

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 229

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 21, 2013

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 and others to be tried before the International Criminal Court for committing war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Whereas the United Nations estimates that since the uprising in Syria began in March 2011, more than 70,000 people have been killed;

Whereas Syria and neighboring countries are facing a growing humanitarian crisis, with hundreds of thousands of Syrians having fled the country, and millions being displaced internally;

Whereas under the command of President Bashar al-Assad, Syrian Government forces and shabiha forces 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 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 four reports of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, and adopted seven resolutions devoted to the situation in Syria;

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

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly has adopted five 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, on February 22, 2012, 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, on February 5, 2013, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic found in its report that Syrian forces and affiliated militia committed crimes against humanity, war crimes, and gross violations of international human rights and that anti-government forces committed war crimes;

Whereas the February 5, 2013, United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic found that government forces, affiliated militia, and anti-government forces have violated the rights of children and that government forces and affiliated militia have committed widespread sexual violence;

Whereas the report recommends that the United Nations Security Council “take appropriate action and commit to human rights and the rule of law by means of referral to justice, possibly to the International Criminal Court, bearing in mind that, in the context of the Syrian Arab Republic, only the Security Council is competent to refer the situation to the Court”;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has repeatedly 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 investigate and prosecute 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—

1 (1) strongly condemns the ongoing violence and
2 the systematic gross human rights violations carried
3 out by Syrian Government forces under direction of
4 President Bashar al-Assad as well as abuses com-
5 mitted by opposition forces;

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 war crimes and crimes
10 against humanity have been perpetrated in Syria, to
11 refer the situation of Syria to the International
12 Criminal Court.

○