

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 25

Condemning the recent violent actions of the Government of Zimbabwe against peaceful opposition party activists and members of civil society.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 29, 2007

Mr. OBAMA (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. DODD) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Condemning the recent violent actions of the Government of Zimbabwe against peaceful opposition party activists and members of civil society.

Whereas in 2005 the Government of Zimbabwe launched Operation Murambatsvina (“Operation Throw Out the Trash”) against citizens in major cities and suburbs throughout Zimbabwe, depriving over 700,000 people of their homes, businesses, and livelihoods;

Whereas on March 11, 2007, opposition party activists and members of civil society attempted to hold a peaceful prayer meeting to protest the economic and political crisis engulfing Zimbabwe, where inflation is running over 1,700 percent and unemployment stands at 80 percent and in response to President Robert Mugabe’s announce-

ment that he intends to seek reelection in 2008 if nominated;

Whereas opposition activist Gift Tandare died on March 11, 2007, as a result of being shot by police while attempting to attend the prayer meeting and Itai Manyeruke died on March 12, 2007, as a result of police beatings and was found in a morgue by his family on March 20, 2007;

Whereas under the direction of President Robert Mugabe and the ZANU–PF government, police officers, security forces, and youth militia brutally assaulted the peaceful demonstrators and arrested opposition leaders and hundreds of civilians;

Whereas Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) leader Morgan Tsvangarai was brutally assaulted and suffered a fractured skull, lacerations, and major bruising; MDC member Sekai Holland, a 64-year old grandmother, suffered ruthless attacks at Highfield Police Station, which resulted in the breaking of her leg, knee, arm, and three ribs; fellow activist Grace Kwinje, age 33, also was brutally beaten, while part of one ear was ripped off; and Nelson Chamisa was badly injured by suspected state agents at Harare airport on March 18, 2007, when trying to board a plane for a meeting of European Union and Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States lawmakers in Brussels, Belgium;

Whereas Zimbabwe's foreign minister warned Western diplomats that the Government of Zimbabwe would expel them if they gave support to the opposition, and said Western diplomats had gone too far by offering food and water to jailed opposition activists;

Whereas victims of physical assault by the Government of Zimbabwe have been denied emergency medical transfer to hospitals in neighboring South Africa, where their wounds can be properly treated;

Whereas those incarcerated by the Government of Zimbabwe were denied access to legal representatives and lawyers appearing at the jails to meet with detained clients were themselves threatened and intimidated;

Whereas at the time of Zimbabwe's independence, President Robert Mugabe was hailed as a liberator and Zimbabwe showed bright prospects for democracy, economic development, domestic reconciliation, and prosperity;

Whereas President Robert Mugabe and his ZANU–PF government continue to turn away from the promises of liberation and use state power to deny the people of Zimbabwe the freedom and prosperity they fought for and deserve;

Whereas the staggering suffering brought about by the misrule of Zimbabwe has created a large-scale humanitarian crisis in which 3,500 people die each week from a combination of disease, hunger, neglect, and despair;

Whereas the Chairman of the African Union, President Alpha Oumar Konare, expressed “great concern” about Zimbabwe's crisis and called for the need for the scrupulous respect for human rights and democratic principles in Zimbabwe;

Whereas the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Council of Non-governmental Organizations stated that “We believe that the crisis has reached a point where Zimbabweans need to be strongly persuaded and

directly assisted to find an urgent solution to the crisis that affects the entire region.”;

Whereas Zambian President, Levy Mwanawasa, has urged southern Africa to take a new approach to Zimbabwe instead of the failed “quiet diplomacy”, which he likened to a “sinking Titanic,” and stated that “quiet diplomacy has failed to help solve the political chaos and economic meltdown in Zimbabwe”;

Whereas European Union and African, Caribbean, and Pacific lawmakers strongly condemned the latest attack on an opposition official in Zimbabwe and urged the government in Harare to cooperate with the political opposition to restore the rule of law; and

Whereas United States Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Christopher Dell, warned that opposition to President Robert Mugabe had reached a tipping point because the people no longer feared the regime and believed they had nothing left to lose: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) it is the sense of Congress that

4 (A) the state-sponsored violence taking
5 place in Zimbabwe represents a serious viola-
6 tion of fundamental human rights and the rule
7 of law and should be condemned by all respon-
8 sible governments, civic organizations, religious
9 leaders, and international bodies; and

10 (B) the Government of Zimbabwe has not
11 lived up to its commitments as a signatory to

1 the Constitutive Act of the African Union and
2 African Charter of Human and Peoples Rights
3 which enshrine commitment to human rights
4 and good governance as foundational principles
5 of African states; and

6 (2) Congress—

7 (A) condemns the Government of
8 Zimbabwe’s violent suppression of political and
9 human rights through its police force, security
10 forces, and youth militia that deliberately inflict
11 gross physical harm, intimidation, and abuse on
12 those legitimately protesting the failing policies
13 of the government;

14 (B) holds those individual police, security
15 force members, and militia involved in abuse
16 and torture responsible for the acts that they
17 have committed;

18 (C) condemns the harassment and intimi-
19 dation of lawyers attempting to carry out their
20 professional obligations to their clients and re-
21 peated failure by police to comply promptly with
22 court decisions;

23 (D) condemns the harassment of foreign
24 officials, journalists, human rights workers, and
25 others, including threatening their expulsion

1 from the country if they continue to provide
2 food and water to victims detained in prison
3 and in police custody while in the hospital;

4 (E) commends United States Ambassador
5 Christopher Dell and other United States Gov-
6 ernment officials and foreign officials for their
7 support to political detainees and victims of tor-
8 ture and abuse while in police custody or in
9 medical care centers and encourages them to
10 continue providing such support;

11 (F) calls on the Government of Zimbabwe
12 to cease immediately its violent campaign
13 against fundamental human rights, to respect
14 the courts and members of the legal profession,
15 and to restore the rule of law while adhering to
16 the principles embodied in an accountable de-
17 mocracy, including freedom of association and
18 freedom of expression;

19 (G) calls on the Government of Zimbabwe
20 to cease illegitimate interference in travel
21 abroad by its citizens, especially for humani-
22 tarian purposes; and

23 (H) calls on the leaders of the Southern
24 Africa Development Community (SADC) and
25 the African Union to consult urgently with all

1 Zimbabwe stakeholders to intervene with the
2 Government of Zimbabwe while applying appro-
3 priate pressures to resolve the economic and po-
4 litical crisis.

