

Public Law 105-235
105th Congress

Joint Resolution

Aug. 14, 1998
[S.J. Res. 54]

Finding the Government of Iraq in unacceptable and material breach of its international obligations.

- Whereas hostilities in Operation Desert Storm ended on February 28, 1991, and the conditions governing the cease-fire were specified in United Nations Security Council Resolutions 686 (March 2, 1991) and 687 (April 3, 1991);
- Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 requires that international economic sanctions remain in place until Iraq discloses and destroys its weapons of mass destruction programs and capabilities and undertakes unconditionally never to resume such activities;
- Whereas Resolution 687 established the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM) to uncover all aspects of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs and tasked the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency to locate and remove or destroy all nuclear weapons systems, subsystems or material from Iraq;
- Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 715, adopted on October 11, 1991, empowered UNSCOM to maintain a long-term monitoring program to ensure Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs are dismantled and not restarted;
- Whereas Iraq has consistently fought to hide the full extent of its weapons programs, and has systematically made false declarations to the Security Council and to UNSCOM regarding those programs, and has systematically obstructed weapons inspections for seven years;
- Whereas in June 1991, Iraqi forces fired on International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors and otherwise obstructed and misled UNSCOM inspectors, resulting in United Nations Security Council Resolution 707 which found Iraq to be in "material breach" of its obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 for failing to allow UNSCOM inspectors access to a site storing nuclear equipment;
- Whereas in January and February of 1992, Iraq rejected plans to install long-term monitoring equipment and cameras called for in United Nations resolutions, resulting in a Security Council Presidential Statement of February 19, 1992 which declared that Iraq was in "continuing material breach" of its obligations;
- Whereas in February of 1992, Iraq continued to obstruct the installation of monitoring equipment, and failed to comply with UNSCOM orders to allow destruction of missiles and other proscribed weapons, resulting in the Security Council Presidential Statement of February 28, 1992, which reiterated that Iraq was in "continuing material breach" and noted a "further material

- breach” on account of Iraq’s failure to allow destruction of ballistic missile equipment;
- Whereas on July 5, 1992, Iraq denied UNSCOM inspectors access to the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture, resulting in a Security Council Presidential Statement of July 6, 1992, which declared that Iraq was in “material and unacceptable breach” of its obligations under United Nations resolutions;
- Whereas in December of 1992 and January of 1993, Iraq violated the southern no-fly zone, moved surface-to-air missiles into the no-fly zone, raided a weapons depot in internationally recognized Kuwaiti territory and denied landing rights to a plane carrying United Nations weapons inspectors, resulting in a Security Council Presidential Statement of January 8, 1993, which declared that Iraq was in an “unacceptable and material breach” of its obligations under United Nations resolutions;
- Whereas in response to continued Iraqi defiance, a Security Council Presidential Statement of January 11, 1993, reaffirmed the previous finding of material breach, followed on January 13 and 18 by allied air raids, and on January 17 with an allied missile attack on Iraqi targets;
- Whereas on June 10, 1993, Iraq prevented UNSCOM’s installation of cameras and monitoring equipment, resulting in a Security Council Presidential Statement of June 18, 1993, declaring Iraq’s refusal to comply to be a “material and unacceptable breach”;
- Whereas on October 6, 1994, Iraq threatened to end cooperation with weapons inspectors if sanctions were not ended, and one day later, massed 10,000 troops within 30 miles of the Kuwaiti border, resulting in United Nations Security Council Resolution 949 demanding Iraq’s withdrawal from the Kuwaiti border area and renewal of compliance with UNSCOM;
- Whereas on April 10, 1995, UNSCOM reported to the Security Council that Iraq had concealed its biological weapons program, and had failed to account for 17 tons of biological weapons material resulting in the Security Council’s renewal of sanctions against Iraq;
- Whereas on July 1, 1995, Iraq admitted to a full scale biological weapons program, but denied weaponization of biological agents, and subsequently threatened to end cooperation with UNSCOM resulting in the Security Council’s renewal of sanctions against Iraq;
- Whereas on March 8, 11, 14, and 15, 1996, Iraq again barred UNSCOM inspectors from sites containing documents and weapons, in response to which the Security Council issued a Presidential Statement condemning “clear violations by Iraq of previous Resolutions 687, 707, and 715”;
- Whereas from June 11–15, 1996, Iraq repeatedly barred weapons inspectors from military sites, in response to which the Security Council adopted United Nations Security Council Resolution 1060, noting the “clear violation on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 687, 707, and 715” and in response to Iraq’s continued violations, issued a Presidential Statement detailing Iraq’s “gross violation of obligations”;
- Whereas in August 1996, Iraqi troops overran Irbil, in Iraqi Kurdistan, employing more than 30,000 troops and Republican Guards, in response to which the Security Council briefly suspended implementation on United Nations Security Council Resolution 986, the United Nations oil for food plan;

Whereas in December 1996, Iraq prevented UNSCOM from removing 130 Scud missile engines from Iraq for analysis, resulting in a Security Council Presidential Statement which “deplore[d]” Iraq’s refusal to cooperate with UNSCOM;

Whereas on April 9, 1997, Iraq violated the no-fly zone in southern Iraq and United Nations Security Council Resolution 670, banning international flights, resulting in a Security Council statement regretting Iraq’s lack of “specific consultation” with the Council;

Whereas on June 4 and 5, 1997 Iraqi officials on board UNSCOM aircraft interfered with the controls and inspections, endangering inspectors and obstructing the UNSCOM mission, resulting in a United Nations Security Council Presidential Statement demanding Iraq end its interference and on June 21, 1997, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1115 threatened sanctions on Iraqi officials responsible for these interferences;

Whereas on September 13, 1997, during an inspection mission, an Iraqi official attacked UNSCOM officials engaged in photographing illegal Iraqi activities, resulting in the October 23, 1997, adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1134 which threatened a travel ban on Iraqi officials responsible for noncompliance with United Nations resolutions;

Whereas on October 29, 1997, Iraq announced that it would no longer allow American inspectors working with UNSCOM to conduct inspections in Iraq, blocking UNSCOM teams containing Americans to conduct inspections and threatening to shoot down United States U-2 surveillance flights in support of UNSCOM, resulting in a United Nations Security Council Resolution 1137 on November 12, 1997, which imposed the travel ban on Iraqi officials and threatened unspecified “further measures”;

Whereas on November 13, 1997, Iraq expelled United States inspectors from Iraq, leading to UNSCOM’s decision to pull out its remaining inspectors and resulting in a United Nations Security Council Presidential Statement demanding Iraq revoke the expulsion;

Whereas on January 16, 1998, an UNSCOM team led by American Scott Ritter was withdrawn from Iraq after being barred for three days by Iraq from conducting inspections, resulting in the adoption of a United Nations Security Council Presidential Statement deploring Iraq’s decision to bar the team as a clear violation of all applicable resolutions;

Saddam Hussein.
Kofi Annan.

Whereas despite clear agreement on the part of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein with United Nations General Kofi Annan to grant access to all sites, and fully cooperate with UNSCOM, and the adoption on March 2, 1998, of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1154, warning that any violation of the agreement with Annan would have the “severest consequences” for Iraq, Iraq has continued to actively conceal weapons and weapons programs, provide misinformation and otherwise deny UNSCOM inspectors access;

Richard Butler.

Whereas on June 24, 1998, UNSCOM Director Richard Butler presented information to the United Nations Security Council indicating clearly that Iraq, in direct contradiction to information provided to UNSCOM, weaponized the nerve agent VX; and

Whereas Iraq’s continuing weapons of mass destruction programs threaten vital United States interests and international peace and security: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Government of Iraq is in material and unacceptable breach of its international obligations, and therefore the President is urged to take appropriate action, in accordance with the Constitution and relevant laws of the United States, to bring Iraq into compliance with its international obligations.

Approved August 14, 1998.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 54:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 144 (1998):

July 31, considered and passed Senate.

Aug. 3, considered and passed House.