

Nov. 20, 2002
[H. Con. Res. 349]

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN BY
HUMANITARIAN AID WORKERS—CONDEMNATION

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 Liberia, 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 nongovernmental 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

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

(1) supports the Secretary General of the United Nations in condemning the sexual exploitation of children by humanitarian aid workers;

(2) urges the United Nations to conduct a comprehensive worldwide investigation into the extent, if any, of sexual exploitation of refugees by agents or employees of United Nations agencies, of other international nongovernmental organizations, and of governments;

(3) urges the President to—

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

(B) instruct the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development and the Secretary of Agriculture to review the distribution of food assistance to refugee communities throughout the world to ensure that humanitarian assistance to refugees provided by the United States is respectful of the human rights of women

and children and is distributed in such a way as to minimize the risk of sexual exploitation; and

(4) urges the Secretary General, the President, and the executive authorities of all governmental and nongovernmental entities engaged in refugee work to adopt codes of conduct for employees, contractors, and other agents of the United Nations, of the United States Government, and of such governmental and nongovernmental entities, respectively, who are engaged in refugee work that strictly prohibit sexual relationships between international refugee workers and those entrusted to their care, and to enforce these prohibitions vigorously.

Agreed to November 20, 2002.

ADJOURNMENT—SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Nov. 22, 2002
[S. Con. Res. 160]

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That when the Senate adjourns at the close of business on any day from Wednesday, November 20, 2002 through Saturday, November 23, 2002, or from Monday, November 25, 2002, through Wednesday, November 27, 2002, or on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader, or his designee, it stand adjourned sine die, or until Members are notified to reassemble pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the House of Representatives adjourns on any legislative day through the remainder of the second session of the One Hundred Seventh Congress on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned sine die, or until Members are notified to reassemble pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Majority Leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the Senate and the House, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate whenever, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

Agreed to November 22, 2002.