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(Original Signature of Member)

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES.

Condemning the Assad regime and its backers for their continued support of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MAST submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Condemning the Assad regime and its backers for their continued support of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria.

Whereas Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, with the support of Iran and the Russian Federation, has committed widespread atrocities against the people of Syria, leading to one of the worst humanitarian crises in over 70 years, including the deaths of more than 500,000 people, the destruction of more than 50 percent of Syria's critical infrastructure, and the forced displacement of more than 14 million people;

Whereas the Assad regime, with the support of Iran and the Russian Federation, has conducted violent attacks

against humanitarian aid workers, supplies, facilities, transports, and assets, and impeded the access and secure movement of humanitarian personnel, and has used chemical weapons against the Syrian people on numerous occasions;

Whereas since the introduction of Russian forces into Syria in September 2015, Russia has deployed over 68,000 Russian personnel to help sustain the Assad regime, and has reportedly transferred the S-300 surface-to-air missile system to Syria, giving Russia, Iran, Hezbollah, and other Iranian-backed militias additional cover for their activities in Syria;

Whereas Iran is estimated to have deployed over 3,000 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and regular Iranian military advisers to Syria and approximately 20,000 militia fighters, including 'Asaib ahl al-Haqq, Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba, Fatimeyoun, and Zainabiyoun, which continue to expand their presence in Syria;

Whereas Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats has stated “it’s unlikely Russia has the will or capability to fully implement and counter Iranian decision and influence” in Syria;

Whereas Iran’s positions in Syria, which Iran has used to launch rockets and drones toward Israel, are critical to Iran’s efforts to create a “land bridge” from Iran through Iraq and Syria to Lebanon so that it can arm Hezbollah in Lebanon with rockets and missiles, and increase the accuracy of Hezbollah’s munitions;

Whereas Iranian-backed militias have demolished civilian areas, implemented sieges, and evicted civilian residents

throughout Syria in a campaign of forced displacement, where Iranian-funded reconstruction plans to sell housing developments to foreign militias risk establishing a permanent Iranian presence and obstacle for return of thousands of Syrian families who fled Syria; and

Whereas the Syrian Government has reportedly signed agreements with Iran and IRGC controlled companies with respect to military cooperation: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) supports a political solution to the conflict
3 which will result in the air space of Syria no longer
4 being utilized by the Assad regime or Russia to tar-
5 get civilians, an end to the sieges carried out by
6 Assad, Russia, Iran, Hezbollah, and other Iranian-
7 backed militias, and the release of all political pris-
8 oners,

9 (2) opposes international reconstruction funds
10 from supporting projects in Syria in areas controlled
11 by the Assad regime as long as the Assad regime re-
12 mains in power,

13 (3) condemns the Assad regime, the Govern-
14 ment of the Russian Federation, the Government of
15 Iran, and Hezbollah and other Iranian-backed mili-
16 tias for their continued support of war crimes and
17 crimes against humanity in Syria, including the
18 widespread use of torture, summary executions, pro-

1 longed sieges, forced relocations, and indiscriminate
2 targeting of civilians and humanitarian actors;

3 (4) recognizes that as long as the Assad regime
4 remains in power, it will continue to oppress the
5 Syrian people, the Russian Federation will continue
6 to expand its influence in the Middle East, and Iran
7 will remain entrenched in Syria;

8 (5) calls upon the President and Secretary of
9 State to work towards a sustainable political transi-
10 tion in Syria that results in a government in Syria
11 that is not a danger to its own people, abandons its
12 chemical weapons program, allows for the safe, dig-
13 nified, and voluntary return of displaced persons,
14 and does not provide Iran with a platform to threat-
15 en Syria's neighbors;

16 (6) urges the President and the Secretary of
17 State develop a strategy to prevent a permanent Ira-
18 nian presence in Syria, understanding that the Rus-
19 sia Federation has not proven to be a viable partner
20 to help in this effort;

21 (7) urges the Secretary of State to investigate
22 and determine whether the forced displacement of
23 Syrian civilians from their homes through brutal
24 sieges, starvation, and indiscriminate targeting of ci-

1 vilians, and repopulation with foreign fighters con-
2 stitutes sectarian or ethnic cleansing; and

3 (8) calls on the President and Secretary of
4 State to determine whether militias operating in
5 Syria under the command of the Islamic Revolu-
6 tionary Guard Corps (IRGC), including Harakat
7 Hezbollah al-Nujaba, Fatemiyoun, Zainabioun, and
8 'Asaib ahl al-Haq are terrorist organizations and
9 meet the criteria for sanctions pursuant to Executive
10 Order 13460 or 13582.