

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 229

Supporting the people of the Togolese Republic in their desire for free, fair, and open elections and the establishment of a democratic, representative government.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 21, 2005

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota (for herself and Ms. WATSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Supporting the people of the Togolese Republic in their desire for free, fair, and open elections and the establishment of a democratic, representative government.

Whereas, in 1960, the West African country of the Togolese Republic gained its independence from France;

Whereas, in 1967, former President Gnassingbé Eyadéma seized power in Togo, and he remained in power until his death on February 5, 2005;

Whereas in its 2004 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the Department of State stated with respect to Togo that, “The Constitution provides for the right of citizens to change their government peacefully; however, the Government restricted this right in practice.”;

Whereas following former President Eyadéma's death, the Togolese army suspended the constitution and appointed former President Eyadéma's son, Faure Gnassingbé, as president;

Whereas, on February 6, 2005, the Togolese parliament amended the constitution to allow Faure Gnassingbé to stay in power and carry out the remaining three years of his father's presidential term, with no new elections scheduled until 2008;

Whereas the Togolese constitution stipulates that upon a president's death, the Speaker of the Parliament should sit as interim president for sixty days, after which a presidential election is to be held;

Whereas the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union considered the actions in Togo to be a military coup, and both organizations imposed sanctions on Togo;

Whereas regional security organizations, the United Nations, and other countries called for Faure Gnassingbé's resignation, and a Department of State spokesman stated, "the United States does not accept as legitimate the designation of Gnassingbé as interim president and calls on him to step aside immediately.";

Whereas after mounting international pressure, Faure Gnassingbé authorized new elections and stepped down as interim president;

Whereas opposition groups and citizens in Togo have held pro-democracy demonstrations in the capital city of Lomé, and the protests have resulted in limited violence; and

Whereas, in his 2005 inaugural address, President George W. Bush stressed the link between United States national security and securing democracy globally when he stated, “It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world . . . Freedom, by its nature, must be chosen, and defended by citizens, and sustained by the rule of law and the protection of minorities . . . We will encourage reform in other governments by making clear that success in our relations will require the decent treatment of their own people.”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) supports the people of the Togolese Republic
3 in their desire for free, fair, and open elections
4 and the establishment of a democratic, representa-
5 tive government;

6 (2) calls on Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice
7 to encourage the Government of Togo and the Togo-
8 lese people to seek a peaceful transition to a demo-
9 cratically elected government, in accordance with
10 internationally accepted values of democracy and
11 transparency, and to be diligent in ensuring free,
12 fair, and open elections;

13 (3) recognizes the positive steps designed to
14 promote democracy and stability in the region taken
15 by the Economic Community of West African States

1 (ECOWAS), which took swift steps to condemn the
2 original disregard of the Togolese constitution;

3 (4) encourages ECOWAS to continue moni-
4 toring and promoting democracy in Togo and in its
5 other member countries;

6 (5) encourages the African Union and the inter-
7 national community to monitor the presidential elec-
8 tions in Togo and to continue to monitor Togo fol-
9 lowing the elections to guard against violence of any
10 kind;

11 (6) encourages the presence of internationally
12 recognized organizations to serve as election mon-
13 itors in Togo to ensure free, fair, and open elections
14 by allowing all opposition candidates to take part in
15 the upcoming April 24, 2005, presidential election;
16 and

17 (7) requests the Department of State to deter-
18 mine the legitimacy of the elections on April 24,
19 2005, and to report to the International Relations
20 Committee of the House of Representatives and the
21 Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate con-
22 cerning whether the elections were free, fair, and
23 open.

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