

MARKUP OF H. CON. RES. 102, H. CON. RES.
188, H. CON. RES. 46 AND H. CON. RES. 20

MARKUP
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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**MARKUP OF H. CON. RES. 102, H. CON. RES.
188, H. CON. RES. 46 AND H. CON. RES. 20**

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1999

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:10 p.m. In Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Benjamin A. Gilman (Chairman of the Committee) Presiding.

Chairman GILMAN. The Committee will come to order.

The Committee on International Relations meets today in open session pursuant to notice to mark up several resolutions.

We will first consider H. Con. Res. 102 relating to the International Red Cross. The Chair lays the resolution before the Committee. Clerk will report the title of the resolution.

Members will please take their seats.

Ms. BLOOMER. House Concurrent Resolution 102, Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and recognizing the humanitarian safeguards these treaties provide in times of armed conflict.

Chairman GILMAN. This resolution was referred to the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights but was not acted upon. Without objection, the preamble and operative language of the resolution will be read in that order for amendment. The clerk will read.

Ms. BLOOMER. Whereas the Geneva Conventions of 1949 set basic humane—

Chairman GILMAN. Without objection, the resolution is considered as having been read, and it is open to amendment at any point.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Chairman GILMAN. This resolution was introduced by the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Johnson.

I now recognize myself on the resolution.

H. Con. Res. 102, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, recognizes the important contribution the Geneva Conventions of 1949 have made to international humanitarian law. Last August, we observed the 50th anniversary of these treaties. During this century, we have seen the scope and devastation of conflict and warfare reach hitherto unimaginable bounds where virtually every individual of a society involved in war is affected. In order to ameliorate and to the greatest extent possible mitigate the horrible devastation of modern warfare, the states

parties to the Geneva Conventions have undertaken to recognize certain limitations and to humanize the laws of war.

Are there any Members seeking recognition or seeking to offer amendments? Any Members seeking to make any comments?

If not, the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. Bereuter, is recognized to offer a motion.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Chairman be requested to seek consideration of the pending resolution on the suspension calendar.

Chairman GILMAN. The question is on a motion by the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. Bereuter. All those in favor of the motion, signify by saying aye. All those opposed, say no.

The ayes have it. The motion is agreed to. Further proceedings on this measure are postponed.

We will now consider H. Con. Res. 188 relating to Greece and Turkey. The Chair lays the resolution before the Committee. The Clerk will report the title of the resolution.

Ms. BLOOMER. House Concurrent Resolution 188, a Concurrent Resolution commending Greece and Turkey for their mutual and swift response to the recent earthquakes in both countries by providing to each other humanitarian assistance and rescue relief.

Chairman GILMAN. This resolution is in the jurisdiction of the Full Committee. Without objection, the preamble and operative language of the resolution will be read in that order for amendment. The Clerk will read.

Ms. BLOOMER. Whereas Greece and Turkey, two long-standing allies of the United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organization—

Chairman GILMAN. Without objection, the resolution is considered as having been read and is open to amendment at any point.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Chairman GILMAN. This amendment was introduced by the distinguished gentleman from Florida, Mr. Bilirakis, and several other distinguished Members, including Mr. Burton and other cosponsors.

I recognize myself for discussion on the proposal.

The earthquake which devastated Turkey last August produced a swift reaction in neighboring Greece. Putting aside bitter and long-standing political differences, the people and government of Greece responded to their neighbor's plight with generous humanitarian assistance and support. The significance of Greece's response did not go unnoticed or unwelcomed in Turkey, as the Turkish government as well as media commented very positively about Greece's quick response to the tragedy.

In September, a strong but fortunately less destructive earthquake struck Athens, and Turkey was the first country to send assistance in the form of search and rescue teams to locate survivors. In the aftermath of these two natural disasters, the Greek and Turkish foreign ministers have met and agreed to continue discussions building on the new-found goodwill between the Greek and Turkish people aimed at resolving the issues that have produced tensions between these two NATO allies of the United States.

I commend the co-chairs of our Hellenic Issues Caucus, Mr. Bilirakis, the gentleman from Florida, and Ms. Maloney, the

gentle lady from New York, for recognizing the significance of this thaw in the relations between our two important allies in the eastern Mediterranean and for their initiatives which put the Congress on record in support of continuing the dialogue between Greece and Turkey so that all outstanding differences can be resolved.

I should also note that Mr. Burton of Indiana, a Senior Member of this Committee, who has supported a balanced approach to Greece and Turkey in the Committee and in the Congress is also an original co-sponsor of this resolution.

Our government should do everything to assist and encourage this process of reconciliation between Greece and Turkey. I urge the Committee to unanimously adopt H. Con. Res. 188.

Mr. Bereuter.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your excellent statement, and I would like to associate myself with it. If staff finds it possible, I would like to be added as a co-sponsor for the resolution.

Chairman GILMAN. Without objection.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Those of us that are friends of Greece and Turkey have noted for so many years the friction, to say the least, that has existed between Greece and Turkey during the NATO meetings in the North Atlantic Assembly, friction related to Turkey's interest in joining the European Union. But sometimes adversity brings people and countries together, and it seems that the government of Greece deserves particular commendation for initiating assistance to Turkey in the wake of the tragic earthquakes. Of course, as you pointed out, then Turkey responded to what was fortunately a less devastating earthquake in Greece.

I think the government of Greece is demonstrating that it is interested in pursuing more positive relationships with Turkey, and Turkey has gratefully and gracefully responded.

I noted also that Turkey was among the first countries to send earthquake relief to Taiwan, even though they certainly have their hands full at home with the aftermath of the tragedy. It is entirely appropriate that our colleagues are commending these two countries for the thaw in relationships and their response to each other's tragedies. I hope that it is an indication of more positive things to come.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Bereuter.

Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to stand in strong support of this resolution. I think both nations certainly put aside some of the grievances, some of the differences that we have seen in regard to the Cyprus question and that both countries came and showed their humanitarian assistance with swift action. Hopefully actions of this nature perhaps can be built on where both countries could see the differences between them, especially on the issue of Cyprus, are very limited, especially since Cypriots—all are Cypriots first, just about, and had been Greek and Turkish secondarily up until the 1974–1973 invasion.

I would like to commend Mr. Bereuter and certainly urge all of us to support that issue. Thank you.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

Any other Members seeking recognition?

If not, the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. Bereuter, is recognized to offer a motion.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, I move the Chairman be requested to seek consideration of the pending resolution on the suspension calendar.

Chairman GILMAN. The question is now on the motion of the gentleman from Nebraska. All those in favor of the motion, signify by saying aye. Those opposed, say no.

The ayes have it. The motion is agreed to. Further proceedings on this measure are postponed.

We will now consider H. Con. Res. 46 relating to the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The Chair lays the resolution before the Committee. The Clerk will report the title of the resolution.

Ms. BLOOMER. House Concurrent Resolution 46, a Concurrent Resolution urging an end of the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia and calling on the United Nations Human Rights Commission and other human rights organizations to investigate human rights abuses in Congress in connection with the Eritrean and Ethiopian conflict.

Chairman GILMAN. This resolution was reported favorably without amendment by the Subcommittee on Africa. Without objection, the preamble and operative language of the resolution will be read in that order for amendment. The Clerk will read.

Ms. BLOOMER. Whereas peace and stability existed between Eritrea and Ethiopia following the 1991 ouster of the Mengistu—

Chairman GILMAN. Without objection, the resolution is considered as having been read and is open to amendment at any point. [The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Chairman GILMAN. The Chairman recognizes the distinguished Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, the gentleman from California, Mr. Royce, to introduce a resolution.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As you mentioned, this resolution was marked up last week by the Africa Subcommittee. What this resolution does is urges an end to the 17-month civil war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. That war has now cost the lives of some 70,000 young men and women slaughtered in trench warfare.

This resolution also calls for an investigation of human rights abuses in connection with the conflict. Hopefully, this resolution will help to bring home to both sides of the conflict that Congress has lost patience with the intransigence that keeps this war going. It is a war that neither side can afford. This legislation recognizes the Organization for African Unity framework which both sides claim to accept and provides an equitable basis to end the devastating conflict, and I would like to commend its author, Mr. Campbell.

I have said civil war. I stand corrected in that. It is a war between people who were both once of one country, but this is one of the most tragic conflicts we have seen today.

I want to thank Mr. Campbell, and I want to thank the other Members of the Subcommittee and urge its passage.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Royce.

Mr. Campbell?

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Chairman, I think the Ranking Member might be more the appropriate to recognize first. I will take my place in my seniority.

Chairman GILMAN. Sorry. Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Campbell.

Let me just say that, as we speak today, the Prime Minister of Algeria is convening a meeting trying to bring both sides together. I had the privilege to meet with the Honorable Dawit Johannes this morning, the Speaker of the House of the People's Republic of Ethiopia. At that meeting I was urging, although Ethiopia has now—Ethiopia originally agreed to the OAU framework which Eritrea initially did not agree to, now Eritrea is willing to accept the framework of the OAU but Ethiopia is unwilling.

I think we do have to recall that it was Ethiopia that first agreed 7 or 8 months ago to the framework which said that they would have to move back to their positions before May 6th in the Bodme bottom—A area to have a withdrawal of belligerents out of the region, out of the area at that time. Eritrea did not agree. They now agree, but I think Ethiopia has moved them out of the region and feels that they should have agreed to it 9 months ago when we agreed to it. But I think whoever agreed to it first and now that both sides have said they would agree to it just at different times, I think that they must put down these weapons of war and come together to see a cease-fire. Neither one can afford it, as has been mentioned.

Isaias Afwerki and Meles Zenawi are "relatives" I understand. It makes no sense that 70,000 lives have been lost. We were looking toward Ethiopia and Eritrea as the future of Africa with new, young, intelligent, vibrant leaders very concerned about their people, and this conflict has certainly thrown a blanket over those statements, and so we urge the support of this resolution.

Thank you.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

Mr. Campbell?

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Chairman, the two previous speakers have eloquently stated the case. I have nothing further to add except a word of deep thanks first to my colleague from California, Mr. Royce, who has been a masterful Chairman of the Africa Subcommittee. But for his willingness and leadership we would not have this resolution before us.

Thanks to my good friend and colleague, Mr. Payne.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I will make this very quick as well, Mr. Chairman.

I salute Congressman Royce. He has done a terrific job as Chairman of the Subcommittee.

Let me just enter one note for the record. Chairman Royce and I have a constituent in Orange County who is an Eritrean who has had property in Ethiopia confiscated. We are watching this very closely, and this needs to go on the record. There have been human rights abuses by the Ethiopian government. If they claim they are

putting this aside, we expect them to treat people fairly, especially when they have U.S. citizens in their family who live in my constituency.

Chairman GILMAN. I would just like to add that this is the same thing that many of us have been saying to the embassies of both countries for many months; the war must end.

I commend the gentleman for introducing the measure.

Are there any Members seeking recognition to offer amendments on this?

If not, the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. Bereuter, is recognized to offer a motion.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, I move the Chairman be requested to seek consideration of the pending resolution on the suspension calendar.

Chairman GILMAN. The question is now on the motion from the gentleman from Nebraska. All those in favor of the motion, say aye. The opposed, no.

The ayes have it. The motion is agreed to. Further proceedings on this measure are postponed.

I recognize the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Burton.

Mr. BURTON. I will be brief. I know we have a vote pending on the floor, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to say I was not here when we passed H. Con. Res. 188. I want to congratulate both Turkey and Greece on their humanitarian efforts with one another. Hopefully, our resolution will help spur more cooperation along that line in the future.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Burton. We will include your remarks at the appropriate place in the record.

We have one more resolution. We will now consider H. Con. Res. 20 relating to the northern part of Somalia. The Chair lays the resolution before the Committee. The Clerk will report the title of the resolution.

Ms. BLOOMER. House Concurrent Resolution 20, Concerning economic, humanitarian and other assistance to the northern part of Somalia.

Chairman GILMAN. This resolution was reported favorably without amendment by the Subcommittee on Africa. Without objection, the preamble and operative language of the resolution will be read in that order for amendment. The Clerk will read.

Ms. BLOOMER. Whereas the area in the northern part of Somalia, referred to as Somaliland—

Chairman GILMAN. Without objection, the resolution is considered as having been read and is open to amendment at any point.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Chairman GILMAN. I now recognize the distinguished Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, the gentleman from California, Mr. Royce, to introduce the resolution.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank Mr. Campbell because this resolution draws much-needed attention to Somalia which, frankly, has ceased to exist as a nation as a result of fighting between factions led by self-serving warlords.

This resolution recognizes that the northern part of Somalia has achieved a significant level of economic and social stability, and

this should be commended. The resolution, however, should not be construed as calling for diplomatic recognition of Somaliland. In fact, the resolution calls for all Somali parties to work with the international community to achieve a permanent end to the civil strife there and the adoption of a permanent government structure most conducive to the well-being and basic human rights of all Somali people. I would like to commend Mr. Campbell for authoring and Mr. Payne, the Ranking Member of the Africa Subcommittee, for co-sponsoring this resolution.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Royce.

Mr. Payne?

Mr. PAYNE. I yield to Mr. Campbell this time, and then I will take up the second part if we don't have enough time.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Thanks very much.

Thank you, Mr. Payne, for your leadership in the area and for working so carefully with me on this.

Again, my thanks to Chairman Royce for scheduling this, for allowing this to be considered and mostly to you, Chairman Gilman, who scheduled this in such a time that it might be coincident with the visit of President Egal of Somaliland.

I would simply add there is nothing in the resolution one way or the other. It is neutral on the question of recognition. Its purpose is to help people in need.

I yield back.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Payne?

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

I also appreciate the introduction of this resolution by the Chairman. Mr. Royce has done an outstanding job.

Mr. Campbell and I had the opportunity to travel to Somaliland. We saw the difference of Somaliland from the trips that I have taken to Mogadishu in Somalia. Schools are working. Hospitals are working. They have a semblance of order.

As you know, Somaliland and Somalia were forced together, both under different colonial leaders, colonial powers, and the whole system was different; and Somaliland has a leg up because they were self-governing where Somalia was still governed by the colonial people. I certainly support this. Regarding the this whole question of whether recognition should happen, I would certainly be in favor of having that discussion at some other time. But as my colleague certainly drew out, this does not talk about recognition, it just talks about support.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

The story of the Islamic fundamentalist regime of Sudan toward our Nation, a regrettably ongoing war between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the violent clashes between the warlords in southern Somalia all bear watching. Because of these problems it is in our National interest to identify those portions of the horn that have demonstrated a degree of stability and governance and encourage northern Somalia and particularly the area once defined as the British protector of Somaliland as one such area.

The resolution which Mr. Campbell and Mr. Payne introduced after their visit to the region is a modest effort in that regard, and I support the resolution.

Are there any other Members seeking recognition or offering amendments?

If not, the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. Bereuter, is recognized to offer a motion.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, I move the Chairman be requested to seek consideration of the pending resolution on the suspension calendar.

Chairman GILMAN. The question is on the motion by the gentleman from Nebraska. All those in favor of the motion, say aye. Those opposed, say no.

The ayes have it. The motion is agreed to. Further proceedings on this measure are postponed.

The Committee is now adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 2:30 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

OCTOBER 19, 1999

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 102

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and recognizing the humanitarian safeguards these treaties provide in times of armed conflict.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 6, 1999

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas submitted the following concurrent resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and recognizing the humanitarian safeguards these treaties provide in times of armed conflict.

Whereas the Geneva Conventions of 1949 set basic humane standards of behavior during armed conflict, and are the major written source of international humanitarian law;

Whereas these Conventions prescribe humane treatment for civilian populations, wounded, sick and shipwrecked military personnel, and prisoners of war during armed conflict;

Whereas these Conventions recognize the International Committee of the Red Cross as an independent and neutral organization whose humanitarian mission is to protect

and assist civilians, prisoners of war, and other victims of armed conflict;

Whereas “the red cross in a field of white” is not an ordinary organizational symbol, but one to which the international community has granted the ability to impose restraint during war and to protect human life;

Whereas the American Red Cross and its sister national societies are members of a world-wide organization rooted in the provisions of international humanitarian law and dedicated to the promulgation of its principles, among which are the Geneva Conventions of 1949;

Whereas the international programs of the American Red Cross bring relief from natural and manmade disasters abroad, contribute to the development of nonprofit relief organizations abroad, and include the teaching of international humanitarian law throughout the United States;