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H. RES. 991

Condemning all acts of violence, oppression, and abuse against ethnic minorities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 1, 2024

Mr. CARSON (for himself, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MCGARVEY, Mr. THANEDAR, and Ms. TITUS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Condemning all acts of violence, oppression, and abuse against ethnic minorities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Whereas the Democratic Republic of the Congo (referred to as the “DRC”) has been beset for decades by various challenges, including natural disasters, political unrest, abuses against civilians from many communities, and targeted ethnic-based violence;

Whereas Rwandophones, notably the Banyamulenge ethnic group and other Congolese Tutsi, have been the targets of an escalation of hate speech and incitement to violence nationwide;

Whereas the United States, credible human rights organizations, and civil society have documented and published

reports and findings that implicate the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (referred to as the “FARDC”) in aiding and collaborating with armed groups and militias, including several that are designated for United Nations sanctions due to human rights violations;

Whereas the return of the March 23 Movement (referred to as the “M23”) rebel group, who are reportedly backed by the Rwandan Government, has exacerbated ethnic tensions within the eastern provinces;

Whereas reports from the United Nations Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo, including those issued on December 16, 2022, and June 13, 2023, have consistently found that hate speech specifically targeting Rwandophones, who are often portrayed as “invaders”, has proliferated alongside the crisis brought about by the M23 rebels;

Whereas some Congolese politicians and security force officials have employed anti-Rwandophone rhetoric;

Whereas the M23’s presence in eastern DRC further destabilizes the region and is responsible for an array of gross violations of human rights and the displacement of thousands of civilians;

Whereas evidence documenting violence against Rwandophone communities may meet 1 or more of the criteria under Article II of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, to which the United States and the DRC are parties;

Whereas militias engage in illicit mining activities to finance and sustain themselves, often exploiting child labor and engaging in environmental degradation practices that un-

dermine the DRC’s economic interests and international treaty obligations;

Whereas the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (referred to as “MONUSCO”) has taken measures to facilitate inter-communal dialogues between rival ethnic groups to promote peace and stability;

Whereas, in April 2019, the United States and the DRC established the U.S.-DRC Privileged Partnership for Peace and Prosperity, to which the 2 countries added the Preservation of the Environment in February 2021, which aims to advance democracy and promote human rights, improve security, and encourage sustainable development and United States investment in the DRC, as underscored and reinforced by Deputy National Security Advisor Daleep Singh’s visit on January 26, 2022;

Whereas the strategic partnership between the United States and the DRC, as well as the DRC’s role in leading a global clean energy revolution, requires cooperative efforts to implement governance reforms, combat corruption, provide security, and improve environmental and labor standards to ensure the health, safety, and prosperity of future generations; and

Whereas the United States Department of State Integrated Country Strategy for the DRC states that “the success of the DRC’s democracy hinges on stability in the country’s eastern provinces”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns all acts of violence perpetrated

3 against ethnic minorities by members of the Armed

4 Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and

1 armed groups operating throughout the Democratic
2 Republic of the Congo;

3 (2) further condemns all human rights viola-
4 tions perpetrated against the civilian population by
5 M23, which reportedly include the use of child sol-
6 diers, killings, sexual violence, and looting;

7 (3) calls for increased security for the millions
8 of people forcibly displaced in the DRC;

9 (4) reaffirms that the United States has held
10 and continues to hold the Government of the DRC
11 responsible for upholding the rights of all citizens,
12 regardless of ethnicity, in accordance with the
13 DRC's international obligations;

14 (5) urges social media companies to curb hate
15 speech and incitement to violence on their platforms;

16 (6) appeals to neighboring countries to uphold
17 their commitment to providing safe harbor for refu-
18 gees from ethnic minority communities until their
19 human rights can be guaranteed in the DRC;

20 (7) recognizes that the United States has an
21 international obligation to uphold its commitments
22 to prevent and punish the crime of genocide;

23 (8) urges the Government of the Democratic
24 Republic of the Congo to—

1 (A) hold accountable all state security
2 forces that perpetrate atrocities against the ci-
3 vilian population by conducting transparent in-
4 vestigations and prosecutions and taking all ad-
5 ditional necessary measures to prevent further
6 atrocities;

7 (B) continue progress toward the disar-
8 mament, demobilization, reintegration, repatri-
9 ation, and resettlement of armed groups in co-
10 ordination with the United Nations Organiza-
11 tion Stabilization Mission in the Democratic
12 Republic of Congo, as outlined in United Na-
13 tions Security Council Resolution 2666 (2022);

14 (C) continue coordinating with the East
15 African Community Nairobi Process initiative
16 to encourage peace talks and disarmament of
17 armed groups in eastern DRC, provided that
18 the initiative has an overall positive effect on
19 the security of the populace and all parties in-
20 volved in the process ensure that it is trans-
21 parent and well-managed;

22 (D) allow and facilitate, in accordance with
23 relevant provisions of international law and con-
24 sistent with humanitarian principles, the full,
25 safe, immediate, and unhindered access to hu-

1 humanitarian personnel, equipment and supplies,
2 and the timely delivery of humanitarian assist-
3 ance to populations in need, in particular to ref-
4ugees and internally displaced persons through-
5 out the territory of the DRC;

6 (E) uphold its obligations as a state party
7 to the United Nations Convention on the Pre-
8vention and Punishment of the Crime of Geno-
9cide, the International Convention on the Elimini-
10 nation of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,
11 the International Covenant on Civil and Polit-
12 ical Rights, the United Nations Convention on
13 the Rights of the Child, and the Rome Statute
14 of the International Criminal Court; and

15 (F) combat all forms of hate speech and
16 hold accountable any person or group respon-
17 sible for ethnically charged rhetoric and incite-
18 ment to violence;

19 (9) urges the Secretary of State, in coordina-
20 tion with the heads of other relevant Federal depart-
21 ments and agencies, to—

22 (A) work with other Federal departments
23 and agencies to thoroughly investigate atrocities
24 committed against ethnic minorities in the DRC
25 and develop a strategy to address and deter

1 such atrocities pursuant to section 3 of the Elie
2 Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act
3 of 2018 (22 U.S.C. 2656 note);

4 (B) engage at the highest level with the
5 Government of the DRC to mitigate the hu-
6 manitarian effects of ethnic-based violence; and

7 (C) coordinate with like-minded partners
8 and key stakeholders to increase and maintain
9 engagement on the issue in multilateral fora,
10 including the United Nations Security Council;
11 and

12 (10) calls on the President of the United States
13 to—

14 (A) appoint a Special Envoy to the Great
15 Lakes region of Africa, which will be vital to
16 addressing the enduring regional security crisis
17 emanating from eastern DRC;

18 (B) use all existing authorities to protect
19 ethnic minorities who flee ethnic-based violence
20 in the DRC, including the authority to des-
21 ignate Rwandophones, such as the Congolese
22 Tutsi and Banyamulenge, who are nationals of
23 the DRC for Priority 2 access to the United
24 States Refugee Admissions Program; and

1 (C) impose targeted sanctions against
2 known human rights abusers in the DRC under
3 existing authorities, such as Executive Order
4 13413, as amended by Executive Order 13671,
5 and Executive Order 13818, to deter further
6 gross violations of human rights against ethnic
7 minorities in the DRC.

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