



## *Department of Social Development and World Peace*

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • FAX 202-541-3339  
WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/SDWP

March 27, 2006

The Honorable Richard G. Lugar  
Chairman  
Committee on Foreign Relations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**BY FAX: 202-228-0360**

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I am writing to urge you to support S. 2125, the Democratic Republic of the Congo Relief, Security and Democracy Promotion Act of 2005 and request that you place the bill on the Committee markup calendar. The bill was introduced with strong bipartisan support from Senators Barack Obama (D-IL), Sam Brownback (R-KS), Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Mike DeWine (R-OH).

The Catholic bishops strongly support S. 2125 because it would address some of the most urgent concerns arising from the longstanding conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This conflict has been one of the deadliest since the Second World War, with nearly 3.9 million people dead. The situation requires U.S. assistance with humanitarian relief, security, democracy and the transparent management of natural resources. S. 2125 would establish a partnership between the United States and the people of the DRC to encourage and support a fair and representative electoral process, as well as assist the government in responding to the basic human needs of its people.

This important legislation comes at a critical moment. As the DRC prepares to hold its first democratic elections for the presidency and legislature in four decades, the United States will have a unique opportunity to work in partnership with the Congolese people to foster a climate of peace and stability.

Last month Pope Benedict XVI reiterated his appeal to the international community to engage in "determined action to consolidate [the Congo's] political and economic stability." Your support for S. 2125 would represent an important step in assuring not only a better future for the Congolese people, but also greater peace and security for Africans across the region. As the recently released National Security Strategy clearly indicates, the resolution of regional conflicts through stabilization and reconstruction efforts only serves to enhance the security of the American people here at home.

Please join your colleagues who have already voiced their support for S. 2125 by bringing this vital legislation to a vote. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Wenski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and "W".

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski  
Bishop of Orlando  
Chairman, Committee on International Policy



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March 27, 2006

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Foreign Relations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**BY FAX: 202-224-0139**

Dear Senator Biden:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I am writing to urge you to support S. 2125, the Democratic Republic of the Congo Relief, Security and Democracy Promotion Act of 2005 and request that you place the bill on the Committee markup calendar. The bill was introduced with strong bipartisan support from Senators Barack Obama (D-IL), Sam Brownback (R-KS), Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Mike DeWine (R-OH).

The Catholic bishops strongly support S. 2125 because it would address some of the most urgent concerns arising from the longstanding conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This conflict has been one of the deadliest since the Second World War, with nearly 3.9 million people dead. The situation requires U.S. assistance with humanitarian relief, security, democracy and the transparent management of natural resources. S. 2125 would establish a partnership between the United States and the people of the DRC to encourage and support a fair and representative electoral process, as well as assist the government in responding to the basic human needs of its people.

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March 27, 2006

The Honorable Sam Brownback  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**BY FAX: 202-228-1265**

Dear Senator Brownback:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I am writing today to commend you for introducing S. 2125, the Democratic Republic of the Congo Relief, Security and Democracy Promotion Act of 2005. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has been one of the deadliest since the Second World War, with nearly 3.9 million people dead. Your tireless efforts on this important legislation have provided hope that some of the most urgent concerns arising from this longstanding conflict in the DRC might finally be addressed.

As the DRC prepares to hold its first democratic elections for the presidency and legislature in four decades, this legislation comes at a critical moment when the country needs to create a climate of peace and stability. This situation requires U.S. assistance with humanitarian relief, security, democracy and transparent management of natural resources. S. 2125 would establish a United States policy framework that forms a partnership with the people of the DRC to encourage and support a fair and representative electoral process, while assisting the government in responding to the basic human needs of its people.

Only last month Pope Benedict XVI reiterated his appeal to the international community to engage in “determined action to consolidate [the Congo’s] political and economic stability.” Your leadership in placing this proposal before the Senate represents an important step in assuring not only a better future for the Congolese people, but also greater peace and security for Africans across the region. As the recently released National Security Strategy clearly indicates, the resolution of regional conflicts through stabilization and reconstruction efforts only serves to enhance the security of the American people here at home.

Please accept this expression of gratitude for your sponsorship of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Relief, Security and Democracy Promotion Act. We hope that your colleagues will join you by bringing this vital legislation to a vote and enacting it into law.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski  
Bishop of Orlando  
Chairman, Committee on International Policy



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March 27, 2006

The Honorable Barack Obama  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**BY FAX: 202-228-5417**

Dear Senator Obama:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I am writing today to commend you for introducing S. 2125, the Democratic Republic of the Congo Relief, Security and Democracy Promotion Act of 2005. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has been one of the deadliest since the Second World War, with nearly 3.9 million people dead. Your tireless efforts on this important legislation have provided hope that some of the most urgent concerns arising from this longstanding conflict in the DRC might finally be addressed.

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