

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 172

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the urgent need to provide emergency humanitarian assistance and development assistance to civilians in Afghanistan, including Afghan refugees in surrounding countries.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 18, 2001

Mr. WELLSTONE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the urgent need to provide emergency humanitarian assistance and development assistance to civilians in Afghanistan, including Afghan refugees in surrounding countries.

Whereas, well before the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Afghanistan was the site of the greatest crisis of hunger and displacement in the world;

Whereas, after more than 20 years of conflict, 3 years of severe drought, and the repressive policies of the Taliban regime, 4,000,000 Afghans had sought refuge in neighboring countries, and Afghan women have one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world, and one in four children dies before the child's fifth birthday;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that 1,500,000 additional Afghans could seek to flee the country in coming months due to the ongoing military conflict;

Whereas all 6 countries neighboring Afghanistan have closed their borders to refugees both on security grounds and citing an inability to economically provide for more refugees, and thousands have been trapped at borders with no food, shelter, water, or medical care;

Whereas 7,500,000 people inside Afghanistan face critical food shortages or risk starvation by winter's end, and are partially or fully dependent on outside assistance for survival, and of these people, 70 percent are women and children;

Whereas the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), which distributes most of the food within Afghanistan, estimates that food stocks in the country are critically short, and WFP overland food shipments inside and outside the border of Afghanistan have been disrupted due to security concerns over United States military strikes;

Whereas airdrops of food by the United States military cannot by itself meet the enormous humanitarian needs of the Afghan people, and cannot replace the most effective delivery method of overland truck convoys of food, nor can it replace access to affected populations by humanitarian agencies;

Whereas the President has announced a \$320,000,000 initiative to respond to the humanitarian needs in Afghanistan and for Afghan refugees in neighboring countries, and much more international assistance is clearly needed; and

Whereas the United States is the single largest donor of humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people, totaling more than \$185,000,000 in fiscal year 2001: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved,*

2 **SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON HUMANITARIAN**
 3 **AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FOR THE**
 4 **PEOPLE OF AFGHANISTAN.**

5 It is the sense of the Senate that—

6 (1) Afghanistan’s neighbors should reopen their
 7 borders to allow for the safe passage of refugees,
 8 and the international community must be prepared
 9 to contribute to the economic costs incurred by the
 10 flight of desperate Afghan civilians;

11 (2) as the United States engages in military ac-
 12 tion in Afghanistan, it must work to deliver assist-
 13 ance, particularly through overland truck convoys,
 14 and safe humanitarian access to affected popu-
 15 lations, in partnership with humanitarian agencies in
 16 quantities sufficient to alleviate a large scale human-
 17 itarian catastrophe; and

18 (3) the United States should contribute to ef-
 19 forts by the international community to provide
 20 long-term, sustainable reconstruction and develop-
 21 ment assistance for the people of Afghanistan, in-

- 1 including efforts to protect the basic human rights of
- 2 women and children.

