

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 361

Concerning efforts to provide humanitarian relief to mitigate the effects of drought and avert famine in the Horn of Africa, particularly Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Kenya.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 20, 2011

Mr. PAYNE (for himself, Mr. CARNAHAN, Ms. LEE of California, and Ms. BASS of California) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Concerning efforts to provide humanitarian relief to mitigate the effects of drought and avert famine in the Horn of Africa, particularly Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Kenya.

Whereas the humanitarian conditions in the Horn of Africa are extremely close to a famine and currently more than 11,500,000 residents of Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Kenya are in need of emergency assistance;

Whereas the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) is reporting that the current drought plaguing the Horn of Africa is considered to be the worst in the region since the 1950s;

Whereas a famine exists when three conditions occur, households lack resource to meet basic food requirements, when Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates exceed 30 percent, and when the crude mortality rate (CMR) is equal to or above 5 people per 10,000 people per day;

Whereas two or more of these criteria are already occurring in some areas of the Horn of Africa, particularly in parts of Somalia, where the threat of famine is compounded by drought, food shortage, civil war, and little government capacity for food distribution system;

Whereas acute malnutrition rates in northern and eastern Kenya and central and southern Somalia are the highest seen since 2003, and GAM rates among Somali refugees arriving in Ethiopia have reached 47 percent;

Whereas UNICEF estimates that more than 2,000,000 young children are malnourished in drought-affected regions, and half a million children face imminent life-threatening conditions, without immediate treatment, these children may suffer physical and mental disabilities for the rest of their lives, if they survive at all;

Whereas the drought and famine-like conditions that affect the Horn of Africa have been brought on by successive seasons of low rainfall, crop failure, rising food prices, and livestock mortality;

Whereas in 2011, high crop failure and low rainfall have resulted in estimates that Somalia's domestic food production will provide for only 20 percent of Somalia's domestic consumption;

Whereas between January and April 2011, food prices increased by more than 25 percent in Kenya, resulting in reduced access to food staples such as maize and beans;

Whereas as of May 2011, cereal prices in Ethiopia had increased by an average of 27.5 percent compared to May 2010 prices, with maize prices in Somali Region increasing by up to 117 percent;

Whereas as of July 2011, livestock mortality rates had reached 40 to 60 percent above normal rates in some areas of Ethiopia due to depleted grazing and water resources;

Whereas these conditions have been exacerbated by the current conflict in southern and central Somalia, and the very limited access given to humanitarian organizations to help the people of those regions in Somalia;

Whereas the current drought conditions, resulting in the lack of food, are creating a large refugee problem, which according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has approximately 1,300 Somalis arriving at the Dadaab refugee complex in northern Kenya daily, and almost 2,000 Somalis arriving at the Dolo Ado refugee camp in Ethiopia weekly;

Whereas to date, UNHCR estimates that 405,068 Somali refugees are already present in Kenya, and 123,562 Somali refugees are in Ethiopia;

Whereas half of new Somali refugees arriving in Ethiopia and one-third arriving in Kenya are severely malnourished;

Whereas this large movement of Somali refugees adds additional strain to neighboring countries also experiencing drought conditions;

Whereas control over the southern and central regions of Somalia by al Shabaab and other militia groups, as well as internal violent conflict and lawlessness, has continued to exacerbate the humanitarian crisis in the region;

Whereas, on July 6, 2011, USAID activated a regional Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in Nairobi, Kenya, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to monitor regional drought conditions and coordinate response activities with other donors; and

Whereas in order to achieve the goals of ensuring food security, preventing famine, and lessening the humanitarian crisis, nations residing in the Horn of Africa, and more generally Africa as a continent, must be knowledgeable and effective regarding the sustainable use of natural resources: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) commends the Administration for providing
3 over \$366,000,000 to date in response to the
4 drought and famine-like conditions in the Horn of
5 Africa;

6 (2) commends the United States Agency for
7 International Development (USAID) for providing
8 \$57,000,000 for the creation of a 5-year program in
9 the accessible Galmuduug, Puntland, and Somali-
10 land regions of Somalia in order to mitigate conflict,
11 promote stability and community cohesion, and
12 strengthen the relationships between citizens and
13 government;

14 (3) calls on the United States Government to
15 continue to commit the necessary resources to pro-
16 vide humanitarian support and nutritional relief to
17 the Horn of Africa region, as well as continue to

1 provide long-term development assistance through
2 the President's Feed the Future Initiative, which is
3 working in the region to address the root causes of
4 hunger and undernutrition and increase resilience
5 among vulnerable populations;

6 (4) strongly encourages international humani-
7 tarian organizations to continue to provide food and
8 humanitarian assistance to the regions in need,
9 mindful of the need for the safety and security of re-
10 lief workers;

11 (5) calls on the Transitional Federal Govern-
12 ment of Somalia (TFG) and other local Somali au-
13 thorities to make additional effort in order to pro-
14 vide support and humanitarian relief to the people of
15 Somalia;

16 (6) calls on all parties to allow the unrestricted
17 access of humanitarian aid agencies to all persons
18 who are affected by drought and supports inter-
19 national efforts to facilitate the timely delivery of as-
20 sistance to those areas;

21 (7) calls on the United States Government and
22 the international community to remain focused on
23 those most vulnerable to the current drought and
24 famine-like conditions, especially women and chil-
25 dren;

1 (8) encourages increased water conservation,
2 water quality enhancement, and more efficient use of
3 water resources in the region;

4 (9) reaffirms the United States commitment to
5 promoting the safety, health, and well-being of the
6 millions of refugees around the world, as stated in
7 H. Res. 1350, the World Refugee Day Resolution,
8 and specifically those in the Horn of Africa during
9 and after the drought; and

10 (10) calls on the United States Government and
11 the international community, including international
12 and local nongovernmental organizations to continue
13 aid and development activities in the Horn of Africa,
14 in order to alleviate poverty and hunger in the re-
15 gion.

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