

RESOLUTION CONDEMNING CHEMICAL WEAPONS ATTACK AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST CIVILIANS IN SYRIA AND CALLING FOR FORCEFUL DIPLOMACY TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT

WHEREAS peaceful protests that began in March 2011 against the repressive regime of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad were met with full military force against unarmed civilians, turning the protests into a brutal civil war that has killed more than 100,000 people, mostly civilians, and forced millions to flee and become refugees, displacing entire cities and towns; and the diplomatic efforts of many countries, including the United States, to achieve a cease fire and end the killing of civilians have been ignored by the Assad regime and blocked by Russia, the Assad regime's primary backer and military weapons supplier, leading, in the words of United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to the "collective failure" of the international community "to prevent atrocity crimes" against civilians in Syria; and

WHEREAS on August 21, 2013, Assad's regime drastically escalated its already horrific war against civilians by firing lethal sarin nerve gas rockets into neighborhoods near Damascus that the regime had been trying to clear of opposition forces, killing hundreds of civilians including women and children – a death toll the U.S. government estimates as at least 1,429 killed, including at least 426 children; and

WHEREAS chemical weapons, such as those the Assad regime used on August 21, 2013, kill indiscriminately on a mass scale, without distinguishing soldier from civilian or adult from child, human decency and international law condemn and ban the use of chemical weapons, and the world has codified that ban in the Chemical Weapons Convention, signed by 189 countries representing 98% of humanity; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Party of Orange County ('DPOC') expresses its outrage and condemns in the strongest terms the inhuman and criminal actions of Assad and his regime in murdering civilians with sarin nerve gas, expresses its deepest sympathy for the Syrian people victimized by the Assad regime's chemical attack, and urges ongoing efforts to bring to justice all those responsible for such crimes against humanity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DPOC strongly supports the efforts of President Barack Obama, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, and other world leaders to use forceful diplomacy in preference to military intervention to (1) eliminate all chemical weapons from Syria; (2) end hostilities and all human rights abuses; and (3) commence negotiations between all parties to the conflict under international supervision so that the Syrian people can live in peace to build a free and democratic Syria.

Submitted by: Iyad Afalqa, Carole Levers, Dr. Bill Honingman, Jeff LeTourneau and Michael Fox