

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 687

Calling for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to be tried before the International Criminal Court for committing crimes against humanity.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 15, 2012

Mr. ISRAEL (for himself and Mr. COLE) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Calling for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to be tried before the International Criminal Court for committing crimes against humanity.

Whereas the United Nations estimates that since the uprising in Syria began in January 2011, more than 10,000 people consisting mostly of civilians have been killed and tens of thousands have been displaced;

Whereas under the command of President Assad, Syrian government forces and shabiha have been accused of gross human rights violations including heavy shelling of civilian areas, widespread pillaging and the burning of homes, denial of basic human needs such as food, water, and medical care, mass torture and arrests, unlawful detention, and brutal execution-style killings;

Whereas President Assad failed to adhere to the Arab League peace deal agreed to in November 2011, that called for withdrawing Syrian security forces, releasing political prisoners, and beginning dialogue with the opposition;

Whereas President Assad has so far failed to implement the six-point peace plan orchestrated by Special Envoy to Syria Kofi Annan that went into effect in April 2012, which calls for an end to the violence, beginning of political dialogue, access for humanitarian agencies to provide needed aid, release of detainees, freedom of movement throughout the country for journalists, and the right to demonstrate peacefully;

Whereas the United States has implemented a series of sanctions through five Executive Orders pertaining to the situation in Syria;

Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Council has held four Special Sessions, issued two reports of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, and adopted five resolutions devoted to the situation in Syria;

Whereas the United Nations Security Council has adopted two resolutions authorizing an advance team to monitor the ceasefire in Syria and a United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS);

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly has adopted two resolutions regarding human rights and the situation in Syria;

Whereas the situation in Syria continues to deteriorate despite such actions by the international community;

Whereas in May and June 2012, massacres have occurred, including the killing of men, women, and children in villages such as Houla and Qubeir;

Whereas, on June 7, 2012, referring to the massacres in Houla and Qubeir, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights stated that “These killings are indicative of a pattern of widespread or systematic attacks against civilian populations, and may amount to crimes against humanity and other international crimes.”;

Whereas, on November 23, 2011, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic expressed its concern “that crimes against humanity have been committed in different locations in the Syrian Arab Republic during the period under review.”;

Whereas, on February 22, 2011, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic found in its second report that after further review, “a reliable body of evidence exists that, consistent with other verified circumstances, provides reasonable grounds to believe that particular individuals, including commanding officers and officials at the highest levels of Government, bear responsibility for crimes against humanity and other gross human rights violations.”;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has called on the United Nations Security Council to consider referring the situation of Syria to the International Criminal Court; and

Whereas the International Criminal Court is an independent body whose mission is to try individuals for crimes within its jurisdiction, including crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) strongly condemns the ongoing violence and
3 gross human rights violations carried out by Syrian
4 government forces under direction of President
5 Bashar al-Assad;

6 (2) expresses its support for the people of Syria
7 seeking peaceful democratic change; and

8 (3) calls on the United Nations Security Coun-
9 cil, based on evidence that crimes against humanity
10 have been perpetrated by Syrian government forces,
11 to refer the situation of Syria to the International
12 Criminal Court.

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