

109TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. 611

Supporting the efforts of the Independent National Electoral Commission of the Government of Nigeria, political parties, civil society, religious organizations, and the people of Nigeria, to facilitate the first democratic transition of Nigeria from one civilian government to another in the general elections to be held in April 2007.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 30 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 29), 2006

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. HAGEL, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. DEWINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Supporting the efforts of the Independent National Electoral Commission of the Government of Nigeria, political parties, civil society, religious organizations, and the people of Nigeria, to facilitate the first democratic transition of Nigeria from one civilian government to another in the general elections to be held in April 2007.

Whereas the United States maintains strong and friendly relations with Nigeria and values the leadership role that Nigeria plays throughout the continent of Africa, particularly in the establishment of the New Partnership for African Development and the African Union;

Whereas Nigeria is an important strategic partner with the United States in combating terrorism, promoting regional stability, and improving energy security;

Whereas Nigeria has been, and continues to be, a leading supporter of the peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States by contributing troops to operations in Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Kuwait, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Rwanda, and Sudan;

Whereas past corruption and poor governance have resulted in weak political institutions, crumbling infrastructure, a feeble economy, and an impoverished population;

Whereas political aspirants and the democratic process of Nigeria are being threatened by increasing politically-motivated violence, including the assassination of 3 gubernatorial candidates in different states during the previous 2 months; and

Whereas the Chairperson of the Independent National Electoral Commission has—

(1) announced that governorship and state assembly elections will be held on April 14, 2007;

(2) stated that voting for the president and national assembly will take place on April 21, 2007; and

(3) vowed to organize free and fair elections to facilitate a smooth democratic transition: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the importance of Nigeria as a
3 strategic partner and long-time friend of the United
4 States;

1 (2) acknowledges the increasing significance of
2 the leadership of Nigeria throughout the region and
3 continent;

4 (3) commends the decision of the National As-
5 sembly of Nigeria to reject an amendment to the
6 constitution that would have lifted the existing 2-
7 term limit and allowed for a third presidential term;

8 (4) encourages the Government of Nigeria and
9 the Independent National Electoral Commission to
10 demonstrate a commitment to successful democratic
11 elections by—

12 (A) developing an aggressive plan for voter
13 registration and education;

14 (B) addressing charges of past or intended
15 corruption in a transparent manner; and

16 (C) conducting objective and unbiased re-
17 cruitment and training of election officials;

18 (5) urges the Government of Nigeria to respect
19 the freedoms of association and assembly, including
20 the right of candidates, members of political parties,
21 and others—

22 (A) to freely assemble;

23 (B) to organize and conduct public events;

24 and

1 (C) to exercise those and other rights in a
2 manner free from intimidation or harassment;

3 (6) urges a robust effort by the law enforce-
4 ment and judicial officials of Nigeria to enforce the
5 rule of law, particularly by—

6 (A) preventing and investigating politically-
7 motivated violence; and

8 (B) prosecuting those suspected of such
9 acts;

10 (7) urges—

11 (A) President Bush to ensure that the
12 United States supports the democratic gains
13 made in Nigeria during the last 8 years; and

14 (B) the Government of Nigeria to actively
15 seek the support of the international community
16 for democratic, free, and fair elections in April
17 2007; and

18 (8) expresses the support of the United States
19 for coordinated efforts by the Government of Nigeria
20 and the Independent National Electoral Commission
21 to work with political parties, civil society, religious
22 organizations, and other entities to organize a peace-
23 ful political transition based on free and fair elec-

- 1 tions in April 2007 to further consolidate the democ-
- 2 racy of Nigeria.

