

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1426

Urging the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and President Paul Kagame to immediately release human rights lawyer Professor Peter Erlinder from jail and allow him to return to the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 8, 2010

Ms. McCOLLUM (for herself and Mr. ELLISON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Urging the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and President Paul Kagame to immediately release human rights lawyer Professor Peter Erlinder from jail and allow him to return to the United States.

Whereas the Constitution of Rwanda, adopted on May 26, 2003, states that Rwanda is “Resolved to build a State governed by the rule of law, based on respect for fundamental human rights, pluralistic democracy, equitable power sharing, tolerance and resolution of issues through dialogue”;

Whereas there is an increasing pattern of restrictions of free expression in Rwanda ahead of the August presidential elections, including the denial of a work visa to a senior

Human Rights Watch researcher and the crackdown of opposition members and journalists;

Whereas the United States Government has provided over \$1,034,000,000 billion in United States taxpayer-funded foreign assistance to Rwanda since 2000, and an additional \$240,200,000 is proposed in the President's fiscal year 2011 budget;

Whereas Peter Erlinder is a law professor at William Mitchell College of Law in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and has served as a lead defense attorney for the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania;

Whereas Peter Erlinder was arrested on May 28, 2010, in Kigali, Rwanda, and is currently being detained at Kicukiro Prison on charges of "genocide ideology" based in part upon legal arguments made during his work as a defense attorney at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda; and

Whereas United States Department of State Spokesman P.J. Crowley announced on June 3, 2010, that the United States Government was pressing the Government of Rwanda to "resolve this case quickly" and that the Department of State hoped for Peter Erlinder's release on "compassionate grounds": Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives urges
 2 the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and President
 3 Paul Kagame to immediately release Professor Peter
 4 Erlinder from jail and allow him to return to the United
 5 States.