

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 419

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the new United Nations Human Rights Council fails to adequately reform the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, thus preventing that body from becoming an effective monitor of human rights throughout the world.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 31, 2006

Mr. FRIST (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the new United Nations Human Rights Council fails to adequately reform the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, thus preventing that body from becoming an effective monitor of human rights throughout the world.

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was created in 1946 to monitor and prevent the abuse of human rights throughout the world;

Whereas, since its creation in 1946, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights failed to consistently uphold the ideals contained in—

- (1) the United Nations Charter; and
- (2) the Universal Declaration on Human Rights;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights had been particularly ineffective because the membership of the commission included some of the worst abusers of human rights in the world, including—

- (1) Cuba;
- (2) Sudan;
- (3) Libya;
- (4) Belarus;
- (5) China; and
- (6) Zimbabwe;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights failed to act or speak out against numerous cases of egregious human rights abuses, including—

- (1) the many abuses of communism;
- (2) the genocide in Rwanda in 1994; and
- (3) the ongoing genocide in Darfur caused by the Government of Sudan;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights failed to condemn countries that sponsor terrorism, including—

- (1) Iran;
- (2) Syria; and
- (3) North Korea;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights had repeatedly singled out Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, for criticism, while overlooking serious human rights abuses throughout that region of the world;

Whereas President Bush and the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, have repeatedly emphasized that meaningful reform of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights is a key element for making the United Nations more accountable, effective, and efficient;

Whereas the creation of the new Human Rights Council on March 15, 2006, failed to address the serious shortcomings of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and fell far short of creating the small standing body composed of appropriate countries that was initially envisioned by the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in his March 2005 report, “In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights For All”;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council succeeds only in making superficial changes to the structure of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council does not—

- (1) embody the recommended institutional reforms necessary to advance human rights;
- (2) monitor cases of human rights abuse throughout the world; and
- (3) prevent egregious human rights violators from being elected to the council;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council only reduces the number of seats on the council from 53 to 47, which is not enough to make the council more efficient or more effective;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council also maintains many geographical quotas that will only ensure that human rights abusers will continue to have access to membership on the council;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council is not supported by some of the leading non-governmental

institutions in the world that are dedicated to the promotion of freedom and human rights;

Whereas the United States, while voting against the resolution creating the United Nations Human Rights Council, was unable to ensure that the council would be structured to best promote and protect human rights around the globe; and

Whereas if the United States, working with other like-minded countries, is not able to adequately reform the corrupt United Nations Human Rights Commission, then the chances for the United States and other like-minded countries to effect the broader changes to the United Nations that are desired and needed to make the institution more effective are much reduced: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) affirms that the United Nations Human
3 Rights Council should be a body that upholds the
4 ideals contained in—

5 (A) the United Nations Charter; and

6 (B) the Universal Declaration on Human
7 Rights;

8 (2) believes that countries charged with pro-
9 tecting the human rights of individuals throughout
10 the world should be required to—

11 (A) hold regular, competitive, and demo-
12 cratic elections;

13 (B) allow for freedom of expression; and

14 (C) have a credible civil society;

1 (3) finds that the creation of the United Na-
2 tions Human Rights Council fails to—

3 (A) adequately reform the United Nations
4 Commission on Human Rights; and

5 (B) prevent the worst abusers of human
6 rights in the world from attaining membership
7 to the council;

8 (4) applauds the Administration for opposing
9 the creation of the new council;

10 (5) believes that the United States should ad-
11 here to its principles and not seek membership on
12 the new council, a move that would undermine the
13 credibility of the United States and give the new
14 council unwarranted legitimacy;

15 (6) urges the Administration to not support the
16 United Nations Human Rights Council, and to advo-
17 cate in favor of the withdrawal of any financial sup-
18 port that would be used to support the council until
19 meaningful reforms are undertaken; and

20 (7) believes the United States should strength-
21 en, deepen, and operationalize the work of the inter-
22 national community of democracies by establishing
23 an effective human rights oversight body outside the
24 United Nations system, so as to make it the primary

- 1 means for examining, exposing, monitoring, and re-
- 2 dressing human rights abuses throughout the world.

