



## H.Res. 1230 – Condemning postelection violence in Zimbabwe and calling for a peaceful resolution to the current political crisis

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### FLOOR SITUATION

H.Res. 1230 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Donald Payne (D-NJ) on May 22, 2008. The resolution was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, but was never considered.

H.Res. 1230 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on June 18, 2008.

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### SUMMARY

H.Res. 1230 resolves that the House of Representatives:

- Calls on all security forces, informal militias, and individuals to immediately cease attacks on and abuse of civilians;
- Strongly condemns the orchestrated campaign of violence, torture, and harassment conducted by the ruling party and its supporters and sympathizers in the police and military against members of the opposition, opposition parties, and all other civilians;
- Calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to create an environment conducive to a peaceful transition of power;
- Encourages the political parties to commit to forming a government that reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people and promotes national unity, the restoration of the rule of law, and genuine democratic governance;
- Advocates for a mechanism such as a truth and reconciliation commission through which to ensure accountability for all groups and individuals who are found to have orchestrated or committed human rights violations in the context of the elections;
- Urges the United Nations, with the cooperation and support of the African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) to dispatch a special envoy to Zimbabwe without delay, with a mandate to monitor the runoff elections and the human rights situation, and to support efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the political crisis;
- Urges the international community, under the leadership of the United Nations, AU, SADC, and the SADC Parliamentary Forum, to deploy teams of credible persons to serve as monitors to ensure that the outcome of the presidential runoff elections reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people;
- Commends the people of Zimbabwe for their continued courage in the face of systematic persecution, intimidation, and abuse, and commits to providing continued humanitarian assistance until the economic crisis is resolved;
- Commends the actions being taken by activists, civil society organizations, and churches in support of democracy and respect for basic human rights and the rule of law in Zimbabwe, and encourages these entities to maintain their activities; and
- Stands in solidarity with the people of Zimbabwe.

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### BACKGROUND

On March 29, 2008, presidential and parliamentary elections were held in Zimbabwe. Weeks later, the Zimbabwe Election Commission (ZEC) announced that President Robert Mugabe was defeated by opposition candidate Morgan Tsvangirai. Because neither candidate received 50 percent of the vote, a runoff election must be held by law on June 27, 2008. In the wake of the election, President Mugabe has lashed out at civil society and opposition supporters. There have been 65 reported deaths, according to *The Economist*. Government security forces have also raided the opposition Movement for Democratic



# LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

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Change party headquarters, arresting some 300 people. Human Rights Watch, a monitoring group, reports that Zimbabwean authorities have blocked some aid agencies from distributing food in several provinces of the country until after the run-off election.

The unemployment rate in Zimbabwe is approximately 80 percent, according to the CIA World Factbook. The nation also suffers from the world's highest inflation rate as well – almost 100,000 percent today, according to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). At least three million Zimbabweans have fled the recent turmoil in the nation. The Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), currently led by President Robert Mugabe, has controlled the executive and legislative branches of the country for 28 years. The Republic of Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in southern Africa which borders Botswana, Zambia, and Mozambique.

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## STAFF CONTACT

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