

109TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. RES. 401

Urging the Republic of Belarus to conduct planned presidential elections March 19, 2006, in a free, fair, and transparent manner and with respect for human rights.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 13, 2006

Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. SUNUNU) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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## RESOLUTION

Urging the Republic of Belarus to conduct planned presidential elections March 19, 2006, in a free, fair, and transparent manner and with respect for human rights.

Whereas the Government of Belarus has accepted numerous specific commitments governing the conduct of elections as a participating State of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), including provisions of the 1990 Copenhagen Document;

Whereas the Belarus parliamentary elections of 2000 failed to meet international standards;

Whereas the Belarus presidential elections of 2001 failed to meet international standards;

Whereas the local elections in Belarus in 2003 failed to meet international standards;

Whereas the Belarus parliamentary elections of 2004 failed to meet international standards;

Whereas the 2004 vote on the constitutional referendum in Belarus failed to meet international standards;

Whereas Belarus is scheduled to conduct presidential elections on March 19, 2006;

Whereas President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko has placed tight controls on the press, jailed opposition party members, violently disrupted protests, conducted surveillance of opposition candidates, and been implicated in the disappearance of at least 3 opposition members and a journalist;

Whereas, on March 2, 2006, opposition candidate Alexander Kazulin and 20 of his supporters were beaten and detained;

Whereas the campaign of Alexander Milinkevich, the main opposition candidate, has been subject to repeated government harassment and bureaucratic obstacles to open campaigning; and

Whereas the intimidation and arrest of opposition parties and candidates, including the reported March 8, 2006, arrest of Vincuk Viachorka and 5 other members of Alexander Milinkevich's campaign team, represents a deliberate assault on the democratic process and sends a clear signal that government officials in Belarus are not committed to holding free and fair elections: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1           (1) supports the people of Belarus as they face  
2           the dictatorship of President Lukashenko;

3           (2) notes that the integration of Belarus into  
4           the Western community of nations will suffer delay  
5           so long as President Lukashenko prevents the devel-  
6           opment of a democratic political system;

7           (3) urges the Government of Belarus to ensure  
8           a free, fair, and fully transparent 2006 presidential  
9           election, in accordance with Organization for Secu-  
10          rity and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) standards,  
11          including unobstructed access to all aspects of the  
12          election process by the OSCE Office of Democratic  
13          Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), opposi-  
14          tion parties, and nongovernmental organizations;

15          (4) encourages the international community, in-  
16          cluding the Council of Europe and the OSCE, to  
17          continue supporting democracy in Belarus, and  
18          thanks the governments and people of neighboring  
19          countries such as Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia for  
20          continuing to promote democracy and human rights  
21          in Belarus; and

22          (5) expresses its belief that tyranny in Belarus  
23          will not forever endure and that the people of

- 1 Belarus will one day enjoy the benefits of democracy
- 2 and human rights at home.

