CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

November 19, 1999

REAUTHORIZING OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION LAND TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 3381, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3381) to reauthorize the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the Trade and Development Agency, and for other purposes.

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

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 3381) was read the third time and passed.

MIAMI, FLORIDA, AS PERMANENT LOCATION FOR SECRETARIAT OF FTAA

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 71 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 71) expressing the sense of the Congress that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 71 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 71) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

S. Con. Res. 71

Whereas deliberations on establishing a “Free Trade Area of the Americas” (FTAA) will help facilitate greater cooperation and understanding on trade barrier reduction throughout the Americas; Whereas the trade ministers of 34 countries of the Western Hemisphere agreed in 1998 to create a permanent Secretariat in order to support negotiations on establishing the FTAA; Whereas the FTAA Secretariat will employ persons to provide logistical, administrative, archival, translation, publication, and distribution support for the negotiations; Whereas the FTAA Secretariat will be funded by a combination of local resources and institutional resources from a tripartite committee consisting of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the United Nations Economic Commission on Latin America for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Whereas the temporary site of the FTAA Secretariat will be located in Miami, Florida, from 1999 until February 28, 2001, at which point the Secretariat will rotate to Panama City, Panama, until February 28, 2003, and then rotate to Mexico City, Mexico, until February 28, 2005; Whereas by 2005 the FTAA Secretariat will have international institution status providing jobs and tremendous economic benefits to its host city; Whereas a permanent site for the FTAA Secretariat after 2005 will likely be selected from among the 3 temporary host cities; Whereas the city of Miami, Miami-Dade County, and the State of Florida have long served as the gateway for trade with the Caribbean and Latin America; Whereas trade between the city of Miami, Florida, and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean totaled $36,793,000,000 in 1998; Whereas the Miami-Dade area and the State of Florida possess the necessary infrastructure, local resources, and culture necessary for the FTAA Secretariat’s permanent site; Whereas the United States possesses the world’s largest economy and is the leading proponent of trade liberalization throughout the world; and Whereas the city of Miami, Florida, the State of Florida, and the United States are uniquely situated among other competing locations to host the “Brussels of the Western Hemisphere”; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 71 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 71) was agreed to.

The preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2791

(Purpose: To make clerical corrections)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maine [Ms. COLLINS], for Mr. HELMS, proposes an amendment numbered 2791.

The amendment is as follows:

In the second clause of the preamble, strike “is” and insert “are”.

The amendment (S. Res. 223) was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

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

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

CONDEMNING VIOLENCE IN CHECHNYA

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 223 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 223) condemning the violence in Chechnya.

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

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, a technical amendment to the preamble be agreed to, the preamble, as amended, be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

FREEDOM OF BELIEF, EXPRESSION, AND ASSOCIATION IN THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 404, S. Res. 217.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 217) relating to the freedom of belief, expression, and association in the People’s Republic of China.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations with amendments to the preamble, as follows:

The parts of the preamble intended to be stricken are shown in boldface brackets, and the parts of the preamble intended to be inserted are shown in italic.

S. Res. 217

 Whereas the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights affirm the freedoms of thought, conscience, religion, expression, and assembly as fundamental human rights belonging to all people; Whereas the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, including the People’s Republic of China, a member of the United Nations; Whereas the People’s Republic of China has signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights but has yet to ratify the treaty and thereby make it legally binding; Whereas the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China provides for the freedom of religious belief and the freedom not to believe;
November 19, 1999

WHENAS the People’s Republic of China is escalating. The most immediate target is Falun Gong—a movement which combines traditional breathing exercises with elements of Buddhism and the beliefs of its founder. Since April, when more than 10,000 practitioners of Falun Gong shocked the Chinese government by gathering in front of the leadership compound in Beijing, the Chinese government has tried to systematically eradicate the practice.

The Beijing regime rounded up thousands of practitioners, arrested its leaders, ransacked homes, confiscated and burned Falun Gong materials, and forced adherents to renounce their beliefs. The government then banned the practice of Falun Gong and officially labeled it a cult as part of a nationwide propaganda campaign to discredit practitioners. But this was not enough. On October 30, 1999, in a perverse maneuver, the National People’s Congress raised the stakes of persecution by adopting a new law banning and criminalizing groups deemed by the Chinese government to be cults—perverse because this is the Chinese government’s way of legitimizing their abuses of human rights—perverse because the law is being applied retroactively.

Protestors of this law faced police beat, kicked, and yanked the hair of several elderly women protestors. Practitioners, mostly middle-aged or senior citizens, sitting or standing in silent meditation were dragged away from Tiananmen square. But they remained peaceful.

The Chinese government has wasted no time in arresting Falun Gong practitioners, and charging them under this law. As of November 9, 1999, according to Chinese officials, 111 people had been formally arrested on charges ranging from disrupting state security to stealing state secrets. Many more have been detained and sent to re-education programs or labor camps. Now, at least four leaders have been convicted, with sentences ranging from two to twelve years. Many more will be convicted.

The truth of the matter is that the Chinese government is insecure and cannot tolerate any group that is outside control. That is why it is engaged in this crackdown. That is why it sentenced four pro-democracy activists to 11 years. That is why it continues to persecute people of faith.

In August, police detained a 65-year-old bishop of China’s underground Roman Catholic Church in Hebei province and convicted seven lay members of the underground Catholic church in Jiangxi province.

In October, in Guangzhou, some 200 police officers demolished a shelter used by House Church Christians. They detained, brutalized, and warned five House Church preachers against preaching or practicing their faith. I am extremely concerned about the well being of Christians who are suffering in detention for their faith, including Pastor Li Dixin, one of the Guangzhou House Church members, Zhang Rongliang from Henan, and Zheng Xinqi from Anhui.

These incidents are simply anecdotal. They reflect a greater pattern of ongoing religious persecution.

Mr. President, at the same time that the Chinese government is cracking down on its own citizens, at the same time it is authorizing harsher punishments for believing outside of government control, the Beijing regime is flouting international norms, and even tossing aside its own constitution, which supposedly provides for the freedom of religious belief and the freedom not to believe.

The freedoms of thought, conscience, religion, expression, and assembly are not “western values” or “American values” that we are trying to impose on China. These values have been embraced by the international community. And it is up to the international community to uphold them when they are being trampled—to speak out in the face of injustice.

This resolution is part of our responsibility. With this resolution, we urge the Chinese government to step back into the realm of international standards, to end its crackdown, and to respect the values that we are trying to impose on China.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the amendments to the preamble be agreed to, the preamble, as amended, be printed in the Record.

The resolution, 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.]