

(2) calls on the Government of Nigeria and all Nigerian political parties and actors to—
 (A) take actions to facilitate credible, transparent, and peaceful elections that reflect the will of the people and advance the consolidation of democracy and the stability of the broader region;

(B) condemn in the strongest terms the use of speech that incites violence, and refrain from efforts to demonize or delegitimize opponents, sow division among Nigerians, or otherwise inflame tensions;

(C) seek to resolve any disputes over results peacefully, including through judicial processes as necessary;

(D) respect the impartiality of the Independent National Electoral Commission; and

(E) take measures to combat vote buying;

(3) calls on the Government of Nigeria to—

(A) refrain from deploying security forces in a partisan manner;

(B) ensure that security services maintain the highest level of professionalism and impartiality in facilitating the electoral process, enable accredited observers and journalists to perform their work, and protect the right of citizens to exercise their votes freely; and

(C) enforce laws against election malfeasance, including vote buying, and ensure equal and robust application of such laws through appropriate mechanisms, including through the establishment of an Electoral Offenses Commission and Tribunal;

(4) urges all Nigerians to fully and peacefully engage in the electoral process, insist on full enfranchisement, reject inflammatory or divisive rhetoric or actions, and seek to resolve any disputes over results through the legal system;

(5) calls upon the Independent National Electoral Commission to sustain confidence and trust in its management of the electoral process by taking effective measures to—

(A) combat vote buying through voter education campaigns;

(B) institute a nationwide ban on cell phones in the voting cubicle;

(C) ensure the participation in the election of internally displaced persons (IDPs); and

(D) clean the voter rolls and ensure timely production and distribution of the Permanent Voter Card to new voters;

(6) encourages political parties in Nigeria to adhere to and enforce existing codes of conduct that commit parties to democratic electoral standards regarding campaign use of resources, engagement of voters, peaceful resolution of disputes, and acceptance of verified and credible results;

(7) condemns any efforts on the part of any politicians or political parties in Nigeria to politicize the security and law enforcement agencies;

(8) encourages civil society organizations in Nigeria to—

(A) promote the peaceful participation of citizens in the electoral process and draw on existing inter-religious and peacebuilding bodies to enhance their efforts;

(B) disseminate information about citizen-based observation findings and analysis to increase public knowledge and understanding about the conduct of the elections; and

(C) continue leading important early warning and response activities to mitigate election-related violence, including monitoring efforts to incite violence or further inflame tensions;

(9) supports efforts by the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to assist elections preparations in Nigeria, including through programs focused on conflict mitigation; and

(10) calls on the United States Government and other international partners, especially

election-focused nongovernmental organizations, to—

(A) continue to support efforts by the Government of Nigeria to address the remaining electoral preparation challenges and identify gaps in which additional resources or diplomatic engagement could make important contributions to the conduct of credible, transparent elections; and

(B) support civil society organizations and media organizations working to enhance transparency and accountability in the use of state resources around the election period.

SA 191. Mr. McCONNELL (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RISCH)) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 1, calling for credible, transparent, and safe elections in Nigeria, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas it is in the national interest of the United States to maintain a strong bilateral relationship with a politically stable, democratic, and economically sound Nigeria that can play a leadership role in the region and the continent more broadly;

Whereas Nigeria has presidential and National Assembly elections scheduled for February 16, 2019, and gubernatorial and state-level elections scheduled for March 2, 2019;

Whereas credible, transparent, and peaceful elections could further consolidate democratic gains achieved in Nigeria since the transition from military to civilian democratic rule;

Whereas a 2017 survey conducted by Afrobarometer found that the overwhelming majority of Nigerians agreed that democratic elections are the best means of choosing their country's leaders, thus indicating that the country's citizens are deeply committed to democracy;

Whereas collaboration between civil society actors and the international community was a key factor that contributed to successful elections in 2015;

Whereas successive elections in Nigeria have featured varying degrees of violence;

Whereas both the ruling coalition and opposition parties have incited ethnic violence in an apparent effort to gain electoral advantage, intimidate electoral rivals, and suppress voter turnout;

Whereas, during the Ekiti and Osun gubernatorial elections in July 2018 and September 2018, respectively, there were concerning incidents in which some elements of Nigeria's security agencies displayed partisanship and a lack of objectivity, which risks escalating tensions within the country;

Whereas Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has taken important steps to improve electoral processes, notably through the introduction of continuous voter registration, the adoption of simultaneous accreditation and voting, improvements to the secrecy of the ballot, and the advancement of smart card reader technology;

Whereas remaining challenges to the conduct of credible, transparent, and peaceful elections in Nigeria include the failure to enact additional, critical reforms to the legal framework for elections, instances of vote buying, reported security threats in the Middle Belt and North East, incitement, and disinformation; and

Whereas ensuring transparency in electoral preparations and building public confidence in the electoral process is vital to the success of the upcoming elections in Nigeria: Now, therefore, be it

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I have 4 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 14, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 14, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Bimal Patel, of Georgia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, Todd M. Harper, of Virginia, and Rodney Hood, of North Carolina, both to be a Member of the National Credit Union Administration Board, and Mark Anthony Calabria, of Virginia, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 14, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, February 14, 2019, at 2 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the senior Senator from Nebraska and the senior Senator from Arkansas be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions on February 15.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 75, S. Res. 76, and S. Res. 77.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measures en bloc?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the

motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

CALLING FOR CREDIBLE, TRANSPARENT, AND SAFE ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 1, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 1) calling for credible, transparent, and safe elections in Nigeria, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the Menendez-Risch substitute amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the concurrent resolution, as amended, be agreed to; that the Menendez-Risch amendment to the preamble, at the desk, be considered and agreed to; that the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 190) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: To provide a complete substitute)

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following: "That Congress—

(1) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to supporting peace and democracy in Nigeria;

(2) calls on the Government of Nigeria and all Nigerian political parties and actors to—

(A) take actions to facilitate credible, transparent, and peaceful elections that reflect the will of the people and advance the consolidation of democracy and the stability of the broader region;

(B) condemn in the strongest terms the use of speech that incites violence, and refrain from efforts to demonize or delegitimize opponents, sow division among Nigerians, or otherwise inflame tensions;

(C) seek to resolve any disputes over results peacefully, including through judicial processes as necessary;

(D) respect the impartiality of the Independent National Electoral Commission; and

(E) take measures to combat vote buying;

(3) calls on the Government of Nigeria to—

(A) refrain from deploying security forces in a partisan manner;

(B) ensure that security services maintain the highest level of professionalism and impartiality in facilitating the electoral process, enable accredited observers and journal-

ists to perform their work, and protect the right of citizens to exercise their votes freely; and

(C) enforce laws against election malfeasance, including vote buying, and ensure equal and robust application of such laws through appropriate mechanisms, including through the establishment of an Electoral Offenses Commission and Tribunal;

(4) urges all Nigerians to fully and peacefully engage in the electoral process, insist on full enfranchisement, reject inflammatory or divisive rhetoric or actions, and seek to resolve any disputes over results through the legal system;

(5) calls upon the Independent National Electoral Commission to sustain confidence and trust in its management of the electoral process by taking effective measures to—

(A) combat vote buying through voter education campaigns;

(B) institute a nationwide ban on cell phones in the voting cubicle;

(C) ensure the participation in the election of internally displaced persons (IDPs); and

(D) clean the voter rolls and ensure timely production and distribution of the Permanent Voter Card to new voters;

(6) encourages political parties in Nigeria to adhere to and enforce existing codes of conduct that commit parties to democratic electoral standards regarding campaign use of resources, engagement of voters, peaceful resolution of disputes, and acceptance of verified and credible results;

(7) condemns any efforts on the part of any politicians or political parties in Nigeria to politicize the security and law enforcement agencies;

(8) encourages civil society organizations in Nigeria to—

(A) promote the peaceful participation of citizens in the electoral process and draw on existing inter-religious and peacebuilding bodies to enhance their efforts;

(B) disseminate information about citizen-based observation findings and analysis to increase public knowledge and understanding about the conduct of the elections; and

(C) continue leading important early warning and response activities to mitigate election-related violence, including monitoring efforts to incite violence or further inflame tensions;

(9) supports efforts by the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to assist elections preparations in Nigeria, including through programs focused on conflict mitigation; and

(10) calls on the United States Government and other international partners, especially election-focused nongovernmental organizations, to—

(A) continue to support efforts by the Government of Nigeria to address the remaining electoral preparation challenges and identify gaps in which additional resources or diplomatic engagement could make important contributions to the conduct of credible, transparent elections; and

(B) support civil society organizations and media organizations working to enhance transparency and accountability in the use of state resources around the election period.

The concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 191) in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the preamble)

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas it is in the national interest of the United States to maintain a strong bilat-

eral relationship with a politically stable, democratic, and economically sound Nigeria that can play a leadership role in the region and the continent more broadly;

Whereas Nigeria has presidential and National Assembly elections scheduled for February 16, 2019, and gubernatorial and state-level elections scheduled for March 2, 2019;

Whereas credible, transparent, and peaceful elections could further consolidate democratic gains achieved in Nigeria since the transition from military to civilian democratic rule;

Whereas a 2017 survey conducted by Afrobarometer found that the overwhelming majority of Nigerians agreed that democratic elections are the best means of choosing their country's leaders, thus indicating that the country's citizens are deeply committed to democracy;

Whereas collaboration between civil society actors and the international community was a key factor that contributed to successful elections in 2015;

Whereas successive elections in Nigeria have featured varying degrees of violence;

Whereas both the ruling coalition and opposition parties have incited ethnic violence in an apparent effort to gain electoral advantage, intimidate electoral rivals, and suppress voter turnout;

Whereas, during the Ekiti and Osun gubernatorial elections in July 2018 and September 2018, respectively, there were concerning incidents in which some elements of Nigeria's security agencies displayed partisanship and a lack of objectivity, which risks escalating tensions within the country;

Whereas Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has taken important steps to improve electoral processes, notably through the introduction of continuous voter registration, the adoption of simultaneous accreditation and voting, improvements to the secrecy of the ballot, and the advancement of smart card reader technology;

Whereas remaining challenges to the conduct of credible, transparent, and peaceful elections in Nigeria include the failure to enact additional, critical reforms to the legal framework for elections, instances of vote buying, reported security threats in the Middle Belt and North East, incitement, and disinformation; and

Whereas ensuring transparency in electoral preparations and building public confidence in the electoral process is vital to the success of the upcoming elections in Nigeria: Now, therefore, be it

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 1

Whereas it is in the national interest of the United States to maintain a strong bilateral relationship with a politically stable, democratic, and economically sound Nigeria that can play a leadership role in the region and the continent more broadly;

Whereas Nigeria has presidential and National Assembly elections scheduled for February 16, 2019, and gubernatorial and state-level elections scheduled for March 2, 2019;

Whereas credible, transparent, and peaceful elections could further consolidate democratic gains achieved in Nigeria since the transition from military to civilian democratic rule;

Whereas a 2017 survey conducted by Afrobarometer found that the overwhelming majority of Nigerians agreed that democratic elections are the best means of choosing their country's leaders, thus indicating