

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1169

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should become an international human rights leader by ratifying and implementing certain core international conventions.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 1, 2008

Mr. LEWIS of California (for himself, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. LEE, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. HONDA, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. WYNN, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. WATSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BACA, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WATT, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should become an international human rights leader by ratifying and implementing certain core international conventions.

Whereas the United States has played a leading role in developing global human rights standards since the country's inception;

Whereas the United States Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, are among the guiding principles which helped develop the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Whereas Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, led the United States delegation and the United Nations (UN) in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Whereas, December 10, 2008, will mark the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly also adopted the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1966;

Whereas the world will celebrate the 201st anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade on May 1, 2008;

Whereas, on January 1, 2008, the United States recognized the 145th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation;

Whereas the United States continues to make legislative amendments that improve the rights of all Americans; these include the 13th Amendment in 1865, the Civil Rights Act of 1866, the 14th Amendment, the 19th Amendment, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and the Voting Rights Act Reauthorization of 2006;

Whereas the development of human and civil rights standards and protections requires constant review and attention;

Whereas the UN Millennium Development Goals set forth a fifteen-year plan to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination;

Whereas there are as many as 27 million people around the world who remain enslaved;

Whereas the United States has supported the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the UN General Assembly and has ratified significant international human rights treaties that include the International Conventions on the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination, on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

Whereas the United States has ratified two of the eight “fundamental” conventions outlined by the International Labor Organization (ILO) including the Abolition of Forced Labour, and the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour;

Whereas the United States has also ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts;

Whereas the United States is expected to be a regional and global leader in the international civil and human rights movement; and

Whereas the United Nations headquarters are located in New York City, and the Organization of American States is headquartered in Washington, DC: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that—

3 (1) the United States recommits to fighting dis-
4 crimination, xenophobia, human and civil rights
5 abuses in both domestic and foreign policy;

6 (2) the United States should give thorough re-
7 view to domestic policy and legislative proposals that
8 would improve the rights and lives of marginalized
9 communities within the United States;

10 (3) the Senate should give its advice and con-
11 sent to the ratification of the UN Covenant on Eco-
12 nomic, Social and Cultural Rights, the UN Conven-
13 tion on the Elimination of All Forms of
14 Discrimination Against Women and its Optional Pro-
15 tocol, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,
16 the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with
17 Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, the UN Con-
18 vention for the Protection of All Persons from En-
19 forced Disappearance, the First Optional Protocol to
20 the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and
21 the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention Against
22 Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading
23 Treatment or Punishment;

1 (4) the United States Senate should give its ad-
2 vice and consent to the ratification of the ILO Con-
3 vention on Forced or Compulsory Labour, the ILO
4 Convention on Freedom of Association and Protec-
5 tion of the Right to Organise, the ILO Convention
6 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining,
7 the ILO Convention on Equal Remuneration, the
8 ILO Convention on Discrimination in Respect of
9 Employment and Occupation, and the ILO Conven-
10 tion on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employ-
11 ment;

12 (5) the United States should fully support the
13 Inter-American human rights system, especially
14 hemispheric conventions regarding the rights of all
15 persons, women, children, the disabled, marginalized
16 communities, and the right to freedom of expression;
17 and

18 (6) it is the policy of the United States to op-
19 pose slavery, torture, racism, discrimination, and
20 xenophobia in all forms.

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