



Draft Resolution Calling for America's Recommitment to the Principles and Values of the Geneva Conventions

WHEREAS international humanitarian law, as exemplified by the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, protects both combatants and non-combatants during armed conflict;

WHEREAS America has championed the development and worldwide spread of international humanitarian law for almost 150 years;

WHEREAS our previous commanders-in-chief have led the men and women of the United States Armed Forces with the honor and dignity they deserve by upholding both the spirit and the letter of the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law more generally;

WHEREAS our current commander-in-chief, President George W. Bush, has disgracefully turned his back on nearly 150 years of American leadership in international humanitarian law and ordered our military and intelligence services to treat the Geneva Conventions as a technicality to be evaded rather than an expression of our deepest convictions of justice and fair play both on and off the battlefield;

WHEREAS the integrity of our nation and the professionalism of our military have been severely and perhaps irretrievably damaged by President Bush's policy of contempt towards the Geneva Conventions;

WHEREAS whatever minor, temporary advantage might have been gained by violating the letter and the spirit of international humanitarian law principles, this has been overwhelmed by the international cynicism and contempt such violations have engendered and by our soldiers' loss of morale;

WHEREAS it is not a sign of weakness but of great moral strength to treat our enemies better than we expect to be treated by them; and

WHEREAS we are both diminished and desperately ineffective when we resort to torture, incommunicado detentions and extraordinary renditions to fight our enemies.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that Democrats Abroad call on our Congressional leaders and the President to reverse past decisions and current policies to parse the Geneva Conventions for every conceivable loophole in order to excuse or encourage noncompliance with both the letter and spirit of the Conventions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Democrats Abroad call on our Congressional leaders and the President to reverse past decisions that prisoners captured in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the world and accused of committing or plotting terrorist or military acts against America and its allies are not entitled to the protections of the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law more generally.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Democrats Abroad call on our Congressional leaders and the President to publicly reaffirm America's commitment to the letter and the spirit of the Geneva Conventions, and to take concrete steps towards making that recommitment credible by, among other things, following through on President Bush's expressed desire to close the detention facility at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.