

is important to us. It is a program that has and continues to serve over 9 million women, infants, and children monthly, providing food, education and access to health care. Many of the women and children who use these services are at-risk for poor nutritional diets and WIC provides them with greater access to nutritious foods as well as preventative services to improve their families' health over the long-term.

At caucus meetings, we have discussed this program and the impact of reduced spending on women across the nation. It is important for this Congress to advance ways in the upcoming budget that can ensure benefits are provided to constituencies with the greatest need.

WIC is the largest discretionary program under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and as such has been targeted for cuts in the continuing resolution. For the pregnant, postpartum and breast-feeding women who participate in WIC, as well as for their under-five children, we look forward to working together on solutions acceptable to both sides of the aisle.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BLAKE FARENTHOLD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 18, 2011

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 89, I missed the vote due to a previously scheduled satellite interview in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

BARLETTA AMENDMENTS AND WEINER-CHAFFETZ-CRAVAACK AMENDMENT

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 18, 2011

Mr. PAYNE. I rise today to oppose the Barletta amendments and the Weiner-Chaffetz-Cravaack amendment to eliminate funding for the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), should they be offered during floor consideration of H.R. 1.

The elimination of USIP would have strong, adverse impact on America's security interests. USIP is an important national security actor. The U.S. Government must have options for resolving international conflict other than military action. USIP—created by Congress and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan—is the only independent U.S. Government actor that is dedicated solely to conflict prevention and resolution.

USIP is the critical bridge between governmental and non-governmental actors to promote peace in volatile conflicts. Their Center for Mediation and Conflict Resolution conducts work in a number of critical conflict zones in Africa, Middle East, and across the globe:

USIP is addressing a series of challenges and opportunities facing the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, with a focus on institutional capacity to make compromises, the capacity of the Israeli and Palestinian publics to build consensus and support for a negotiated agreement, and the role of U.S. policymakers

in encouraging and supporting these efforts toward a peaceful resolution.

USIP is addressing several issues in Nigeria, a country rife with conflicts over petroleum resources and religion. Amidst this situation, the Center is working on peace efforts for the Niger Delta region, including working collaboratively with local governments, oil companies, and Nigerian NGOs.

For nearly two decades, the United States Institute of Peace has been working in Sudan on peace processes. Its knowledge and expertise has helped shape the environment that has contributed, so far, to a relatively peaceful outcome of the referendum. USIP's work on prevention, power-sharing, constitutional reform and natural resources has made a critical difference in the country's local capacity.

USIP produces timely expert analysis on issues critical to policymakers and conflict prevention practitioners. Just last week USIP published the attached PEACE Brief report on the political stalemate in Côte d'Ivoire following the November 28, 2010 election and the broader issue of preventing electoral violence in Africa.

USIP is a small, agile center of innovation in support of America's national security interests in supporting peace and democracy in Africa and across the globe. USIP has been a very useful resource to policymakers for decades, we can not eliminate this critical institution.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting "no" on these amendments.

[From the PeaceBrief—United States Institute of Peace, Feb. 7, 2011]

CÔTE D'IVOIRE'S POLITICAL STALEMATE: A SYMPTOM OF AFRICA'S WEAK ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

(By Dorina Bekoe)

SUMMARY

The political stalemate in Côte d'Ivoire following the November 28, 2010, presidential election continues. The majority of the international community recognizes Alassane Ouattara as the winner, but Laurent Gbagbo, the sitting president, insists he won. Financial and diplomatic sanctions imposed on the Gbagbo administration have thus far not forced Gbagbo from power.

Maintaining international pressure and focus is critical to resolving the Ivorian crisis, but African states are increasingly divided on how to proceed.

The power-sharing arrangement settled on by five African nations in recent elections sets a dangerous precedent. Losers with a strong militia may find it easier to use threats of violence or actual violence to retain a critical power role, thus subverting the intent of the election.

African states will continue to experience violence during elections until the security sector is reformed, states refrain from holding elections while militias remain mobilized and armed, elections can be clearly and independently verified, institutions are politically independent, and policies exist to discourage the violent acquisition of power.

Following the November 28, 2010, presidential runoff election, the United Nations, charged with validating the electoral process, along with the Independent Electoral Commission, proclaimed Alassane Ouattara the winner, with 54.1 percent of the vote, over Laurent Gbagbo, the sitting president, who had received 45.9 percent of the vote. However, the Constitutional Council, headed by a Gbagbo supporter, annulled results in 13 departments, alleging fraud, and proclaimed Gbagbo the winner, with 51.4 percent of the vote; Ouattara was given 48.5 percent.¹ Both

Ouattara and Gbagbo were sworn in as president by their supporters.

Most in the international and regional communities recognized Ouattara as the winner, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) suspended Côte d'Ivoire from membership. Gbagbo's calls to investigate election fraud, recount the ballots, and craft a power-sharing arrangement have been rejected by the international and regional institutions. Instead, ECOWAS and AU envoys have urged Gbagbo to step down, financial and travel sanctions have been placed on him and his associates, and ECOWAS threatened military intervention.² With the military and the Young Patriots militia supporting Gbagbo and the Forces Nouvelles rebels supporting Ouattara, many fear that the failure of diplomacy and sanctions will reignite the 2002 civil war. While the central conundrum is how to convince Gbagbo to leave office, larger questions loom about the role of elections, the state of democratization, and the strength of institutions in Africa.

POWER SHARING IN RESPONSE TO ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

In 2010, opposition candidates claimed electoral fraud and irregularities in every presidential election in Africa—in Guinea, Togo, Sudan, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Comoros, Tanzania, and Rwanda. Historically, in many cases of electoral fraud, the challenger urges demonstrations or refuses to recognize the results. In prolonged and violent standoffs mediators have been dispatched, as occurred in Guinea 2010, or a power-sharing agreement has been negotiated, as occurred in Kenya and Zimbabwe in 2008, in Togo in 2005, in Madagascar in 2002, and in Zanzibar in 2001.

While the power-sharing arrangements in those five cases aimed to stop the violence and address some of its underlying causes, such arrangements could have longlasting implications, and shorter, transitional measures might be considered instead. Granted, an electorate can vote for a power-sharing or proportionally representative government. The problems arise when power sharing is imposed as a solution when there is a clear winner (it weakens the purpose of an election), when the winner cannot be determined (it can encourage fraud and other obfuscation), or when there is postelection violence (it may demonstrate that violence pays). In this sense, Gbagbo's power-sharing proposal is troubling and presents a critical philosophical decision for Africa's institutions: how to react to candidates who respond violently to election results. More broadly, how can leaders be encouraged to accept defeat? How should the international community respond to leaders who use violence to hold on to power? For the remainder of 2011, Africa faces nearly 40 elections and referenda in 23 countries, including some that have a history of violence and weak democratic institutions, such as Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. A power-sharing norm, in the event of violently contested election results, will be a dangerous precedent.

LESSONS FROM MADAGASCAR AND TOGO

In 2003, a disputed first-run election left Madagascar divided between the supporters of incumbent president Didier Ratsiraka and challenger Marc Ravalomanana. The Organization of African Unity brokered the Dakar Agreement to pave the way for a resolution.³ But when Ratsiraka refused to concede, confrontations between the two escalated, and Ratsiraka fled to France.⁴ Six years later the mayor of Antananarivo, Andry Rajoelina, accused Ravalomanana's administration of corruption and mismanagement and, with the military's backing, assumed the presidency. Ravalomanana fled to South