

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 349

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Calling for effective measures to end the sexual
exploitation of refugees.

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Whereas the United Nations and organizations engaged in international humanitarian relief periodically receive reports of sexual exploitation of refugees, particularly women and children;

Whereas last year a report commissioned by the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees and the British organization Save the Children accuses aid workers in Libe-

ria, Sierra Leone, and Guinea of refusing to give food and medicine to young girls unless they perform sexual favors;

Whereas in response to this report the Secretary General of the United Nations denounced sexual exploitation of refugees and called for a full investigation of the humanitarian staff from the agencies involved;

Whereas the charges against aid workers in West Africa are still being investigated and in recent years there have been reports implicating employees of international non-governmental organizations, government agencies responsible for humanitarian response, and peacekeeping forces in sexual exploitation of refugees;

Whereas many of these reports have involved children, some as young as 10 to 12 years of age;

Whereas the insufficiency of food rations in refugee camps has been cited as a primary factor contributing to sexual exploitation;

Whereas refugees are often extremely poor and cut off from employment and other ordinary means of income, so that they can be highly susceptible to demands that they exchange sex for food to help their families survive: and

Whereas the relationship between refugee workers and refugees is a custodial or caregiving relationship in which the custodian or caregiver can exercise substantial power over the life of the other party, and which carries a corresponding risk of abuse: Now, therefore, be it

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

1 (1) supports the Secretary General of the
2 United Nations in condemning the sexual exploi-
3 tation of children by humanitarian aid workers;

4 (2) urges the United Nations to conduct a com-
5 prehensive worldwide investigation into the extent, if
6 any, of sexual exploitation of refugees by agents or
7 employees of United Nations agencies, of other
8 international nongovernmental organizations, and of
9 governments;

10 (3) urges the President to—

11 (A) affirm the commitment of the United
12 States to protecting the well-being and human
13 rights of women and children, particularly those
14 in refugee situations; and

15 (B) instruct the Administrator of the
16 United States Agency for International Devel-
17 opment and the Secretary of Agriculture to re-
18 view the distribution of food assistance to ref-
19 ugee communities throughout the world to en-
20 sure that humanitarian assistance to refugees
21 provided by the United States is respectful of
22 the human rights of women and children and is
23 distributed in such a way as to minimize the
24 risk of sexual exploitation; and

1 (4) urges the Secretary General, the President,
2 and the executive authorities of all governmental and
3 nongovernmental entities engaged in refugee work to
4 adopt codes of conduct for employees, contractors,
5 and other agents of the United Nations, of the
6 United States Government, and of such govern-
7 mental and nongovernmental entities, respectively,
8 who are engaged in refugee work that strictly pro-
9 hibit sexual relationships between international ref-
10 ugee workers and those entrusted to their care, and
11 to enforce these prohibitions vigorously.

Passed the House of Representatives October 16,
2002.

Attest:

Clerk.