

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 234

Regarding the human rights situation in Sudan and Mauritania, including the practice of chattel slavery and all other forms of booty.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 4, 1998

Mr. PAYNE submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Regarding the human rights situation in Sudan and Mauritania, including the practice of chattel slavery and all other forms of booty.

Whereas the Government of Sudan and the Government of Mauritania have perpetrated a prolonged campaign of human rights abuses and discrimination;

Whereas the 1997 Country Reports on Human Rights of the Department of State has documented numerous such abuses by both governments;

Whereas since Sudan's independence in 1956, the Khartoum Government dominated by northern Arabs has been fighting against the Christian and animist South;

Whereas the Government of Sudan is not able to pay their militias and has encouraged the militias to take slaves as compensation;

Whereas the Christian Solidarity International estimates that tens of thousands of black slaves are owned by Arabs in northern Sudan;

Whereas the Sudanese Government's Popular Defense Force (PDF) enslaved 18 women and children during a slave raid on four villages—Tiomthet, Mabior Nyang, Ajok and Achorou—in northeastern Bahr El Ghazal on November 30, 1997;

Whereas the slave raid is the most recent of a long series of such raids undertaken as part of the ruling National Islam Front (NIF) regime's self-declared jihad (holy war) against the predominantly Christian and Christian and animist South;

Whereas the Government of Mauritania detained two human rights activists and a lawyer following the broadcast on French television of a documentary on slavery;

Whereas the Government of Mauritania has carried out illegal searches that has culminated in the arrest of Boubacar Ould Messaoud, Maitre Brahim Ould Ebety, and Cheick Saad Bouh Kamara on January 17, 1998, for broadcasting a documentary on slavery;

Whereas the Government of Mauritania ratified the United Nations Convention to Suppress the Slave Trade and Slavery, and has officially abolished slavery in 1905, 1960 and 1980, however, despite being a party to these agreements, slavery still exists in Mauritania; and

Whereas Sudan is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the African Charter on Human

and People's Rights, the Slavery Convention, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, however, despite being a party to these agreements, slavery still exists in Sudan: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) calls upon the Government of Sudan and
4 the Government of Mauritania to honor their obliga-
5 tions under the Universal Declaration of Human
6 Rights and the Convention on the Abolition of Slav-
7 ery to prosecute slave owners to the fullest extent
8 under the anti-slavery laws of each such country and
9 to educate individuals being held as slaves concern-
10 ing their legal rights;

11 (2) calls upon both governments to surrender
12 and release all slaves and return them to their
13 homes;

14 (3) urges in the strongest terms that both gov-
15 ernments investigate abuses of slavery;

16 (4) urges the United Nations Security Council
17 to condemn these acts of slavery by both govern-
18 ments;

19 (5) deplores the fighting of the National Islam
20 Front (NIF) which has caused untold suffering for
21 the people of Sudan;

1 (6) advocates the strengthening of the border
2 between northern and southern Sudan;

3 (7) encourages human rights organizations to
4 facilitate a safe passage for slavery victims to and
5 from conflict zones;

6 (8) commends the Clinton Administration for
7 sanctioning Sudan and monitoring the acts of Mau-
8 ritania with respect to slavery; and

9 (9) urges in the strongest possible terms that
10 the Secretary of the Treasury should not waive any
11 of the current sanctions that are in place against
12 Sudan.

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