

H. CON. RES. 151

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the international community had been led to believe that the presidential election held in Nigeria on June 12, 1993, would result in a return to full democratic civilian rule in Nigeria;

Whereas General Ibrahim Babangida, the head of Nigeria's military government at the time of the June 12, 1993, election, interrupted the release of the election results on June 23, 1993, and later annulled the election, thereby preventing a return to civilian rule;

Whereas the election process indicated that voters in Nigeria—a country with a population of approximately 90,000,000 individuals comprising 250 ethnic groups and spread across 357,000 square miles—were expressing a spirit of national unity that transcended ethnic, religious, and regional allegiances;

Whereas reported returns suggested that Moshood Abiola of the Social Democratic Party was receiving a substantial majority of the votes cast, leading the poll in 20 of the 30 states in Nigeria;

Whereas the annulment of the presidential elections resulted in various forms of civil unrest, which in turn led to the death of more than 100 individuals;

Whereas an interim government established by General Babangida on August 27, 1993, and headed by Ernest Shonekan, failed to win the support of the Nigerian people;

Whereas General Sani Abacha took power on November 17, 1993, appointing an unelected provisional ruling council to govern Nigeria;

Whereas General Abacha and the provisional ruling council, upon taking power, stated their commitment to an early return to civilian and democratic rule, and named several prominent democratic political figures to serve in the government;

Whereas the political and economic conditions in Nigeria have continued to deteriorate in the months since Abacha took control of the country;

Whereas the faith of the Nigerian people in the viability of the nation as a unified whole must be preserved, and the balkanization of Nigeria guarded against;

Whereas the people of Nigeria have not accepted the continuation of military rule and have courageously spoken out in favor of the rapid return of democratic and civilian rule;

Whereas on May 15, 1994, a broad coalition of Nigerian democrats formed the National Democratic Coalition calling upon the military government to step down in favor of the winner of the June 12, 1993, election;

Whereas the confidence of the Nigerian people and the international community in the provisional ruling council's commitment to the restoration of democracy can only be established by a sustained demonstration of a commit-

ment to human rights, due process, and the return of civilian rule;

Whereas the United States would prefer to have a relationship with Nigeria based upon cooperation and mutual support but cannot, and will not, condone or overlook the denial of democratic civilian rule—against the clear wishes of the Nigerian people—by the provisional ruling council or any other body in Nigeria;

Whereas the lack of support from the Nigerian authorities on drug trafficking issues has recently forced the United States to place Nigeria on the list of countries penalized for failure to seriously address the narcotics proliferation issue;

Whereas continuing credible reports of widespread corruption and questionable business practices in the Nigerian Government, and the lack of cooperation in addressing these problems by the Nigerian Government, further undermines Nigeria's credibility in the international community;

Whereas the steps taken by the international community in response to the refusal of the Nigerian military to relinquish power serve both to encourage the people of Nigeria in their legitimate struggle for democracy and to limit the ability of the military to entrench its rule; and

Whereas Nigeria's leadership role on the African continent and its international influence will be severely compromised by its failure to rejoin the world community of democratic nations: Now, therefore, be it

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

1 (1) continues to support the Nigerian people in
2 their commitment to unity and democracy as evi-
3 denced by their participation in the June 12, 1993,
4 presidential election in the Federal Republic of Nige-
5 ria, and in their subsequent insistence on the return
6 to full civilian and democratic rule;

7 (2) endorses the steps taken by President Clin-
8 ton and the Administration—specifically the restric-
9 tions on assistance to agencies of the Nigerian Gov-
10 ernment, the suspension of military cooperation be-
11 tween the United States and Nigeria, the restric-
12 tions on travel to the United States by officials of
13 the Nigerian military regime, and the insistence that
14 full normalization of United States—Nigeria rela-
15 tions depends upon the restoration of civilian demo-
16 cratic rule—to demonstrate United States opposition
17 to the annulment of such election and to encourage
18 the restoration of fully democratic and civilian rule
19 in Nigeria;

20 (3) urges the Administration to continue all ac-
21 tions designed to encourage the restoration of civil-
22 ian rule in Nigeria, especially the restriction on trav-
23 el to the United States by officials of the military re-
24 gime, until concrete and significant steps have been

1 taken toward a genuine transition to a democrat-
2 ically elected civilian government in Nigeria;

3 (4) encourages the Administration to explore
4 additional measures that might be taken, either uni-
5 laterally, in cooperation with other nations, or
6 through multilateral institutions such as the Inter-
7 national Monetary Fund and the International Bank
8 for Reconstruction and Development, to construc-
9 tively encourage the restoration of democratic and
10 civilian rule in Nigeria;

11 (5) requests that United States officials, both
12 in the United States and in Nigeria, consistently re-
13 iterate United States insistence upon the rapid re-
14 turn of civilian and democratic rule in Nigeria, and
15 that United States Government agencies such as the
16 United States Information Agency and the Agency
17 for International Development, as well as publicly
18 supported agencies such as the National Endowment
19 for Democracy, should provide support for activities
20 aimed at strengthening democratic forces and demo-
21 cratic institutions in Nigeria;

22 (6) condemns the recent arrests by the Nigerian
23 military authorities of Chief Abiola and other politi-
24 cal leaders and democracy advocates, as well as the

1 new restrictions imposed on freedom of expression;
2 and

3 (7) urges General Abacha and the provisional
4 ruling council in Nigeria, in order to maintain the
5 viability of Nigeria and restore political stability and
6 to avert the further deterioration of relations be-
7 tween Nigeria and the United States, to—

8 (A) fully restore freedom of the press, with
9 access to all contemporary political and elec-
10 toral information, fully respect human rights,
11 and fully restore the independence and author-
12 ity of the judiciary in Nigeria;

13 (B) immediately release Chief Abiola and
14 the other political leaders and human rights ac-
15 tivists who have been arrested or detained;

16 (C) decisively move to resolve the political
17 crisis in Nigeria by setting up a rapid timetable
18 for the full restoration of civilian and demo-
19 cratic rule, unencumbered by the military; and

20 (D) positively respond to United States
21 and other international efforts to constructively

1 encourage the restoration of democracy in
2 Nigeria.

Passed the House of Representatives July 25, 1994.

Attest:

Clerk.

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 151

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Concerning the movement toward democracy in the
Federal Republic of Nigeria.