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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. _____

Condemning rape and sexual violence against women.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. DINGELL submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Condemning rape and sexual violence against women.

Whereas violence against women is a global crisis that causes
devastating harm to women, their children, and their
communities;

Whereas there has been greater attention across the world on
violence against women, especially when it is despicably
used as a tool of war;

Whereas rape, sexual violence, and gender-based violence are
horrific in any context, but are especially heinous when
weaponized during conflicts;

Whereas rape and sexual violence have unjustly been used as
weapons of war for centuries to target ethnic, political,

or cultural rivals, torment civilian populations, and assert and maintain control;

Whereas rape and sexual violence continue to be weaponized during modern conflicts;

Whereas multiple news organizations have reported accounts of sexual violence against women perpetrated by Hamas during the October 7th terrorist attacks on Israel, a report from Physicians for Human Rights Israel has raised concerns that the October 7 Hamas attacks included many incidents of sexual assault following repetitive patterns, and photographic and eyewitness evidence of the sexual violence that was weaponized by Hamas during the attacks was presented during a United Nations session on sexual and gender-based violence;

Whereas since fighting began in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in April 2023, United Nations experts have raised concerns about the reported escalation of violence against women, including sexual exploitation, slavery, trafficking, rape, and forced disappearances that appear to have been racially, ethnically, and politically motivated, according to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights;

Whereas the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine has evidence that Russian soldiers have raped and committed other forms of sexual violence against women between the ages of 16 and 83 since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022;

Whereas gender-based violence has been a widespread problem in Myanmar, and sexual violence has become more

brutal and widespread since the 2021 military coup, according to the Karenni National Women's Organization;

Whereas sexual- and gender-based violence against women and girls was highly prevalent during and since the conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia, that started in November 2020, according to several studies;

Whereas armed gangs in Haiti have used sexual violence, including collective rapes, since at least 2018, to instill fear, punish, subjugate, and inflict pain on local populations to expand their control, according to the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner;

Whereas abuse and assault targeting women and girls in Yemen has increased 63 percent since the start of the war in 2015, with adolescent girls among the most vulnerable, according to the United Nations;

Whereas it is estimated that over 25,000 people were victims of sexual- and gender-based crimes in Uganda during the decades-long conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army that began in 1987, according to the International Center for Transnational Justice, and high rates of gender-based violence across the country continue to jeopardize the lives of women;

Whereas decades of conflict with Israel have resulted in high levels of poverty, instability, and deteriorating living conditions in Gaza that have increased the risk of violence for Palestinian women and girls, according to the United Nations Population Fund, and the outbreak of war between Israel and Hamas and worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza is compounding the risks women and children already faced;

Whereas 59 percent of Palestinian women and girls have reported experiencing at least one form of gender-based violence, according to the United Nations Population Fund, and news outlets have reported that Palestinian women have been harassed at checkpoints and while in custody, according to testimony submitted to the United Nations;

Whereas conflict-related sexual violence is vastly under-reported;

Whereas rape and other forms of sexual violence are prohibited under international law;

Whereas the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court considers rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity as crimes against humanity;

Whereas women are disproportionately affected by sexual violence during conflict;

Whereas sexual violence against the LGBTQIA+ community during conflict is a component of gender-based violence, linked to the imposition of moral codes and societal norms that directly target the ability of all sexual and gender identities to live freely, according to LGBTQIA+ human rights organizations;

Whereas the consequences of sexual violence affect women beyond the cessation of conflict, including pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, stigmatization, and a lack of access to health care;

Whereas sexual and gender-based violence outside of conflict times continues to jeopardize the lives of women;

Whereas at least 32 percent of women have experienced physical violence in Pakistan, according to the United Nations Population Fund, and honor killings continue to take the lives of hundreds of Pakistani women each year, according to Human Rights Watch;

Whereas, since the Women Life Freedom protests that erupted in Iran in September 2022, there has been documented widespread use of violence and mistreatment, including sexual harassment, against those who have been arrested, according to Human Rights Watch;

Whereas gender inequity and sexual violence are inextricably linked, and gender inequality can fuel harmful cultural and societal norms that affect women's economic status and impact women's access to education, supportive services, and legal protections;

Whereas other inequities caused by poverty, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, income, race, and immigration status, among others, increase women's vulnerability to experiencing sexual violence;

Whereas violence against women continues to be a pervasive issue that extends across borders, and an estimated 736,000,000 women worldwide have been subjected to physical or sexual violence at least once in their lives;

Whereas sexual violence remains a serious problem in the United States;

Whereas sexual violence impacts millions of women within the United States every year, and women from racial and ethnic minority groups are disproportionately affected;

Whereas gender-based violence is prevalent in settings that are embedded in the fabric of United States society, in-

cluding college campuses, the military, the workplace,
and prisons; and

Whereas more must be done to eliminate sexual violence both
within the United States and communities across the
world: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns violence against women in all
3 forms, at all times, and across all circumstances;

4 (2) condemns the weaponization of rape, sexual
5 violence, and gender-based violence during conflicts;

6 (3) stands with survivors of rape, sexual vio-
7 lence, and gender-based violence in the United
8 States and nations across the globe;

9 (4) recognizes and honors individuals and orga-
10 nizations across the globe who are working to elimi-
11 nate gender-based violence;

12 (5) reaffirms a commitment to eliminating sex-
13 ual violence and gender-based violence within the
14 United States and abroad; and

15 (6) calls on members of the international com-
16 munity—

17 (A) to enact laws protecting survivors and
18 holding perpetrators of violence accountable for
19 their actions; and

20 (B) to prioritize the elimination of gender-
21 based violence in conflict settings.