

Whereas the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy can be a leader in supporting river development and protection;

Whereas the Mekong Dam Monitor, funded partly by the Mekong-United States Partnership, has provided essential data and information about the impacts of hydropower dams along the Mekong River to the people and governments of the Mekong River Basin to allow them to prepare for irregular water flows and mitigate the economic and environmental impacts of those flows;

Whereas the Mekong River has become a hub for criminal elements to traffic in drugs, people, and wildlife, undermining the rule of law in the countries in the Mekong River Basin and impacting the world through the proliferation of illegal drugs and fauna that can cause spillover of zoonotic diseases;

Whereas the international community has committed to support the development of countries along the Mekong River through internationally recognized development goals;

Whereas the Friends of the Mekong, which includes the countries in the Mekong River Basin, the United States, Australia, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the Asian Development Bank, the Mekong River Commission Secretariat, and the World Bank, is committed to supporting the shared principles that have underpinned peace and prosperity across the Indo-Pacific for decades;

Whereas close coordination and collaboration with civil society groups throughout the Mekong River Basin is essential to the protection of the Mekong River;

Whereas, among the countries in the Mekong River Basin, there has been a negative trend toward the detention and detainment of civil society actors and journalists and an increase in violations of human rights;

Whereas the February 1, 2021, military coup in Burma was illegal and unjustified and has resulted in more than 2,000 deaths, more than 1,000,000 people displaced, and tens of thousands of people in detention, and continued violence threatens the stability of the entire region, especially those countries along the borders of Burma; and

Whereas diaspora communities from countries in the Mekong River Basin are a vital part of the United States and help build thriving people-to-people ties between those countries and the United States that lead to strong commercial, civil society, and cultural ties: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) expresses sincere concern over the environmental, economic, and humanitarian threats to the Mekong River and the communities of the Mekong River and continued support to counter those threats; and

(2) declares it is the policy of the United States Government—

(A) to, through the Mekong-United States Partnership and the Friends of the Mekong, promote the economic and environmental well-being of the people of Mainland Southeast Asia in the 5 countries through which the Mekong River flows, namely, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam;

(B) to encourage the development of quality infrastructure, national electricity markets, cross-border energy trade, cross-border transport, greater energy access, the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises, agriculture, transportation, the facilitation of trade and investment, strengthened subregional production linkages and supply chains, digital infrastructure, and the digital economy in the Mekong River Basin;

(C) to promote engagement and buy-in of the United States private sector to support inclusive economic growth, resilience, global

health, education, and long-term development in the region;

(D) to leverage the expertise of the United States, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, and other partners in high-quality infrastructure to support the economic development needs of the countries in the Mekong River Basin;

(E) to encourage all members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to view the environmental, humanitarian, and economic threats to the Mekong River as a danger to the entire region;

(F) to promote effective water use policies, natural resources management, and environmental conservation and protection, including—

(i) through support for a technically sound, well-coordinated, and consensus-based approach to managing the shared resources of the Mekong River Basin;

(ii) through support for environmental conservation, protection, and resilience in the Mekong subregion; and

(iii) by enhancing the capacity of countries in the Mekong River Basin on conservation and management of natural resources, including fishery resources, for long-term food security;

(G) to continue the important work that provides vital data and monitoring to the people and Governments of the Mekong River;

(H) to encourage the development of the capacity of the region to respond to a variety of threats, including countering transnational crime such as trafficking of drugs, wildlife, timber, and persons, and criminal activity associated with illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and to improve health security, including emergency preparedness and response for pandemics and epidemics, cybersecurity, and disaster response and preparedness and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief;

(I) to promote the development of human capital through education, medical and public health partnerships, vocational training, youth empowerment, women's economic empowerment, gender equality, university co-operation, and educational and professional exchanges;

(J) to work together with countries in the Mekong River Basin to combat pollution, over fishing, natural resource degradation, and the effects that environmental changes are having on the Mekong River, and the communities that depend on the river, and to support the abilities of such communities to adapt and build resilience capacities of those countries;

(K) to encourage all countries in the Mekong River Basin to provide timely early warning for natural and unnatural operations of the river;

(L) to support freedom of expression in the countries in the Mekong River Basin through promoting independent journalism and the freedom to access information;

(M) to continue to call for the cessation of violence in Burma and support the return of Burma to a path of inclusive democracy, so that it can fully contribute to regional development;

(N) to prioritize the strengthening of people-to-people ties through United States exchange programs such as the Fulbright Program, the Peace Corps, the International Visitors Leadership Program, and the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Program, including the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Academy at Fulbright University Vietnam; and

(O) to recognize that strong democratic institutions, the promotion and protection of fundamental freedoms, independent civil society, and free and fair elections are central to implementing the shared vision of a

Mekong River region, and an Indo-Pacific region, that is free, open, secure, and prosperous.

#### PERMITTING THE COLLECTION OF CLOTHING, TOYS, FOOD, AND HOUSEWARES DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSES IN SENATE BUILDINGS

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 451, submitted earlier today.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 451) permitting the collection of clothing, toys, food, and housewares during the holiday season for charitable purposes in Senate buildings.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 451) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR THE WORKERS OF THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to consideration of S. Res. 452, which was submitted earlier today.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 452) designating October 30, 2023, as a national day of remembrance for the workers of the nuclear weapons program of the United States.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 452) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE WEEK

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Committee

on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to consideration of S. Res. 396.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 396) designating the week beginning on October 8, 2023, as “National Wildlife Refuge Week”.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 396) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of October 4, 2023, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2023

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, November 7; that, following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Bertagnolli nomination, post-cloture; further, that all time on the nomination be considered expired at 11:45 a.m., and that following the cloture vote on the Kato nomination, the Senate stand in recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for weekly caucus meetings; further, that if cloture has been invoked on the Kato nomination, all time be considered expired at 2:15 p.m.; and that if cloture has been invoked on the Kobick nomination, all time be considered expired at 5:30 p.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:43 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at 10 a.m.

#### NOMINATIONS

##### Executive nominations received by the Senate:

###### THE JUDICIARY

JACQUELYN D. AUSTIN, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA, VICE J. MICHELLE CHILDS, ELEVATED.

JACQUELINE BECERRA, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE MARCIA G. COOKE, RETIRED.

MELISSA DAMIAN, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE URSULA NAMCUSI UNGARO, RETIRED.

DAVID SEYMOUR LEIBOWITZ, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE FREDERICO A. MORENO, RETIRED.

JULIE SIMONE SNEED, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE ROY BALE DALTON, JR., RETIRED.

###### IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

###### To be brigadier general

COL. PATTI L. FRIES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

###### To be brigadier general

COL. TOMMY F. TILLMAN, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

###### To be major general

BRIG. GEN. STEVEN J. BUTOW

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

###### To be colonel

MICHAEL D. MCCARTHY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

###### To be lieutenant colonel

MAURICIO DE CASTRO PRETEL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

###### To be major

BENJAMIN T. FEDELES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

###### To be major

ASHLY C. RUF

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

###### To be lieutenant colonel

BRANDON L. SANDERS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

###### To be major

LI ZHAO MUECKAY

ALEXANDER T. PARMATER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

###### To be major

ZARI N. COFIELD

JOSHUA D. FORSYTH

###### IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

###### To be colonel

AGUR S. ADAMS

BENJAMIN S. ADAMS

BRIAN A. ADAMS

STEVEN C. ALLSHOUSE

CHARLES E. ANKLAM III

ROBERT C. ARBEGAST

PHILLIP T. ASH

AARON M. AWTRY

ANTHONY P. BARILETTI

PAUL T. BARTOK

SCOTT E. BEATTY

RICHARD A. BEHRMANN  
LYNN W. BERENDSEN  
MICHAEL A. BLEJSKI  
CHRISTOPHER G. BLOSSER  
STEPHEN J. BOADA  
NICOLE M. BOHANNON  
BRETT A. BOHNE

THOMAS E. BOLEN, JR.

ANNE M. BRADEN

BARRET F. BRADSTREET

JOSHUA H. BRINGHURST

ARTHUR Q. BRUGGEMAN

CARIN O. CALVIN

JULIET H. CALVIN

JARRAD S. CAOLA

DANIEL W. CAROFFINO

BRYCE W. CARTER

ALLAN S. CHIU

MICHAEL P. CICCHI

VANESSA M. CLARK

RYAN B. COHEN

WILLIAM E. DELEAL II

STEPHEN E. DETRINIS

JARROD A. DEVORE

SETH E. DEWEY

GABRIEL L. DIANA

PHILLIP D. DIBELLA

JOHN D. DIRK

AIXA R. DONES

BRIAN J. DONLON

TIMOTHY R. DRIESLEIN

JASON T. DUKE

HAROLD J. EVERHART

NATASHA M. EVERLY

ROBERT A. FAIRLEY

ALEXANDER FARSAAD

TREVOR J. FELTER

BENJAMIN J. FIALA

NATHAN A. FLEISCHAKER

GEORGE E. FLEMING

GEORGE J. FLYNN III

JONATHAN T. FRYCHS

BRADLEY N. FULTZ

THOMAS D. FUSS

KENDRICK L. GAINES

TIMOTHY K. GALLAGHER, JR.

ALEXANDRA V. GERBRACHT

ROBERT F. GERBRACHT

ROBERT A. GIBSON

CRAIG A. GIORIS

FRED GLENCAMP III

JONATHAN C. GLOVER

JASON R. GOODALE

ALEXANDER E. GOODNO

RYAN R. GORDINIER

DAVID J. GRABOW

MATTHEW J. GRABOWSKI

ROBERT C. GRASE

JEROME C. GRECO

CHAD R. GRIMMETT

EDWARD V. HULTON

TIMOTHY G. HUDSON

ROBERT P. HURST

JONATHAN A. HUTCHISON

BRIAN P. HUYSMAN

BROGAN C. ISSITT

JASON R. JOHNSTON

ROBERT M. JONES, JR.

DANIEL W. KAISER

DENNIS W. KATOLIN

MEGHAN A. KENNERLY

DAVID L. KLINGENSMITH

MARK A. KOVAL

AARON R. KRUKOW

SASHA J. KUHOW

BRIAN D. LAPORTE

KENNETH A. LARETTO

THOMAS B. LEE

ROE S. LEMONS, JR.

MATHEW K. LESNOWICZ

KEVAN D. LEWIS

CLARENCE E. LOOMIS, JR.

MICHEL R. LUPIENT

TRACY A. MAESE

ROBERT F. MAY

FRANK P. MEASE, JR.

ANTHONY M. MERCADO

DAVID A. MERLES

BENJAMIN M. MIDDENDORF

DANIEL R. MYERS

CHARLES C. NASH

RICHARD P. NEKIRK

RANDALL L. NICKEL, JR.

EDWARD J. O'CONNELL IV

MICHAEL P. PAVIS

JASON P. PELLERIN

MICHAEL T. PERROTTET

DOUGLAS K. PETERSON

ELIZABETH PHAM

PETER F. PRIESTER

ERIK C. QUIST

TERRANCE J. REESE

MATTHEW T. RITCHIE

MASTIN M. ROBESON, JR.

KENNETH K. ROSSMAN

HEATH E. RUPPERT

ADAM R. SACCHETTI

BRIAN W. SCHWEERS

ARUN SHANKAR

THOMAS F. SHORT

ROBERT F. SHUFORD

ARLON D. SMITH

JOHN F. SOTO, JR.

WILLIAM R. SOUCIE

KEVIN J. STEPE

RICHARD J. STINNETT, JR.

NATHAN J. STORM