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H. CON. RES. 410

Supporting peace and democracy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,
and an end to the plunder of its natural resources.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 23, 2002

Mr. HALL of Ohio (for himself, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. HOUGHTON, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. PAYNE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Supporting peace and democracy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and an end to the plunder of its natural resources.

Whereas during the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that began in 1998, involving rebel groups in that country as well as armed forces of Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi, the United States has supported the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in their desire for peace and democracy through moral and financial support of Congolese citizens, and through United Nations and other initiatives designed to secure peace;

Whereas, despite a peace agreement signed by most parties to the conflict in 1999 (the “Lusaka Peace Accords”),

and despite the efforts of the United Nations there through peacekeeping forces and otherwise, suffering caused by the war continues, in significant part because rebel groups and foreign armies are profiting directly from their control of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and are therefore dissuaded from agreeing to end the war;

Whereas independent reports confirm that most of the more than 2,500,000 deaths in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since the war began in 1998 have been caused by starvation and disease, and are not the direct result of fighting;

Whereas the human suffering in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is extreme; one-third of the population is in critical need of food, infant mortality in some isolated regions exceeds 41 percent, maternal mortality in the country is among the highest in the world, 60 percent of school-aged children are not being educated, and large numbers of children are forced to serve as soldiers;

Whereas there have been many reports by United Nations organizations, private charities, journalists, and others concerning the extent of the human suffering in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and concerning the role that plunder of natural resources, including diamonds, timber, and coltan, is playing in preventing an end to the war;

Whereas international efforts to sever the funding that the trade in diamonds provides for wars that are underway encourage diamond-producing countries to develop a system of certification to assist international efforts in excluding “conflict diamonds” from international trade; however, because the United Nations has not imposed sanctions on diamonds that fund the conflict in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo, there is no way for consumers to be confident that the money they use to purchase diamond jewelry is not funding the most deadly ongoing war in the world; and

Whereas there is growing evidence that the trade in diamonds mined in lawless areas such as much of the Democratic Republic of the Congo supports not only terror against Africans, but also acts of terrorism against Americans: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) the Congress joins the international commu-
4 nity in supporting peace and democracy in the
5 Democratic Republic of the Congo, and an end to
6 the plunder of its natural resources; and

7 (2) it is the sense of the Congress that—

8 (A)(i) the President should direct the
9 United States representative to the United Na-
10 tions immediately to work to bring before the
11 United Nations Security Council a resolution
12 imposing comprehensive sanctions against the
13 sale of diamonds mined in the territory of the
14 Democratic Republic of the Congo unless the
15 diamonds are certified by the government of
16 that country as not funding the conflict there;
17 and

1 (ii) sanctions referred to in clause (i)
2 should be similar to those sanctions relating to
3 conflict diamonds that have been imposed
4 against rebels in Angola and UNITA, and
5 against Liberia, taking into account the rec-
6 ommendations of the report of the United Na-
7 tions Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploi-
8 tation of Natural Resources and Other Forms
9 of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the
10 Congo;

11 (B) the President should urge the United
12 Nations Security Council to give priority to tak-
13 ing steps to control the illegal harvesting of
14 timber in the Democratic Republic of the
15 Congo;

16 (C) combatants in the Democratic Repub-
17 lic of the Congo, whether members of rebel
18 groups within that country or members of
19 armed forces of other countries, should be con-
20 demned by the United Nations and the inter-
21 national community for failing to abide by the
22 1999 Lusaka Peace Accords, and for inflicting
23 unspeakable suffering on the vast numbers of
24 civilians in the Democratic Republic of the
25 Congo, including more than 2,500,000 people

1 who have died and more than 2,000,000 who
2 have been driven from their homes;

3 (D) the President should forthwith send
4 representatives of the United States to the
5 Democratic Republic of the Congo, to countries
6 whose armed forces occupy the Democratic Re-
7 public of the Congo, and to countries whose
8 support sustains rebel groups operating in the
9 Democratic Republic of the Congo, to advise
10 the leaders of those countries—

11 (i) that peace in the Democratic Re-
12 public of the Congo is in the national secu-
13 rity interests of all countries, including the
14 United States; and

15 (ii) that continued strife in that coun-
16 try threatens to impede the war against
17 terrorism; and

18 (E) the United States Government should
19 not grant a visa to any individual who is sus-
20 pected of committing war crimes in the Demo-
21 cratic Republic of the Congo, or to members of
22 the individual's family, and should transfer any
23 such individual found in the United States to

- 1 the jurisdiction of the International War Crimes
- 2 Tribunal for prosecution.

