

**OPEN LETTER FROM 26 INTERFAITH ORGANIZATIONS REQUESTING ROBUST FY18 FUNDING
FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

July 11, 2017

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Sub-Committee
State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Sub-Committee
State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Sub-Committee
State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Sub-Committee
State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

We are a diverse group of national faith-based organizations committed to saving lives and advancing the dignity of vulnerable and marginalized persons and communities across the world. We support U.S. investment in international humanitarian and poverty-focused development assistance and peacebuilding programs, and we join the larger international development community in urging congress to fund the overall international affairs budget at no less than \$60 billion.

As your subcommittees consider the FY2018 State, Foreign Operations appropriations bill, we specifically request no less than:

- **\$3.4 billion for Development Assistance**
- **\$3.320 billion for USAID's Global Health Programs**
- **\$3.604 billion for Migration and Refugee Assistance**
- **\$3.410 billion for International Disaster Assistance**
- **\$50 million for Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance**
- **\$30 million for the Complex Crisis Fund**

We urge that funding for these accounts not come at the expense of other effective humanitarian and development assistance, which work together to serve the common goal of building a safer and more prosperous world. This is a time of extraordinary crisis around the world, and requires an unprecedented response of U.S. leadership and partnership. Currently, 20 million people are at risk of starvation due to famine-like conditions in northeast Nigeria, Somalia, Yemen and South Sudan; making this one of the worst humanitarian crises since World War II.

Development funding is likewise a prudent return on investment. The Development Assistance accounts provide resources for critical and life-giving water and sanitation, agriculture, education and many other efforts, which help communities break the cycle of poverty and achieve sustainable solutions.

Through our own work overseas, we see how U.S. investments in global health benefit the lives of millions of people every year. To give just one example, six million fewer children died before their fifth birthday in 2014 than in 1990, due in significant part to effective U.S. foreign assistance programs. USAID's Global Health Programs which have reduced malaria, polio, HIV/AIDS, TB and tropical diseases, while strengthening maternal and child health and nutrition have produced impressive, life-saving results.

The U.S. government has provided indispensable funding, influence and leadership to launch initiatives, strengthen local capacity, and coordinate humanitarian strategies across national boundaries. America's public contributions overseas deliver results the private sector cannot achieve alone. The humanitarian and poverty-focused development assistance accounts are among the most effective investments we fund. While U.S. faith-based humanitarian aid organizations raise the vast majority of their funds from private sources, we recognize the vital importance of U.S. government leadership and partnership.

As faith-based organizations committed to ending extreme poverty and promoting the dignity of each human life, we appreciate your consideration of these priorities. Robust U.S. funding will contribute toward a more just, peaceful, secure and hope-filled world where all God's children can pursue a future reflective of great promise and opportunity.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Sincerely,

1. Adventist Development and Relief Agency
2. American Hindu World Service
3. American Jewish World Service
4. Bread For The World
5. Catholic Medical Mission Board
6. Children's Medical Ministries
7. Church World Service
8. Disabled Children's Fund
9. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
10. Faiths for Safe Water
11. Food for the Hungry
12. Friends Committee on National Legislation
13. IMA World Health
14. Islamic Relief USA
15. Jewish Council for Public Affairs
16. Lutheran World Relief
17. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
18. Mennonite Central Committee, US, Washington DC Office
19. National Council of Churches
20. Presbyterian Church USA
21. Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Institute Justice Team
22. Union for Reform Judaism
23. Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
24. United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
25. United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
26. World Relief



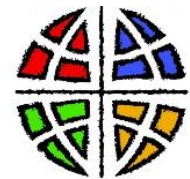
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ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT
AND RELIEF AGENCY



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

