

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 518

Calling for free and transparent elections in Gabon.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 6, 1998

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (for himself, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. DIXON, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. SANFORD, and Ms. MCKINNEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Calling for free and transparent elections in Gabon.

Whereas Gabon is a heavily forested and oil-rich country on central Africa's west coast;

Whereas Gabon gained independence from France in 1960;

Whereas Gabon is scheduled to hold national elections in December 1998 for the purpose of electing a President;

Whereas the Government of Gabon has been subject to single-party rule for a significant period of its recent history and only 1 person has held the office of the President since 1967;

Whereas the Freedom House Survey of World Freedom, 1997–1998, determined that “Gabon's citizens have

never been able to exercise their constitutional right to change their government democratically”;

Whereas the International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) served as observers during the 1993 Presidential and legislative elections in Gabon and found widespread electoral irregularities;

Whereas the Government of Gabon is a signatory to the “Paris Accords” of 1994, approved by national referendum in July 1995, which were to have provided for a state of law guaranteeing basic individual freedoms and the organization of free and fair elections under a new independent national election commission;

Whereas the people of Gabon have demonstrated their support for the democratic process through the formation of numerous political parties since 1990 and their strong participation in prior elections; and

Whereas it is in the interest of the United States to promote political and economic freedom in Africa and throughout the world: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes and commends those Gabonese
3 who have demonstrated their love for free and fair
4 elections;

5 (2) calls on the Gabonese Government—

6 (A) to take measures to help ensure a
7 credible election and to ensure that the election
8 commission remains independent and impartial;
9 and

1 (B) to invite the International Foundation
2 of Electoral Systems (IFES), the National
3 Democratic Institute, the International Republic
4 lic Institute, or other appropriate international
5 nongovernmental organizations to organize and
6 supervise the December 1998 Presidential elec-
7 tion in Gabon, assuring that these elections in
8 Gabon are free and fair;

9 (3) urges the Government of Gabon to take all
10 necessary and lawful steps toward conducting free
11 and fair elections;

12 (4) calls on the international community to join
13 the United States in offering their assistance toward
14 free and fair elections;

15 (5) urges the United States to provide support
16 directly and through appropriate nongovernmental
17 organizations for the organization of free and fair
18 elections in Gabon;

19 (6) calls on the United States to work with the
20 international community in urging the Government
21 of Gabon to create the conditions necessary to guar-
22 antee free and fair elections; and

23 (7) urges the United States Government and
24 the international community to continue to encour-

- 1 age the Government of Gabon to ensure a lasting
- 2 and committed transition to democracy.

