

**OPEN LETTER FROM 32 FAITH ORGANIZATIONS REQUESTING ROBUST FY15 FUNDING ALLOCATIONS
FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

May 6, 2014

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee for State and
Foreign Operations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Appropriations Subcommittee for State and
Foreign Operations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee for State and
Foreign Operations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee for State and
Foreign Operations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

As religious and faith-based organizations committed to ending extreme poverty and promoting the dignity of each human life, we ask that you fund international humanitarian and poverty-focused development assistance programs in FY 2015 at equal or higher funding levels as those enacted in fiscal year 2014, as found in the State and Foreign Operations budget.

At this time of crisis in the Central African Republic, Syria, South Sudan, and Ukraine, and more frequent and intense natural disasters, U.S. leadership and partnership is more important than ever. As you know, the UN consolidated humanitarian appeal for 2014 is its highest ever. We are pleased that funding for international humanitarian assistance in FY 2014 acknowledged these significant needs and ask you to fund International Disaster Assistance and Migration and Refugee Assistance at least at FY 2014 levels this year. Level funding would ensure swift U.S. response should Syria, the Central African Republic, or South Sudan spiral further out of control, or another major natural disaster strike. In the context of such acute conflicts, we specifically call for U.S. support of an increase in unarmed civilian peacekeeping initiatives through the State Department, UN or NGO's.

Development funding is likewise a prudent return on investment. For less than one penny of every U.S. taxpayer dollar, this funding supports life-saving programs that help to break the cycles of poverty and introduce productive opportunities for individuals, families, and communities around the world. To provide one example, U.S. investments in primary education have helped to increase global literacy rates by 33 percent and triple primary school enrollment in the last 25 years. Educational attainment fuels economic productivity; individual earnings increase 10 percent for every year of school completed. Development assistance funds

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education, water and sanitation, agricultural, and many other programs, 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. U.S.-supported nutrition interventions during the critical 1,000 days from pregnancy to age two help to ensure a child's ability to grow, learn, and thrive throughout their lifetime. And every dollar invested in nutrition generates as much as \$138 in better health and increased productivity.

The U.S. government's support of PEPFAR has provided life-saving antiretroviral treatment for 6.7 million men, women, and children worldwide over the duration of this program. Of the 780,000 pregnant women who tested positive for HIV last year, 95 percent of their children were born HIV-free due to treatment interventions. In order to capitalize on these gains and realize the first AIDS-free generation since HIV was discovered, we cannot cut back on global health funding for PEPFAR and the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, as well as maternal and child health, vulnerable children, and nutrition.

As you work on FY2015 appropriations, we urge you to continue to fund humanitarian and poverty-focused development assistance programs at levels comparable or higher than those enacted in the previous fiscal year. In doing so, we will continue to build a more hope-filled world, where all God's children can pursue a future reflective of great promise and opportunity. We recognize the tight budget constraints in which you are working, and we stand ready to help you as you discern the nation's priorities for 2015.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Sincerely,

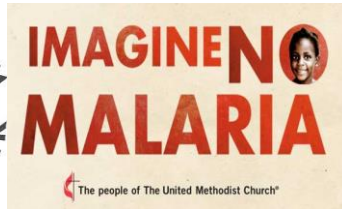
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|---|---|
| 1. American Jewish World Service | 9. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America |
| 2. Bread for the World | |
| 3. Center for Interreligious Understanding | 10. Faiths for Safe Water |
| 4. Children's Medical Ministries | 11. Food for the Hungry |
| 5. Christian Connections for International Health | 12. Franciscan Action Network |
| 6. Church World Service | 13. Imagine No Malaria- United Methodist Church |
| 7. Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach | 14. IMA World Health |
| 8. Conference of Major Superiors of Men | 15. Islamic Relief USA |
| | 16. Islamic Society of North America |
| | 17. Leadership Conference of Women Religious |

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| 18. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns | 25. The Episcopal Church |
| 19. Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office | 26. Union for Reform Judaism |
| 20. Muslim Public Affairs Council | 27. Unitarian Universalist Service Committee |
| 21. National Council of the Churches of Christ, USA | 28. United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries |
| 22. Office of Public Witness, Church of the Brethren | 29. United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society |
| 23. Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America | 30. Uri L'Tzedek |
| 24. Presbyterian Church (USA) | 31. Women of Reform Judaism |
| | 32. World Renew |



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THE
Episcopal
CHURCH

