



H.Res. 1011 – Calling on the United States Government and the international community to promptly develop, fund, and implement a comprehensive regional strategy to protect civilians, facilitate humanitarian operations, contain and reduce violence, and contribute to conditions for sustainable peace and good governance in Chad, as well as in the wider region that includes the northern region of the Central African Republic and the Darfur region of Sudan

FLOOR SITUATION

H.Res. 1011 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Frank Wolf (R-VA) on February 28, 2008. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs agreed to the resolution, as amended, on April 30, 2008.

H.Res. 1011 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on May 5, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.Res. 1011 resolves that the House of Representatives:

- Expresses concern about the safety and well being of innocent civilians in Chad, Chadian refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and refugees from Darfur and the Central African Republic that have taken refuge in Chad;
- Strongly condemns Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir and the National Congress Party for their support of the armed rebellion and aggressive behavior in Chad and throughout the region;
- Calls on parties to seek a negotiated settlement;
- Urges the Government of Chad to—
 - Engage in an inclusive national dialogue with all stakeholders of the current conflict to reach a comprehensive agreement that would address the root causes of the Chadian crisis and strengthen democratic institutions;
 - Protect its civilians from violence and respect and enforce the rule of law in accordance with international norms and standards; and
 - Honor its May 9, 2007, agreement with the United Nations Children's Fund, ensuring its commitment to end all recruitment of persons under the age of 18 and demobilize all children under the age of 18 from its security forces;
- Urges the Government of the Central African Republic to—
 - Fulfill its obligation under international law to protect civilians; and
 - Engage in constructive and inclusive dialogue with opposition and armed groups;



- Calls on armed opposition groups to—
 - Renounce violence and respect the rule of law;
 - Engage in political dialogue to resolve the current crisis in their respective countries; and
 - Immediately end cooperation with the Government of Sudan and others that encourage and support armed rebellion;
- Urges the United Nations Security Council to remain focused on the crises in Chad and the Central African Republic, and to ensure the effective and impartial protection of civilians, including internally displaced persons and refugees, particularly local populations, by preempting, preventing, and deterring attacks on civilians; and
- Calls on the President to—
 - Continue United States humanitarian assistance to the refugees and internally displaced persons in Chad and the Central African Republic;
 - Provide support to strengthen democratic institutions and respect for human rights and rule of law;
 - And seek punitive measures against the Government of Sudan by the United Nations Security Council for its aggression and destructive activities in Chad and the region.

BACKGROUND

Until 1960, Chad was held by France as a part of its African territories. Since its independence, Chad has struggled through civil war and political unrest. Chad's government currently functions under the 1996 Constitution. It held flawed presidential elections in 1996 and 2001. In June of 2005, President Idriss Deby held a referendum which successfully removed constitutional term limits from the presidency. He won his third presidential election in 2006.

The ongoing humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan, continues to spill over into neighboring countries, in particular Chad. Violent rebellions have sporadically arisen in Chad and western Sudan despite several peace agreements between Chad's government and rebel leaders. In February 2008, rebels attacked the Chadian government in N'Djamena. President Deby blamed the Sudanese government for supporting and arming the rebels who attacked the Chadian government.

The political upheaval and violence in the region exacerbates the crisis in Darfur and impedes humanitarian relief efforts. The United Nations officially took over peacekeeping activities in Darfur, Sudan, earlier this year.

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