

109TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 90

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas the Mexican cities of Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua have been plagued with the abduction, sexual assault, and brutal murders of over 400 young women since 1993;

Whereas there have been at least 56 murders of women in Ciudad Juárez and the city of Chihuahua since 2004;

Whereas at least 152 of the victims were sexually assaulted prior to their murders;

Whereas more than half of the victims are women and girls between the ages of 13 and 22, and many were abducted in broad daylight in well-populated areas;

Whereas these murders have brought pain to the families and friends of the victims on both sides of the border as they struggle to cope with the loss of their loved ones;

Whereas many of the victims have yet to be positively identified;

Whereas the perpetrators of most of these heinous acts remain unknown;

Whereas the Mexican Federal Government has taken steps to prevent these abductions and murders in Ciudad Juárez, including setting up a commission to coordinate Federal and State efforts, establishing a 40-point plan, appointing a special commissioner, and appointing a special prosecutor;

Whereas the Mexican Federal special prosecutor's review of the Ciudad Juárez murder investigations found evidence that over 100 police, prosecutors, forensics experts, and other State of Chihuahua justice officials failed to properly investigate the crimes, and recommended that they be held accountable for their acts of negligence, abuse of authority, and omission;

Whereas the Government of Mexico has recognized the importance of the work of the Mexican Federal special prosecutor and has shifted the mission of the prosecutor's office to assist local authorities in investigating and prosecuting crimes of violence against women throughout the country;

Whereas in 2003 the El Paso Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the El Paso Police Department began providing Mexican Federal, State, and municipal law enforcement authorities with training in investigation techniques and methods;

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development has begun providing assistance to the State of Chihuahua for judicial reform;

Whereas the government of the State of Chihuahua has jurisdiction over these crimes;

Whereas the Governor and Attorney General of the State of Chihuahua have expressed willingness to collaborate with the Mexican Federal Government and United States officials in addressing these crimes;

Whereas the Department of State has provided consular services on behalf of the American citizen and her husband who were tortured into confessing to one of the murders;

Whereas Mexico is a party to the following international treaties and declarations that relate to abductions and murders: the Charter of the Organization of American States, the American Convention on Human Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the United Nations Declaration on Violence Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention of Belem do Para, the Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture, the Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance, and the United Nations Declaration on the

Protection of All Persons From Enforced Disappearance;
and

Whereas continuing impunity for these crimes is a threat to
the rule of law in Mexico: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) condemns the ongoing abductions and mur-
4 ders of young women in Ciudad Juárez and the city
5 of Chihuahua in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico,
6 since 1993;

7 (2) expresses its sincerest condolences and
8 deepest sympathy to the families of the victims of
9 these murders;

10 (3) recognizes the courageous struggle of the
11 victims' families in seeking justice for the victims;

12 (4) urges the President and Secretary of State
13 to incorporate the investigative and preventative ef-
14 forts of the Mexican Government in the bilateral
15 agenda between the Governments of Mexico and the
16 United States and to continue to express concern
17 over these abductions and murders to the Govern-
18 ment of Mexico;

19 (5) urges the President and Secretary of State
20 to continue to express support for the efforts of the
21 victims' families to seek justice for the victims, to
22 express concern relating to the continued harass-

1 ment of these families and the human rights defend-
2 ers with whom they work, and to express concern
3 with respect to impediments in the ability of the
4 families to receive prompt and accurate information
5 in their cases;

6 (6) supports ongoing efforts to identify un-
7 known victims through forensic analysis, including
8 DNA testing, conducted by independent, impartial
9 experts who are sensitive to the special needs and
10 concerns of the victims' families, as well as efforts
11 to make these services available to any families who
12 have doubts about the results of prior forensic test-
13 ing;

14 (7) condemns the use of torture as a means of
15 investigation into these crimes;

16 (8) encourages the Secretary of State to con-
17 tinue to include in the annual Country Report on
18 Human Rights of the Department of State all in-
19 stances of improper investigatory methods, threats
20 against human rights activists, and the use of tor-
21 ture with respect to cases involving the murder and
22 abduction of young women in the State of Chi-
23 huahua;

24 (9) encourages the Secretary of State to urge
25 the Government of Mexico and the State of Chi-

1 huahua to review the cases of murdered women in
2 which those accused or convicted of murder have
3 credibly alleged they were tortured or forced by a
4 state agent to confess to the crime;

5 (10) strongly recommends that the United
6 States Ambassador to Mexico visit Ciudad Juárez
7 and the city of Chihuahua for the purpose of meet-
8 ing with the families of the victims, women's rights
9 organizations, and Mexican Federal and State offi-
10 cials responsible for investigating these crimes and
11 preventing future such crimes;

12 (11) encourages the Secretary of State to urge
13 the Government of Mexico to ensure fair and proper
14 judicial proceedings for the individuals who are ac-
15 cused of these abductions and murders and to im-
16 pose appropriate punishment for those individuals
17 subsequently determined to be guilty of such crimes;

18 (12) encourages the Secretary of State to urge
19 the State of Chihuahua to hold accountable those
20 law enforcement officials whose failure to adequately
21 investigate the murders, whether through negligence,
22 omission, or abuse, has led to impunity for these
23 crimes;

24 (13) encourages the Secretary of State to urge
25 the Government of Mexico to ensure that the Mexi-

1 can Federal special prosecutor's office, responsible
2 for assisting local authorities in investigating and
3 prosecuting crimes of violence against women
4 throughout the country, gives particular attention to
5 the murders of women in Ciudad Juárez and Chi-
6 huahua City;

7 (14) strongly supports the work of the special
8 commissioner to prevent violence against women in
9 Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua City;

10 (15) condemns all senseless acts of violence in
11 all parts of the world and, in particular, violence
12 against women; and

13 (16) expresses the solidarity of the people of the
14 United States with the people of Mexico in the face
15 of these tragic and senseless acts.

Passed the House of Representatives May 2, 2006.

Attest:

Clerk.

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Conveying the sympathy of Congress to the families of the young women murdered in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, and encouraging increased United States involvement in bringing an end to these crimes.