
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

CONDEMNING THE HUMAN RIGHTS ATROCITIES AND VIOLENCE AGAINST
CHILDREN IN NORTHERN UGANDA AND URGING CONGRESS TO LEAD THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE CHILDREN
OF UGANDA.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii is committed to supporting the dignity and
2 worth of each human being; and

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4 WHEREAS, for more than 20 years, the Lord's Resistance Army
5 (LRA) led by Joseph Kony, has engaged in an armed conflict with
6 the Government of Uganda, resulting in 10,000 people murdered,
7 at least twice that number of children abducted, and over
8 1,600,000 people displaced; and

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10 WHEREAS, the United States (U.S.) State Department has
11 found that, while having "demonstrated a marked improvement in
12 respect to human rights," the Ugandan government's human rights
13 record remains poor, and abuse, violence, and violations of
14 civil rights continue to occur; and

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16 WHEREAS, the former United Nations Undersecretary-General
17 for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator called
18 the civil war in northern Uganda "the biggest forgotten,
19 neglected humanitarian emergency in the world today"; and

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21 WHEREAS, the LRA has been placed on the Terrorist Exclusion
22 List by the U.S. State Department under the Patriot Act, which
23 among other qualifications, means its members cannot immigrate
24 to the U.S.; and

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26 WHEREAS, on April 26, 2006, the U.S. State Department's
27 Deputy Assistant Secretary for Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights
28 and Labor testified before Congress that those who suffer most
29 from the LRA's tactics are the children, who face enslavement,
30 sexual exploitation, and forced soldiering; and



1 WHEREAS, more than 85 percent of the LRA's captives are
2 made up of children, mostly between the ages of 11 and 16, who
3 are abducted and forced to fight as rebels; and
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5 WHEREAS, the LRA has abducted approximately 12,000 children
6 since 2002 and continues to abduct children, forcing these
7 children into virtual slavery as laborers, soldiers, guards, and
8 sex slaves, and beating, raping, and pressing these children to
9 march until exhausted, while forcing them to participate in the
10 killing of other children who attempt to escape; and
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12 WHEREAS, child soldiers are exposed to hazardous conditions
13 and are at risk of physical injury and disability, psychological
14 trauma, sexually transmitted diseases, and often death; and
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16 WHEREAS, due to the threat of abduction, at one time as
17 many as 35,000 child "night commuters" traveled nightly from
18 conflict areas or camps to spend the night in shelters, schools,
19 churches, or balconies in urban centers with greater capacity to
20 protect them; and
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22 WHEREAS, the continuing violence and instability obstruct
23 the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people of
24 northern Uganda and impede national and regional trade,
25 development and democratization efforts, and counter-terrorism
26 efforts; and
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28 WHEREAS, over 5,000 children are also believed to be
29 serving in the Ugandan People's Defense Forces, joining due to
30 economic necessity, to avenge the loss of a family member, or
31 for their own personal safety; and
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33 WHEREAS, although the Government of Uganda and the LRA
34 signed a cessation of hostilities agreement in August 2006, it
35 was never fully implemented, and they have not yet arrived at a
36 sustainable negotiated settlement, while observers remain
37 concerned that hostilities between rebel and government forces
38 could resume; and
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40 WHEREAS, Hawaii and its citizens cannot be bystanders, as
41 the children of Uganda are subject to enslavement, exploitation,
42 soldiering, and human trafficking, which are moral and ethical
43 issues that implicate us all; now, therefore,



1 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
2 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
3 Session of 2008, the Senate concurring, that the Legislature
4 disapproves of the Lord's Resistance Army leadership's
5 inconsistent commitment to resolving the conflict in northern
6 Uganda peacefully; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature also urges the
9 Government of Uganda to abolish child soldiering in its armed
10 forces; and
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Hawaii's Congressional
13 Delegation is urged to support legislation allocating sufficient
14 funds for continued humanitarian aid for the people of Uganda as
15 well as legislation urging the LRA to engage in good faith
16 negotiations in pursuing a political solution to this conflict;
17 and
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19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the U.S. Secretary of State,
20 the Administrator of the United States Agency for International
21 Development, and the heads of other similar government agencies
22 and nongovernmental agencies and nongovernmental organizations
23 within the international community are urged to continue
24 augmenting efforts to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in
25 northern Uganda and to support a peaceful resolution to this
26 crisis by publicly and forcefully reiterating the preceding
27 demands; and
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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
30 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
31 United States, Hawaii's Congressional Delegation, and United
32 States Ambassador to the United Nations.

