

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 655

Condemning the crackdown on democracy protestors in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, in the People's Republic of China on the 15th anniversary of that tragic massacre.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 1, 2004

Mr. COX (for himself, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. ROHR-ABACHER, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. STRICKLAND, and Mr. WU) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Condemning the crackdown on democracy protestors in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, in the People's Republic of China on the 15th anniversary of that tragic massacre.

Whereas the United States was founded on the principle that all men and women are created equal and entitled to the exercise of their basic human rights;

Whereas freedom of expression, assembly, association, and religion are fundamental human rights that belong to all people and are recognized as such under the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

Whereas the horrific events of June 3–4, 1989, in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, in the People’s Republic of China, reminded the world that these universal human rights are denied to the citizens of the most populous nation on earth by the Communist Party that rules in China;

Whereas in recent days the Communist Government of China has stepped up harassment of the relatives of people who lost their lives in the 1989 crackdown on democracy protestors in Tiananmen Square, in an apparent effort to control dissent ahead of the 15th anniversary of that tragic massacre;

Whereas in recent weeks China’s Communist Party leaders have been working to eliminate the residual influence of Zhao Ziyang, who was purged as Communist Party chief for opposing the 1989 crackdown on the Tiananmen protests, and are trying to erase his name from history;

Whereas Zhao was last seen in public on May 19, 1989, when he tearfully begged student protesters to leave Tiananmen Square, and was then promptly put under house arrest and purged;

Whereas the Communist Government of China declared martial law the next day and troops backed by tanks crushed the student movement on June 3–4, 1989;

Whereas the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square were the manifestation of a democratic movement that had begun to spread across China following the death of the former General Secretary of the Communist Party of the People’s Republic of China on April 15, 1989, and that had given rise to peaceful protests throughout China calling for the establishment of a dialogue with government and party leaders on democratic reforms, including freedom

of expression, freedom of assembly, and the elimination of corruption by government officials;

Whereas after that date thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators continued to protest peacefully in and around Tiananmen Square in Beijing until June 3 and 4, 1989, when Chinese authorities ordered the People's Liberation Army and other security forces to use lethal force to disperse demonstrators in Beijing, especially around Tiananmen Square;

Whereas the report of the Chinese Red Cross on June 7, 1989, and the United States Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1989, gave various estimates of the numbers of people killed and wounded in 1989 by the People's Liberation Army soldiers and other security forces, and it is now believed by many that thousands were killed;

Whereas 20,000 people nationwide suspected of taking part in the democracy movement were arrested and sentenced without trial to prison or reeducation through labor, and many were reportedly tortured;

Whereas the Communist Government of China continues to suppress dissent by imprisoning pro-democracy activists, journalists, labor union leaders, religious believers, and other individuals in China and Tibet who seek to express their political or religious views in a peaceful manner;

Whereas credible sources estimate that the Communist Government of China continues to imprison as many as 2,000 Tiananmen Square activists, such as Yang Jianli, and denies such activists their basic human rights, such as access to legal counsel, contact with their families, and trials within reasonable times;

Whereas security agents of the People's Republic of China have detained Chinese citizens who were planning activities to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, including the preparation of a video for presentation at this year's United Nations Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva on the deaths of their relatives and other victims who perished in Tiananmen Square;

Whereas coincident with the 15th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, the Communist Government of China has frustrated the efforts of Chinese citizens in Hong Kong to establish a gradual and orderly process toward universal suffrage and the democratic election of the legislature and chief executive in Hong Kong as promised at the time of the reversion of Hong Kong to China in 1997 and as envisioned by the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region;

Whereas despite an unprecedented public protest in Hong Kong on July 1, 2003, reminiscent of protests in Beijing shortly before June 4, 1989, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China declared on April 26, 2004, that universal suffrage would not apply to the selection of the Chief Executive in Hong Kong in 2007 or to the selection of members of the Legislative Council in Hong Kong in 2008; and

Whereas June 4, 2004, is the 15th anniversary of the date of the Tiananmen Square massacre: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

1 (1) expresses sympathy to the families of those
2 killed, tortured, and imprisoned as a result of their
3 participation in the democracy protests of June 3–
4 4, 1989, in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, in the Peo-
5 ple’s Republic of China, and to all those persons who
6 have suffered for their efforts to keep that struggle
7 alive during the past 15 years, and to all the people
8 of China who lack fundamental human rights;

9 (2) commends all persons who are peacefully
10 advocating for democracy and human rights in
11 China;

12 (3) calls upon those nations participating in the
13 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing to use opportunities
14 created by the Games to urge China to fully comply
15 with the United Nations Declaration on Human
16 Rights;

17 (4) calls upon the Communist Government of
18 China, its National People’s Congress, and any other
19 groups appointed by the Communist Government of
20 China to honor its pledge of a “high degree of au-
21 tonomy” made at the time of the Hong Kong rever-
22 sion in 1997, by permitting immediate elections for
23 the Legislative Council of Hong Kong according to
24 rules approved by the Hong Kong people through an
25 election-law convention, referendum, or both, and by

1 leaving all revisions of Hong Kong law to a legisla-
2 ture elected by universal suffrage; and

3 (5) condemns the ongoing and egregious human
4 rights abuses by the Communist Government of
5 China and calls on that Government to—

6 (A) reevaluate the official verdict on the
7 June 4, 1989, Tiananmen pro-democracy activi-
8 ties and order formal investigations into the re-
9 ported killing, torture, and imprisonment of de-
10 mocracy activists with the goal of bringing
11 those responsible to justice;

12 (B) establish a June Fourth Investigation
13 Committee, the proceedings and findings of
14 which should be accessible to the public, to
15 make a just and independent inquiry into all
16 matters related to June 4, 1989;

17 (C) release all prisoners of conscience, in-
18 cluding those persons still in prison as a result
19 of their participation in the peaceful pro-democ-
20 racy protests of 1989, provide just compensa-
21 tion to the families of those killed in those pro-
22 tests, and allow those exiled on account of their
23 activities in 1989 to return and live in freedom
24 in China; and

1 (D) release Dr. Yang Jianli, an organizer
2 of the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, who
3 has been illegally detained incommunicado by
4 the Communist Government of China since
5 April 26, 2002, and whose wife and 2 children
6 are United States citizens, and put an imme-
7 diate end to the harassment, detention, and im-
8 prisonment of all Chinese citizens exercising
9 their legitimate freedoms of expression, associa-
10 tion, and religion.

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