

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 54

Condemning the escalating violence, the gross violation of human rights and attacks against civilians, and the attempt to overthrow a democratically elected government in Sierra Leone.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 25, 1999

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. FRIST, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. DODD, and Mr. KENNEDY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

MARCH 23, 1999

Reported by Mr. HELMS, without amendment

MAY 5, 1999

Considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Condemning the escalating violence, the gross violation of human rights and attacks against civilians, and the attempt to overthrow a democratically elected government in Sierra Leone.

Whereas the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) military junta and the rebel fighters of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone mounted a campaign of “Operation No Living Thing” in 1997 and have recently renewed the terror;

Whereas the atrocities and violence against the citizens of Sierra Leone, which include forced amputations, raping of women and children, pillaging farms, and the killing of the civilian population, has continued for more than 8 years;

Whereas the AFRC and RUF continue to kidnap children, forcibly train them, and send them as combatants in the conflict in Sierra Leone;

Whereas the Nigerian-led intervention force, Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), which has deployed nearly 15,000 troops to Sierra Leone, has made a considerable contribution towards ending the cycle of violence there, despite the fact that some of its members have engaged in violations of humanitarian law;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that in 1998 more than 210,000 refugees fled Sierra Leone to Guinea, bringing the total number of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea to 350,000, in addition to some 90,000 Sierra Leonean refugees who sought safe haven in Liberia;

Whereas the refugee camps in Guinea and Liberia are at risk of being used as safe havens for rebels and staging areas for attacks into Sierra Leone;

Whereas the humanitarian crisis in Sierra Leone has reached epic proportions with people dying from lack of food and medicine; and

Whereas the escalating violence in Sierra Leone threatens stability in West Africa and has the immediate potential of spreading to neighboring Guinea: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1 (1) urges the President and the Secretary of
2 State to give high priority to aiding in the resolution
3 of the conflict in Sierra Leone and to bringing sta-
4 bility to West Africa, including active participation
5 and leadership in the Sierra Leone Contact Group;

6 (2) condemns—

7 (A) the violent atrocities committed by the
8 Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)
9 and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)
10 throughout the conflict, and in particular its at-
11 tacks against civilians and its use of children as
12 combatants; and

13 (B) those external actors, including Libe-
14 ria, Burkina Faso, and Libya, for contributing
15 to the continuing cycle of violence in Sierra
16 Leone by providing financial, political, and
17 other types of assistance to the AFRC or the
18 RUF, often in direct violation of the United
19 Nations arms embargo;

20 (3) supports continued efforts by the regional
21 peacekeeping force, ECOMOG, to restore peace and
22 security and to defend the democratically elected
23 government of Sierra Leone;

24 (4) recognizes that basic improvements in
25 ECOMOG's performance with respect to human

1 rights and the management of its own personnel
2 would markedly improve its effectiveness in achiev-
3 ing its goals and improve the level of international
4 support needed to meet those goals;

5 (5) supports appropriate United States
6 logistical, medical and political support for
7 ECOMOG and notes the contribution that such sup-
8 port has made thus far toward achieving the goals
9 of peace and stability in Sierra Leone;

10 (6) calls for an immediate cessation of hos-
11 tilities and respect for human rights, and urges all
12 members of the armed conflict in Sierra Leone to
13 engage in dialogue to bring about a long-term solu-
14 tion to such conflict; and

15 (7) expresses support for the people of Sierra
16 Leone in their quest for a democratic, prosperous,
17 and reconciled society.

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