

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 89

Supporting the goals and objectives of the Prague Conference on Holocaust
Era Assets.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 30, 2009

Mr. WEXLER (for himself, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. MCMAHON, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. WAXMAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals and objectives of the Prague Conference
on Holocaust Era Assets.

Whereas the Government of the Czech Republic will host a Conference on Holocaust Era Assets in Prague from June 26, 2009, through June 30, 2009;

Whereas the Prague Conference will facilitate a review of the 1998 Washington Conference on Holocaust Era Assets, which had participation of 44 nations, 13 nongovernmental organizations, scholars, and Holocaust survivors;

Whereas a high level United States delegation participated in the Washington Conference on Holocaust Era Assets led by Undersecretary of State Stuart Eizenstat, Nobel Peace Laureate Elie Wiesel, Federal Judge Abner Mikva,

senior diplomats, and a bipartisan group of Members of Congress;

Whereas then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright delivered the key note address at the Washington Conference on Holocaust Era Assets, articulating the United States commitment to Holocaust survivors and urging conference participants to “chart a course for finishing the job of returning or providing compensation for stolen Holocaust assets to survivors and the families of Holocaust victims.”;

Whereas the Prague Conference is expected to take stock of issues agreed on at the Washington Conference, including financial assets, bank accounts, insurance issues, and other financial property;

Whereas the Prague Conference is expected to include a special session on social programs for Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi atrocities;

Whereas the Prague Conference is expected to include working groups on Holocaust education, remembrance and research, looted art, Judaica, Jewish cultural property, and immovable property, including both private, religious, and communal property;

Whereas United States participation and leadership at the highest level is critically important to ensure a successful outcome of the Prague Conference;

Whereas Congress supports further inclusion of Holocaust survivors and their advocates in the Prague Conference planning and proceedings;

Whereas the United States strongly supports an immediate and just restitution or compensation of property illegally

confiscated during the last century by Nazi and Communist regimes;

Whereas many Holocaust survivors lack the means for even the most basic necessities, including proper housing and health care;

Whereas the United States and the international community has a moral obligation to uphold and defend the plight and dignity of Holocaust survivors and to ensure their well-being;

Whereas for the Prague Conference is a critical forum to effectively address the increasing economic, social, housing, and health care needs of Holocaust survivors in their waning years;

Whereas President Barack Obama, during his visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Israel in July 2008, stated “Let our children come here and know this history so they can add their voices to proclaim ‘never again.’ And may we remember those who perished, not only as victims but also as individuals who hoped and loved and dreamed like us and who have become symbols of the human spirit.”; and

Whereas the Prague Conference may represent the last opportunity for the international community to address outstanding Holocaust-era issues: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) supports the goals and objectives of the
4 2009 Prague Conference on Holocaust Era Assets;

5 (2) applauds the Government of the Czech Re-
6 public for its decision to host the Prague Conference

1 and its unwavering commitment to address out-
2 standing Holocaust-era issues;

3 (3) expresses strong support for the decision to
4 make the economic, social, housing, and health care
5 needs of Holocaust survivors a major focus of the
6 Prague Conference;

7 (4) urges the countries in Central and Eastern
8 Europe, which have not already done so, to return
9 looted and confiscated properties to their rightful
10 owners or, where restitution is not possible, pay eq-
11 uitable compensation to the rightful owners in ac-
12 cordance with principles of justice and in an expedi-
13 tious manner that is just, transparent, and fair;

14 (5) calls on the President to send a high-level
15 official, such as the Secretary of State, to represent
16 the United States at the Prague Conference; and

17 (6) urges other invited nations to participate at
18 a similarly high level.

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