

Slovyansk, armed separatists have invaded Romani homes and beaten and robbed men, women, and children. Ukrainian speakers—including Ukrainian-speaking journalists—have reportedly experienced intimidation in the largely Russian-speaking Donetsk area.

At the same time in Crimea, which Russia forcibly annexed, Crimean Tatars continue to be threatened with deportation and attacked for speaking their own language in their ancestral homeland. Moreover, the longtime leader of the Crimean Tatar community and former Soviet political prisoner Mustafa Dzhemilev has been banned from returning to Crimea.

It is important to underscore that Crimea is the ancestral home of the Crimean Tatars, who in 1944 were forcibly and brutally evicted by Stalin to central Asia and only allowed to return to their home in the early 1990s.

Additionally, the separatist Crimean authorities have gone after the Ukrainian community, announcing that Ukrainian literature and history will no longer be offered in Crimean schools.

These attacks and threats underscore the importance of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and other OSCE institutions in Ukraine in assessing the situation on the ground and helping to de-escalate tensions. They need to be permitted to operate unhindered—and most certainly not held hostage—in Eastern Ukraine and to be allowed access into Crimea, which Russia continues to block.

The actions against pro-Ukrainian activists and minorities are the direct result of Russia's unfounded and illegal aggression against Ukraine—first in Crimea and then in Eastern Ukraine. There is no doubt as to who pulls the strings. The Kremlin has been relentlessly flaunting their Geneva promises and has done nothing to rein in the militants they control. Mr. Putin needs to get Russian soldiers and other assorted military and intelligence operatives out of Ukraine.

We must not forget Crimea. We must never recognize Russia's forcible, illegal annexation of the Ukrainian territory, which violates every single one of the 10 core OSCE Helsinki principles. We must build on the punitive measures already undertaken against the Russian and Ukrainian individuals who so blatantly violated the international agreements in the Ukrainian and Crimean Constitutions. Violations of another nation's territorial integrity and sovereignty must not be tolerated. Russia's flagrant land grab of Crimea has set a horrible precedent for those countries harboring illegal territorial ambitions around the globe.

I welcome the President's stepping up of economic sanctions on seven Russian officials, including members of President Putin's inner circle and 17 companies linked to Mr. Putin. I also welcome the State Department and Commerce Department tightening pol-

icy to deny export license applications for any high-technology items that could contribute to Russia's military capabilities. I am confident Russia will feel the impact of these sanctions. These, along with the further targeted sanctions announced by the EU earlier this week, will only continue to have a growing impact.

Nevertheless, if the situation in eastern Ukraine continues to deteriorate, or even should the status quo persist, the United States needs to ratchet up these sanctions, and soon, including several sectoral sanctions against Russia's industries such as banking, mining, energy, and defense.

Of equal importance, we need to remain steadfast in helping Ukraine become a stronger democratic state and foster its political and economic stability. The millions of men, women, and children who demonstrated for months for human rights and human dignity spoke loudly and clearly, expressing the wishes of the vast majority of the Ukrainian citizens. The interim government has been working hard under exceedingly difficult circumstances to move Ukraine further on the path of economic and political reforms. We and our international partners need to keep making this progress our focal point. Ukraine needs a lot of help after the devastation wreaked on their economy by the incredibly corrupt and dysfunctional Yanukovich regime.

Ukraine has so many pressing needs. Among the most important are stabilizing the economy and preparing for the most important May 25 Presidential elections. Others include judicial reform, reform of the police and military, seeking justice and rehabilitation for the victims of the violence, including those suffering now at the hands of the pro-Russian militants, helping internally displaced people who are fleeing Crimea, and working to recover the billions in assets stolen by the previous regime.

I am pleased Ukraine's civil society, including Western-educated young people, is firmly committed to the rule of law and democracy and is playing a critical role in helping the Ukrainian Government work toward these ends. NGOs and think tanks have worked with the Parliament to pass a law on the independence of public broadcasting, a bill on public procurement, and one on how judges are appointed—all critical in fighting the scourge of corruption.

The United States is providing concrete assistance through a U.S. crisis support package for Ukraine, which includes support for the integrity of the May elections and constitutional reform, substantial economic assistance, energy security technical expertise, help to recover proceeds of corruptions stolen by the former regime, and other anticorruption assistance, and fostering greater people-to-people contacts. We need to be willing to provide more resources to the Ukrainians as

they actively work to fulfill their aspirations.

Ultimately, these choices will lead to a more secure, democratic, and peaceful world, and that is something that reflects both American interests and American values.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNER). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

(The remarks of Ms. LANDRIEU pertaining to the introduction of S. 2280 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. LANDRIEU. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the motion to proceed to S. 2262 is now pending?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The leader is correct.

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion that I would ask to be reported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 368, S. 2262, a bill to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Jeanne Shaheen, Michael F. Bennet, Richard J. Durbin, Christopher A. Coons, Bill Nelson, Tom Harkin, Martin Heinrich, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard Blumenthal, Tim Kaine, Patty Murray, Tom Udall, Joe Manchin III, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Angus S. King, Jr., Mark R. Warner.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

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

TRIBUTE TO GLENN POSHARD

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to thank Dr. Glenn Poshard for his years of public service to Illinois.

Today, Dr. Poshard will be stepping down as president of Southern Illinois University, a position he has held with honor and distinction for more than 7 years. Under his leadership, Southern Illinois University has been able to keep tuition costs low and the university's finances sound, despite financial problems that have plagued the State.

Dr. Poshard has dedicated his life to working for the people of southern Illinois. In 1984, he was appointed to the Illinois State Senate until the people of the 22nd Congressional District sent him to the United States House of Representatives in 1989. I was fortunate to serve with Dr. Poshard for 8 years in the House of Representatives, where he was a strong proponent of campaign finance reform. Due to his commitment to reform, he limited individual donations to his gubernatorial campaign in 1998 and refused to accept contributions from political action committees.

Following his tenure in Congress, Dr. Poshard and his wife, Jo, founded the Poshard Foundation for Abused Children. For the last 14 years, the Poshard Foundation has worked to help abused, abandoned, and neglected children in southern Illinois.

After a 40 year affiliation with Southern Illinois University, Dr. Poshard is leaving his alma mater in good shape. He retires as the second longest-serving president in the history of the Southern Illinois University system, an experience he calls "the greatest honor of my life."

I congratulate Glenn on his outstanding career and thank him for his dedicated service to the people of Illinois. I wish him and his family all the best.

 AFGHANISTAN AND UKRAINE
 SECURITY

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I just returned from a trip to Afghanistan and Ukraine where I reviewed the security situation in each country as chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

In each country, I met with military leaders and with civilian leaders and representatives of civilian society. The overwhelming impression I came away with is that American leadership remains critical, that others who are struggling for democracy and freedom see us as an essential friend and ally, and support for those who share those values must remain a cornerstone of our foreign policy and as essential to our own security.

In Afghanistan, I met with senior leaders of both our military and the Afghan military, including General Dunford, the commander of U.S. and coalition forces, and Afghan Minister of Defense Mohammedi. They reported that the transition of security responsibility to the Afghanistan National

Security Forces—ANSF—has gone even better than we had hoped, with no significant loss of security in the country despite the withdrawal of tens of thousands of American and coalition troops. U.S. and Afghan leaders alike expressed satisfaction with the ability of the newly built and much larger ANSF to successfully protect the Afghan people, to defeat Taliban forces in combat, and to secure a series of major public events, culminating in the April 5 Afghan presidential election.

Our military commanders emphasized that while these gains reflect the growing confidence of the Afghan security forces in their ability to provide security to the Afghan people, the challenge ahead is to put in place the final pieces needed to make the progress of the last decade sustainable. This includes logistics, maintenance, airlift, and building the institutions of the Afghan Army and police. Fundamental to any long-term effort on our part in Afghanistan will be the signing of the Bilateral Security Agreement as soon as possible with a new Afghan president. While President Karzai remains unreliable and his rhetoric offensive, all the major Afghan presidential candidates, including the two winners of the first round, support what we have done so far and look forward to signing the BSA promptly if elected.

In addition to meeting with the three leading presidential candidates, I met with Afghan government officials and with several groups of representatives of Afghan civil society. The Afghans I met with came from different backgrounds and spoke with different voices, but they shared a common message of pride in the achievement of their country as it has rebuilt and recovered from the devastation of decades of civil war and Taliban rule. They pointed to the revival of Afghanistan's education and health systems, the dramatic improvement in the role of women in the country, and the new life that the last 10 years have brought to the country's economy.

They also spoke of their frustration with the exceedingly negative picture of events in Afghanistan depicted in the U.S. press. A leading national paper writes about a "deepening resentment" of the American presence and a "growing alienation" between Afghanistan and the United States. But the Afghans I met and large majorities of Afghans, according to public opinion polls, are grateful for the sacrifices we have made on their behalf and are convinced they can continue to transform their country with our continued support. Their polls show that 64 percent of the Afghan people believe there has been significant progress in security. U.S. polls show the opposite, the product of an unbalanced, negative view in our media.

The Afghans I met spoke with pride of the election they held on April 5, in which 7 million Afghans braved threats and violence to get to the polls, voting

at a higher rate than we achieve in our own elections. According to preliminary counts, more than 35 percent of the voters were women. This record vote was the culmination of a campaign in which the leading candidates held huge rallies, attended by tens of thousands of Afghans all over the country—including in areas that much of our press reports are controlled by the Taliban. All of the security for these events, and for the vote itself, was provided by Afghan forces. And every Afghan I spoke with said that he—or she—feels more secure today than a few years ago, in part because Afghan forces are providing security in Afghan cities and towns.

Although the vote was divided among a number of candidates and a run-off between Dr. Abdullah and Dr. Ghani will occur, Afghans say the act of voting itself sent a message that Afghans reject the Taliban and what it stands for. Our intelligence sources indicate that the Taliban leadership is concerned by its inability to disrupt the election and prevent Afghans from getting to the polls.

So, far from what we may read in much of our press, the Afghan people conveyed to me their optimism regarding their country's significant progress, their desire for democracy, and their gratitude for the assistance of the United States over the past decade.

In Ukraine, I met with Acting President Turchinov, Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, Defense Minister Koval, National Security and Defense Council Head Parubiy, and numerous other government officials, activists, and participants in the political process. Ukrainians faced down the heavily-armed security forces of a corrupt, repressive regime on the Maidan—their Independence Square—while they themselves armed with little more than rocks, tires, and sandbags. Now they face an even greater challenge in the form of tens of thousands of Russian troops massed on their borders. Already, the Russians have annexed Crimea and Russian Special Operations forces have organized sympathizers to occupy buildings in a number of Eastern Ukrainian cities and towns in an effort to disrupt and destabilize the government, make an election on May 25 difficult to organize, and establish a basis for Russian occupation or a Russian-oriented breakaway State.

In the face of these challenges, the Ukrainians I met expressed gratitude for the solidarity and support our country has shown through the dark days of the Yanukovich regime and into the challenges they face today. They expressed their support for our values and their strong desire to be a part of the democratic West, rather than the authoritarian sphere of Putin's Russia and its allies. And they asked for our support in their effort to stabilize their country, fend off the Russian challenge, and hold free and fair elections as scheduled.