

Calling on the President of the United States to engage in an open discussion with the leaders of the Republic of Georgia to express support for the planned presidential elections and... (Agreed to by Senate)

SRES 391 ATS

110th CONGRESS
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S. RES. 391

Calling on the President of the United States to engage in an open discussion with the leaders of the Republic of Georgia to express support for the planned presidential elections and the expectation that such elections will be held in a manner consistent with democratic principles.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

December 6, 2007

Mr. LUGAR (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. DODD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

December 13, 2007

Committee discharged; considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Calling on the President of the United States to engage in an open discussion with the leaders of the Republic of Georgia to express support for the planned presidential elections and the expectation that such elections will be held in a manner consistent with democratic principles.

Whereas the Republic of Georgia, which is an emerging democracy strategically located between Turkey and Russia, is an important political and geopolitical ally of the United States;

Whereas Georgia has made significant economic progress since 2000, with an economic growth rate that now exceeds 9 percent on an annual basis, and was named the top economic reformer in the world by the World Bank in 2006;

Whereas the Government of Georgia has been a leader in addressing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction under the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program;

Whereas the Government of Georgia is working to become a candidate for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union;

Whereas the United States Government strongly supports the territorial integrity of Georgia and works actively toward a peaceful settlement of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflicts that might lead those regions toward greater autonomy within a unified Georgia;

Whereas the popular uprising in Georgia in 2003, the Rose Revolution, led to the establishment of democracy in that country;

Whereas opposition parties in Georgia engaged in demonstrations lasting several days beginning on November 2, 2007;

Whereas the President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, declared a state of emergency on November 7, 2007, after which the country's main opposition television station, Imedi, was closed;

Whereas Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza visited Georgia on November 10-11, 2007, and urged the Government of Georgia to reopen its private television stations, stating on Georgian state television: "A cornerstone of democracy is that all TV stations should remain open.";

Whereas President Saakashvili ended emergency rule on November 17, 2007, and announced presidential elections to be held on January 5, 2008;

Whereas the Government of Georgia has announced the reopening of the major opposition television station, Imedi;

Whereas the Government of Georgia has invited international election monitors to oversee the elections and thereby contribute to greater international recognition of the Georgian political process; and

Whereas freedom of the press, freedom of political expression, and a fair and impartial judiciary are among the most fundamental tenets of democracy:
Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that--

(1) the President should publicly state strong support for free and fair elections to be held in Georgia on January 5, 2008, in accordance with democratic principles; and

(2) the Government of Georgia, in order to restore faith in the democratic evolution of the country--

(A) must conduct free and fair elections, without government interference; and

(B) must permit all independent media to remain open and report on the elections.