

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 155

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Urging the Government of the Republic of Albania to ensure that the parliamentary elections to be held on July 3, 2005, are conducted in accordance with international standards for free and fair elections.

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CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas the United States maintains strong and friendly relations with the Republic of Albania and appreciates the ongoing support of the people of Albania;

Whereas the President of Albania has called for elections to Albania's parliament, known as the People's Assembly, to be held on July 3, 2005;

Whereas Albania is one of 55 participating States in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), all of which have adopted the 1990 Copenhagen Document containing specific commitments relating to the conduct of elections;

Whereas these commitments, which encourage transparency, balance, and impartiality in an election process, have become the standard by which observers determine whether elections have been conducted freely and fairly;

Whereas, though improvements over time have been noted, the five multiparty parliamentary elections held in Albania between 1991 and 2001, as well as elections for local offices held between and after those years, fell short of the standards in the Copenhagen Document to varying degrees, according to OSCE and other observers;

Whereas with OSCE and other international assistance, the Government of Albania has improved the country's electoral and legal framework and enhanced the capacity to conduct free and fair elections;

Whereas subsequent to the calling of elections, Albania's political parties have accepted a code of conduct regarding their campaign activities, undertaking to act in accordance with the law, to refrain from inciting violence or hatred in the election campaign, and to be transparent in disclosing campaign funding; and

Whereas meeting the standards in the Copenhagen Document for free and fair elections is absolutely essential to Albania's desired integration into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions, including full membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as well as to Al-

bania's progress in addressing official corruption and combatting organized crime: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) welcomes the opportunity for the Republic
4 of Albania to demonstrate its willingness and pre-
5 paredness to take the next steps in European and
6 Euro-Atlantic integration by holding parliamentary
7 elections on July 3, 2005, that meet the Organiza-
8 tion for Security and Cooperation in Europe
9 (OSCE) standards for free and fair elections as de-
10 fined in the 1990 Copenhagen Document;

11 (2) firmly believes that the citizens of Albania,
12 like all people, should be able to choose their own
13 representatives in parliament and government in free
14 and fair elections, and to hold these representatives
15 accountable through elections at reasonable inter-
16 vals;

17 (3) supports commitments by Albanian political
18 parties to adhere to a basic code of conduct for cam-
19 paigning and urges such parties and all election offi-
20 cials in Albania to adhere to laws relating to the
21 elections, and to conduct their activities in an impar-
22 tial and transparent manner, by allowing inter-
23 national and domestic observers to have unob-
24 structed access to all aspects of the election process,

1 including public campaign events, candidates, news
2 media, voting, and post-election tabulation of results
3 and processing of election challenges and complaints;

4 (4) supports assistance by the United States to
5 help the people of Albania establish a fully free and
6 open democratic system, a prosperous free market
7 economy, and its rightful place in European and
8 Euro-Atlantic institutions, including the North At-
9 lantic Treaty Organization (NATO); and

10 (5) encourages the President to communicate to
11 the Government of Albania, to all political parties
12 and candidates, and to the people of Albania the
13 high importance attached by the Government of the
14 United States to this parliamentary election as a
15 central factor in determining the future relationship
16 between the United States and Albania.

Passed the House of Representatives June 27, 2005.

Attest:

Clerk.