

119TH CONGRESS
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H. RES. 525

Affirming the role of the United States in eliminating sexual violence in conflict.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 20, 2025

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

RESOLUTION

Affirming the role of the United States in eliminating sexual violence in conflict.

Whereas sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war throughout history, whether to subjugate, terrorize, or ethnically cleanse populations;

Whereas the term “conflict-related sexual violence” refers to any form of sexual violence perpetrated against an individual that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict, such as rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage;

Whereas the occurrence of conflict-related sexual violence directly correlates with the resurgence of hostilities, militarization, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, mass population displacement, the rise of violent ex-

tremism, the collapse of the rule of law and social support systems, and a climate of impunity;

Whereas conflict-related sexual violence has been considered a war crime, crime against humanity, and an act of genocide and torture under international jurisprudence;

Whereas, despite the numerous international resolutions, conventions, and treaties, sexual violence continues to occur in many conflicts across the world with almost total impunity;

Whereas recent conflicts have demonstrated that conflict related sexual violence remains a significant risk in any conflict and the United States Government has previously determined that armed groups have engaged in widespread sexual violence;

Whereas, in 2023, 3,688 verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence were committed, representing a 50-percent increase from previous reporting;

Whereas conflict-related sexual violence remains under-reported due to social stigma, lack of accessible services, and the impunity of perpetrators. For each case of conflict-related rape that is reported, an estimated 10 to 20 are not reported;

Whereas, in 2023, women and girls accounted for 95 percent of the reported cases of conflict-related sexual violence;

Whereas, in 2023, more than 1,470 cases were reported of conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated against children, with many cases going unreported;

Whereas 72 million children live near armed groups that perpetrate sexual violence against them;

Whereas sexual violence against children can be damaging to their physical and mental health, in the near- and long-term, and can prevent them from reaching their full potential;

Whereas conflict-related sexual violence is also targeted at men and boys, though high stigma leads to under-reporting of conflict-related sexual violence against men and boys and a lack of recognition and sufficient support for survivors;

Whereas an individual's perceived sex, ethnicity, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, or displacement status may increase their vulnerability to becoming a target of conflict-related sexual violence;

Whereas addressing the substantial gaps in the areas of prevention, accountability, and compliance, are critical to promoting sustainable peace;

Whereas many prescribed prevention measures, such as legal protections, codes of conduct for armed groups, early warning systems, and accountability measures are inadequately implemented and enforced;

Whereas prevention measures should be considered a peace and security imperative that can help reduce the occurrence and reoccurrence of armed conflicts;

Whereas access to safe and effective health care, protection, shelters, reporting mechanisms, are essential to meeting the needs of survivors, and preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence;

Whereas rendering justice to survivors is a precondition for lasting reconciliation and peace to take hold;

Whereas the lack of accountability for perpetrators emboldens them to strike again, perpetuating and encouraging vi-

cious cycles of sexual violence even when a country emerges from conflict;

Whereas conflict-related sexual violence fosters global instability, exacerbates humanitarian crises, and hinders long-term peace, while effective prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence makes the United States, and communities around the world, safer, stronger, and more prosperous;

Whereas the United States recognizes that successfully preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence requires meaningful participation of women in peace and security processes;

Whereas the United States has served as a global leader in efforts to promote and elevate women's participation in economic, civic, and security decision-making and peace processes; and

Whereas, in 2015, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed June 19 of each year the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict to raise awareness of the need to put an end to conflict-related sexual violence, to honor the victims and survivors, and to pay tribute to all those who have devoted their lives to standing up for the eradication of these crimes: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) affirms the leadership and commitment of
3 the United States Government in efforts to prevent
4 and respond to conflict-related sexual violence and to
5 support and protect all survivors of conflict-related
6 sexual violence;

1 (2) recognizes that accountability for the per-
2 petration of conflict-related sexual violence is impor-
3 tant for comprehensive and lasting peace agree-
4 ments;

5 (3) calls on the United States to ensure mecha-
6 nisms to hold perpetrators of sexual violence ac-
7 countable are included in peacebuilding resolutions
8 and processes, and that women participate in such
9 peace processes in accordance with the Women,
10 Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–
11 68);

12 (4) calls on the United States to commit to
13 strengthening justice for all conflict-related sexual
14 violence survivors;

15 (5) stands in solidarity with the survivors of
16 conflict-related sexual violence, and those working to
17 support them, to ensure survivors are not forgotten
18 and get the care they need and deserve.

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