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H. CON. RES. 294

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 16, 2005

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Referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Calling on the international community to condemn the Laogai, the system of forced labor prison camps in the People's Republic of China, as a tool for suppression maintained by the Chinese Government.

Whereas the Laogai is a vast prison labor system in the People's Republic of China and consists of a network of more than 1,000 prisons, camps, and mental institutions in which detainees must work at factories, farms, mines, and other facilities;

Whereas the two major aims of the Laogai are to generate economic resources for the state through free labor and

to “reform criminals” through hard labor and political indoctrination;

Whereas the Government of the People’s Republic of China relies on the Laogai as a tool for political suppression of pro-democracy activists, Internet dissidents, labor activists, and religious and spiritual believers, including Han Chinese, Tibetans, Uyghurs, Mongolians, and “house church” Christians;

Whereas, while the Soviet Gulags no longer exist, the Chinese Laogai is still fully operational, subjecting most of its three million prisoners to forced labor by threatening torture;

Whereas fifty million people have suffered as prisoners in the Laogai since its inception;

Whereas Laogai prisoners are deprived of religious freedom and forced to give up their political views in order to become a “new socialist person” and uphold communism and the Chinese Communist Party;

Whereas in recent years, more than 100,000 religious believers have been unjustly and illegally imprisoned in one Laogai camp alone, where they have been beaten, tortured, and often killed;

Whereas Laogai prisoners are forced to work long hours in appalling conditions, including mining asbestos and other toxic chemicals with no protective clothing, tanning hides while standing naked in vats filled with chemicals used for softening of animal skins, and working in mining facilities where explosions and other accidents are a common occurrence;

Whereas it is documented that China’s national policy since 1984 has been to extract organs from executed prisoners

without prior consent of the prisoners or their family members, setting China apart from every other country in the world;

Whereas there are more than 1,000 instances in which organs are harvested from executed Chinese prisoners every year;

Whereas both Chinese and foreign patients from around the world receive organs transplanted from executed Chinese prisoners;

Whereas Laogai prisoners are required to make confessions of their wrongdoings, which include political and religious views that the Chinese Communist Party wishes to suppress;

Whereas Chinese citizens are not guaranteed due process of law nor even a right to trial;

Whereas many individuals are often convicted and sentenced with no trial at all, or they are convicted with “evidence” extracted through torture;

Whereas in one part of the Laogai system known as the Laojiao, or reeducation-through-labor, Chinese citizens can be detained for up to three years without any judicial review or formal appearance in the judicial system;

Whereas goods produced by forced labor in the Laogai system continue to be exported to the United States and the world;

Whereas the Chinese Government has continuously encouraged the export of goods produced through the Laogai prison system and relies on forced labor as an integral part of its economy;

Whereas forced labor and torture practices carried out in the Laogai violate international laws, standards, and treaties to which China is party, including the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and

Whereas China, a member State of the International Labor Organization, also violates many agreements regarding labor conditions and the rights of workers: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) calls on the international community to con-
4 demn the Laogai, the system of forced labor prison
5 camps in the People’s Republic of China, as a tool
6 for suppression maintained by the Chinese Govern-
7 ment;

8 (2) calls on the Government of the United
9 States to fully implement United States laws that
10 prohibit the importation of forced labor products
11 made in the Laogai;

12 (3) calls on the Government of the United
13 States to take actions to review the implementation
14 of the Memorandum of Understanding on Prison
15 Labor in 1992 and the Statement of Cooperation in
16 1994 with respect to the Laogai;

1 (4) will undertake efforts to join with the Euro-
2 pean Parliament to urge the introduction of a reso-
3 lution at the United Nations Human Rights Com-
4 mission condemning the Laogai and the human
5 rights situation in China;

6 (5) calls on the Government of the People's Re-
7 public of China to release information about the
8 Laogai, including the total number of Laogai camps
9 and prisoners throughout China, the exact locations
10 of the camps, and the business production activities
11 taking place at the camps;

12 (6) calls on the Government of the People's Re-
13 public of China to release information about the
14 number of executions of prisoners at the camps that
15 are carried out every year, and the extent of the har-
16 vesting and transplantation of organs of executed
17 prisoners;

18 (7) urges the Government of the People's Re-
19 public of China to allow unrestricted visits by inter-
20 national human rights inspectors, including United
21 Nations inspectors, to Laogai camps throughout
22 China; and

23 (8) urges the Congressional-Executive Commis-
24 sion on China to continue to investigate the Laogai
25 system in China and to make recommendations for

1 United States policy that will help protect human
2 rights for Chinese citizens.

Passed the House of Representatives December 16,
2005.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.