

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 155

Expressing the sense of the Senate on efforts to control violence and strengthen the rule of law in Guatemala.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 18, 2007

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

MAY 1, 2007

Committee discharged; considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate on efforts to control violence and strengthen the rule of law in Guatemala.

Whereas warring parties in Guatemala ended a 36-year internal armed conflict with a peace agreement in 1996, but the country has since faced alarming levels of violence, organized crime, and corruption;

Whereas the alleged involvement of senior officials of the National Civilian Police in the murder of three Salvadoran parliamentarians and their driver, and the subsequent killing of four of the police officers while in custody underscored the need to purge and strengthen law enforcement and judicial institutions in Guatemala;

Whereas high-level officials of the Government of Guatemala have acknowledged the infiltration of organized criminal networks into the state apparatus and the difficulty of combating these networks when they are deeply entrenched in public institutions;

Whereas, in its 2006 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Guatemala, the Department of State noted that police corruption was a serious problem in Guatemala and that there were credible allegations of involvement by individual police officers in criminal activity, including rapes, killings, and kidnappings;

Whereas, in its most recent report on Guatemala, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights notes that impunity continues to undermine the credibility of the justice system in Guatemala and that the justice system is still too weak to confront organized crime and its powerful structures; and

Whereas, the Government of Guatemala and the United Nations signed an agreement on December 12, 2006, to establish the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (Comisión Internacional Contra la Impunidad en Guatemala—CICIG), to assist local authorities in investigating and dismantling the illegal security groups and clandestine organizations that continue to operate in Guatemala: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) it is the sense of the Senate that the Inter-
 3 national Commission against Impunity in Guatemala
 4 is an innovative mechanism to support local efforts
 5 to confront the entrenched and dangerous problem

1 posed by illegal armed groups and clandestine secu-
2 rity organizations in Guatemala and their infiltra-
3 tion into state institutions;

4 (2) the Senate commends the Government of
5 Guatemala, local civil society organizations, and the
6 United Nations for such a creative effort;

7 (3) the Senate encourages the Guatemalan Con-
8 gress to enact necessary legislation required to im-
9 plement the International Commission against Impu-
10 nity in Guatemala and other pending legislation
11 needed to fulfill the 1996 peace agreement;

12 (4) the Senate calls on the Government of Gua-
13 temala and all sectors of society in Guatemala to un-
14 reservedly support the investigation and prosecution
15 of illegal armed groups and clandestine security or-
16 ganizations; and

17 (5) the Senate reiterates its commitment to
18 support the Government of Guatemala in its efforts
19 to strengthen the rule of law in that country, includ-
20 ing the dismantling of the clandestine groups, the
21 purging of the police and judicial institutions, and
22 the implementation of key justice and police reforms.

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