

Calendar No. 323

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 503

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the Government of the People's Republic of China should immediately guarantee the safety and freedom of tennis star Peng Shuai.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 3, 2022

Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COTTON, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

APRIL 4 (legislative day, MARCH 31), 2022

Reported by Mr. MENENDEZ, with an amendment and an amendment to the preamble

[Strike out all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

[Strike the preamble and insert the part printed in *italic*]

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the Government of the People's Republic of China should immediately guarantee the safety and freedom of tennis star Peng Shuai.

~~Whereas, on November 2, 2021, 3-time Olympian Peng Shuai went missing after she said in a since-deleted post on Chinese social media site Weibo that she had been sexu-~~

ally assaulted and forced into a sexual relationship with Zhang Gaoli, who was the senior Vice Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China from 2013 to 2018;

Whereas authorities of the People's Republic of China imposed a media and internet blackout of discussions of Peng's case;

Whereas, on November 14, 2021, after Peng had not been seen or heard from for 12 days, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Women's Tennis Association Steve Simon requested a "full, fair, and transparent" investigation into Peng's allegations;

Whereas the hashtag "#WhereIsPengShuai" trended across social media worldwide, with the exception of the People's Republic of China where it was censored;

Whereas, on November 17, 2021, the Women's Tennis Association received a statement purporting to be from Peng, recanting her abuse claim and saying "everything is fine";

Whereas, in response, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Women's Tennis Association Steve Simon said the statement "released today by Chinese state media concerning Peng Shuai only raises my concerns as to her safety and whereabouts";

Whereas the International Olympic Committee said in a statement that it was "encouraged by assurances that she is safe";

Whereas, on November 19 and 20, 2021, photos and videos of Peng appearing in her home, in a restaurant, and at a youth tennis event in Beijing emerged on Twitter accounts affiliated with government-run media;

Whereas, on November 19, 2021, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said the White House is “deeply concerned” over Peng’s disappearance and seeks “independent and verifiable proof” of her location and condition;

Whereas, on November 19, 2021, Liz Throssell, the spokesperson for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, told reporters “... it would be important to have proof of her whereabouts and wellbeing, and we would urge that there be an investigation with full transparency into her allegations of sexual assault”;

Whereas, on November 21, 2021, the International Olympic Committee said in a statement that its President, Thomas Bach, had a 30-minute video call with Peng, joined by a Chinese sports official and an official of the International Olympic Committee;

Whereas the statement said that, during the call, Peng appeared to be “doing fine” and appeared “relaxed”, and said she “would like to have her privacy respected”;

Whereas the International Olympic Committee did not explain how the video call with Peng had been organized, given the difficulties other concerned parties have had reaching her;

Whereas, on November 30, 2021, in an interview with CNN, International Olympic Committee official Dick Pound defended the handling of the situation by the Government of the People’s Republic of China and said the “unanimous conclusion” by International Olympic Committee officials on the call is that Peng Shuai is “fine”;

Whereas the annual report of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China for 2020 finds that gender-based

violence in China remains a serious issue, and highly publicized cases of sexual assault continue to surface;

Whereas, on December 1, 2021, the Women's Tennis Association suspended all Women's Tennis Association tournaments in China and Hong Kong;

Whereas Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Women's Tennis Association Steve Simon stated, "In good conscience, I don't see how I can ask our athletes to compete there when Peng Shuai is not allowed to communicate freely and has seemingly been pressured to contradict her allegation of sexual assault. Given the current state of affairs, I am also greatly concerned about the risks that all of our players and staff could face if we were to hold events in China in 2022.";

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has repeatedly detained "#MeToo" activists in China and censored online and public discussion around sexual assault and harassment; and

Whereas athletes from the around the world will be competing in the 2022 Winter Olympic Games in Beijing in February 2022: Now, therefore, be it

Whereas, on November 2, 2021, 3-time Olympian Peng Shuai went missing after she said in a since-deleted post on Chinese social media site Weibo that she had been sexually assaulted and forced into a sexual relationship with Zhang Gaoli, who was the senior Vice Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China from 2013 to 2018;

Whereas authorities of the People's Republic of China imposed a media and internet blackout of discussions of Peng's case;

Whereas, on November 14, 2021, after Peng had not been seen or heard from for 12 days, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Women’s Tennis Association Steve Simon requested a “full, fair, and transparent” investigation into Peng’s allegations;

Whereas the hashtag “#WhereIsPengShuai” trended across social media worldwide, with the exception of the People’s Republic of China where it was censored;

Whereas, on November 17, 2021, the Women’s Tennis Association received a statement purporting to be from Peng, recanting her abuse claim and saying “everything is fine”;

Whereas, in response, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Women’s Tennis Association Steve Simon said the statement “released today by Chinese state media concerning Peng Shuai only raises my concerns as to her safety and whereabouts”;

Whereas the International Olympic Committee said in a statement that it was “encouraged by assurances that she is safe”;

Whereas, on November 19 and 20, 2021, photos and videos of Peng appearing in her home, in a restaurant, and at a youth tennis event in Beijing emerged on Twitter accounts affiliated with government-run media;

Whereas, on November 19, 2021, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said the White House is “deeply concerned” over Peng’s disappearance and seeks “independent and verifiable proof” of her location and condition;

Whereas, on November 19, 2021, Liz Throssell, the spokesperson for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, told reporters “. . . it would be important to have proof of her whereabouts and wellbeing, and we would urge

that there be an investigation with full transparency into her allegations of sexual assault”;

Whereas, on November 21, 2021, the International Olympic Committee said in a statement that its President, Thomas Bach, had a 30-minute video call with Peng, joined by a Chinese sports official and an official of the International Olympic Committee;

Whereas the statement said that, during the call, Peng appeared to be “doing fine” and appeared “relaxed”, and said she “would like to have her privacy respected”;

Whereas the International Olympic Committee did not explain how the video call with Peng had been organized, given the difficulties other concerned parties have had reaching her;

Whereas, on November 30, 2021, in an interview with CNN, International Olympic Committee official Dick Pound defended the handling of the situation by the Government of the People’s Republic of China and said the “unanimous conclusion” by International Olympic Committee officials on the call is that Peng Shuai is “fine”;

Whereas the annual report of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China for 2020 finds that gender-based violence in China remains a serious issue, and highly publicized cases of sexual assault continue to surface;

Whereas, on December 1, 2021, the Women’s Tennis Association suspended all Women’s Tennis Association tournaments in China and Hong Kong;

Whereas Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Women’s Tennis Association Steve Simon stated, “In good conscience, I don’t see how I can ask our athletes to compete there when Peng Shuai is not allowed to communicate freely and has seemingly been pressured to contradict her

allegation of sexual assault. Given the current state of affairs, I am also greatly concerned about the risks that all of our players and staff could face if we were to hold events in China in 2022.”; and

Whereas the Government of the People’s Republic of China has repeatedly detained “#MeToo” activists in China and censored online and public discussion around sexual assault and harassment: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—*

2 (1) the case of Peng Shuai is directly related to
3 broader international concerns around the freedom
4 of speech and safety of athletes participating in the
5 2022 Winter Olympic Games in Beijing;

6 (2) the failure of the International Olympic
7 Committee to clearly and forcefully challenge the
8 claims of the Government of the People’s Republic
9 of China concerning Peng’s safety raise questions
10 about the ability and willingness of the International
11 Olympic Committee to stand up for the human
12 rights of athletes participating in the 2022 Olympic
13 and Paralympic games in Beijing;

14 (3) the Government of the People’s Republic of
15 China would help reduce concerns about athlete
16 safety at the 2022 Winter Olympic Games in Beijing
17 by assuring Peng’s freedom and safety and inves-
18 tigating her allegations in a fair and transparent
19 manner;

1 (4) the Government of the People's Republic of
2 China should immediately take steps to—

3 (A) provide independent and verifiable
4 proof of Peng's whereabouts and that she is
5 safe;

6 (B) allow Peng to engage directly with the
7 Women's Tennis Association and the United
8 Nations to independently verify her safety and
9 explain her absence from public life since mak-
10 ing her allegation;

11 (C) open an independent and transparent
12 investigation into Peng's allegations against
13 former senior Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli;

14 (D) publicly commit to hold sexual violence
15 abusers accountable;

16 (E) cease all censorship of reporting and
17 discussions of Peng's case; and

18 (F) allow Peng to leave China if she so de-
19 sires and prevent any retaliation against family
20 members remaining there;

21 (5) by failing to clearly and forcefully challenge
22 the Chinese Communist Party's narrative, the Inter-
23 national Olympic Committee has failed to uphold its
24 own stated commitments with regard to "[r]espect
25 for international conventions on protecting human

1 rights”, as outlined in the Code of Ethics of the
 2 International Olympic Committee;

3 (6) the conduct of the International Olympic
 4 Committee runs counter to efforts by the United
 5 States Government, human rights organizations, the
 6 Women’s Tennis Association, and other international
 7 bodies and individuals to secure Peng’s safety; and

8 (7) in an effort to regain lost public confidence,
 9 the International Olympic Committee should publicly
 10 call on the Government of the People’s Republic of
 11 China to undertake the actions called for in para-
 12 graph (4).

13 *That it is the sense of the Senate that—*

14 (1) *the case of Peng Shuai is directly related to*
 15 *broader international concerns around the freedom of*
 16 *speech and safety in China;*

17 (2) *the failure of the International Olympic*
 18 *Committee to clearly and forcefully challenge the*
 19 *claims of the Government of the People’s Republic of*
 20 *China concerning Peng’s safety raises questions about*
 21 *the ability and willingness of the International Olym-*
 22 *pic Committee to stand up for the human rights of*
 23 *athletes participating in the Olympic and*
 24 *Paralympic games in Beijing, as well as in future*
 25 *games;*

1 (3) *the Government of the People’s Republic of*
 2 *China should immediately take steps to—*

3 (A) *allow Peng to provide independent and*
 4 *verifiable proof of her own whereabouts and safe-*
 5 *ty without retribution;*

6 (B) *allow Peng to engage directly with the*
 7 *Women’s Tennis Association and the United Na-*
 8 *tions to independently verify her safety and ex-*
 9 *plain her absences from public life since making*
 10 *her allegation;*

11 (C) *open an independent and transparent*
 12 *investigation into Peng’s allegations against*
 13 *former senior Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli;*

14 (D) *publicly commit to hold sexual violence*
 15 *abusers accountable;*

16 (E) *cease all censorship of reporting and*
 17 *discussions of Peng’s case; and*

18 (F) *allow Peng to leave China if she so de-*
 19 *sires and prevent any retaliation against family*
 20 *members remaining there;*

21 (4) *the International Olympic Committee, by*
 22 *failing to clearly and forcefully challenge the Chinese*
 23 *Communist Party’s narrative, has failed to uphold its*
 24 *own stated commitments with regard to “[r]espect for*
 25 *international conventions on protecting human*

1 *rights”, as outlined in the Code of Ethics of the Inter-*
 2 *national Olympic Committee, and runs counter to ef-*
 3 *forts by the United States Government, human rights*
 4 *organizations, the Women’s Tennis Association, and*
 5 *other international bodies and individuals to secure*
 6 *Peng’s safety;*

7 *(5) to regain lost public confidence, the Inter-*
 8 *national Olympic Committee should publicly call on*
 9 *the Government of the People’s Republic of China to*
 10 *undertake the actions called for in paragraph (3);*
 11 *and*

12 *(6) to demonstrate commitment to Olympic ath-*
 13 *letes and their human rights, the International Olym-*
 14 *pic Committee should deny the ability of the People’s*
 15 *Republic of China to serve as an Olympic Games host*
 16 *nation or to bid to become a future Olympic Games*
 17 *host nation until the Government of the People’s Re-*
 18 *public of China ceases its horrific abuses of inter-*
 19 *nationally recognized human rights, including the*
 20 *genocide against the Uyghurs and other Muslim mi-*
 21 *norities, and undertakes the actions called for in*
 22 *paragraph (3).*

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