

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 32

Expressing the grave concern of Congress regarding the occupation of the Republic of Lebanon by the Syrian Arab Republic.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 26, 2005

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself and Mr. ENGEL) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the grave concern of Congress regarding the occupation of the Republic of Lebanon by the Syrian Arab Republic.

Whereas the Syrian Arab Republic is the only country currently occupying another country that is a full member of the United Nations, in violation of all international laws and norms, including United Nations Security Council Resolutions 425, 426, 520, and 1559;

Whereas since its invasion of the Republic of Lebanon in 1976, the Syrian regime has implemented a systematic policy of occupation over Lebanon that has transformed the political, social, and economic character of Lebanon;

Whereas on July 20, 1976, President Hafez al-Assad of Syria stated that, “Syria and Lebanon were one state and one people . . .”;

Whereas the total Syrian occupation was complete on October 13, 1990, when the Syrian troops launched aerial and ground attacks and occupied the Lebanese presidential palace and the ministry of defense, ousting the constitutional government of Prime Minister Michel Aoun of Lebanon;

Whereas the Syrian regime appointed their own proxy government and president in occupied Lebanon and started a large-scale persecution operation against the Lebanese people by arresting, abducting, torturing, and killing opponents to the occupation;

Whereas, on May 22, 1991, following the occupation of Beirut, Lebanon, Syria concluded the Brotherhood Treaty for Coordination and Cooperation with Lebanon;

Whereas this treaty solidified the integration of the two countries in matters of security and intelligence, finance and trade, and industry and agriculture, by establishing the mechanism for Syrian command under the cover of “joint” decision-making;

Whereas the Syrian regime has continued to employ a wide range of policy means to transform Lebanon into a “client state” and a Syrian political satellite;

Whereas Syria clearly tampered with the Lebanese parliamentary elections of 1992, 1996, and 2000, amending electoral laws in all instances, which delineated voting districts and laid down intricate procedures for the elections, which were rigged in a way to guarantee results favorable to Syria;

Whereas Syrian-backed ad-hoc modifications to the Lebanese constitution extended the presidential tenure of the Lebanese president Elias Harawi by three years, allowed Emile Lahoud, commander of the Lebanese army, to become president, and extended Lahoud's term in contravention of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559;

Whereas Lebanese judicial institutions have been utilized and mobilized to impose Syrian control, including the routine issuance of death sentences in absentia against patriots and oppositionists;

Whereas Lebanese Broadcasting Law No. 382 of 1994 provided the legislative framework for controlling and restricting Lebanese radio and television;

Whereas the muzzle on the free flow of information and opinion in Lebanon is in sharp contrast to the legacy of journalism in that country;

Whereas Syria has reportedly widely utilized the practices of kidnapping and arresting Lebanese citizens, using torture against them, and causing their virtual disappearance;

Whereas Human Rights Watch reported that in November 1999 Syrian authorities in Damascus, Syria, offering no explanation whatsoever, returned the dead body of Lebanese citizen Adel Khalaf Ajouri, aged 52, who had "disappeared" in 1990;

Whereas within Lebanon itself, Syria reportedly operated detention facilities in Tripoli, Beirut, Shtaura in the Bekka Valley, and Anjar on the Lebanese-Syrian border;

Whereas "Syrian order" in Lebanon was institutionalized when Damascus led the process of disarming the Leba-

nese militias except for retaining Hezbollah as a terrorist force engaged against the State of Israel;

Whereas Lebanon, under the control of Syria, continues to serve as a major training center for terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command;

Whereas Lebanese Government officials have actively facilitated and contributed to the Syrian occupation and its activities, threatening regional and global security; and

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 calls for the “strict respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity, and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout Lebanon”, the withdrawal from Lebanon of “all remaining foreign forces”, “the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias,” and “the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory”:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—*

3 (1) the Republic of Lebanon is a captive coun-
4 try;

5 (2) the occupation of Lebanon represents a
6 long-term threat to the security of the Middle East
7 and United States efforts to promote political and
8 economic liberalization in the region, and this issue
9 should be raised by the President and the Secretary

1 of State in all appropriate bilateral and multilateral
2 forums;

3 (3) the President should direct the United
4 States Permanent Representative to the United Na-
5 tions to present and secure support for a United Na-
6 tions Security Council Resolution classifying Leb-
7 anon as a “captive country” and calling for the im-
8 mediate release of all Lebanese detainees in Syria
9 and Lebanon;

10 (4) the President should freeze all assets in the
11 United States belonging to Lebanese Government of-
12 ficials who are found to support and aid the occupa-
13 tion of Lebanon by the Syrian Arab Republic;

14 (5) all countries should fully and immediately
15 implement United Nations Security Council Resolu-
16 tion 1559;

17 (6) it should be the policy of the United States
18 to—

19 (A) support independent human rights and
20 pro-democracy advocates in Lebanon; and

21 (B) seek the full restoration of sovereign
22 democratic rule in Lebanon; and

23 (7) the United States should provide assistance
24 through the Middle East Partnership Initiative and
25 the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative

1 for broadcasts and civil society efforts to assist indi-
2 viduals, organizations, and entities that support
3 Lebanese sovereignty and the promotion of democ-
4 racy in Lebanon.

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