

H. Res. 449

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

May 3, 2000.

Whereas the Republic of Senegal held free, fair, and transparent multi-party elections on March 19, 2000;

Whereas Senegalese President Abdou Diouf conceded defeat to longtime rival Abdoulaye Wade on Monday, March 20, 2000, after a hotly contested run-off election;

Whereas President Diouf's party, Parti Socialist, has ruled in the West African country of Senegal since independence from France in 1960;

Whereas President-elect Abdoulaye Wade of the Parti Democratique Senegal (PDS) was voted into office by a majority of the electorate and is Senegal's third President;

Whereas the citizens of Dakar, Senegal, joyously welcomed the results of Senegal's free and fair elections;

Whereas on February 27, 2000, during the first round of voting, President Diouf amassed 41.3 percent of the vote to Wade's 31 percent;

Whereas President-elect Wade won 22 of the country's 31 districts and received 60 percent of the total 1,616,307 votes cast;

Whereas President-elect Wade's victory ends 40 years of uninterrupted rule by Mr. Diouf's Socialist Party;

Whereas President Diouf telephoned Mr. Wade to congratulate him on winning the elections;

Whereas President-elect Wade campaigned on the principles of "probity, good work, and involvement of the youth" in the construction of Senegal;

Whereas Mr. Wade received the endorsement of five leading opposition candidates after the second round of voting, including Mr. Moustapha Niasse, a former foreign minister in President Diouf's party;

Whereas Mr. Niasse said the new government's first task would be to re-establish the country's equilibrium and fight corruption;

Whereas the newly elected President Wade first ran for the presidency in 1978 against ex-President Leopold Senghor and ran in four subsequent polls;

Whereas this West African country of 10 million people has remained relatively stable and prosperous;

Whereas Senegalese President Diouf took office 19 years ago and served as prime minister for 10 years;

Whereas his predecessor and mentor, poet and politician Leopold Sedar Senghor, surprised the country in 1980 by voluntarily stepping down and turning over power to President Diouf, as prescribed by Senegal's constitution;

Whereas Senegal has a free press and judiciary;

Whereas Senegal is a recipient of the African Crisis Responsive Initiative;

Whereas Mr. Wade's history symbolizes a triumph for a country which has long been considered a model of African democracy although ruled by one party; and

Whereas this election marks a contribution to a paradigm shift of a new political system on the West African coast: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the people of the Republic of Senegal for voting in this historic Presidential election;

(2) congratulates President Diouf for stepping down before the results were officially announced and upholding democracy and good governance;

(3) encourages the Administration to send a Presidential delegation to the West African Country of Senegal to welcome President Wade into office;

(4) strongly urges the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) to follow Senegal's lead and make efforts to promote democratic reforms and prevent future conflicts;

(5) calls upon the newly elected President to involve all Senegalese to accept the election results and move the country forward;

(6) calls on all factions within the Secessionist Movement of Democratic Forces in the Casamance (MFDC) rebel group in Casamance to commit to a cessation of hostilities and create stability for its people;

(7) strongly urges newly elected President Wade to continue the peace initiative started by former President Diouf with the Secessionist Movement of Democratic Forces in the Casamance (MFDC);

(8) urges President-elect Wade to dialogue with the MFDC to settle the Casamance conflict through political negotiations and urges prompt initiation of peace talks; and

(9) recognizes Senegal as one of the first African states to adopt a multi-party system in the early 1980's and a nation that has been a longtime beacon of democracy on a continent of one-party states and military dictatorships.

Attest:

Clerk.