

H. Res. 245

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

November 9, 1997.

Whereas United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan appointed former United States Secretary of State James Baker III as his Personal Envoy for Western Sahara to end the prevailing referendum stalemate;

Whereas talks between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (also known as the Polisario Front) mediated by Mr. Baker have achieved agreement on ways to end the referendum stalemate;

Whereas the end of the stalemate over the Western Sahara referendum would allow for the release of civilian political prisoners and prisoners of war held by Morocco and the Polisario Front; and

Whereas the United States supports the holding of a free, fair, and transparent referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara: Now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its full support to former United States Secretary of State James Baker III in his mission as Personal Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for the Western Sahara;

(2) expresses its support for a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara that should meet the following criteria:

(A) free, fair, and transparent and held in the presence of international and domestic observers and international media without administrative or military pressure or interference;

(B) only genuine Sahrawis, as identified in the method agreed to by both sides, will take part in the referendum voting; and

(C) the result, once certified by the United Nations, is accepted by both sides;

(3) encourages the release of civilian political prisoners and prisoners of war held by Morocco and the Polisario Front at the earliest possible date; and

(4) requests the administration to fully support former United States Secretary of State James Baker III in his mission of organizing a free, fair, and transparent referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara without military or administrative constraints.

Attest:

Clerk.