

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 131

Concerning the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the need for international efforts toward long-term peace, stability, and observance of human rights.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 21, 2013

Ms. BASS (for herself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. SIRES, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. KEATING, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MORAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. TAKANO, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. HONDA, Ms. EDWARDS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CLEAVER, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. WATT, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. HAHN, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. WATERS, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Concerning the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the need for international efforts toward long-term peace, stability, and observance of human rights.

Whereas since the 1990s, an estimated 5,000,000 people have died and more than 2,000,000 people have been displaced

due to repeated cycles of conflict and atrocities, particularly those in North and South Kivu provinces;

Whereas the United Nations and humanitarian groups have reported staggering rates of sexual violence indicating tens of thousands of cases perpetrated by the Congolese army and armed groups, including the M23 and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, which continue to operate with nearly total impunity;

Whereas human rights defenders in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been subject to intimidation and attack;

Whereas the Democratic Republic of the Congo's wealth of natural resources, including minerals and high-value wildlife products such as elephant ivory, have been a key driver of insurrection and violence, and the discovery and exploitation of oil could motivate further conflict;

Whereas the deeply flawed November 2011 elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo laid bare significant political, economic, and social challenges;

Whereas the Democratic Republic of the Congo is home to one of the world's longest enduring and most expensive international peacekeeping operations;

Whereas the November 20, 2012, seizure of the city of Goma by the M23 rebel group, despite bilateral and multilateral efforts to address longstanding humanitarian crises, forge lasting peace, and pursue security sector reform and accountability, demonstrates that the underlying causes of the recurring conflicts in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo remain unresolved;

Whereas on November 15, 2012, the United Nations Group of Experts provided compelling evidence, in report find-

ings corroborated by the United States Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in testimony before the United States House of Representatives on December 11, 2012, and December 19, 2012, that the M23 crisis is fueled and exacerbated by the Government of Rwanda, including through Rwandan Government provision of significant military and logistical assistance, and of operational and political guidance and support, to the M23; and

Whereas the United Nations and United States have imposed sanctions on the M23 and its leaders for human rights atrocities including rape, massacres, and the recruitment and physical and psychological torture of child soldiers: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) asserts that the region’s leaders and the
3 international community should break the cycle of
4 violence and impunity in the Democratic Republic of
5 the Congo and surrounding region and urgently ad-
6 dress the root causes of the M23 conflict and pre-
7 vious crises;

8 (2) calls on the signatories of the February 24,
9 2013, Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework
10 for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the
11 Region to abide by the provisions outlined in the
12 framework agreement in addition to ensuring that
13 those troops being re-integrated into the Congolese

1 army are not those accused of human rights viola-
2 tions;

3 (3) calls on governments of the Great Lakes re-
4 gion of Africa to respect the national security and
5 territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of
6 the Congo, and to immediately halt and prevent any
7 and all forms of support to the M23 and other non-
8 state armed groups, including any support provided
9 by individuals independently of government policy;

10 (4) recognizes the recent efforts by the Govern-
11 ment of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to
12 end the recruitment of children into the armed
13 forces and demands the immediate cessation of the
14 recruitment and exploitation of children by militias,
15 and further calls on all armed groups to free chil-
16 dren and other civilians held against their will;

17 (5) calls on the Obama Administration, in close
18 coordination with international and regional part-
19 ners, to mobilize a comprehensive response to pre-
20 vent further deterioration of regional peace and sta-
21 bility and to ensure that life-saving humanitarian as-
22 sistance be unhindered and provided to populations
23 in need, particularly displaced persons and conflict-
24 affected communities;

1 (6) acknowledges the good work of the United
2 States Special Advisor on the Great Lakes and the
3 Democratic Republic of the Congo, and finds that
4 the challenges of helping to resolve the cycle of vio-
5 lence and impunity in the Democratic Republic of
6 the Congo requires higher-level United States diplo-
7 matic and political engagement;

8 (7) requests that Secretary of State John Kerry
9 demonstrate the high-level concern that the United
10 States attaches to ensuring stability and security in
11 the Democratic Republic of the Congo by appointing
12 a Special Envoy who will help lead the United States
13 and international efforts to end the M23 conflict and
14 secure permanent peace, stability, and safety for the
15 people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

16 (8) calls on all nations to increase cooperation
17 in order to cease the trade of illegal goods, including
18 poached ivory and conflict minerals, that continues
19 to fuel violence in the Democratic Republic of the
20 Congo;

21 (9) calls on the Obama Administration, includ-
22 ing the Atrocities Prevention Board, in close coordi-
23 nation with international and regional partners, to
24 develop and make actionable recommendations to
25 address, prevent, and ensure accountability for seri-

1 ous violations of international humanitarian law and
2 human rights abuses by all actors in the Democratic
3 Republic of the Congo, including by fully imple-
4 menting sanctions outlined in section 1284 of the
5 National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year
6 2013, notwithstanding transactions that are cus-
7 tomary, necessary, and incidental to the provision of
8 critical, life-saving aid to civilian populations, and
9 the policy goals set out under the Democratic Re-
10 public of the Congo Relief, Security, and Democracy
11 Promotion Act of 2006, introduced by then-Senator
12 Barack Obama;

13 (10) urges the Government of the Democratic
14 Republic of the Congo, with close support from the
15 international community, to investigate and pros-
16 ecute those who have committed war crimes, crimes
17 against humanity, and violations of international hu-
18 manitarian law and human rights, including those
19 against women and children;

20 (11) calls on the Government of the Democratic
21 Republic of the Congo to meaningfully engage in
22 electoral reforms, in addition to security sector re-
23 forms to prevent militia combatants, particularly
24 M23 members, accused of abuses from integrating
25 into the military, and to host inclusive inter-Congo-

1 lese dialogues to address critical internal political
2 issues and strengthen processes of state institution
3 building in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

4 (12) urges the Obama Administration to ad-
5 dress alleged support for militias operating in the
6 Democratic Republic of the Congo from foreign gov-
7 ernments or entities;

8 (13) acknowledges the United Nations' appoint-
9 ment of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes re-
10 gion of Africa; and

11 (14) urges the United Nations Security Council
12 to lead efforts to reinforce and strengthen the
13 United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission
14 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
15 (MONUSCO) and its capacity to protect civilians,
16 including preventing any future M23 advances on
17 Goma, as evidenced by the temporary seizure of
18 Goma and other areas, and to support measures to
19 strengthen the ability of MONUSCO to help ensure
20 peace and security in the future.

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