

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 413

Recognizing 20 years since the genocide in Rwanda, and affirming it is in the national interest of the United States to work in close coordination with international partners to help prevent and mitigate acts of genocide and mass atrocities.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 7, 2014

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

APRIL 11, 2014

Reported by Mr. MENENDEZ, without amendment

DECEMBER 9, 2014

Considered, amended, and agreed to with an amended preamble

RESOLUTION

Recognizing 20 years since the genocide in Rwanda, and affirming it is in the national interest of the United States to work in close coordination with international partners to help prevent and mitigate acts of genocide and mass atrocities.

Whereas in the aftermath of the Holocaust, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide declaring that genocide, whether committed in a time of peace or war, is a crime under international law;

Whereas the United States was the first country to sign the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and the Senate voted to ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on February 11, 1986;

Whereas, for approximately 100 days between April 7, 1994, and July 1994, more than 800,000 civilians were killed in a genocide in Rwanda that targeted members of the Tutsi, moderate Hutu, and Twa populations, resulting in the horrific deaths of nearly 70 percent of the Tutsi population living in Rwanda;

Whereas the massacres of innocent Rwandan civilians were premeditated and systematic attempts to eliminate the Tutsi population by Hutu extremists, fueled by hatred and incitement propagated by newspapers and radio;

Whereas in addition to systematic targeting of an ethnic minority in Rwanda resulting in the mass slaughter of innocent civilians, rape was also used as a weapon of war;

Whereas, despite the deployment of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) in October 1993 following the end of the Rwandan Civil War, its mandate was insufficient to ensure the protection of large swathes of the population, demonstrating the inability of the United Nations to effectively respond to the unfolding genocide and stop or mitigate its impact;

Whereas, on July 4, 1994, the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a trained military group consisting of formerly exiled Tutsis, began its takeover of the country, which resulted in an ending of the genocide, though not a complete end to the violence, including retribution;

Whereas, in October 1994, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was established as the first international tribunal with the mandate to prosecute the crime of genocide and ultimately prosecuted 63 individuals for war crimes, including genocide and crimes against humanity as well as the first convictions for rape as a weapon of war;

Whereas the United States Government supports initiatives to ensure that victims of genocide and mass atrocities are not forgotten, and has committed to work with international partners to help prevent genocide and mass atrocities and identify and support a range of actions to protect civilian populations at risk;

Whereas, in July 2004, the Senate adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution 133 and the House of Representatives adopted House Concurrent Resolution 467, declaring that “the atrocities unfolding in Darfur, Sudan, are genocide”, and calling on the United States Government and the international community to take measures to address the situation immediately;

Whereas, in September 2004, the United States Government, in testimony by Secretary of State Colin Powell before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, declared the ongoing conflict in Darfur, Sudan, a “genocide” perpetrated by the government based in Khartoum against its own people and affecting over 2,400,000 people in Sudan, including an estimated 200,000 fatalities;

Whereas, in September 2005, the United States joined other members of the United Nations in adopting United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/1, which affirmed that the international community has a responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other

peaceful means to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity;

Whereas, in December 2011, the Senate unanimously passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 71, recognizing the United States national interest in helping to prevent and mitigate acts of genocide and other mass atrocities against civilians, and urging the development of a whole of government approach to prevent and mitigate such acts;

Whereas, in April 2012, President Barack Obama established the Atrocities Prevention Board within the United States inter-agency structure, chaired by National Security staff, to help identify and more effectively address atrocity threats, including genocide, as a core national security interest and core moral responsibility;

Whereas, in July 2013, the National Intelligence Council completed the first ever National Intelligence Estimate on the global risk for mass atrocities and genocide;

Whereas, in January 2014, the National Director of Intelligence testified before the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate, stating that “the overall risk of mass atrocities worldwide will probably increase in 2014 and beyond. . . . Much of the world will almost certainly turn to the United States for leadership to prevent and respond to mass atrocities.”;

Whereas, despite measures taken by the United States Government and other governments since 1994, the international community still faces the challenges of responding to escalation of violence, atrocities, and religious-based conflict in many corners of the globe, including Syria and the Central African Republic, and a failure of

the international community to appropriately respond to and address the rapidly deteriorating situation could result in further atrocities;

Whereas the United Nations Security Council was unable to pass a resolution condemning the Government of Bashar al Assad of Syria for the use of chemical weapons against civilians, killing more than 1,400 of his own people in August 2013; and

Whereas United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recommended to the United Nations Security Council the establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic with the primary mandate to protect civilians: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the United Nations designation
3 of April 7th as the International Day of Reflection
4 on the Genocide in Rwanda;

5 (2) honors the memory of the more than
6 800,000 victims of the Rwandan genocide and ex-
7 presses sympathy for those whose lives were forever
8 changed by this horrific event;

9 (3) expresses support for the people of Rwanda
10 as they remember the victims of genocide;

11 (4) affirms it is in the national interest of the
12 United States to work in close coordination with
13 international partners to prevent and mitigate acts
14 of genocide and mass atrocities;

1 (5) condemns ongoing acts of violence and mass
2 atrocities perpetrated against innocent civilians in
3 Syria, the Central African Republic, South Sudan,
4 Sudan and elsewhere;

5 (6) urges the President to confer with Congress
6 on an ongoing basis regarding the priorities and ob-
7 jectives of the Atrocities Prevention Board;

8 (7) urges the President to work with Congress
9 to strengthen the United States Government's ability
10 to identify and more rapidly respond to genocide and
11 mass atrocities in order to prevent where possible
12 and mitigate the impact of such events;

13 (8) clarifies that nothing in this resolution shall
14 be construed as an authorization for the use of force
15 or a declaration of war; and

16 (9) supports ongoing United States and inter-
17 national efforts to—

18 (A) strengthen multilateral peacekeeping
19 capacities;

20 (B) build capacity for democratic rule of
21 law, security sector reform, and other measures
22 to improve civilian protection in areas of con-
23 flict;

1 (C) ensure measures of accountability for
2 perpetrators of mass atrocities and crimes
3 against humanity; and

4 (D) strengthen the work of United States
5 and international institutions, such as the Holo-
6 caust Memorial Museum, which are working to
7 document, identify, and prevent mass atrocities
8 and inspire citizens and leaders worldwide to
9 confront hatred and prevent genocide.

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