

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3017

Calling for ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights  
of the Child.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 9, 1997

Mr. SANDERS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

Calling for ratification of the United Nations Convention  
on the Rights of the Child.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Rights of the Child  
5 Act of 1997”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) The United States is the only Western in-  
9 dustrialized nation which has neither ratified nor be-

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1       come a party to the United Nations Convention on  
2       the Rights of the Child.

3           (2) During the 1990's, the United States had  
4       the worst child poverty rate among Western indus-  
5       trialized nations: one-quarter of America's children  
6       lived in poverty.

7           (3) One in 10 infants living in the United  
8       States has no routine source of health care.

9           (4) Forty percent of children in the United  
10      States are at risk of school failure.

11          (5) An estimated 1,800,000 teenagers were vic-  
12      tims of violent crimes in the United States in the  
13      early 1990's.

14          (6) 2,600,000 children were reported abused  
15      and neglected in 1991.

16          (7) Approximately 144,000 babies will die in  
17      the United States, over the next 4 years, before their  
18      1st birthday.

19   **SEC. 3. SUBMISSION OF UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON**  
20                           **THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.**

21       It is the sense of the Congress that the President  
22      should submit and seek the advice and consent of the Sen-  
23      ate by December 31, 1998, to ratification of the Conven-  
24      tion on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United  
25      Nations with the support of the United States on Novem-

ber 29, 1989, and signed by Madeleine Albright acting as United States Delegate to the United Nations and on behalf of the United States Government on February 16, 1995.

**SEC. 4. CONSULTATION WITH THE STATES.**

Prior to the submission under section 3, the Attorney General of the United States shall meet with the attorneys general of the States and territories of the United States for the purpose of determining their recommendations concerning any limitations in the form of reservations, declarations, statements, and understandings that should accompany a proposed resolution of ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an advisory commission concerning the economic, social, cultural, political, and civil rights of children.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The commission shall be composed of 11 persons, appointed as provided under subsection (c), with experience, expertise, and concerns pertaining to the economic, social, cultural, political, and civil rights of children as well as individuals who are parents or legal guardians of children.

1       (c) APPOINTMENT.—Not later than March 1, 1998,  
2 the commission of shall be appointed as follows:

3           (1) 5 persons appointed by the President.

4           (2) 1 person appointed by the Speaker of the  
5 House of Representatives.

6           (3) 1 person appointed by the majority leader  
7 of the House of Representatives.

8           (4) 1 person appointed by the majority leader  
9 of the Senate.

10          (5) 1 person appointed by the minority leader  
11 of the Senate.

12          (6) 1 person appointed by the minority leader  
13 of the House of Representatives.

14          (7) The Secretary of Health and Human Serv-  
15 ices (or a designee of the Secretary).

16       (d) CHAIRPERSON.—The President shall designate a  
17 chairperson of the commission.

18       (e) VACANCIES.—Vacancies in the commission shall  
19 be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

20       (f) COMPENSATION.—Members of the commission  
21 shall serve without pay or other compensation.

22       (g) STAFF.—Such staff and administrative support  
23 as are necessary and appropriate shall be made available  
24 to the commission on a non-reimbursable basis by the Sec-  
25 retary of Health and Human Services.

1       (h) REPORT.—Not later than September 1, 1998, the  
2 commission shall submit to the Congress a report with any  
3 recommendations agreed to by a majority of its members  
4 stipulating any limitations to the Convention on the  
5 Rights of the Child that are advisable to facilitate ratifica-  
6 tion.

7       (i) TERMINATION.—Ninety days after the submission  
8 of the report under subsection (h) the commission shall  
9 cease to exist.

10 **SEC. 6. INTERIM MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF INTERNATION-**  
11 **ALLY-RECOGNIZED RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.**

12       (a) ILO.—In addition to such amounts as are other-  
13 wise authorized to be appropriated, there are authorized  
14 to be appropriated \$1,000,000 for each of the fiscal years  
15 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002 for a United States  
16 contribution to the International Labor Organization for  
17 the activities of the International Program on the Elimini-  
18 tion of Child Labor.

19       (b) UNCHR.—In addition to such amounts as are  
20 otherwise authorized to be appropriated, there are author-  
21 ized to be appropriated \$100,000 for each of the fiscal  
22 years 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002 for a United  
23 States contribution to the United Nations Commission on  
24 Human Rights for programs relating to bonded child labor

1 that are carried out by the Subcommittee and Working  
2 Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

3 **SEC. 7. PROHIBITION ON IMPORTATION OF PRODUCTS**  
4 **MADE BY BONDED CHILD LABOR.**

5 (a) PROHIBITION.—No product manufactured or  
6 mined, in whole or in part, by bonded child labor shall  
7 be imported into the United States.

8 (b) REGULATION.—The Secretary of the Treasury, in  
9 consultation with the Secretary of Labor, shall prescribe  
10 such regulations as are necessary and appropriate to  
11 carry out this section.

12 (c) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section the follow-  
13 ing terms have the following meanings:

14 (1) The term “bonded child labor” means work  
15 or service exacted from a child confined against the  
16 child’s will, either in payment for the debts of a par-  
17 ent, relative, or guardian, or drawn under false pre-  
18 text.

19 (2) The term “child” means an individual who  
20 has not attained the age of 18 years.

21 **SEC. 8. PROHIBITION ON ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES THAT**  
22 **ALLOW CHILD PROSTITUTION AND SEXUAL**  
23 **EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN.**

24 (a) PROHIBITION.—United States assistance may not  
25 be provided to the government of a foreign country for

1 a fiscal year unless the President certifies to the Congress  
2 for such fiscal year that such government has enacted, and  
3 is enforcing, laws against child prostitution and the sexual  
4 exploitation of children.

5 (b) WAIVER.—The prohibition on foreign assistance  
6 under subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to a for-  
7 eign country if the President determines and notifies the  
8 Congress that providing such assistance for such country  
9 is in the national security interest of the United States.

10 (c) DEFINITION.—As used in this section, the term  
11 “United States assistance” means assistance under the  
12 Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.).

13 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The prohibition on foreign  
14 assistance under subsection (a) shall apply with respect  
15 to fiscal year 1999 and subsequent fiscal years.

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