

printed in italic, and with an amendment to strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

S. RES. 386

Whereas the people of the United States have a strong relationship with the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and a strong commitment to the principles of democracy and adherence to the rule of law;

Whereas, in 2006, the Government of the DRC adopted a new constitution that limited the President to two consecutive five-year terms, which for President Joseph Kabila expired on December 19, 2016;

Whereas President Kabila swore to uphold the constitution of the DRC as part of his oath of office;

Whereas the constitutionally required elections have not yet taken place;

Whereas citizens of the DRC have repeatedly demanded that their constitutional right to elect a new President after two terms be upheld and that President Kabila must therefore step down;

Whereas, on December 31, 2016, the National Episcopal Conference of Congolese Bishops mediated a political agreement between the ruling coalition and main opposition parties under which President Kabila is prohibited from running for a third term, constitutional changes which would extend the President's time in office are prohibited, and elections were to be held before the end of 2017;

Whereas, on March 31, 2017, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2348, which called for a "swift implementation" of the December 2016 political agreement, including "peaceful, credible, inclusive and timely elections no later than December 2017, leading to a peaceful transition of power";

Whereas, on June 21, 2017, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2360, which stressed "the importance of the DRC and its national partners taking all necessary steps to accelerate preparations for the elections without further delays";

Whereas, on November 5, 2017, the Congolese electoral commission released a calendar that would delay elections until at least December 23, 2018, while noting numerous "constraints" that could impact respect of this calendar;

Whereas the failure to hold constitutionally required elections has increased political uncertainty, violence, and instability inside the DRC, and the United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator said that amid the political stalemate, "conflict is rapidly spreading across the country and in appalling ways, even in a country blighted by violence and insecurity for decades";

Whereas, despite contributions in billions of dollars in development, peacekeeping, humanitarian, and diplomatic support from the United States and the international community over the past two decades, persistent insecurity has plagued the DRC and a perpetual humanitarian crisis is devolving rapidly further as a result of President Kabila's continued effort to maintain the presidency;

Whereas the natural wealth of the DRC is monopolized by a narrow few and enabled by endemic corruption, regional proxy conflict, and poor governance, which together have promoted insecurity and resulted in rates of internal displacement, disease, and mortality approaching the highest in the world;

Whereas political space in the DRC continues to be heavily restricted, as evidenced by arrests and detention of members of the political opposition, democratic activists, and journalists, and by restrictions on fundamental freedoms such as speech and assembly, and Congolese state security forces have repeatedly responded to peaceful protestors with violence including assaults on Catholic communities;

Whereas American Michael Sharp and Swede Zaida Catalán, members of the United Nations

Group of Experts, were assassinated in 2017 while investigating reports of atrocities by state security forces in the Kasai region, and there has been little effort made by the Government of the DRC to cooperate with any independent investigation into these murders; and

Whereas members of the opposition have been targeted, arrested, harassed, and violently attacked by security forces: Now, therefore, be it Resolved,

That the Senate—

(1) expresses concern that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo failed to hold elections in 2016 as required by its Constitution and later failed to fulfill its political commitment to hold elections in 2017;

(2) expresses concern that the growing security, humanitarian, and human rights crisis in the DRC is exacerbated by the lack of a duly elected leadership;

(3) recognizes that impunity and the lack of effective rule of law undermine democracy, and that the arrest and detention of civil society activists and the harassment of political opponents close political space and repress peaceful dissent;

(4) calls on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to complete concrete steps towards holding elections, including—

(A) issuance of district-level voter registration data;

(B) completion of legislation to enable redistricting;

(C) fulfillment of the constitutionally required step of "calling the electorate";

(D) publication of the final list of presidential and parliamentary candidates; and

(E) holding presidential, parliamentary, and provincial elections by December 23, 2018;

(5) calls on the opposition to take all steps possible within the DRC to support and promote immediate free, fair, and inclusive elections;

(6) welcomes United States Government sanctions targeting several senior security officials and other individuals responsible for human rights abuses, impeding democracy, and gross corruption in the DRC;

(7) encourages the careful vetting of all planned United States assistance to Congolese state security forces to ensure that its impact and importance to United States national security objectives outweigh the potential damage to United States interests that might result in working with the state security services of the DRC;

(8) notes the importance of continued unity among the international community that untested, un-piloted technology, such as electronic voting machines, given their high cost, risk of failure, and potential for manipulation, should not be used if a credible election process is intended to benefit all Congolese citizens;

(9) calls on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to cooperate with United States, Swedish, and United Nations officials to enable a credible and independent investigation of the killing of Michael Sharp and Zaida Catalán, and to identify and bring to justice those responsible for their murder;

(10) calls on the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to end political arrests and free political detainees, including youth activists, in support of a credible and inclusive electoral environment; and

(11) urges the President of the United States, in close coordination with regional and other international partners, to use appropriate means—

(A) to provide appropriate electoral assistance to support the organization of credible elections in the DRC by December 23, 2018; and

(B) to deter further electoral calendar slippage and abuses against the people of Congo, including through the consideration of targeted sanctions against high-level DRC officials, including close associates of President Joseph Kabila responsible for further delay of or impediment to elections or otherwise maintaining President

Kabila's rule beyond the constitution's two-term limit.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the question is on adoption of the resolution, as amended.

The resolution (S. Res. 386), as amended, was agreed to.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to, the preamble, as amended, be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment to the preamble in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JULY 17, 2018

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, July 17; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed. I ask that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Blew nomination, under the previous order, and that at 11:45 a.m. all time be yielded back and the Senate then vote on confirmation of the nomination with no intervening action or debate, and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; further, that following disposition of the Blew nomination and notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture motions filed on Thursday, July 12 ripen; finally, that following the cloture vote on the Quarles nomination, the Senate stand in recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the