

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 9

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By: **Delegates Acevero, Addison, Alston, Coley, Hill, Martinez, Patterson, Roberson, Stinnett, and Young**

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Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Condemning Violence and Violations of Law – Democratic Republic of the**
3 **Congo, Gaza, and Sudan**

4 FOR the purpose of condemning all acts of violence against civilians and violations of
5 international humanitarian and human rights law occurring in the Democratic
6 Republic of the Congo, Gaza, and Sudan; stating grave concern over certain reports
7 and the risk of genocide in these regions; urging the government of the United States
8 to perform certain actions; and generally relating to the Democratic Republic of the
9 Congo, Gaza, and Sudan.

10 WHEREAS, The Maryland General Assembly has previously spoken out against
11 mass violence and humanitarian crises abroad, including through resolutions condemning
12 Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and affirming the protection of civilians and respect for
13 international law; and

14 WHEREAS, The protection of civilians, the prohibition of collective punishment, and
15 the prevention of genocide and crimes against humanity are foundational principles of
16 international humanitarian law and the United Nations Charter; and

17 WHEREAS, In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, decades of violence fueled by
18 armed groups and external actors have resulted in the deaths of millions of civilians,
19 widespread sexual violence, forced displacement, and ongoing instability, and recent
20 escalations continue to deepen an already devastating humanitarian crisis; and

21 WHEREAS, In Gaza, ongoing military operations have resulted in catastrophic
22 civilian harm, including the deaths of over 70,000 civilians, widespread destruction of
23 homes, hospitals, schools, places of worship, and critical infrastructure, and the
24 displacement of the vast majority of the population; and

25 WHEREAS, In Sudan, armed conflict between warring factions has led to mass
26 killings, ethnic violence, famine conditions, and the displacement of millions, with credible



1 reports of atrocities amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity, particularly
2 against civilian populations in Darfur and other regions; and

3 WHEREAS, Numerous international humanitarian organizations, legal experts, and
4 United Nations officials have warned of the risk of genocide and have documented
5 violations of international humanitarian law, including the obstruction of humanitarian
6 aid and attacks on civilian objects; and

7 WHEREAS, These crises disproportionately impact women, children, the elderly,
8 religious and ethnic minorities, and other vulnerable populations; and

9 WHEREAS, Maryland is home to diverse communities with deep personal, cultural,
10 and familial ties to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gaza, and Sudan, and many
11 Maryland residents are directly affected by the suffering occurring in these regions; and

12 WHEREAS, Silence in the face of mass civilian harm undermines global norms
13 against atrocity crimes and erodes the moral authority of democratic institutions; now,
14 therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the State
16 condemns all acts of violence against civilians and violations of international humanitarian
17 and human rights law occurring in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gaza, and Sudan;
18 and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the State expresses grave concern over credible reports of war
20 crimes, crimes against humanity, and the risk of genocide in these regions; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the State reaffirms its commitment to the values of human
22 dignity, justice, and the equal worth of all human life; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the State affirms that the protection of civilian life, humanitarian
24 access, and accountability under international law must be upheld without exception or
25 selectivity; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the State calls for: (1) an immediate and sustained ceasefire or
27 cessation of hostilities where necessary to protect civilians; (2) full, unhindered
28 humanitarian access to affected populations; (3) the release of all unlawfully detained
29 civilians; and (4) independent investigations and accountability mechanisms for violations
30 of international law; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That the State urges the government of the United States to: (1) use
32 its diplomatic, economic, and political influence to prevent further atrocities; (2) support
33 international humanitarian relief efforts; (3) ensure that U.S. foreign assistance is
34 consistent with international humanitarian law; and (4) work with international partners
35 to pursue durable, just, and peaceful resolutions to these conflicts; and be it further

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1 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
2 Legislative Services to the Governor of Maryland; the President of the Senate of Maryland;
3 the Speaker of the House of Delegates; and the Maryland Congressional Delegation; and
4 be it further

5 RESOLVED, That certified copies of this Resolution be sent by the Secretary of State
6 to the President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate; the United States Senate
7 Majority Leader; the United States Senate Minority Leader; the Speaker of the United
8 States House of Representatives; and the United States House of Representatives Minority
9 Leader.