

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 176

Expressing the sense of the Senate on United States policy during the political transition in Zimbabwe, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 9, 2009

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. KERRY, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BURRIS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. BROWNBACK) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate on United States policy during the political transition in Zimbabwe, and for other purposes.

Whereas, over the course of the last decade, the Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), led by Robert Mugabe, increasingly turned to violence and intimidation to maintain power amidst government-directed economic collapse and a growing humanitarian crisis;

Whereas the Department of State's 2008 Country Report on Human Rights Practices states that the Government of Zimbabwe "continued to engage in the pervasive and systematic abuse of human rights, which increased during the year," including unlawful killings, politically-moti-

vated abductions, state-sanctioned use of excessive force and torture by security forces against opposition, student leaders, and civil society activists;

Whereas Zimbabwe held presidential and parliamentary elections on March 29, 2008, with official results showing that Mr. Mugabe won 43.2 percent of the vote, while Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition party Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), won 47.9 percent of the vote;

Whereas, in the wake of those elections, Mr. Mugabe and his allies launched a brutal campaign of violence against members and supporters of the MDC, voters and journalists, and other citizens of Zimbabwe, leading Mr. Tsvangirai to withdraw from the June 27, 2008, runoff presidential election, which Mr. Mugabe, the only remaining candidate, then won with 85 percent of the vote;

Whereas, on September 15, 2008, ZANU-PF and the MDC signed a “Global Political Agreement” (GPA) to form a transitional government under which Mr. Mugabe would remain President, Mr. Tsvangirai would become Prime Minister, and the parties would divide control of the ministries;

Whereas the Global Political Agreement, as written, included provisions to restore the rule of law and economic stability and growth, establish a new constitution, end violence by state and non-state actors, and promote freedom of assembly, association, expression, and communication;

Whereas the installation of the transitional government stalled for five months as Mr. Mugabe and his allies refused to compromise on control of key ministries and security agencies and continued to use the state security

apparatus to intimidate and commit violence against political opponents;

Whereas, according to the United Nations, the humanitarian situation during that time deteriorated to unprecedented levels, with an estimated 5,000,000 people in Zimbabwe susceptible to food insecurity, and collapsing water and sewerage services giving rise to a cholera epidemic that has resulted in the deaths of more than 4,000 people;

Whereas, on February 11, 2009, the parties finally formed the transitional government;

Whereas there has since been some progress toward the implementation of the Global Political Agreement, including positive steps by the Ministry of Finance, such as the issuance of a Short Term Economic Recovery Program (STERP) and the abandonment of the Zimbabwe dollar in favor of foreign currencies;

Whereas many of the reform-minded individuals within the new transitional government are limited by a severe lack of qualified personnel and material resources;

Whereas the full implementation of the Global Political Agreement continues to be obstructed by hardliners in the government, and important issues regarding senior government appointments remain unresolved, notably the status of the current Reserve Bank Governor and the Attorney General;

Whereas ZANU-PF officials have made efforts to obstruct implementation of the Global Political Agreement as they continue to arrest legitimate journalists and human rights activists and delay the swearing into office of properly designated officials nominated by MDC; and

Whereas the security forces continue to operate outside the rule of law, condoning land invasions, restrictions on media access and freedoms, and harassment, arbitrary arrests, and detention of civil society activists in Zimbabwe: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that the
2 United States Government, in coordination with other
3 democratic governments and international institutions de-
4 siring to help the people of Zimbabwe, should—

5 (1) continue to provide humanitarian assistance
6 to meet the urgent needs of the people of Zimbabwe;

7 (2) make available increased resources for non-
8 governmental entities to provide assistance and to
9 pay salaries or fees to appropriately qualified people
10 in Zimbabwe to enable progress to be made in the
11 critical areas of education, health, water, and sanita-
12 tion;

13 (3) welcome and encourage responsible efforts
14 by the international community to support, strength-
15 en, and extend reforms made by ministries within
16 the Government of Zimbabwe, especially the Min-
17 istry of Finance;

18 (4) provide concrete financial and technical as-
19 sistance in response to requests from the people of
20 Zimbabwe and civil society organizations in their ef-
21 forts to draft and enact a new constitution based on

1 democratic values and principles that would enable
2 the country to hold fair and free elections at an
3 early date;

4 (5) work with and encourage regional govern-
5 ments and leaders to promote human rights, the res-
6 toration of the rule of law, and economic growth in
7 Zimbabwe;

8 (6) maintain the existing ban on the transfer of
9 defense items and services and the suspension of
10 most non-humanitarian government-to-government
11 assistance until there is demonstrable progress to-
12 ward restoring the rule of law, civilian control over
13 security forces, and respect for human rights in
14 Zimbabwe; and

15 (7) support the continuation and updating of fi-
16 nancial sanctions and travel bans targeted against
17 those individuals responsible for the deliberate
18 breakdown of the rule of law, politically motivated
19 violence, and other ongoing illegal activities in
20 Zimbabwe.

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