

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 550

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding United States policy recognizing the Assyrian Genocide.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 22, 2021

Mr. HARDER of California (for himself, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. SCHIFF) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding United States policy recognizing the Assyrian Genocide.

Whereas the Ottoman Empire committed the crime of genocide against the Assyrian people, killing at least 300,000 innocent Assyrians by way of mass executions, death marches, torture, and starvation during the First World War;

Whereas, in August 1933, approximately 3,000 Assyrians were brutally murdered in Semele in the Duhok and Mosul districts of modern-day Iraq by the nascent Iraqi army and irregular Kurdish and Arab forces;

Whereas August 7 is globally observed by the Assyrian community as Assyrian Memorial Day in remembrance of all

massacres and genocides committed against the Assyrian people and of the persecution this community has faced as a result of their distinct ethnic and religious identity;

Whereas the International Association of Genocide Scholars has found that the genocide against the Assyrian population was part of a larger campaign against Christian minorities, including Armenians and Pontian and Anatolian Greeks;

Whereas Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term “genocide” in 1944, drew on the history of the Assyrian Genocide in his seminal work that guided the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide;

Whereas the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–441) establishes that atrocities prevention represents a United States national interest, and affirms that it is the policy of the United States to pursue a United States Governmentwide strategy to identify, prevent, and respond to the risk of atrocities by “strengthening diplomatic response and the effective use of foreign assistance to support appropriate transitional justice measures, including criminal accountability, for past atrocities”;

Whereas the resilience and endurance of the Assyrian people is commendable and praiseworthy, despite being victims of an ethnocide that is being continued by the Islamic State;

Whereas the Assyrian community across the world continues to feel the effects of the Assyrian Genocide, including families that have never been reunited;

Whereas recognition and commemoration of a genocide is critical to efforts of preventing both future genocides and further harm to the group upon which the genocide was committed; and

Whereas the Assyrian Genocide remains unrecognized by many countries and organizations across the globe, including the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that it is the policy of the United States to—

3 (1) commemorate the Assyrian Genocide
4 through official recognition and remembrance;

5 (2) reject efforts to enlist, engage, or otherwise
6 associate the United States Government with denial
7 of the Assyrian Genocide or any other genocide;

8 (3) call upon the Republic of Turkey to offi-
9 cially recognize the Assyrian Genocide; and

10 (4) encourage education and public under-
11 standing of the facts of the Assyrian Genocide, in-
12 cluding the United States role in the humanitarian
13 relief effort, and the relevance of the Assyrian Geno-
14 cide to modern-day crimes against humanity.

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