

(RUF) in Sierra Leone mounted a campaign of "Operation No Living Thing" in 1997 and have recently renewed the terror;

Whereas the atrocities and violence against the citizens of Sierra Leone, which include forced amputations, raping of women and children, pillaging farms, and the killing of the civilian population, has continued for more than 8 years;

Whereas the AFRC and RUF continue to kidnap children, forcibly train them, and send them as combatants in the conflict in Sierra Leone;

Whereas the Nigerian-led intervention force, Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), which has deployed nearly 15,000 troops to Sierra Leone, has made a considerable contribution towards ending the cycle of violence there, despite the fact that some of its members have engaged in violations of humanitarian law;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that in 1998 more than 210,000 refugees fled Sierra Leone to Guinea, bringing the total number of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea to 350,000, in addition to some 90,000 Sierra Leonean refugees who sought safe haven in Liberia;

Whereas the refugee camps in Guinea and Liberia are at risk of being used as safe havens for rebels and staging areas for attacks into Sierra Leone;

Whereas the humanitarian crisis in Sierra Leone has reached epic proportions with people dying from lack of food and medicine; and

Whereas the escalating violence in Sierra Leone threatens stability in West Africa and has the immediate potential of spreading to neighboring Guinea: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) urges the President and the Secretary of State to give high priority to aiding in the resolution of the conflict in Sierra Leone and to bringing stability to West Africa, including active participation and leadership in the Sierra Leone Contact Group;

(2) condemns—

(A) the violent atrocities committed by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) throughout the conflict, and in particular its attacks against civilians and its use of children as combatants; and

(B) those external actors, including Liberia, Burkina Faso, and Libya, for contributing to the continuing cycle of violence in Sierra Leone by providing financial, political, and other types of assistance to the AFRC or the RUF, often in direct violation of the United Nations arms embargo;

(3) supports continued efforts by the regional peacekeeping force, ECOMOG, to restore peace and security and to defend the democratically elected government of Sierra Leone;

(4) recognizes that basic improvements in ECOMOG's performance with respect to human rights and the management of its own personnel would markedly improve its effectiveness in achieving its goals and improve the level of international support needed to meet those goals;

(5) supports appropriate United States logistical, medical and political support for ECOMOG and notes the contribution that such support has made thus far toward achieving the goals of peace and stability in Sierra Leone;

(6) calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities and respect for human rights, and urges all members of the armed conflict in Sierra Leone to engage in dialogue to bring about a long-term solution to such conflict; and

(7) expresses support for the people of Sierra Leone in their quest for a democratic, prosperous, and reconciled society.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS BY THE TALIBAN IN AFGHANISTAN

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 75, S. Res. 68.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative assistant read as follows:

A bill (S. Res. 68) expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the treatment of women and girls by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am so pleased that the Senate will stand up for the rights of women and pass S. Res. 68, a resolution condemning the Taliban's treatment of women and girls in Afghanistan. I especially thank Senator BROWNBACK in joining me as the main cosponsor of this resolution.

The Taliban is a militia group that now controls between 85–90 percent of Afghanistan. People living under its rule are subjected to an extreme interpretation of Islam practiced nowhere else in the world. It is especially repressive on women living in Afghanistan.

Under Taliban rule, women and girls in Afghanistan are denied even the most basic human rights. They cannot work outside the home, attend school, or even wear shoes that make noise when they walk. Women who are in their homes are not allowed to be seen from the street, and houses with female occupants must have their windows painted over. Parents cannot teach their daughters to read, or take their little girls to be treated by male doctors.

Women are also forced to wear a full head-to-toe garment called a burqa. This restrictive covering allows only a tiny opening to see and breathe through. I understand that some women may choose to wear a burqa for religious reasons—that should be their right. However, the requirement that women wear a burqa is a clear violation of human rights. And further, the rules surrounding this requirement are frightening.

Women found in public who are not wearing a burqa are beaten by Taliban militiamen. If they wear a burqa and their ankles are showing, they are beaten as well. Poor women who cannot afford a burqa are forced to stay at home, preventing them from receiving medical care.

The Physicians for Human Rights recently conducted a study of 160 women in Afghanistan and their findings are horrific.

The study found that 77 percent of women had poor access to health care

in Kabul, while another 20 percent reported no access at all. Of the participants, 81 percent reported a decline in their mental condition; 97 percent met the diagnostic criteria for depression; 42 percent met the diagnostic criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder; and 21 percent reported having suicidal thoughts "extremely often" or "quite often." In addition, 53 percent of women described occasions in which they were seriously ill and unable to seek medical care.

The resolution passed today calls on the President of the United States to prevent a Taliban-led government of Afghanistan from taking a seat in the United Nations General Assembly, as long as these gross violations of human rights persist.

My resolution also urges the Administration not to recognize any government in Afghanistan which does not take actions to achieve the following goals: effective participation of women in all civil, economic, and social life; the right of women to work; the right of women and girls to an education without discrimination and the reopening of schools to women and girls at all levels of education; the freedom of movement of women and girls; equal access of women and girls to health care; equal access of women and girls to humanitarian aid.

It is shocking that women and girls in Afghanistan are suffering under these conditions as we approach the 21st century. The United States has an obligation to take the lead in condemning these abuses.

I want to thank the majority and minority leaders for allowing this legislation to come to the floor, and I appreciate the support from the many cosponsors of this resolution who are working to end human rights abuses against women in Afghanistan.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I understand that Senator BOXER has amendments to the resolution and the preamble at the desk.

I ask unanimous consent that the amendments to the resolution be agreed to, that the resolution, as amended, be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, that the amendment to the preamble be agreed to, and the preamble, as amended, be agreed to with no intervening action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments (Nos. 305 and 306) were agreed to as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 305

(Purpose: To improve the resolution)

On page 3, line 4, strike "the" and insert "any".

AMENDMENT NO. 306

(Purpose: To improve the preamble)

Amend the preamble to read as follows:

Whereas millions of women and girls living under Taliban rule Afghanistan are denied their basic human rights;

Whereas according to the Department of State and international human rights organizations, the Taliban continues to commit

widespread and well-documented human rights abuses, in gross violation of internationally accepted norms;

Whereas, according to the United States Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices (hereafter "1998 State Department Human Rights Report"), violence against women in Afghanistan occurs frequently, including beatings, rapes, forced marriages, disappearances, kidnappings, and killings;

Whereas women and girls under Taliban rule are generally barred from working, going to school, leaving their homes without an immediate male family member as chaperone, and visiting doctors, hospitals or clinics;

Whereas according to the 1998 State Department Human Rights Report, gender restrictions by the Taliban continue to interfere with the delivery of humanitarian assistance to women and girls in Afghanistan;

Whereas according to the 1998 State Department Human Rights Report, under Taliban rule women are forced to don a head-to-toe garment known as a burqa, which has only a mesh screen for vision, and many women found in public not wearing a burqa, or wearing a burqa that does not properly cover the ankles, are beaten by Taliban militiamen;

Whereas according to the 1998 State Department Human Rights Report, some poor women under Taliban rule cannot afford the cost of a burqa and thus are forced to remain at home or risk beatings if they go outside the home without one;

Whereas according to the 1998 State Department Human Rights Report, the lack of a burqa has resulted in the inability of some women under Taliban rule to get necessary medical care because they cannot leave home;

Whereas according to the 1998 State Department Human Rights Report, women under Taliban rule reportedly have been beaten if their shoe heels click when they walk;

Whereas according to the 1998 State Department Human Rights Report, under

Taliban rule women in homes must not be visible from the street, and houses with female occupants must have their windows painted over;

Whereas according to the 1998 State Department Human Rights Report, under Taliban rule women are not allowed to drive, and taxi drivers reportedly have been beaten if they take unescorted women as passengers;

Whereas according to the 1998 State Department Human Rights Report, women under Taliban rule are forbidden to enter mosques or other places of worship; and

Whereas women and girls of all ages under Taliban rule have suffered needlessly and even died from curable illness because they have been turned away from health care facilities because of their gender: Now, therefore, be it

The resolution (S. Res. 68), as amended, was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

[The resolution was not available for printing. It will appear in a future edition of the RECORD.]

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MAY 6, 1999

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until the hour of 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 6. I further ask consent that on Thursday immediately following the prayer the routine requests through the morning hour be granted, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, that the Senate then resume consideration of S. 900, and Senator GRAMM be recognized in order to

offer an amendment as under the original consent agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. GRAMM. For the information of all Senators, tomorrow the Senate will resume consideration of the Financial Services Modernization Act, with Senator GRAMM immediately recognized to offer his amendment.

It is hoped that the bill will be completed during Thursday's session of the Senate. Therefore, rollcall votes will occur throughout tomorrow's session of the Senate.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:45 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, May 6, 1999, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate May 5, 1999:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

EDWARD B. MONTGOMERY, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR, VICE RICHARD M. MCGAHEY.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DAVID B. DUNN, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA.