

104<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 40

Concerning the movement toward democracy in the Federal Republic of  
Nigeria.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 15, 1995

Mr. PAYNE of New Jersey submitted the following concurrent resolution;  
which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

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## **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

Concerning the movement toward democracy in the Federal  
Republic of Nigeria.

Whereas the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and  
the international community had been led to believe that  
the presidential election held in Nigeria on June 12,  
1993, would result in a return to full democratic civilian  
rule in Nigeria;

Whereas General Ibrahim Babangida, the head of Nigeria's  
military government at the time of the June 12, 1993,  
election, interrupted the release of the election results on  
June 23, 1993, and later annulled the election, thereby  
preventing a return to civilian rule;

Whereas the election process indicated that voters in Nige-  
ria—a country with a population of approximately  
90,000,000 individuals comprising 250 ethnic groups and

spread across 357,000 square miles—were expressing a spirit of national unity that transcended ethnic, religious, and regional allegiances;

Whereas reported returns suggested that Moshood Abiola of the Social Democratic Party was receiving a substantial majority of the votes cast, leading the poll in 20 of the 30 states in Nigeria;

Whereas the annulment of the presidential elections resulted in various forms of civil unrest, which in turn led to the death of more than 100 individuals;

Whereas an interim government established by General Babangida on August 27, 1993, and headed by Ernest Shonekan, failed to win the support of the Nigerian people;

Whereas General Sani Abacha took power on November 17, 1993, appointing an unelected provisional ruling council to govern Nigeria;

Whereas General Abacha and the provisional ruling council, upon taking power, stated their commitment to an early return to civilian and democratic rule, and named several prominent democratic political figures to serve in the government;

Whereas the political and economic conditions in Nigeria have continued to deteriorate in the months since Abacha took control of the country;

Whereas the faith of the Nigerian people in the viability of the nation as a unified whole must be preserved, and the balkanization of Nigeria guarded against;

Whereas the people of Nigeria have not accepted the continuation of military rule and have courageously spoken out

in favor of the rapid return of democratic and civilian rule;

Whereas on May 15, 1994, a broad coalition of Nigerian democrats formed the National Democratic Coalition calling upon the military government to step down in favor of the winner of the June 12, 1993, election;

Whereas the confidence of the Nigerian people and the international community in the provisional ruling council's commitment to the restoration of democracy can only be established by a sustained demonstration of a commitment to human rights, due process, and the return of civilian rule;

Whereas the United States would prefer to have a relationship with Nigeria based upon cooperation and mutual support but cannot, and will not, condone or overlook the denial of democratic civilian rule—against the clear wishes of the Nigerian people—by the provisional ruling council or any other body in Nigeria;

Whereas the lack of support from the Nigerian authorities on drug trafficking issues has recently forced the United States to again place Nigeria on the list of countries penalized for failure to seriously address the narcotics proliferation issue;

Whereas continuing credible reports of widespread corruption and questionable business practices in the Nigerian Government, and the lack of cooperation in addressing these problems by the Nigerian Government, further undermines Nigeria's credibility in the international community;

Whereas the steps taken by the international community in response to the refusal of the Nigerian military to relin-

quish power serve both to encourage the people of Nigeria in their legitimate struggle for democracy and to limit the ability of the military to entrench its rule; and

Whereas Nigeria's leadership role on the African continent and its international influence will be severely compromised by its failure to rejoin the world community of democratic nations: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*  
2 *concurring)*, That the Congress—

3            (1) continues to support the Nigerian people in  
4            their commitment to unity and democracy as evi-  
5            denced by their participation in the June 12, 1993,  
6            presidential election in the Federal Republic of Nige-  
7            ria, and in their subsequent insistence on the return  
8            to full civilian and democratic rule;

9            (2) endorses the steps taken by President Clin-  
10          ton and the Administration—specifically the restric-  
11          tions on assistance to agencies of the Nigerian Gov-  
12          ernment, the suspension of military cooperation be-  
13          tween the United States and Nigeria, the restric-  
14          tions on travel to the United States by officials of  
15          the Nigerian military regime, and the insistence that  
16          full normalization of United States-Nigeria relations  
17          depends upon the restoration of civilian democratic  
18          rule—to demonstrate United States opposition to  
19          the annulment of such election and to encourage the

1 restoration of fully democratic and civilian rule in  
2 Nigeria;

3 (3) urges the Administration to continue all ac-  
4 tions designed to encourage the restoration of civil-  
5 ian rule in Nigeria, especially the restriction on trav-  
6 el to the United States by officials of the military re-  
7 gime, until concrete and significant steps have been  
8 taken toward a genuine transition to a democrat-  
9 ically elected civilian government in Nigeria;

10 (4) encourages the Administration to explore  
11 additional measures that might be taken, either uni-  
12 laterally, in cooperation with other nations, or  
13 through multilateral institutions such as the Inter-  
14 national Monetary Fund and the International Bank  
15 for Reconstruction and Development, to construc-  
16 tively encourage the restoration of democratic and  
17 civilian rule in Nigeria;

18 (5) requests that United States officials, both  
19 in the United States and in Nigeria, consistently re-  
20 iterate United States insistence upon the rapid re-  
21 turn of civilian and democratic rule in Nigeria, and  
22 that United States Government agencies such as the  
23 United States Information Agency and the Agency  
24 for International Development, as well as publicly  
25 supported agencies such as the National Endowment

1 for Democracy, should provide support for activities  
2 aimed at strengthening democratic forces and demo-  
3 cratic institutions in Nigeria;

4 (6) condemns the arrests and imprisonment by  
5 the Nigerian military authorities of Chief Abiola and  
6 other political leaders and democracy advocates, as  
7 well as the new restrictions imposed on freedom of  
8 expression; and

9 (7) urges General Abacha and the provisional  
10 ruling council in Nigeria, in order to maintain the  
11 viability of Nigeria and restore political stability and  
12 to avert the further deterioration of relations be-  
13 tween Nigeria and the United States, to—

14 (A) fully restore freedom of the press, with  
15 access to all contemporary political and elec-  
16 toral information, fully respect human rights,  
17 and fully restore the independence and author-  
18 ity of the judiciary in Nigeria;

19 (B) immediately release Chief Abiola and  
20 the other political leaders and human rights ac-  
21 tivists who have been arrested or detained;

22 (C) decisively move to resolve the political  
23 crisis in Nigeria by setting up a rapid timetable  
24 for the full restoration of civilian and demo-  
25 cratic rule, unencumbered by the military; and

1           (D) positively respond to United States  
2           and other international efforts to constructively  
3           encourage the restoration of democracy in  
4           Nigeria.

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