

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 485

To encourage the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to abide by constitutional provisions regarding the holding of presidential elections in 2016, with the aim of ensuring a peaceful and orderly democratic transition of power.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 9, 2016

Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

To encourage the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to abide by constitutional provisions regarding the holding of presidential elections in 2016, with the aim of ensuring a peaceful and orderly democratic transition of power.

Whereas the United States Government has supported and will continue to support the principle that the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (in this resolution referred to as “the DRC”) should choose their own government in accordance with their constitution and all relevant laws and regulations;

Whereas the constitution of the DRC requires that elections be held in time for the inauguration of a new president

on December 19, 2016, when the current presidential term expires;

Whereas, on March 30, 2016, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2277, which called upon the Government of the DRC and its national partners, including the CENI (Independent National Electoral Commission), “to ensure a transparent and credible electoral process, in fulfillment of their primary responsibility to create propitious conditions for the forthcoming elections . . . scheduled for November 2016 in accordance with the Constitution” and urged the Government of the DRC and all relevant parties to ensure an electoral environment conducive to a “free, fair, credible, inclusive, transparent, peaceful, and timely electoral process, in accordance with the Congolese constitution”;

Whereas events in the DRC over the last year and a half have called into serious question the commitment of the Government of the DRC to hold such elections on the required timeline, and President Joseph Kabila has not publicly committed to stepping down at the end of his term;

Whereas there are 12 presidential elections slated to take place on the continent of Africa by the end of 2017, and what transpires in the DRC will set an important example for the leaders of those countries; and

Whereas many observers have expressed concern that failure to move ahead with elections in the DRC could lead to violence and instability inside the DRC, which could reverberate throughout central Africa’s Great Lakes region:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1 (1) urges the Government of the DRC and all
2 other relevant parties to engage in a credible, inde-
3 pendently monitored, and technical dialogue to reach
4 consensus on a way forward on establishing a de-
5 tailed electoral calendar and organizing elections;

6 (2) urges the Government of the DRC to re-
7 spect the constitution of the DRC and, as constitu-
8 tionally required, to ensure a free, open, peaceful,
9 and democratic transition of power;

10 (3) expresses its solidarity with the people of
11 the DRC to choose their own government in an at-
12 mosphere free of violence, threats, and intimidation
13 by the government or other parties, including the re-
14 lease of Fred Bauma and Yves Makwambala;

15 (4) commits to maintain vigilance and scrutiny
16 of the electoral process in the DRC, to help ensure
17 that all United States Government activities con-
18 tribute fully and robustly to the above-mentioned ob-
19 jectives; and

20 (5) pledges to examine continuously the use of
21 all available and appropriate means to ensure these
22 objectives, including the imposition of targeted sanc-
23 tions on individuals or entities responsible for vio-

- 1 lence and human rights violations and undermining
- 2 democratic processes in the DRC.

