the UAE is supporting the murderous RSF, and the RSF is the one party to this conflict that the U.S. Government has found to be committing genocide. Lots of atrocities on all sides. The only party that the U.S. Government has found to be committing genocide is the RSF.

And so, that is why I have proposed an amendment. It is very straightforward. It just says no U.S. arm sales to the UAE so long as they are supplying the RSF. If the UAE decides it is not going to pursue that strategy anymore, there will be no limitations. But it seems to me that after years of this conflict, we have an obligation to actually use our leverage to do something, not simply ask for more reports when we know what the answer to some of these reports is going to be.

I just want to bring to the attention to the committee a letter I had with McGurk, who was a senior White House official during the last Administration. This is in December of 2024, and I had proposed -- I filed a joint resolution for approval on arms sales to the

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UAE, and McGurk came and said, look, do not ask for a vote on this right away because we think we are persuading the UAE to no longer supply the RSF. And I am just going to read you this paragraph: "Despite reports we have received suggesting the contrary has occurred to date, the UAE has informed the administration that it is not now transferring any weapons to the RSF and will not do so going forward. The administration will work with relevant departments and agencies to monitor for indications of the credibility and reliability of these assurances provided by the UAE. By January 17," meaning January 17, 2025 -- "I commit to providing you with an executive branch up-to-date assessment in that regard."

So, I held off asking for a vote. I did get the January 17 assessment. The U.S. intelligence community assessed that the UAE is not telling us the truth and that they were supplying the RSF, which has been confirmed repeatedly, and in fact, they have increased their support, including through Ethiopia. And so I do not think we need to ask for a report to make that determination. I think we should pass this amendment, which says we are serious, stop lying to us, and there are consequences, both to not telling us the truth -- lying -- but also to this supplying a genocidal organization, and if they stop, then this will not take effect.

I mean, the intention is not to prohibit the UAE from getting weapons forever. It is to prevent them and deter them from sending their weapons to this genocidal organization, the RSF. So, I would urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Van Hollen. I am going to oppose the amendment, not because anything you have said is incorrect or that there is not an issue there. There is clearly an issue there. I want to see this bill pass, and from a very practical standpoint, we cannot pass the bill with that in it. Because of other relationships we have

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with the UAE, we have seen time and time again, that using U.S. arms sales as a way to manipulate a country really does not work because Russia and China, others are there to sell them weapons.

So, again, I do not -- I am not accusing you of not pursuing a road that really needs to be pursued, but I think it has to be in a different venue than here because I want to see this bill passed. I really do. I have worked with Senator Coons on it and others, and we really need to underscore it. I want to see it pass, so for that reason and that reason alone, I am going to oppose the amendment. Thank you, Senator.

Is there further debate?

Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: I am also going to reluctantly oppose the amendment, even though I agree with everything you said, for the same reason because I think it would kill the bill. I also think we ought to designate the RSF a terrorist organization because if we did that, that would then be a very strong signal to countries like the UAE and everybody else that they better stop doing business with the RSF. So, I am -- I also think we ought to pursue that avenue because I think that would be in the interest of addressing the buy-in here.

The Chairman: Yes.

Senator Murphy.

Senator Murphy: Yes, thank you. I am going to support Senator Van Hollen's amendment. I think this is a very good bill. I do not necessarily believe that this amendment has to kill the underlying legislation. I worry that our existing policy, which has been targeted sanctions, appointments of envoys, has just not worked, and that it is time for a fairly major reorientation in policy. And while it is true that many countries are

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funding this conflict, I would encourage folks to get the classified briefing, if you have not already, on the impact of third-party countries' funding. You, I think, will come to the conclusion that the UAE's funding is essential to the continuation of the war.

And so, a targeted approach, a tough approach on UAE's financing is probably the only way that we are going to put enough pressure to get a permanent peace settlement. So, I do not know if this amendment is going to pass or not, but I think we are going to have to take a much tougher approach on all of the third-party funders, but in particular, the UAE, if we genuinely want this conflict to come to a conclusion.

Senator Merkley: Mr. Chairman?

Senator Coons: I will just briefly say that I have read the classified. I have raised this with the Emirates. You are right. You are right. They are the worst contributor to this conflict. I want to see this bill pass, so I will reluctantly join the Chair and Ranking in voting against the amendment. I will not offer a second degree. You are right, and I look forward to finding more, better, clearer, tougher ways to deliver that message and have it change UAE policy.

Senator Merkley: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Senator Merkley.

Senator Merkley: When you review the history of the carnage in Sudan, its length of time and the level of loss of life, it is just so messy, and as long as countries like the UAE are funneling arms, then everything else we do is window dressing. So, I think that Van Hollen's amendment is a very important, essential part if we are really serious about making an impact on one of the most world's worse, maybe no worse, calamity at this point.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Merkley. With that --

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Senator Van Hollen: If I could just close very briefly, Mr. Chairman. Again, I appreciate the effort in this legislation. I really do. I do think after all these years, and all the testimony that we have heard, and all the credible outside testimony that we had, that the only way to actually make a difference here is to start using the leverage. It is not perfect, but it is using our leverage. We just do not need another report, Mr. Chairman, to know what is going on, and so I would just -- I do not know why it has to kill the bill. I have not heard anybody who say they are actually opposed to doing this themselves. So, I would just urge just a "no" vote.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Van Hollen. I think your amendment is taken in good faith -- really good faith. The UAE being singled out here is appropriate because they are probably the worst, but there are a lot of complicated factors here. They are not the only one, and then I think you also have to look at the underlying reasons for why things are happening, and all of that really complicates it. And I -- and it will -- I can assure you it will cause the bill to fail, so that is the reason I am opposing it, not because you are not moving in good faith with what you are trying to do.

Is there further debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There being no further debate, we will have a roll call vote on Senator Van Hollen's first-degree amendment. So, with that, the -- does everyone know what we are doing here? No questions or anything? Okay.

The clerk will call the roll on that issue.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: No.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

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Senator McCormick: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

Voice: Aye.

The Chairman: Aye by proxy. Excuse me.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: No.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

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Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Murphy: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Merkley: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Schatz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: Aye.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Duckworth: No.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: No.

The clerk will report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the ayes are 7. The noes are 15.

The Chairman: The amendment has failed, and thank you, Senator Van Hollen, for raising the issue. Did you want to take up your second --

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Senator Van Hollen: Yes, Mr. Chairman. So, I think the closing point you made on the UAE amendment was that it was simply not the UAE when there were other parties involved in sending weapons into this conflict and fueling this conflict. And while I think we all agree the UAE is the worst of these actors, there are others. And so, what this amendment does is simply say that we want to stop fueling this war, which we all say is the worst humanitarian crisis in the world and a source of great instability. And one way to do that is to get the outside parties, all of them, to stop sending weapons in, and we have limited tools at our disposal. This would say that we will not send U.S. weapons to those countries that are, in turn, sending weapons to fuel this conflict.

And I want to point out a couple important differences between this one and the previous one. In addition to covering all the parties, it also has a waiver in it. It has a provision right here: "The President may waive the prohibition on a case-by-case basis if the President determines such a waiver is in the vital national security interest of the United States, and not more than 15 days," it goes on, "notifies the committees." So, this addresses both the concern that we were only targeting UAE, despite agreement that it is the worst actor, and it also provides flexibility to the President. And by the way, none of this kicks in unless the President determines that any of these entities is actually sending weapons in, so this is a more comprehensive approach with more flexibility, and I really do urge my colleagues to accept this version.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Van Hollen. Again, I am going to oppose this for the same reasons that I gave on the first one. It is certainly not as targeted as the first one, but again, I think that if -- at some point in time, you really got to study, not only who, but why and what are the underlying causes of this, or you are not going to get the data. So, I am going to oppose the amendment.

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Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Mr. Chairman, can I ask a question? Has the White House weighed in on any of these?

The Chairman: Yes.

Senator Shaheen: And they have expressed opposition to any --

The Chairman: Well, I would not even put it in terms of expressing opposition. I think when they weigh in, what they generally do is explain why they have opposition to these and the factors that could be complicated if you pass something like that because they -- obviously the White House through the State Department, and the White House itself frequently, are much more engaged on the ground and with the parties than we are as a body. And so when I talk with them, that is generally how I get the message, not a "Hey, do not do this." I mean, it is an explanation for complications, and I think their concerns are well taken in this.

Senator Coons: If I could, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: Yes, Senator Coons.

Senator Coons: I respect and appreciate that there has been a full committee hearing on Sudan, that there -- that you have continued to move forward on this legislation, even given some of the concerns you just referenced. But we all recognize that what Senator Van Hollen is trying to do is to give it more teeth, more relevance, more timeliness, and I hope all of us are struggling with the absence of a significant consequence to hearings, meetings, letters. I will join you in moving this bill forward simply on the representation that this amendment, I would otherwise vote for enthusiastically and support, would bring down the bill. But at some point, we have to reach the end of studies and even legislating hearings and take action.

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Yes, the UAE is the worst, but a dozen other countries, both our adversaries and our allies, are supporting this war, whether it is the PRC and Russia, or it is Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, Ethiopia, Egypt. The funds and weapons being funneled into Sudan are horrible, and the consequences are awful. So, I am glad that we will finally move any bill related to Sudan and a bill that has some significant pieces to it, but we have to look more squarely in the eye that this is unfolding, and that many of the weapons being used are from America through our allies into this conflict.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator.

Is there further debate?

Senator Van Hollen: Well, Mr. Chairman, so if I can -- if no one else has anything, I will just close.

The Chairman: Sure. Go ahead.

Senator Van Hollen: Look, I think -- I mean, this body has taken action on numerous occasions to pass important legislation, you know, sanctions when we have to pass -- we have all sorts of legislation, despite opposition from Administrations, whether it is the Biden administration or, of course, sometimes the Trump administration. And so, I have -- I am a little troubled by the sort of anticipatory objection from the White House being a cause for this body not acting together in a bipartisan manner, I mean, this committee as well as the Senate.

I mean, this legislation would have to travel a long way before it comes to a conclusion, and it would be great to hear the Administration actually express why they are opposed to it. As I say, we provide flexibility for the Administration. We have passed a lot of sanctions out of this body where they are mandatory, where we give very limited opportunities for the Administration to waive them. This is a clear-out waiver here. If they

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find that it is not in our national security interests to proceed with respect to any party they find that is sending weapons in, they can do so.

So, I think we should push them a little because, again, I see the bill as a good-faith effort. You know, the Administration would tell us they are already -- you know, they are already engaged in the strategy. I mean, I talked to the Administration. They say they have got a strategy. More reporting, frankly, is not going to bring us any new information for those of us who have looked at it, and I think many of us have. So, I am not sure why passing a piece of legislation with more reporting requirements and telling the Administration that they have got to develop a strategy that they already say they have got is actually going to move the ball forward. One thing that might would be to finally use our leverage to put pressure on these outside parties with the flexibility that is already provided here. So, I would just urge a yes vote.

The Chairman: Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: I am actually going to vote for this amendment. I had -- I have reservations if it is going to be opposed, but I do think the waiver gives enough flexibility for the Administration, either State or the White House, to address any concerns they have got, and that, therefore, it is important to send a strong statement on the worst humanitarian crisis right now that it is overwhelmingly affecting women and children. So, I do think voting for this is worth doing to send a statement.

The Chairman: Thank you. Appreciate that.

Is there further debate on the amendment?

[No response.]

The Chairman: Again, I am -- I cannot get there on this. I want to -- I really, really want to see this committee do something on this, so I cannot get there on the amendment.

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There being no further debate, the roll -- the clerk will call the roll on Van Hollen
Amendment Number 2.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: No.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

Senator Barrasso: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

The Chairman: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: No.

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The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Merkley: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Schatz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: Aye.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: No.

The clerk will report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 9. The noes are 13.

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The Chairman: The amendment has failed, but I think everyone will take note the fact that it was a close vote, and the appropriate issues have been aired by the committee.

So, with that, we have final passage on the bill. Is there any further discussion on that?

[No response.]

The Chairman: Is a voice vote sufficient, or would you want -- anybody want a roll call?

[No response.]

The Chairman: If not all those in favor of Senate Bill 4726 going to the floor with a do-pass recommendation, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The Chairman: Opposed nay?

[No response.]

The Chairman: The ayes have it. The bill will be forwarded.

The last item on the agenda, Senator Cruz, you are up with Senate Bill 3018, which has become an elderly citizen in this committee.

[Laughter.]

Senator Cruz: Well, this is indeed a bill this committee has a lot of experience with: Taiwan symbols of sovereignty. And just to recap the bidding, we all know that China engages in a sustained effort to delegitimize Taiwan. They pressure countries around the world not to do business, not to have diplomatic relations with Taiwan. They try to pressure countries to not recognize Taiwan as a separate entity. During the Obama administration, unfortunately, the State Department took it a step further and decided to implement a policy where Taiwan, in any meeting with the U.S. Government and any

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meeting on U.S. Government property, was not allowed to display the Taiwanese flag. If there was a military officer, they were not allowed to wear the Taiwanese military uniform. They are the only country that was treated as a non-country. I think that was a mistake. During the Trump administration, the Trump administration in Trump One maintained this policy for most of the Trump administration. I and others on this committee pressed the State Department to change this policy.

Twice this committee has passed this bill previously. We passed it in 2021. We passed it in 2022. Both instances, there was a big, bipartisan vote. Almost every member around this table has voted for this bill previously. At the very end of the Trump administration when Mike Pompeo was Secretary of State, they did finally change the policy back, and they allowed Taiwan to both display their flag and wear the military uniforms. They did it, I think, with about 6 months to go in Trump One. When Biden came in, unfortunately, the State Department changed it back and said, okay, Taiwan is no longer allowed to display their flag or their uniforms. We are now in Trump Two, and the State Department is still maintaining the old policy. They may change at some point, but there is a lot of, I would say, institutional bureaucracy that is resistant to changing it.

When we discussed this at a previous markup a couple of months ago, Ranking Member Shaheen raised concerns, look, would this be -- would this create challenges. Would this create challenges in our relationship with Taiwan, our relationship with China? Does Taiwan want it? And what she suggested that I agreed is that she and I would meet with Taiwan's representative in the United States and get Taiwan's view. And so she and I sat down in this room with the representative, and Taiwan's representative said, yes, this would be helpful. They view this as a positive step forward.

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And so, I appreciate Ranking Member Shaheen's help and assistance on this bill. It is symbolic, but I think symbolism matters, and I do not think the State Department should be accommodating China's efforts to delegitimize Taiwan. I think that is counterproductive, and so my hope is that we will see yet another big, bipartisan vote like we have had both in 2021 and 2022.

The Chairman: Further debate?

Senator Shaheen.

Senator Shaheen: Well, I think you have accurately explained what we have done on the bill, which I now support. And I think it is important to point out that, also, our teams have worked together to edit the text to add a rule of construction that reaffirms the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances. We removed the terms, "sovereignty" and "official" to reduce the possibility of unintended consequences, and I think all of that is positive. So, I share the view that anything we can do to support Taiwan is important right now. It sends a message to China. I think we ought to move the \$14 billion in arms sales that Congress noticed back in January, that that would be appropriate to support Taiwan. So, I intend to vote for it.

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

Is there further debate?

Senator McCormick: Just a question.

The Chairman: Yes?

Senator McCormick: Is there -- this is a reaffirmation of existing U.S. policy towards Taiwan. This is not --

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Senator Cruz: No, no, it is a -- so it is a change. It used to be, before Obama and the first part of Obama, when we met -- when the Taiwanese met, they could have their flags. They could wear their uniform.

Senator McCormick: No, I do not mean the micro policy. I mean, the -- and there is nothing about this -- like, when you made the mention of the word, "sovereign," in other words there is --

Senator Cruz: There is nothing changing the underlying --

Senator Shaheen: Yes.

Senator Cruz: Like, reaffirming.

Senator Shaheen: We changed that.

Senator Cruz: It is the status quo on the relationship with China.

Senator McCormick: So, this is a small policy change back to the ability to --

Senator Cruz: Yes.

Senator McCormick: OK.

The Chairman: Any questions because, obviously, there was a huge policy change is taking -- paying for it. Is there further debate?

Yes, Senator Coons?

Senator Coons: This for me is a very close question. I appreciate and support Senator Cruz's effort to raise the concerns that we have about Taiwan and its status and his efforts to support Taipei. But I bluntly wish that we were taking more concrete action to accelerate the transfer of the noticed weapons sale.

Senator Shaheen: Right.

Senator Coons: And my concern, based on Secretary Rubio's comments in front of our committee, is that the Administration's China policy is rooted in a fear of escalation.

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So, if we pass this, Beijing will escalate in response to it, what else will be abandoned or stepped back or walked away from? I think we should prioritize finalizing the pending arm sales to Taipei.

Senator Cruz: And by the way, I am happy to work with you on that because I agree with you on that. So, I would like to see those arm sales go through as quickly as possible.

Senator Coons: I want to support that. I am concerned that by doing this -- and this is not a knock on you, Senator -- the Administration will give back something even more consequential.

Senator Cruz: I will say, the last two times we passed it, it has not led to any anything escalatory, so we do have some history on that.

Senator McCormick: What did the Chinese do, just issue a statement?

Senator Cruz: Yes, they do not like it, but they did not do anything.

The Chairman: Is there further debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: If there is no further debate, we will take up the vote on the bill, and the first one is the manager's amendment which adopts the amendments that have been talked about here and just move this out.

So, with that, is there a motion to adopt the manager's amendment?

Senator Cruz: So moved.

The Chairman: Senator Cruz makes the motion.

Senator Ricketts: Second.

The Chairman: Senator Ricketts has seconded that motion. Is a voice vote all right? It is.

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All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

The Chairman: Those opposed, nay.

[No response.]

The Chairman: The ayes have it. So, now we move to the underlying bill, as amended by the manager's package, and is there a motion to adopt the bill?

Senator Cruz: So moved.

Voice: Second.

The Chairman: It has been moved and seconded to send this bill to the floor with a do-pass recommendation. Is further debate?

[No response.]

The Chairman: There being no further debate, is a voice vote sufficient on this?

[Cross-talking.]

Senator Shaheen: I think we would like a roll call.

The Chairman: All right. Let us do a roll call. The clerk will call the roll.

The Clerk: Mr. Ricketts?

Senator Ricketts: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. McCormick?

Senator McCormick: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Daines?

Senator Daines: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Hagerty?

Senator Hagerty: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Barrasso?

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Senator Barrasso: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Lee?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Paul?

The Chairman: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Cruz?

Senator Cruz: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Scott?

Senator Scott of Florida: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Curtis?

Senator Curtis: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Cornyn?

Senator Cornyn: Aye.

The Clerk: Mrs. Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Coons?

Senator Coons: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Murphy?

Senator Shaheen: No by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Merkley?

Senator Merkley: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Booker?

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Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Mr. Schatz?

Senator Schatz: No.

The Clerk: Mr. Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: No.

The Clerk: Ms. Duckworth?

Senator Shaheen: Aye by proxy.

The Clerk: Ms. Rosen?

Senator Rosen: Aye.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Aye.

The clerk will report.

The Clerk: Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 18. The noes are 4.

The Chairman: The bill has passed and will be sent to the floor with a recommendation of do-pass.

Thank you, everyone. Thank you to the staff, and I do -- on the way out the door, that completes the committee's business.

I ask unanimous consent staff be authorized to make technical and conforming changes, and members of the committee --

[Cross-talking.]

The Chairman: -- be permitted to submit requests to the clerk in writing to be recorded as no on any item on today's agenda.

Without objection, it so ordered.

The committee is adjourned.

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[Whereupon, at 10:57 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]