

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 192

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States condemns the Russian Government's gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity, stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and supports the efforts of international organizations to help people displaced by war and conflict.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 1, 2023

Mr. ESPAILLAT (for himself and Mr. CICILLINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States condemns the Russian Government's gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity, stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and supports the efforts of international organizations to help people displaced by war and conflict.

Whereas the Government of Russia, led by Vladimir Putin, has engaged in an unprovoked military invasion of Ukraine and gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity;

Whereas the law of armed conflict, also known as international humanitarian law, is a set of international rules regulating the conduct of armed conflict;

Whereas the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols are the core of international humanitarian law, and many rules contained in these treaties are considered customary international law, binding on all states, whether or not they have ratified the treaties;

Whereas Russia's military invasion of Ukraine constitutes an international armed conflict governed by international humanitarian law as well as customary international humanitarian law;

Whereas Article 51(2) of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, prohibits the targeting of civilians, as well as "acts or threats of violence, the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population";

Whereas Article 76 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, states that women "shall be protected in particular against rape, forced prostitution, and any other form of indecent assault";

Whereas Article 77 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions expresses that "children shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected against any form of indecent assault";

Whereas, on June 19, 2008, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1820, noting that "rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide", and calling for "prosecuting persons responsible for such acts";

Whereas Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court defines “crimes against humanity” as acts such as murder, extermination, rape, persecution, and all other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, which are committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack;

Whereas Article 53 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, prohibits committing any “acts of hostility directed against the historic monuments, works of art or places of worship which constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples”;

Whereas Article 15 of Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions, establishes that installations containing dangerous forces, including nuclear electrical generating stations, “shall not be made the object of attack, even where these objects are military objectives, if such attack may cause the release of dangerous forces and consequent severe losses among the civilian population”;

Whereas, on February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation launched an unprovoked military invasion of Ukraine’s sovereign territory;

Whereas, on February 25, 2022, the Russian Federation threatened Sweden and Finland with military and political repercussions if they joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a military alliance committed to the collective defense of members against attacks;

Whereas, on February 28, 2022, the United Nations World Food Programme launched an emergency operation to provide food assistance for people fleeing Ukraine to

neighboring countries, an operation which is ongoing to this day and which has assisted between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 Ukrainians per month during each month of the war;

Whereas, in late February 2022, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization began its ongoing effort to help coordinate Ukraine's requests for assistance and to support Allies in the delivery of humanitarian aid;

Whereas, on March 1, 2022, a Russian airstrike hit Kyiv's main television tower, damaging broadcasting infrastructure, killing at least 5 people, and injuring others;

Whereas, on March 1, 2022, a Russian airstrike targeted Freedom Square in Kharkiv, as cars were stopped at a traffic light on their morning commute;

Whereas Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy characterized Russia's airstrike on Freedom Square on March 1, 2022, as a "war crime";

Whereas, on March 1, 2022, at the United Nations Human Rights Council, Secretary of State Antony Blinken condemned Russia for killing civilians, striking "schools, hospitals and residential buildings" in Ukraine;

Whereas, on March 1, 2022, Andriy Yermak, head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, announced that a Russian missile hit the location of the Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial complex in Kyiv, a place where thousands of Jewish people were killed between 1941 and 1943;

Whereas, on March 1, 2022, a Russian missile hit Freedom Square in the center of Kharkiv, Ukraine, causing severe damage to an opera house, concert hall, and government offices;

Whereas, on March 1, 2022, President Zelenskyy expressed to the European Parliament, “we are fighting for our rights, for our freedoms, for life, for our life, and now we are fighting for survival”;

Whereas, on March 1, 2022, a global spokesperson for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Shabia Mantoo, announced that the UNHCR would begin coordinating a refugee response plan with other United Nations agencies and nongovernmental organization partners, in support of national authorities helping people fleeing Ukraine, a response plan which includes almost 250 partner organizations and which has assisted millions of Ukrainians over course of the past year;

Whereas, on March 1, 2022, the United Nations and humanitarian partners launched coordinated emergency appeals to urgently deliver humanitarian support to people in Ukraine and refugees in neighboring countries;

Whereas United States ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield expressed to the United Nations on March 2, 2022, that videos showed Russian forces moving lethal weaponry into Ukraine, including cluster munitions and vacuum bombs, which are banned under the Geneva Conventions;

Whereas, on March 2, 2022, Ukraine’s foreign ministry reported that a Russian missile strike destroyed the Pavlusenko maternity hospital;

Whereas, on March 2, 2022, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) overwhelmingly voted to condemn Russia for its military invasion of Ukraine and demanded that the Russian Federation immediately, completely, and un-

conditionally withdraw all its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, a vote which was repeated by the UNGA on February 23, 2023, and which once again overwhelmingly condemned the Russian Federation;

Whereas, on March 3, 2022, Ukrainian President Zelenskyy accused Russian forces of “nuclear terror” because “Russian tanks are shooting at the nuclear blocks” in the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station, Europe’s largest nuclear power station;

Whereas, on March 3, 2022, the United States embassy in Ukraine called the Russian attack on the Ukrainian nuclear plant in Zaporizhzhia a “war crime”;

Whereas, on March 4, 2022, Ukraine’s Minister of Foreign Affairs accused Russian soldiers of raping women in Ukrainian cities;

Whereas, on March 5, 2022, the World Health Organization confirmed several Russian attacks on health care centers in Ukraine, causing multiple deaths and injuries;

Whereas, on March 6, 2022, in response to Russian attacks on Ukrainian health care facilities, the Director-General of the World Health Organization expressed that “attacks on healthcare facilities or workers breach medical neutrality and are violations of international humanitarian law”;

Whereas, on March 6, 2022, the UNHCR stated that Russia’s war in Ukraine had created the fastest growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War II;

Whereas, on April 3, 2022, Ukraine’s Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk announced that Russian troops occupying the Ukrainian village of Motyzhyn had kidnaped,

tortured, and killed the village's mayor, Olga Sukhenko, Sukhenko's husband, and Sukhenko's son before disposing of their bodies in a shallow grave;

Whereas, on April 4, 2022, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy characterized Russian troops' actions in Bucha, Ukraine, as "genocide" and "war crimes" when the bodies of over 400 executed civilians were discovered in the city, with many of these bodies displaying visible signs of torture;

Whereas, on April 8, 2022, a Russian cluster munition strike on the train station in Kramatorsk, Ukraine, killed 58 civilians, many of whom were gathered at the train station to board evacuation trains and flee the ongoing fighting;

Whereas, on May 12, 2022, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution expressing "deep concern at the grave human rights and humanitarian situation in the city of Mariupol, the near total destruction of its residential and civilian infrastructure caused by Russian bombing and shelling, reports of tens of thousands of civilian casualties and of mass graves near the city, and the limited progress in securing safe and unhindered evacuations to safe areas under the control of the government of Ukraine";

Whereas, on October 18, 2022, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine published a report stating that "the Commission has found that war crimes and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law have been committed in Ukraine since 24 February 2022. Russian armed forces are responsible for the vast majority of the violations identified";

Whereas, on October 18, 2022, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine’s report revealed that “the Commission documented patterns of summary executions, unlawful confinement, torture, ill-treatment, and rape and other sexual violence committed in areas occupied by Russian armed forces across the four [Ukrainian] provinces on which [the Commission’s inquiry] focused. People have been detained, some have been unlawfully deported to the Russian Federation, and many are still reported missing. Sexual violence has affected victims of all ages. Victims, including children, were sometimes forced to witness the crimes”;

Whereas, as of January 31, 2023, the UNHCR asserts that, as a result of the war in Ukraine, more than 8,000,000 Ukrainian refugees have been recorded across Europe and approximately 17,600,000 people remain in need of urgent humanitarian assistance inside Ukraine; and

Whereas, on February 14, 2023, the Ukraine Conflict Observatory, which was launched by the Department of State, found, using data from the Yale School of Public Health’s Humanitarian Research Lab, that the Russian Government is operating an expansive network of “re-education camps” where it has held thousands of Ukrainian children since the start of the war, with the primary purpose of these camps being the “political re-education” of Ukrainian children: Now, therefore, be it

- 1        *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2            (1) forcefully condemns the continued use of
- 3        unlawful and indiscriminate violence against civilian
- 4        populations by the Government of Russia, its allies,
- 5        and any other parties to the conflict;



1           (2) urges that the global community hold Vladi-  
2           mir Putin and the Russian Government accountable  
3           for war crimes committed during the military inva-  
4           sion of Ukraine;

5           (3) urges the United States and its allies to  
6           continue providing defense security assistance and  
7           humanitarian aid to Ukraine as Ukrainians valiantly  
8           defend themselves against Russia’s military invasion;

9           (4) supports the continued use of sanctions  
10          against Russia and its allies until Russia ends its  
11          military invasion and unequivocally recognizes  
12          Ukraine’s internationally recognized borders and po-  
13          litical independence;

14          (5) urges the United States to maintain support  
15          for international organizations, such as the United  
16          Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, helping  
17          Ukrainians fleeing conflict as well as the over  
18          100,000,000 people around the world who are forc-  
19          ibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, violence,  
20          and human rights violations;

21          (6) urges the United States to treat all forcibly  
22          displaced people with dignity and abide by the Pro-  
23          tocol Related to the Status of Refugees, ratified by  
24          the Senate in 1968, and thereafter considered the

1 “supreme Law of the Land” under article VI, sec-  
2 tion 2 of the Constitution;

3 (7) urges the United States and members of the  
4 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to  
5 meet NATO’s funding needs to ensure the ability to  
6 provide collective defense and innovation;

7 (8) urges NATO to maintain its commitment to  
8 innovating and work towards solving and dealing  
9 with emerging and disruptive technologies; and

10 (9) stands in solidarity with the people of  
11 Ukraine who are fighting for their freedom and de-  
12 moeracy, Slava Ukraini, glory to Ukraine.

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