by Gotham Gazette Staff
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Proposed Res. No. 549-A

Resolution calling on the government of the United States to make all efforts to work through the United Nations Security Council in a manner that would reaffirm our nation's commitment to the rule of law and the primacy of human rights in our international relationships, and to take all appropriate steps toward securing the participation of other nations and international bodies in the effort to ensure that Iraq does not possess biological, chemical or nuclear weapons and toward promoting human rights for all the people of Iraq; and further calling on the government of the United States to work through the United Nations Security Council and with other nations to ensure the unimpeded access of United Nations weapons inspectors to all areas of and facilities in Iraq and to ensure that the inspectors be given a full and fair opportunity to conduct their efforts in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions; and further calling upon the Council of the City of New York to oppose a pre-emptive military attack on Iraq unless it is demonstrated that Iraq poses a real and imminent threat to the security and safety of the United States or its allies or unless other options for achieving compliance with United Nations resolutions calling for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their development have failed.

By Council Members Perkins, Baez, Barron, Boyland, Brewer, Clarke, Comrie, Davis, DeBlasio, Dilan, Espada, Foster, Gerson, Gioia, González, Jackson, Koppell, Liu, Lopez, Martinez, the Speaker (Council Member Miller), Monserrate, Moskowitz, Quinn, Reed, Reyna, Sanders, Seabrook, Serrano, Stewart, Vann and Yassky

Whereas, The manner in which the United States government is responding to the crisis involving Iraq has caused great concern among many New Yorkers, resulting in one of the largest public demonstrations in the history of the City of New York on February 15, 2003; and

Whereas, The Council of the City of New York is the locally elected voice of the people of the City of New York; and

Whereas, Saddam Hussein has violated United Nations resolutions requiring his government to destroy biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, cease the development of such weapons and permit international inspection of all areas and facilities to ensure compliance with such resolutions; and

Whereas, Although international weapons inspections barred by Iraq in 1998 have been reinstituted in response to international pressure, particularly from the United States, there is evidence that despite some cooperation, Iraq is not fully complying with United Nations resolutions; and

Whereas, It is imperative that Iraq not be allowed to possess, use or export biological, chemical or nuclear weapons, or weapons of terror, and that Iraq fully comply with United Nations resolutions; and

Whereas, Since taking power in 1979, Saddam Hussein's regime has committed human rights violations against the Iraqi people on a massive scale—documented by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and others—and we condemn these crimes and the ongoing oppression of the Iraqi people, including the Kurdish, Shiite and other minority groups; and

Whereas, It is in the interest of all nations, including the United States, that threats to world peace and violations of human rights be dealt with in accordance with international law and, whenever possible, on a multilateral basis; and

Whereas, A pre-emptive United States military attack on Iraq, absent a real and imminent threat to the security and safety of the United States or its allies and absent the support of the international community would violate our commitments to the United Nations charter; and

Whereas, War has grave repercussions in terms of loss of life; and

Whereas, While it is difficult to project the financial costs of war, a thorough analysis published by the National Bureau of Economic Research estimates that the total cost of invasion, occupation, peace-keeping, reconstruction, nation-building and necessary humanitarian assistance might range from $150 to $750 billion;

Whereas, Such cost would place an enormous strain on our nation's ability to maintain the

infrastructure, human services and social programs necessary for our nation's security, general welfare and progress; and

Whereas, It has not been substantiated that all other means of disarming Saddam Hussein in accordance with United Nations resolutions have been attempted and have failed; and

Whereas, The United States government has not articulated how a military attack would result in the formation of an Iraqi government that rejects the development of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons and promotes freedom and democracy; and

Whereas, In the event that our armed forces are called into combat in Iraq, we recognize, honor and appreciate the commitment, service and valor of our military personnel, and together with their families, we fervently hope for their safe return; and

Whereas, This resolution speaks of the United States' response to the current crisis involving Iraq and does not address any action the United States might take in response to any future humanitarian crisis; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the government of the United States should make all efforts to work through the United Nations Security Council in a manner that would reaffirm our nation's commitment to the rule of law and the primacy of human rights in our international relationships, and should take all appropriate steps toward securing the participation of other nations and international bodies in the effort to ensure that Iraq does not possess biological, chemical or nuclear weapons and toward promoting human rights for all the people of Iraq; and be it further

Resolved, That the government of the United States should work through the United Nations Security Council and with other nations to ensure the unimpeded access of United Nations weapons inspectors to all areas of and facilities in Iraq and to ensure that the inspectors be given a full and fair opportunity to conduct their efforts in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions; and be it further

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York opposes a pre-emptive military attack on

Iraq unless it is demonstrated that Iraq poses a real and imminent threat to the security and safety of the United States or its allies or unless all other options for achieving compliance with United Nations resolutions calling for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and the means for their development have failed.

Other Links:

- First Draft of the City Council Anti-War Resolution
- The New York City Council And War

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