

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas on October 15, 2000, Aleksandr Lukashenko and his authoritarian regime conducted an illegitimate and undemocratic parliamentary election in an effort to further strengthen the power and control his authoritarian regime exercises over the people of the Republic of Belarus;

Whereas during the time preceding this election the regime of Aleksandr Lukashenko attempted to intimidate the democratic opposition by beating, harassing, arresting, and sentencing its members for supporting a boycott of the October 15 election even though Belarus does not contain a legal ban on efforts to boycott elections;

Whereas the democratic opposition in Belarus was denied fair and equal access to state-controlled television and radio and was instead slandered by the state-controlled media;

Whereas on September 13, 2000, Belarusian police seized 100,000 copies of a special edition of the Belarusian Free Trade Union newspaper, Rabochy, dedicated to the democratic opposition's efforts to promote a boycott of the October 15 election;

Whereas Aleksandr Lukashenko and his regime denied the democratic opposition in Belarus seats on the Central Election Commission, thereby violating his own pledge to

provide the democratic opposition a role in this Commission;

Whereas Aleksandr Lukashenko and his regime denied the vast majority of independent candidates opposed to his regime the right to register as candidates in this election;

Whereas Aleksandr Lukashenko and his regime dismissed recommendations presented by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for making the election law in Belarus consistent with OSCE standards;

Whereas in Grodno, police loyal to Aleksandr Lukashenko summoned voters to participate in this illegitimate election for parliament;

Whereas the last genuinely free and fair parliamentary election in Belarus took place in 1995 and from it emerged the 13th Supreme Soviet whose democratically and constitutionally derived authorities and powers have been undercut by the authoritarian regime of Aleksandr Lukashenko; and

Whereas on October 11, the Lukashenko regime froze the bank accounts and seized the equipment of the independent publishing company, Magic, where most of the independent newspapers in Minsk are published: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 **SECTION 1. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON BELARUS PAR-**
 4 **LIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.**

5 Congress hereby—

6 (1) declares that—

1 (A) the period preceding the elections held
2 in Belarus held on October 15, 2000, was
3 plagued by continued human rights abuses and
4 a climate of fear for which the regime of Alek-
5 sandr Lukashenko is responsible;

6 (B) these elections were conducted in the
7 absence of a democratic electoral law;

8 (C) the Lukashenko regime purposely de-
9 nied the democratic opposition access to state-
10 controlled media; and

11 (D) these elections were for seats in a par-
12 liament that lacks real constitutional power and
13 democratic legitimacy;

14 (2) declares its support for the Belarus' demo-
15 cratic opposition, commends the efforts of the oppo-
16 sition to boycott these illegitimate parliamentary
17 elections, and expresses the hopes of Congress that
18 the citizens of Belarus will soon benefit from true
19 freedom and democracy;

20 (3) reaffirms its recognition of the 13th Su-
21 preme Soviet as the sole and democratically and con-
22 stitutionally legitimate legislative body of Belarus;
23 and

24 (4) notes that, as the legitimate parliament of
25 Belarus, the 13th Supreme Soviet should continue to

1 represent Belarus in the Parliamentary Assembly of
 2 the Organization for Security and Cooperation in
 3 Europe.

4 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON DISAPPEARANCES OF IN-**
 5 **DIVIDUALS AND POLITICAL DETENTIONS IN**
 6 **BELARUS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that the President should
 8 call upon Aleksandr Lukashenko and his regime to—

9 (1) provide a full accounting of the disappear-
 10 ances of individuals in that country, including the
 11 disappearance of Viktor Gonchar, Anatoly
 12 Krasovsky, Yuri Zakharenka, and Dmitry Zavadsky;
 13 and

14 (2) release Vladimir Kudinov, Andrei Klimov,
 15 and all others imprisoned in Belarus for their polit-
 16 ical views.

17 **SEC. 3. TRANSMITTAL OF RESOLUTION.**

18 The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit a copy
 19 of this resolution to the President.

Passed the Senate October 25 (legislative day, Sep-
 tember 22), 2000.

Attest:

Secretary.

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. CON. RES. 153

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Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the parliamentary elections held in Belarus on October 15, 2000, and for other purposes.