

**Second Regular Session
Seventieth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

ENGROSSED

LLS NO. R16-0524.01 Joel Moore x4497

HJR16-1013

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 16-1013

101 **CONCERNING ATROCITIES AGAINST CHRISTIANS AND OTHER ETHNIC**
102 **AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES.**

1 WHEREAS, Those who commit or support atrocities against
2 Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis,
3 Turkmen, Sabean-Mandean, Kaka'e, Shi'a, and Kurds, and who target
4 them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, intend to exterminate or
5 to force the migration or submission of anyone who does not share their
6 views concerning religion; and

7 WHEREAS, Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities
8 have been an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle East for
9 millennia; and

10 WHEREAS, Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities

*Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

HOUSE
Final Reading
April 12, 2016

1 have been murdered; subjugated; forced to emigrate; and have suffered
2 grievous bodily and psychological harm, including sexual enslavement
3 and abuse, inflicted in a deliberate and calculated manner in violation of
4 the laws of their respective nations, the laws of war, laws and treaties
5 forbidding crimes against humanity, and the United Nations Convention
6 on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed in
7 Paris on December 9, 1948 (the Convention); and

8 WHEREAS, These atrocities are undertaken with the specific
9 intent to bring about the eradication and displacement of their
10 communities and the destruction of their cultural heritage in violation of
11 local laws, the laws of war, laws and treaties that punish crimes against
12 humanity, and the Convention; and

13 WHEREAS, Local, national, and international laws and treaties,
14 as well as the Convention, condemn murder, massacre, forced migration,
15 extrajudicial punishment, kidnapping, slavery, human trafficking, torture,
16 rape, and persecution of individuals based upon their religion, and these
17 crimes shall be punished, whether they are committed by constitutionally
18 responsible rulers, public officials, or private individuals; and

19 WHEREAS, Article I of the Convention and international and
20 local laws confirm that genocide and crimes against humanity, whether
21 committed in time of peace or in time of war, are crimes that
22 governmental authorities are obligated to prevent and to punish; and

23 WHEREAS, Article II of the Convention declares that "genocide
24 means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in
25 whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:
26 (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental
27 harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group
28 conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in
29 whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within
30 the group; [and] (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another
31 group"; and

32 WHEREAS, Article III of the Convention affirms that "the
33 following acts shall be punishable: (a) Genocide; (b) Conspiracy to
34 commit genocide; (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;
35 (d) Attempt to commit genocide; [and] (e) Complicity in genocide"; and

36 WHEREAS, A March 13, 2015, report of the United Nations

1 Committee on Human Rights prepared at the request of the Government
2 of Iraq stated "[e]thnic and religious groups targeted by ISIL include
3 Yezidis, Christians, Turkmen, Sabeen-Mandean, Kaka'e, Kurds and
4 Shi'a" and that "[i]t is reasonable to conclude that some of the incidents
5 [in Iraq in 2014–2015] ... may constitute genocide"; and

6 WHEREAS, Attacks on Yezidis included the mass killing of men
7 and boys and the enslavement and forcible transfer of women and
8 children; and

9 WHEREAS, On July 10, 2015, Pope Francis, Supreme Pontiff of
10 the Roman Catholic Church, declared that Middle Eastern Christians are
11 facing genocide, a reality that must be "denounced", and that "[i]n this
12 third world war, waged piecemeal, which we are now experiencing, a
13 form of genocide is taking place, and it must end"; now, therefore,

14 *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Seventieth*
15 *General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:*

16 That we, the members of the General Assembly, find that:

17 (1) The atrocities committed against Christians and other ethnic
18 and religious minorities who are targeted specifically for religious reasons
19 constitute, and are hereby declared to be, crimes against humanity and
20 genocide; and

21 (2) Each of the contracting parties to the United Nations
22 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,
23 signed in Paris on December 9, 1948, and to other international
24 agreements forbidding war crimes and crimes against humanity,
25 particularly the governments of countries and their nationals who are in
26 any way supporting these crimes, are reminded of their legal obligations
27 under the Convention and those international agreements; and

28 (3) Every government and multinational body should call the
29 atrocities being committed in the name of religion by their rightful
30 names--"crimes against humanity", "war crimes", and "genocide"; and

31 (4) The United Nations and the United Nations Secretary-General
32 should assert leadership by calling the atrocities being committed in these
33 places by their rightful names--"war crimes", "crimes against humanity",
34 and "genocide"; and

1 (5) The member states of the United Nations, with an urgent
2 appeal to the Arab States that wish to uphold religious freedom, tolerance,
3 and justice:

4 (A) Should join in this resolution;

5 (B) Should collaborate on measures to prevent further war crimes,
6 crimes against humanity, and genocide; and

7 (C) Should collaborate on the establishment and operation of
8 domestic, regional, and international tribunals to punish those responsible
9 for the ongoing crimes; and

10 (6) The governments of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the
11 Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, and other
12 countries, including Turkey, Greece, the United States of America, and
13 the member states of the European Union, are commended for having
14 sheltered and protected those fleeing the violence of ISIS (Daesh) and
15 other extremists until they can safely return to their homes in Iraq and
16 Syria; and

17 (7) All those who force the migration of religious communities
18 from their ancestral homelands, where they have lived and practiced their
19 faith in safety and stability for hundreds of years--including specifically
20 the Nineveh Plain, a historic heartland of Christianity in Iraq, and Mount
21 Sinjar, the historic home of the Yezidis--should be tracked, sanctioned,
22 arrested, prosecuted, and punished in accordance with the laws of the
23 place where their crimes were committed and under applicable
24 international criminal statutes and conventions.

25 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent
26 to President Barack Obama; Vice President Joe Biden; Mitch McConnell,
27 Majority Leader, United States Senate; Harry Reid, Minority Leader,
28 United States Senate; Paul Ryan, Speaker, United States House of
29 Representatives; Kevin McCarthy, Majority Leader, United States House
30 of Representatives; Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader, United States House
31 of Representatives; Colorado's congressional delegation; the Syrian
32 American Council; the African Community Center of Denver; Lutheran
33 Family Services; the Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and
34 Action; the Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation; the St. Rafka
35 Mission of Hope and Mercy; former Colorado State Senator Thomas J.
36 Wiens; Peter Boyles; and Father Andre Y. Mahanna.