

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 894

Expressing the continued commitment of the House of Representatives to condemn and prevent the use of sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict as a weapon of war and fully implement the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 10, 2020

Mr. KEATING submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing the continued commitment of the House of Representatives to condemn and prevent the use of sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict as a weapon of war and fully implement the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.

Whereas, in April 2019, the Republic of Germany submitted a draft version of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2467, reaffirming its commitment to the continuation and full implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), and 2242 (2015) on women, peace, and security;

Whereas, as reported by the Guardian and other news outlets, the United States delegation opposed the original

draft language on the grounds that ambiguity in the language could be interpreted as supporting abortion, and threatened to veto the resolution unless the paragraph was eliminated entirely;

Whereas this is not the first instance in which the Trump administration has attempted to dilute human rights language and reporting related to reproductive health;

Whereas the resolution was intended to be a declaration of global opposition to the use of sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict;

Whereas the resolution was intended to strengthen the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in the lead up to October 2020, the 20th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace, and security, which recognized the disproportional impact that armed conflict has had on women and girls and called for the inclusion of a gender perspective in conflict resolution;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 was the first recommendation by the United Nations Security Council to parties involved in an armed conflict to prevent the use of sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict as well as ensure the inclusion of women in peace negotiations and postconflict reconstruction;

Whereas the initial draft resolution submitted by Germany in April 2019 urged “United Nations entities and donors to provide nondiscriminatory and comprehensive health services, including sexual and reproductive health, psychosocial, legal, and livelihood support and other multisectoral services for survivors of sexual violence, taking into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities.”;

Whereas the language included in the initial draft resolution was previously agreed by consensus in the United Nations Security Council and was intended to send a clear message of the need to support survivors and that the use of rape as a weapon of war is not condoned by the global community;

Whereas the inclusion of reproductive health care data as an indicator of a broader human rights assessment signals the purposeful inclusion of women and girls, as well as their health, in the global human rights conversation;

Whereas, in spring 2019, for the second year in a row, the Trump administration omitted data on reproductive health care previously included in the Department of State's annual report on human rights globally;

Whereas, in September 2019, the United States led a joint statement delivered at the United Nations High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage attacking sexual and reproductive health and rights, misrepresenting the term as an attack on "the family";

Whereas women's security has been a priority of the House of Representatives of the 116th Congress, having recently reintroduced the International Violence Against Women Act;

Whereas the work of human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders, in promoting civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights positively impacts the lives of women and girls around the world;

Whereas women human rights defenders are at risk of and suffer from violations and abuses, including systematic violations and abuses of their fundamental rights to life, liberty, and security of person, to psychological and phys-

ical integrity, to privacy and respect for private and family life, and to freedom of opinion and expression, association, and peaceful assembly, and in addition these defenders can experience gender-based violence, rape, and other forms of sexual violence, harassment, and verbal abuse and attacks on reputation, online and offline, by state actors, including law enforcement personnel and security forces, and nonstate actors, such as those related to family and community, in both public and private spheres;

Whereas historical and structural inequalities in power relations and discrimination against women, as well as various forms of extremism, have direct implications for the status and treatment of women; and

Whereas, as documented in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, the rights of women human rights defenders, including those working on sexual and reproductive health and rights, have been violated or abused and their work stigmatized owing to discriminatory practices and social norms or patterns that serve to condone violence against women or perpetuate practices involving such violence: Now, therefore, be it

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

3               (1) it is the policy of the United States to en-  
4       sure and promote the full, equal, meaningful, and ef-  
5       fective participation of women in all aspects of over-  
6       seas conflict prevention, management, and resolu-  
7       tion, and postconflict relief and recovery efforts;

1           (2) it is the policy of the United States to work  
2 toward preventing the use of gender-based violence  
3 in armed conflict and work toward ensuring account-  
4 ability for victims and survivors of gender-based vio-  
5 lence;

6           (3) it is the policy of the United States to pro-  
7 mote the principles espoused in United Nations Se-  
8 curity Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women,  
9 peace, and security, and all subsequent United Na-  
10 tions Security Council resolutions on women, peace,  
11 and security;

12           (4) the United States should adopt, as a pre-  
13 condition for the achievement of our wider foreign  
14 development, assistance, and security policy objec-  
15 tives, a feminist foreign policy, defined as a strategy  
16 that places the promotion of gender equality and the  
17 empowerment of women and girls at the center of its  
18 initiatives and investment and that focuses on pro-  
19 moting the rights of women and girls, challenging  
20 gender-based discrimination, and fighting gender in-  
21 equality, which includes preventing gender-based vio-  
22 lence and all forms of conflict-related sexual vio-  
23 lence; and

24           (5) the United States should—

1 (A) respect, protect, and fulfill the rights  
2 of women and girls to bodily autonomy;

3 (B) support all future efforts by inter-  
4 national institutions and organizations to en-  
5 sure universal access to comprehensive sexual  
6 and reproductive health information and serv-  
7 ices, free of discrimination, coercion, and vio-  
8 lence;

9 (C) update and implement the United  
10 States National Action Plan on Women, Peace,  
11 and Security, to include an increased focus on  
12 the full health of women and girls, including  
13 sexual and reproductive health and rights;

14 (D) actively support and promote inter-  
15 national efforts to prioritize the rights and  
16 needs of women and girls and ensure their full,  
17 equal, meaningful, and effective participation in  
18 all areas that affect them; and

19 (E) create an enabling environment to—

20 (i) ensure that women and girls  
21 human rights defenders can perform their  
22 important role of holding the government  
23 accountable to its legal obligations under  
24 international law, including under inter-  
25 national human rights law;

1           (ii) prevent violations, abuses, threats,  
2 harassment, and violence against women  
3 and girls human rights defenders, who face  
4 particular risk because of their gender and  
5 their work;

6           (iii) combat impunity by ensuring that  
7 those responsible for violations and abuses,  
8 including gender-based violence and  
9 threats against women and girls human  
10 rights defenders, committed by state and  
11 nonstate actors, including online, are  
12 promptly brought to justice through impar-  
13 tial investigations; and

14           (iv) ensure accountability by respect-  
15 ing, protecting, and fulfilling victims' and  
16 survivors' right to an effective remedy.

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