

Minnesota State Resolution for Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month

WHEREAS, During the Second World War, Raphael Lemkin, a Polish lawyer of Jewish descent, coined the term “genocide” to describe a coordinated plan of action aimed at the destruction of foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating a group itself, for example, by disintegrating a group’s political and social institutions, culture, language, national feelings, religion, and economic existence, and destroying the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and the lives of individuals belonging to the group; and

WHEREAS, Following the Holocaust, on December 9, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 260 (III) A, the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, declaring genocide to be a crime under international law, and defining genocide to include the commission of certain acts, including killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about a group’s physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group, with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group; and

WHEREAS, In 2008, the Genocide Prevention Task Force, convened by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the American Academy of Diplomacy, and the United States Institute of Peace, issued a report finding that in order to prevent future genocides and mass atrocities, effective prevention measures must be implemented before a crisis has erupted, and that educating the public can help to protect individual rights and promote a culture of lawfulness that will help prevent future genocides; and

WHEREAS, many communities of Minnesota have endured acts of genocide or human rights atrocities in their countries of origin; and

WHEREAS, The State of Minnesota condemns and desires to combat all acts of genocide and all human rights atrocities; and

WHEREAS, Educating the public about the evils of genocide and commemorating victims of genocide, including the adoption of a Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month, are effective tools that will further these goals; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the State of Minnesota that they proclaim the month of April of each year as Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month.