

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H. RES. 520
OFFERED BY MR. ROYCE OF CALIFORNIA

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas March 2014 marked the third year of the crisis in Syria, which has resulted in the world's largest ongoing humanitarian disaster, and the urgent need for a resolution to the conflict, which cannot be achieved so long as Bashar al-Assad continues his despotic rule;

Whereas the regime of Bashar al-Assad and supporting militias, including Hezbollah, continue to carry out sectarian mass atrocities, which have included mass targeted killings, mass graves, the extermination of entire families, including their children, incidents of ethnic cleansing, sexual violence, widespread torture, aerial bombardment of residential areas, and otherwise forced displacement of certain Syrian civilians especially from areas in western Syria where Assad is attempting to increase the dominance of his own loyalists;

Whereas Assad's forces have carried out chemical weapons attacks against Syrian civilians including the August 21, 2013, sarin attack on a suburb of Damascus, which killed an estimated 1,400 Syrians, hundreds of whom were children;

Whereas press reports indicate that the Assad regime has used chlorine gas in attacks against the village of Kfar Zeita, an opposition-held area, as recently as April 2014;

Whereas the Governments of Russia and Iran continue to provide robust military, financial, and diplomatic support to Assad and supporting groups including Hezbollah, enabling their continued mass atrocities against Syrian civilians;

Whereas the United States Government should not continue to officially recognize a regime that is guilty of such vicious abuses of basic human rights on such a vast scale and should seek to support a resolution to the conflict that enables the Syria people to form a peaceful, democratic government that respects human rights and the rule of law, and does not include Bashar al-Assad;

Whereas the United States Department of State took appropriate action on March 5, 2014, in restricting the movements of Assad's loyal representative to the United Nations, Bashar al-Jaafari, to within a 25-mile radius of New York City;

Whereas the United States Department of State also suspended the diplomatic operations of the Assad regime in the United States and expelled Syrian diplomats from Washington, Michigan, and Texas on March 18, 2014;

Whereas over 150,000 people have been killed, including more than 11,000 children, many more have been seriously wounded, and civilian casualties continue to mount as widespread and systematic attacks on schools, hospitals, and other civilian facilities persist in violation of international norms and principles;

Whereas the United Nations has registered more than 2,600,000 Syrian refugees who have fled to neighboring countries, while regional governments and the United Na-

tions estimate that the total number of refugees already has reached more than 3,000,000;

Whereas the United Nations expects the total number of Syrian refugees to reach over 4,000,000 by the end of 2014;

Whereas approximately half of Syrian refugees are children, including nearly 500,000 under the age of 5, and thousands have been separated from their parents and are especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation;

Whereas the United Nations estimates that over 9,300,000 civilians are in need of humanitarian assistance within Syria, more than 40 percent of the country's total population, including 6,500,000 internally displaced persons;

Whereas Bashar al-Assad's forces, supporting militias, and other parties to the conflict are systematically blocking the delivery of humanitarian aid to many civilian areas, including food and medical care funded by the United States and the international community, in violation of international norms and principles;

Whereas Assad's regime often uses humanitarian assistance, and the withholding of it, as a weapon against his opposition;

Whereas the United Nations estimates that 3,000,000 Syrians are trapped in hard-to-reach or besieged areas, with an estimated 250,000 cut-off from assistance for over a year;

Whereas the crisis has worsened already difficult conditions for Syrian women and girls, who are especially vulnerable to economic hardship and gender-based violence, including early marriage, forced marriage, trafficking, sexual violence, or the fear of sexual violence;

Whereas over 5,000,000 children affected by the conflict desperately need food, clean water, shelter, and medical care;

Whereas millions of Syrian children have been forced out of school, and an entire generation of young Syrians are being shaped by violence, displacement, and persistent lack of opportunity and are therefore at high risk of exploitation, life-long underdevelopment, and radicalization;

Whereas the World Health Organization estimates that 70 percent of Syria's medical professionals, up to 80,000 people, have fled the country, while remaining professionals are deliberately targeted by parties to the conflict;

Whereas regional countries, including Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt and Iraq, are hosting well over 2,000,000 refugees;

Whereas despite the attention and resources refugee camps receive, approximately 83 percent of Syrian refugees in the region, do not live in formal refugee camps but rather among host communities where resources and services, including health, water and sanitation, electricity, and other systems are strained at the municipal and national level;

Whereas many members of the Syrian-American community, especially medical professionals, have generously donated their time and money, while taking great personal risk, in heroic efforts to reach those in need inside Syria with humanitarian assistance;

Whereas after decades of conflict between Israel and Syria, Israeli medical professionals have treated wounded Syrian civilians;

Whereas the United Nations launched the largest appeal in its history for a single humanitarian emergency, request-

ing an unprecedented \$6,500,000,000 in 2014 for the Syrian response, representing nearly half of the United Nation’s entire global humanitarian request;

Whereas as of April 2014, the heads of United Nations humanitarian agencies have reported that the appeal “has gone largely unanswered”; and

Whereas the United States has provided over \$1,700,000,000 in assistance to those suffering inside Syria, as well as refugees and host communities in neighboring countries and has committed to continue to increase its humanitarian contributions for those affected by the conflict: Now, therefore, be it

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

That the House of Representatives—

1 (1) strongly condemns all parties’ attacks on ci-
2 vilians and civilian infrastructure in Syria, including
3 attacks on medical personnel, schools, and health fa-
4 cilities, and the use of weapons, including “barrel
5 bombs” and missiles, in populated areas, and calls
6 on Bashar al-Assad’s regime and supporting mili-
7 tias, as well as all other parties to the conflict in
8 Syria, to end the violence against civilians, respect
9 international norms and principles, and pursue all
10 appropriate options to work toward an end to the
11 crisis;

1 (2) demands that Bashar al-Assad's regime and
2 supporting militias, as well as all other parties to the
3 conflict in Syria, immediately cease attacks upon ci-
4 vilians and civilian infrastructure, facilitate unfet-
5 tered humanitarian access, especially that of domes-
6 tic and international medical professionals, through-
7 out the country, respect the safety and security of
8 humanitarian workers, and ensure freedom of move-
9 ment for humanitarian workers and organizations so
10 they may deliver aid to those most in need;

11 (3) urges the United Nations to redirect hu-
12 manitarian aid to Syria to private humanitarian or-
13 ganizations with demonstrated reach and capacity to
14 manage and deliver aid inside Syria unless and until
15 the Assad regime grants and facilitates unfettered
16 humanitarian access throughout all of Syria, across
17 conflict lines and without regard for political affili-
18 ation;

19 (4) calls for the immediate and full implementa-
20 tion of the provisions of the October 2013 United
21 Nations Security Council Presidential Statement, es-
22 pecially including facilitation of the expansion of hu-
23 manitarian relief operations in accordance with
24 international humanitarian norms;

1 (5) calls for the immediate, full, and United
2 Nations-monitored implementation of the provisions
3 of the 2014 United Nations Security Council Resolu-
4 tion 2139 to promptly allow unhindered humani-
5 tarian access, including across conflict lines (for the
6 United Nations and its partners) to people in need
7 throughout Syria;

8 (6) urges the Administration and allies of the
9 United States to formally withdraw their recognition
10 of Bashar al-Assad's regime as the rightful Govern-
11 ment of Syria, in response to the Assad regime and
12 its supporting militias' barbaric slaughter, system-
13 atic starvation, and other grave human rights
14 abuses, even as other negotiations with Assad's re-
15 gime may continue;

16 (7) urges all donors, regional and otherwise, to
17 meet the 2014 United Nations humanitarian fund-
18 ing appeal;

19 (8) commends regional governments and com-
20 munities for continuing to host Syrian refugees and
21 urges host governments to keep their borders open
22 to civilians fleeing the Syria conflict, while mindful
23 of the continued need to monitor, disrupt, and deter
24 the flow of weapons, illicit goods, and designated ter-
25 rorist organizations across their borders;

1 (9) calls upon the Assad regime, the Syrian op-
2 position, and all other parties to the conflict, the Ad-
3 ministration, and the United Nations to improve
4 their facilitation and support for the Syrian-Amer-
5 ican community, especially medical professionals, as
6 they work to aid the Syrian people with all forms of
7 humanitarian assistance;

8 (10) calls for continued international support of
9 neighboring countries and host communities that are
10 supporting refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict;

11 (11) calls for international investment in edu-
12 cation in host countries to expand learning opportu-
13 nities for refugee children, and support programs
14 that help them gain access to quality instruction,
15 protect them from violence and abuse, and provide
16 counseling;

17 (12) calls on the international community to
18 implement steps to mitigate risks and prevent gen-
19 der-based violence, and help ensure the protection of
20 refugee and displaced women and girls against sex-
21 ual exploitation, early marriage, human trafficking,
22 and rape;

23 (13) calls for the meaningful participation of
24 Syrian civil society, including women representatives,

1 in the overall humanitarian response, political proc-
2 esses, and peace negotiations;

3 (14) urges international donors and aid agen-
4 cies to integrate humanitarian relief and longer-term
5 development programs through a comprehensive
6 strategy to address the protracted Syrian crisis; and

7 (15) calls on the President of the United States
8 to develop and submit to Congress within 60 days of
9 the adoption of this resolution a strategy for United
10 States engagement on the Syria crisis, to include a
11 plan that addresses the crisis' national security, re-
12 gional stability, and humanitarian dimensions.

