

H. Res. 175

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

July 28, 1997.

Whereas President Pascal Lissouba defeated former President Denis Sassou-Nguesso in a 1992 election that was determined to be free and fair;

Whereas losing candidates raised questions concerning the results of the 1993 legislative election and used those concerns to cast doubt on the entire democratic process in the Republic of Congo and as the rationale for creating private militias;

Whereas thousands of citizens of the Republic of Congo have been killed in intermittent fighting between Government soldiers and private militiamen since 1993;

Whereas there are concerns about the unfinished census and resulting electoral list to be used in the scheduled July 27 election;

Whereas the recent fighting resulted from the Government's attempt to disarm former President Sassou-Nguesso's "Cobra" militia in advance of the scheduled July 27 election;

Whereas the fighting and uneasy peace has caused serious loss of life and diminished ability to care for those who are without access to adequate medical care or food and water;

Whereas the fighting between Government troops and militia-men have forced the evacuation from the country of foreign nationals and endangered refugees from both Rwanda and the former Zaire; and

Whereas African governments have attempted to bring about a negotiated settlement to the current crisis: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns the current fighting and urges
3 the warring parties to reach a lasting ceasefire that
4 will allow for humanitarian needs to be addressed as
5 soon as possible;

6 (2) calls on all private militia to disarm and
7 disband immediately to end the continuing threat to
8 peace and stability in the Republic of Congo;

9 (3) commends African leaders from Gabon,
10 Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Benin, Central African
11 Republic, Senegal, and Chad for their efforts to
12 negotiate a peaceful settlement and encourages their
13 continuing efforts to find a sustainable political settlement
14 in this matter;

15 (4) supports the deployment of an African
16 peacekeeping force to the Republic of Congo if
17 deemed necessary;

18 (5) urges the Government of the Republic of
19 Congo, in cooperation with all legal political parties,
20 to resolve in a transparent manner questions con-

1 cerning the scheduled elections and to prepare for
2 open and transparent elections at the earliest fea-
3 sible time; and

4 (6) encourages the United States Government
5 to provide technical assistance on election related
6 matters if requested by the Government of the Re-
7 public of Congo.

Attest:

Clerk.