

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. J. RES. _____

To authorize the limited and tailored use of the United States Armed Forces
against Syria.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MENENDEZ introduced the following joint resolution; which was read
twice and referred to the Committee on _____

JOINT RESOLUTION

To authorize the limited and tailored use of the United
States Armed Forces against Syria.

Whereas Syria is in material breach of the laws of war by
having employed chemical weapons against its civilian
population;

Whereas the abuses of the regime of Bashar al-Assad have
included the brutal repression and war upon its own civil-
ian population, resulting in more than 100,000 people
killed in the past two years, and more than 2,000,000 in-
ternally displaced people and Syrian refugees in Turkey,
Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq, creating an unprecedented
regional crisis and instability;

Whereas the Assad regime has the largest chemical weapons
programs in the region and has demonstrated its capa-
bility and willingness to repeatedly use weapons of mass

destruction against its own people, including the August 21, 2013, attack in the suburbs of Damascus in which the Assad regime murdered over 1,000 innocent people, including hundreds of children;

Whereas there is clear and compelling evidence of the direct involvement of Assad regime forces and senior officials in the planning, execution, and after-action attempts to cover-up, the August 21, 2013, attack, and hide or destroy evidence of such attack;

Whereas the Arab League has declared with regards to the August 21, 2013, incident to hold the “Syrian regime responsible for this heinous crime”;

Whereas the United Nations Security Council, in Resolution 1540 (2004), affirmed that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons constitutes a threat to international peace and security;

Whereas in the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–175), Congress found that Syria’s acquisition of weapons of mass destruction threatens the security of the Middle East and the national security interests of the United States;

Whereas the actions and conduct of the Assad regime are in direct contravention of Syria’s legal obligations under the United Nations Charter, the Geneva Conventions, and the Protocol to the Hague Convention on the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, done at Geneva June 17, 1925, and also violate the standards set forth in the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and use of Chemical

Weapons and on their Destruction, done at Paris January 13, 1993;

Whereas Syria's use of weapons of mass destruction and its conduct and actions constitute a grave threat to regional stability, world peace, and the national security interests of the United States and its allies and partners;

Whereas the objectives of the United States use of military force in connection with this authorization are to respond to the use, and deter and degrade the potential future use, of weapons of mass destruction by the Government of Syria;

Whereas the conflict in Syria will only be resolved through a negotiated political settlement, and Congress calls on all parties to the conflict in Syria to participate urgently and constructively in the Geneva process; and

Whereas the President has authority under the Constitution to use force in order to defend the national security interests of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This joint resolution may be cited as the "Authoriza-
5 tion for the Use of Military Force Against the Government
6 of Syria to Respond to Use of Chemical Weapons".

7 **SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF UNITED STATES**
8 **ARMED FORCES.**

9 (a) AUTHORIZATION.—The President is authorized,
10 subject to subsection (b), to use the Armed Forces of the

1 United States as the President determines to be necessary
2 and appropriate in a limited and tailored manner against
3 legitimate military targets in Syria, only to—

4 (1) respond to the use of weapons of mass de-
5 struction by the Government of Syria in the conflict
6 in Syria;

7 (2) deter Syria's use of such weapons in order
8 to protect the national security interests of the
9 United States and to protect United States allies
10 and partners against the use of such weapons; and

11 (3) degrade Syria's capacity to use such weap-
12 ons in the future.

13 (b) REQUIREMENT FOR DETERMINATION THAT USE
14 OF MILITARY FORCE IS NECESSARY.—Before exercising
15 the authority granted in subsection (a), the President shall
16 make available to the Speaker of the House of Representa-
17 tives and the President pro tempore of the Senate the
18 President's determination that—

19 (1) the United States has used all appropriate
20 diplomatic and other peaceful means to prevent the
21 deployment and use of weapons of mass destruction
22 by Syria;

23 (2) the Government of Syria has conducted one
24 or more significant chemical weapons attacks;

1 (3) the use of military force is necessary to re-
2 spond to the use of chemical weapons by the Govern-
3 ment of Syria;

4 (4) it is in the core national security interest of
5 the United States to use such military force;

6 (5) the United States has a military plan to
7 achieve the specific goals of—

8 (A) responding to the use of weapons of
9 mass destruction by the Government of Syria in
10 the conflict in Syria;

11 (B) deterring Syria's use of such weapons
12 in order to protect the national security inter-
13 ests of the United States and to protect United
14 States allies and partners against the use of
15 such weapons; and

16 (C) degrading Syria's capacity to use such
17 weapons in the future; and

18 (6) the use of military force is consistent with
19 and furthers the goals of the United States strategy
20 toward Syria, including achieving a negotiated polit-
21 ical settlement to the conflict.

22 (c) WAR POWERS RESOLUTION REQUIREMENTS.—

23 (1) SPECIFIC STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION.—

24 Consistent with section 8(a)(1) of the War Powers
25 Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1547(a)(1)), Congress de-

1 declares that this section is intended to constitute spe-
2 cific statutory authorization within the meaning of
3 section 5(b) of the War Powers Resolution (50
4 U.S.C. 1544(b)), within the limits of the authoriza-
5 tion established under this section.

6 (2) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER REQUIRE-
7 MENTS.—Nothing in this resolution supersedes any
8 requirement of the War Powers Resolution (50
9 U.S.C. 1541 et seq.).

10 **SEC. 3. LIMITATION.**

11 The authority granted in section 2(a) does not au-
12 thorize the use of the United States Armed Forces on the
13 ground in Syria for the purpose of combat operations.

14 **SEC. 4. TERMINATION OF THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE**
15 **USE OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES.**

16 The authorization in section 2(a) shall terminate 60
17 days after the date of the enactment of this joint resolu-
18 tion, except that the President may extend, for a single
19 period of 30 days, such authorization if—

20 (1) the President determines and certifies to
21 Congress, not later than 5 days before the date of
22 termination of the initial authorization, that the ex-
23 tension is necessary to fulfill the purposes of this
24 resolution as defined by section 2(a) due to extraor-
25 dinary circumstances and for ongoing and impend-

1 ing military operations against Syria under section
2 2(a); and

3 (2) Congress does not enact into law, before the
4 extension of authorization, a joint resolution dis-
5 approving the extension of the authorization for the
6 additional 30-day period; provided that any such
7 joint resolution shall be considered under the expe-
8 dited procedures otherwise provided for concurrent
9 resolutions of disapproval contained in section 7 of
10 the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546).

11 **SEC. 5. SYRIA STRATEGY.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the
13 date of the enactment of this resolution, the President
14 shall consult with Congress and submit to the Committee
15 on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee
16 on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives an in-
17 tegrated United States Government strategy for achieving
18 a negotiated political settlement to the conflict in Syria,
19 including a comprehensive review of current and planned
20 United States diplomatic, political, economic, and military
21 policy towards Syria.

22 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under sub-
23 section (a) shall include—

24 (1) the provision of all forms of assistance to
25 the Syrian Supreme Military Council and other Syr-

1 ian entities opposed to the government of Bashar Al-
2 Assad that have been properly and fully vetted and
3 share common values and interests with the United
4 States;

5 (2) the provision of all forms of assistance to
6 the Syrian political opposition, including the Syrian
7 Opposition Coalition;

8 (3) efforts to isolate extremist and terrorist
9 groups in Syria to prevent their influence on the fu-
10 ture transitional and permanent Syrian govern-
11 ments;

12 (4) coordination with allies and partners; and

13 (5) efforts to limit support from the Govern-
14 ment of Iran and others for the Syrian regime.

15 **SEC. 6. CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING.**

16 (a) NOTIFICATION AND PROVISION OF INFORMA-
17 TION.—Upon the President’s determination to use the au-
18 thority set forth in section 2, the President shall notify
19 Congress, including the Committee on Foreign Relations
20 of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
21 the House of Representatives, of the use of such authority
22 and shall keep Congress fully and currently informed of
23 the use of such authority.

24 (b) REPORTS.—Not later than 10 days after the initi-
25 ation of military operations under the authority provided

1 by section 2, and every 20 days thereafter until the com-
2 pletion of military operations, the President shall submit
3 to Congress, including the Committee on Foreign Rela-
4 tions of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs
5 of the House of Representatives, a report on the status
6 of such operations, including progress achieved toward the
7 objectives specified in section 2(a), the financial costs of
8 operations to date, and an assessment of the impact of
9 the operations on the Syrian regime's chemical weapons
10 capabilities and intentions.

11 **SEC. 7. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

12 The authority set forth in section 2 shall not con-
13 stitute an authorization for the use of force or a declara-
14 tion of war except to the extent that it authorizes military
15 action under the conditions, for the specific purposes, and
16 for the limited period of time set forth in this resolution.