

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 901

Expressing support for democracy and human rights in Pakistan.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 30, 2023

Mr. McCORMICK (for himself and Mr. KILDEE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing support for democracy and human rights in  
Pakistan.

Whereas Pakistan is an important and valued partner of the  
United States;

Whereas in 2022, catastrophic monsoon rains in Pakistan left  
over one-third of the country under water, affecting the  
lives of over 33,000,000 Pakistanis;

Whereas the United States Government has assisted Paki-  
stan's recovery from the devastating 2022 floods, includ-  
ing through resources to rebuild damaged infrastructure,  
invest in clean energy, promote food security, and sup-  
port economic growth;

Whereas, on December 10, 1948, Pakistan became one of the  
original signatories to, and supported the creation of, the  
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR);

Whereas, on June 23, 2010, Pakistan ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR);

Whereas the Department of State 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices reported “significant human rights issues” in Pakistan, including unlawful, arbitrary, and extrajudicial killings, forced disappearance and arbitrary detention by the State or its agents, the taking of political prisoners, serious restrictions on free expression and media, and substantial interference with the freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association;

Whereas the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported the Pakistani police used excessive force on Pakistani citizens during at least 20 protests in 2022, resulting in the death of at least 4 protesters and injuring and detaining many others;

Whereas, on April 3, 2022, President Arif Alvi dissolved Pakistan’s National Assembly on the advice of former Prime Minister Imran Khan, but the dissolution order was subsequently set aside by the Supreme Court of Pakistan;

Whereas, on April 9, 2022, a vote of no-confidence motion in the National Assembly against Imran Khan led to his removal as Prime Minister of Pakistan;

Whereas, on April 11, 2022, Shehbaz Sharif was elected unopposed by the National Assembly to replace Imran Khan as Prime Minister, as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members boycotted the vote and resigned en masse from the National Assembly;

Whereas the Constitution of Pakistan states: “When the National Assembly or a Provincial Assembly is dissolved, a

general election to the Assembly shall be held within a period of ninety days after the dissolution”;

Whereas, on August 5, 2023, the results of the 2023 Census of Pakistan were approved by the Council of Common Interests and the Election Commission of Pakistan subsequently announced the postponement of elections until January 2024 to redraw constituencies of the National Assembly to reflect the 2023 Census;

Whereas, on August 10, 2023, President Arif Alvi dissolved the National Assembly on the advice of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif;

Whereas, on September 1, 2023, caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said the Government “was committed to safeguarding and upholding the rights of all its citizens”, and that the Government “would provide constitutional continuity till the next general elections are held in the country”;

Whereas the Constitution of Pakistan states that “the Federal Government shall have control and command of the Armed Forces”, and the oath taken by members of the Armed Forces swears they will “uphold the Constitution” and “not engage in any political activities”;

Whereas an essential safeguard of democracy is civilian command and control of apolitical military and security forces;

Whereas democracy, development, rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing;

Whereas President Biden in the March 2023 second Summit for Democracy called strengthening democracy the “defining challenge of our age”; and

Whereas, on March 28, 2023, the Government of Pakistan stated that “Pakistan would engage bilaterally with the United States . . . to promote and strengthen democratic principles and values and work towards advancing human rights and the fight against corruption”: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) affirms its strong support for democracy in  
3       Pakistan, including free and fair elections reflecting  
4       the will of the people of Pakistan;

5               (2) calls on the President and the Secretary of  
6       State to work with the Government of Pakistan to  
7       ensure democracy, human rights, and the rule of law  
8       are upheld;

9               (3) urges the Government of Pakistan to up-  
10       hold democratic institutions, human rights, and the  
11       rule of law, and respect the fundamental guarantees  
12       of due process, freedom of press, freedom of assem-  
13       bly, and freedom of speech of the people of Pakistan;

14              (4) condemns attempts to suppress the people  
15       of Pakistan’s participation in their democracy, in-  
16       cluding through harassment, intimidation, arbitrary  
17       detention, or any violation of their human, civil, or  
18       political rights; and

19              (5) condemns any effort to subvert the political,  
20       electoral, or judicial processes of Pakistan.

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