

105TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 309

Condemning the forced abduction of Ugandan children and their use as soldiers.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 24, 1998

Mr. PAYNE (for himself, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. LANTOS, and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Condemning the forced abduction of Ugandan children and their use as soldiers.

Whereas the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has abducted approximately 10,000 children, some as young as 8 years old, in northern Uganda to support its efforts to overthrow the Government of Uganda;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in March 1998 condemned "in the strongest terms" the LRA's child abductions;

Whereas children kidnapped by the LRA are forced to raid and loot villages, fight in the front lines against the Ugandan army, serve as sexual slaves to rebel command-

ers, and help kill other abducted children who try to escape;

Whereas the LRA, led by Joseph Kony, has continued to kill, torture, maim, rape, and abduct large numbers of civilians, virtually enslaving numerous children;

Whereas LRA child abductees serve as surrogates for Sudanese government forces against the south;

Whereas Sudanese government soldiers deliver food supplies, vehicles, ammunition, and arms to LRA base camps in government-controlled southern Sudan;

Whereas children who manage to escape from LRA captivity find their families displaced or deceased and have little access to rehabilitation programs, and in many instances their families are afraid for their children turned toy soldiers to return home;

Whereas children are conscripted, coaxed, or tricked into volunteering for the armed forces and are sometimes sold to armies and armed groups by impoverished families;

Whereas the United Nations has established, through the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 18 as the minimum age for recruitment and participation of individuals in armed forces; and

Whereas the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, and the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, as well as many nongovernmental organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, also support the establishment of 18 as the minimum age for military recruitment and participation in armed conflict: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns the abduction of children by the
3 Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda
4 and calls for the immediate release of all LRA child
5 captives;

6 (2) urges Olara Otunnu, the recently appointed
7 United Nations Special Representative on Children
8 and Armed Conflict, to take appropriate measures to
9 resolve the LRA problem;

10 (3) encourages the United Nations Committee
11 on the Rights of the Child to investigate the situa-
12 tion in northern Uganda;

13 (4) calls on the Al-Bashir government to cease
14 supporting the LRA in the abductions and kidnap-
15 ping of children in Northern Uganda;

16 (5) calls on the President and the Secretary of
17 State to support efforts to end the abduction of chil-
18 dren by the LRA and obtain their release;

19 (6) asks the President to provide more support
20 to United Nations agencies and nongovernmental or-
21 ganizations working to rehabilitate former child sol-
22 diers and reintegrate them into society; and

23 (7) encourages the President to appoint a Spe-
24 cial Humanitarian Envoy for Sudan.

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