

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 289

Expressing the sense of the Congress that a renewed effort be made to end the violent guerrilla war in Colombia, which poses a serious threat to democracy in regions of Colombia as evidenced by the results of the recent October 26, 1997, elections.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 29, 1997

Mr. GALLEGLY (for himself and Mr. ACKERMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that a renewed effort be made to end the violent guerrilla war in Colombia, which poses a serious threat to democracy in regions of Colombia as evidenced by the results of the recent October 26, 1997, elections.

Whereas on October 26, 1997, nationwide municipal elections in Colombia were marred by a brutal campaign of violence, kidnapping, and extortion carried out by the guerrilla movements of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN);

Whereas, during the week before the elections, FARC and ELN terrorist activities escalated into a national crisis with kidnapping of international election observers from

the Organization of American States (OAS) and a declaration of an armed strike in order to impede public transportation during the crucial time of the elections;

Whereas, through the deadly efforts of FARC and ELN, over 40 political candidates were murdered, over 1,900 candidates were forced to abandon their campaigns, nearly 120 municipalities had candidates reluctantly running for political office, and 11 municipalities had no candidates at all;

Whereas the political agendas of FARC and ELN appear to be heavily financed by narcotics, which has aided both guerrilla elements to effectively quadruple their power base over the past 7 years to a position where it is estimated that they now control up to 30 percent of the territory of Colombia;

Whereas it is estimated that 70,000 people have died as a direct result of the internal fighting over the last decade;

Whereas the leaders of FARC and ELN have resisted all overtures by the Government of Colombia to end the violence and establish peace; and

Whereas the campaign of FARC and ELN could ultimately pose a major threat to the democratic form of government of Colombia and the stability of the region: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the importance of the threat of
3 the guerrilla movement to Colombia's democracy and
4 that the acts of violence to disrupt the electoral
5 process in the municipal elections could spill over to

1 the congressional and presidential elections to be
2 held in 1998;

3 (2) urges the guerrilla leaders of the Revolu-
4 tionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the
5 National Liberation Army (ELN) to end the violence
6 and sever their relationship with narcotics traffick-
7 ers, negotiate a peace accord with the Government
8 of Colombia, and take their agenda into the political
9 arena for debate;

10 (3) calls upon the international community,
11 particularly the Organization of American States, to
12 continue to play a more proactive role in trying to
13 resolve the conflict; and

14 (4) urges the Administration to reevaluate
15 United States policies toward Colombia, taking into
16 account the threat of the guerrilla movement to Co-
17 lombia's democracy, and to encourage a peaceful res-
18 olution of the conflict.

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