

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 590

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding calling on the President to direct the United States Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of an appropriate regional or international justice mechanism through the United Nations and United Nations General Assembly to investigate and prosecute possible war crimes, crimes against humanity, and violations of internationally recognized human rights stemming from the conflict in Syria, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 13, 2023

Ms. TLAIB (for herself and Ms. OMAR) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding calling on the President to direct the United States Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of an appropriate regional or international justice mechanism through the United Nations and United Nations General Assembly to investigate and prosecute possible war crimes, crimes against humanity, and violations of internationally recognized human rights stemming from the conflict in Syria, and for other purposes.

Whereas the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10th, 1948, with the support of 48 countries including Syria, enshrines the fundamental and inviolable rights and freedoms of all human beings;

Whereas the Syrian Arab Republic is a State Party to the following core international human rights instruments:

(1) The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

(2) The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

(3) The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

(4) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

(5) The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

(6) The Convention on the Rights of the Child.

(7) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

(8) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography.

(9) The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

(10) The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

(11) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

Whereas significant volumes of publicly accessible information exist indicating that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, led by the dictator Bashar al-Assad, has violated significant portions of the aforementioned agreements, as well as the Geneva Conventions, during the conflict in Syria that began in 2011 and continues to this day;

Whereas the international community has previously established ad hoc tribunals and special courts and other justice mechanisms through the United Nations to bring justice in specific countries where there have been war crimes; and

Whereas various tribunals, including the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, have successfully investigated and prosecuted war crimes, and there are many positive lessons to be learned from these 3 ad hoc tribunals: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) the United States should publicly declare
4 that it is a requirement of basic justice that viola-
5 tions of internationally recognized human rights,
6 international law, war crimes, and crimes against
7 humanity should be investigated and prosecuted;

8 (2) the President should direct the United
9 States Representative to the United Nations to use
10 the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to

1 immediately promote the establishment of an inter-
2 national justice mechanism for war crimes, crimes
3 against humanity, and other violations of inter-
4 nationally recognized human rights, and to prosecute
5 the alleged perpetrators of such serious crimes com-
6 mitted during the period of conflict in the Syrian
7 Arab Republic;

8 (3) in working with other countries to establish
9 this regional or international justice mechanism, the
10 United States should assist all its partners in this
11 effort to develop judicial procedures that enable the
12 fair and open prosecution of those persons accused
13 of perpetrating such serious crimes;

14 (4) the United States should encourage, sup-
15 port, and collect any and all information that can be
16 supplied to an appropriate regional or international
17 justice mechanism regarding possible war crimes,
18 crimes against humanity, and violations of inter-
19 nationally recognized human rights for use as evi-
20 dence to support the indictment and trial of any per-
21 sons responsible; and

22 (5) the United States should urge all other in-
23 terested states to apprehend and deliver into the
24 custody of an appropriate regional or justice mecha-
25 nism for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and

1 violations of internationally recognized human rights
2 persons indicted for international crimes and urge
3 all interested states to provide any and all data and
4 information pertaining to such crimes to that justice
5 mechanism.

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