

107<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 496

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding so-called “honor killings”.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 2, 2002

Mr. NADLER (for himself, Mr. ROHRABACHER, and Mrs. LOWEY) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

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## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding so-called  
“honor killings”.

Whereas thousands of women around the world are killed and maimed each year in the name of family “honor”;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 56th Session, January 2000, working with the Special Rapporteurs on violence against women and extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, received reports of so-called “honor killings” from numerous countries, including Bangladesh, Jordan, India, Pakistan, Ecuador, Uganda, and Morocco, and noted that such killings take many forms, such as flogging, forced suicide, stoning, beheading, acid throwing, and burning;

Whereas according to the Department of State’s Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1999, “crimes of

honor” in Bangladesh include acid-throwing and whipping of women accused of moral indiscretion;

Whereas authorities in Bangladesh estimate there will be up to 200 “honor killings” in that country this year;

Whereas thousands of Pakistani women and girls are stabbed, burned, or maimed every year by husbands, fathers, and brothers who accuse them of dishonoring their family by being unfaithful, seeking a divorce, or refusing an arranged marriage;

Whereas Jordan, which had 20 reported “honor killings” in 1998, still has laws reducing the penalty for, or exempting perpetrators of “honor crimes”, and the Jordanian Parliament has twice failed to repeal these laws;

Whereas His Majesty King Abdullah of Jordan should be commended for the recent formation of Jordan’s Royal Commission on Human Rights, chaired by Her Majesty Queen Rania, which will primarily address obstacles that prevent women and children from exercising their basic human rights, including the persistence of “honor crimes”;

Whereas more than 5,000 “dowry deaths” occur every year in India, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), which reported in 1997 that a dozen women die each day in “kitchen fires” designed to be passed off as accidents because the woman’s husband’s family is dissatisfied over the size of the woman’s dowry;

Whereas women accused of adultery in countries such as Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, and a host of other countries are subject to a maximum penalty of death by stoning;

Whereas even though “honor killings” may be outlawed, law enforcement and judicial systems often fail to properly investigate, arrest, and prosecute offenders and laws frequently permit reduction in sentences or exemptions from prosecution for those who “kill in the name of honor” typically resulting in a token punishment, impunity, and continued violence against women; and

Whereas the right to exist is the most fundamental of all rights and must be guaranteed to every individual without discrimination, and the perpetuation of “honor killings” and dowry deaths is a deliberate violation of women’s human rights that should be universally condemned: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*  
 2 *concurring),* That it is the sense of the Congress that—

3            (1) the United States, through the United  
 4 States Agency for International Development,  
 5 should—

6            (A) work with foreign law enforcement and  
 7 judicial agencies to enact legal system reforms  
 8 to more effectively address the investigation and  
 9 prosecution of so-called “honor crimes”; and

10            (B) make resources available to local orga-  
 11 nizations to provide refuge and rehabilitation  
 12 for women who are victims of “honor crimes”  
 13 and the children of such women;

1           (2) the Department of State, when preparing  
2           yearly Country Reports on Human Rights Practices,  
3           should include—

4                   (A) information relating to the incidence of  
5                   “honor violence” in foreign countries;

6                   (B) the steps taken by foreign govern-  
7                   ments to address the problem of “honor vio-  
8                   lence”; and

9                   (C) all relevant actions taken by the  
10                  United States, whether through diplomacy or  
11                  foreign assistance programs, to reduce the inci-  
12                  dence of “honor violence” and to increase inves-  
13                  tigations and prosecutions of such crimes;

14           (3) the United States should communicate to  
15           the United Nations its concern over the high rate of  
16           honor-related violence toward women worldwide and  
17           request that the appropriate United Nations bodies,  
18           in consultation with relevant nongovernmental orga-  
19           nizations, propose actions to be taken to encourage  
20           these countries to demonstrate strong efforts to end  
21           such violence; and

22           (4) the President and the Secretary of State  
23           should communicate directly with leaders of coun-  
24           tries where “honor killings”, dowry deaths, and re-  
25           lated practices are endemic, in order to convey the

1 Nation's most serious concerns over these gross vio-  
2 lations of human rights and urge these leaders to in-  
3 vestigate and prosecute all such acts as murder, with  
4 the appropriate penalties.

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