

have received thus far is, China does not plan to adopt a similar Zone in the South China Sea.”;

Whereas over half the world’s merchant tonnage flows through the South China Sea, and over 15,000,000 barrels of oil per day transit the Strait of Malacca, fueling economic growth and prosperity throughout the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas the increasing frequency and assertiveness of patrols and competing regulations over disputed territory and maritime areas and airspace in the South China Sea and the East China Sea are raising tensions and increasing the risk of confrontation;

Whereas the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has promoted multilateral talks on disputed areas without settling the issue of sovereignty, and in 2002 joined with China in signing a Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea that committed all parties to those territorial disputes to “reaffirm their respect for and commitment to the freedom of navigation in and over flight above the South China Sea as provided for by the universally recognized principles of international law” and to “resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force”;

Whereas ASEAN and China committed in 2002 to develop an effective Code of Conduct when they adopted the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, yet negotiations are irregular and little progress has been made;

Whereas, in recent years, there have been numerous dangerous and destabilizing incidents in waters near the coasts of the Philippines, China, Malaysia, and Vietnam;

Whereas the United States Government is deeply concerned about unilateral actions by any claimant seeking to change the status quo through the use of coercion, intimidation, or military force, including the continued restrictions on access to Scarborough Reef and pressure on long-standing Philippine presence at the Second Thomas Shoal by the People’s Republic of China; actions by any state to prevent any other state from exercising its sovereign rights to the resources of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf by making claims to those areas that have no support in international law; declarations of administrative and military districts in contested areas in the South China Sea; and the imposition of new fishing regulations covering disputed areas, which have raised tensions in the region;

Whereas international law is important to safeguard the rights and freedoms of all states in the Asia-Pacific region, and the lack of clarity in accordance with international law by claimants with regard to their South China Sea claims can create uncertainty, insecurity, and instability;

Whereas the United States Government opposes the use of intimidation, coercion, or force to assert a territorial claim in the South China Sea;

Whereas claims in the South China Sea must accord with international law, and those that are not derived from land features are fundamentally flawed;

Whereas ASEAN issued Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea on July 20, 2012, whereby ASEAN’s Foreign Ministers reiterated and reaffirmed “the commitment of ASEAN Member States to: . . . 1. the full implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (2002); . . . 2. the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (2011); . . . 3. the early conclusion of a Regional Code of Conduct in the South China Sea; . . . 4. the full respect of the universally recognized principles of International Law, including the

1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS); . . . 5. the continued exercise of self-restraint and non-use of force by all parties; and . . . 6. the peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with universally recognized principles of International Law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).”;

Whereas, in 2013, the Republic of the Philippines properly exercised its rights to peaceful settlement mechanisms with the filing of arbitration case under Article 287 and Annex VII of the Convention on the Law of the Sea in order to achieve a peaceful and durable solution to the dispute, and the United States hopes that all parties in any dispute ultimately abide by the rulings of internationally recognized dispute-settlement bodies;

Whereas China and Japan are the world’s second and third largest economies, and have a shared interest in preserving stable maritime domains to continue to support economic growth;

Whereas there has been an unprecedented increase in dangerous activities by Chinese maritime agencies in areas near the Senkaku islands, including between 6 and 25 ships of the Government of China intruding into the Japanese territorial sea each month since September 2012, between 26 and 124 ships entering the “contiguous zone” in the same time period, and 9 ships intruding into the territorial sea and 33 ships entering in the contiguous zone in February 2014;

Whereas, although the United States Government does not take a position on the ultimate sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands, the United States Government acknowledges that they are under the administration of Japan and opposes any unilateral actions that would seek to undermine such administration;

Whereas the United States Senate has previously affirmed that the unilateral actions of a third party will not affect the United States acknowledgment of the administration of Japan over the Senkaku Islands;

Whereas the United States remains committed under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security to respond to any armed attack in the territories under the administration of Japan, has urged all parties to take steps to prevent incidents and manage disagreements through peaceful means, and commends the Government of Japan for its restrained approach in this regard;

Whereas both the United States and the People’s Republic of China are parties to and are obligated to observe the rules of the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, done at London October 12, 1972 (COLREGs);

Whereas, on December 5, 2013, the USS Cowpens was lawfully operating in international waters in the South China Sea when a People’s Liberation Army Navy vessel reportedly crossed its bow at a distance of less than 500 yards and stopped in the water, forcing the USS Cowpens to take evasive action to avoid a collision;

Whereas the reported actions taken by the People’s Liberation Army Navy vessel in the USS Cowpens’ incident, as publicly reported, appear contrary to the international legal obligations of the People’s Republic of China under COLREGs;

Whereas, on May 1, 2014, the People’s Republic of China’s state-owned energy company, CNOOC, placed its deepwater semi-submersible drilling rig Hai Yang Shi You 981 (HD-981), accompanied by over 25 Chinese ships, in Block 143, 120 nautical miles off Vietnam’s coastline;

Whereas, from May 1 to May 9, 2014, the number of Chinese vessels escorting Hai Yang Shi You 981 (HD-981) increased to more than 80, including seven military ships,

which aggressively patrolled and intimidated Vietnamese Coast Guard ships in violation of COLREGS, reportedly intentionally rammed multiple Vietnamese vessels, and used helicopters and water cannons to obstruct others;

Whereas, on May 5, 2014, vessels from the Maritime Safety Administration of China (MSAC) established an exclusion zone with a radius of three nautical miles around Hai Yang Shi You 981 (HD-981), which undermines maritime safety in the area and is in violation of universally recognized principles of international law;

Whereas China’s territorial claims and associated maritime actions in support of the drilling activity that Hai Yang Shi You 981 (HD-981) commenced on May 1, 2014, have not been clarified under international law

SA 3556. Mr. REID (for Mr. BLUNT) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 653, to provide for the establishment of the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia; as follows:

On page 1, line 5, strike “2013” and insert “2014”.

On page 5, strike line 6 and insert the following:

SEC. 6. SUNSET.

This Act shall cease to be effective beginning on October 1, 2019.

SEC. 7. FUNDING.

On page 5, line 9, strike “2013 through 2017” and insert “2015 through 2019”.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on July 17, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “More Than 1,000 Preventable Deaths a Day Is Too Many: The Need to Improve Patient Safety.” For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Bill Gendel of the committee staff on (202) 224-5480.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO
MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 10, 2013, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 10, 2013, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “The Preserving American’s Transit and Highways Act.”

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