

103^D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 38

Urging the President to complete the review of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in order that the Senate may give its advice and consent to ratification.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 21, 1993

Ms. WOOLSEY (for herself and Mr. HAMILTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Urging the President to complete the review of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in order that the Senate may give its advice and consent to ratification.

Whereas the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (hereafter referred to as the “Women’s Human Rights Convention”) seeks to advance the status of women worldwide for the purpose of guaranteeing the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women on a basis of equality with men in all respects: political, civil, social, cultural, and economic;

Whereas the Women’s Human Rights Convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 18, 1979;

Whereas the United States was an active participant in drafting the Women's Human Rights Convention and signed the Convention on July 17, 1980;

Whereas on November 12, 1980, the President transmitted the Women's Human Rights Convention to the Senate, but at that time did not submit the necessary reservations, understandings, and declarations required for Senate advice and consent to ratification;

Whereas over 100 nations have ratified and acceded to the Women's Human Rights Convention;

Whereas there is a continuing gap between the status and rights of women and men, and there is still no nation in the world where this gap has been eliminated in all major fields of activity;

Whereas the Women's Human Rights Convention calls on nations which are parties to the convention to take all appropriate measures to ensure women, on an equal basis with men, access to education, economic opportunities, legal protection, representation in government, and health care;

Whereas two-thirds of the world's illiterates are women;

Whereas women produce more than half of the food in developing countries, as much as 80 percent of the food produced in Africa, and perform two-thirds of the world's work hours, yet receive only 10 percent of the world's income and own less than 1 percent of the world's property;

Whereas worldwide, including in the United States, women earn only two-thirds as much as their male counterparts, contributing to the growing feminization of poverty;

Whereas as a result of unequal economic opportunities women are the growing majority at the poverty level worldwide, and approximately 78 percent of all people living in poverty in the United States are women and their children;

Whereas in many nations women do not have the same legal or constitutional rights as men, particularly regarding family law—marriage, inheritance, property rights, divorce, alimony, and child support;

Whereas enactment of laws ensuring the rights and fundamental freedoms of women are ineffectual unless governments are willing to enforce them;

Whereas in most countries women attained the right to vote only in the last 35–45 years, and in some countries women still do not have the right to vote;

Whereas only approximately 10 percent of the representatives in the world's parliaments are women;

Whereas childbearing carries the highest risk of death for women of reproductive age in the developing world, resulting in approximately 500,000 deaths each year, the majority of which could be prevented with adequate health care;

Whereas the Women's Human Rights Convention calls on nations which are parties to the convention to take measures to modify the social and cultural practices of men and women with a view to eliminating prejudices and practices which are based on the belief of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes;

Whereas violence against women is the extreme expression of the belief in women's inferiority and occurs in all cultures and countries;

Whereas there is a high degree of official and social tolerance of violence against women, and family violence is the most prevalent form of violence against women;

Whereas trafficking and slavery of women and female children for the sex trade and as forced labor takes place in many regions of the world and is a result of the subjugation of women;

Whereas preference for sons results in the severe neglect of daughters with respect to food, medical care, and education, and as a consequence girls aged two to four die at twice the rate of boys in some regions, female infanticide is practiced, and worldwide female children are three times more likely to suffer from malnutrition than male children;

Whereas the Women's Human Rights Convention emphasizes the equal responsibilities of men and women in the context of family life, and until that occurs women will never be able to exercise and enjoy full equal rights and they and their children both will suffer;

Whereas when women are better informed and educated, their family's health and income benefit, and when women are given training and skills, their nation's productivity increases and its economy grows;

Whereas worldwide there are women's and human rights groups working under adverse circumstances to promote and implement the principles of the Women's Human Rights Convention; and

Whereas by ratifying and acceding to the Women's Human Rights Convention the United States will become a more credible proponent of the rights of women and a more effective advocate in encouraging other countries to protect

the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 representatives that—

3 (1) the full realization of the rights of women
4 is vital to the development and well-being of people
5 of all nations; and

6 (2) the President should, therefore, promptly
7 complete the review of the Women's Human Rights
8 Convention and submit to the Senate any reserva-
9 tions, understandings, or declarations that he con-
10 sidered necessary in order that the Senate may give
11 its advice and consent to ratification.

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