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March 23, 2012

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee for
State and Foreign Operations
and Related Programs
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Chairman and Ranking Member:

As you deliberate on the FY 2013 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs budget, we urge you to protect funding for lifesaving poverty-focused international humanitarian and development programs as listed on the attached table.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) continue to acknowledge the difficult fiscal challenges that Congress faces. We support fiscal responsibility and urge you to pursue this goal in morally responsible ways. We must draw a “circle of protection” around the most vulnerable at home and abroad and the programs that serve them.

The President’s budget request would increase the overall International Affairs Budget by 2.4% in fiscal year 2013 relative to fiscal year 2012, but would cut poverty-focused programs. The poverty-focused programs advance solidarity with poorer nations and enhance global security. They save lives by curing and preventing diseases, making farmers’ fields more productive, caring for orphans whose lives hang in the balance, feeding people victimized by natural and man-made disasters, and housing and caring for refugees. Your leadership to protect these accounts is more important than ever given the current debate in the House.

We urge you to increase funding to these programs because careless cuts cost lives. We are particularly concerned about the President’s proposed cuts to the following accounts: Migration and Refugee Assistance, HIV/AIDS, other health and nutrition programs, and International Disaster Assistance. While we appreciate our nation’s fiscal challenges, the current economic crisis disproportionately impacts the world’s poorest people. Given inflation and high food prices, neither they nor we can afford cuts to these life-saving accounts.

USCCB and CRS bring three assets to this issue. First, the rich body of Catholic Social Teaching gives priority to our poorest brothers and sisters in allocating scarce resources. Second, our two institutions have deep and abiding relationships and partnerships with the Church in developing countries. The Church is a trusted institutional presence that enjoys

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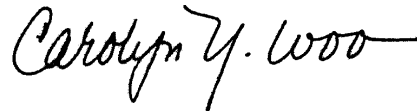
extensive reach, including in remote communities. Third, for 68 years CRS has successfully implemented humanitarian and development programs in one hundred countries across the world, often in partnership with the U.S. government. This experience provides insight into State and Foreign Operations assistance programs.

USCCB and CRS are committed to working with Congress and the Administration to meet the U.S. imperative to increase poverty-focused international assistance and to reform these programs to improve the lives of those in greatest need.

Sincerely yours,

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Most Reverend Richard E. Pates
Bishop of Des Moines
Chair, Committee on International Justice and Peace
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



Dr. Carolyn Y. Woo
President
Catholic Relief Services



**POVERTY-FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT
and HUMANITARIAN ACCOUNTS
SUPPORTED BY USCCB and CRS**



<u>FUNDING ACCOUNT TITLE (\$ in thousands)</u>	<u>Enacted FY 2012</u>	<u>Pres. Req. FY 2013</u>	<u>% Difference FY 2012-2013</u>
<i>State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Budget:</i>			
Maternal and Child Health (including vaccines)	605,550	578,000	-4.5%
Nutrition	95,000	90,000	-5.3%
Vulnerable Children (orphans and displaced children)	17,500	13,000	-25.7%
HIV/AIDS PEPFAR (USAID Funding)	350,000	330,000	-5.7%
Malaria and Other Infectious Diseases (tropical diseases)	1,033,000	963,000	-6.8%
HIV/AIDS PEPFAR (State Funding)	5,542,860	5,350,000	-3.5%
Development Assistance (e.g. Feed the Future, climate change)	2,519,950	2,525,500	0.2%
International Disaster Assistance	975,000	960,000	-1.5%
Transition Initiatives (post-conflict countries)	56,695	57,600	1.6%
Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA)	1,875,100	1,625,400	-13.3%
Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance	27,200	50,000	83.8%
Millennium Challenge Account (development projects)	898,200	898,200	0.0%
Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities	1,828,182	2,098,500	14.8%
Peacekeeping Operations	383,818	249,100	-35.1%
International Development Association (including debt relief)	1,325,000	1,358,500	2.5%
Debt Restructuring (Sudan debt relief for FY13)	12,000	*250,000	1983.0%
TOTAL	\$17,545,055	\$17,396,800	-0.8%
	(0.5% of total federal budget)		(-4.2% from FY10)

* Preconditioned on Sudan's fulfillment of Comprehensive Peace Agreement obligations and their respect for human rights.

Summary of Message to Congress and Account Descriptions

In a time of austerity and fiscal restraints, we need to give moral priority to programs that help the poor, both at home and abroad. We urge Congress to **preserve and strengthen funding for poverty-focused international development and humanitarian programs** that save lives and reduce poverty in the FY 2013 budget. The President's Budget Request increased the overall International Affairs Budget by 2.4%, but cut poverty-focused programs. We are concerned about the President's proposed cuts to the following accounts: Migration and Refugee Assistance, HIV/AIDS, other health and nutrition programs, and International Disaster Assistance.

Maternal and Child Health programs provide proven life-saving help, such as newborn care, immunization, community treatment of pneumonia and nutrition programs that address the major killers of mothers and children in the developing world.

Nutrition Programs help women and children to improve their overall nutrition during the most crucial periods of their lives such as pregnancy and the first years of a child's life.

Vulnerable Children programs address the special needs of displaced children and orphans.

HIV/AIDS PEPFAR (USAID Funding) funding focuses on prevention, care and treatment efforts, and the support of children affected by AIDS in over 90 countries.

Malaria and Other Infectious Diseases funding prepares for avian flu response and helps to prevent and treat HIV, malaria, TB, and other neglected tropical diseases. This fund is critical to prevent major health outbreaks.

HIV/AIDS (State Funding) funds PEPFAR, which save millions of lives by providing HIV prevention efforts (with an emphasis on abstinence and behavior change), care for families and children affected by family members with HIV/AIDS, and anti-retroviral treatment efforts that allow people to live productive lives. These programs also treat malaria, immunize people across the globe, and invest in research and development.

Development Assistance programs support an array of activities, including education, agriculture, water and sanitation, small enterprise, climate change, democracy promotion and good governance. These programs help promote human development and stability in poor countries.

International Disaster Assistance funds emergency health, water, shelter and nutrition efforts through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. It also funds disaster risk reduction, rehabilitation, transitions to development, and emergency food security.

Transition Initiatives help countries in or emerging from conflict to rebuild communities and strengthen government structures; it bridges the gap between emergency relief and longer-term development.

Migration and Refugee Assistance protects refugees and internally displaced persons, helps them to repatriate when conflict ends or natural disaster responses permit, and to resettle to safe countries like the U.S.

Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance programs respond to humanitarian crises in places like Sudan and Iraq.

Millennium Challenge Account provides U.S. funding to countries with a commitment to good governance; in particular, it funds infrastructure projects.

Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities deploy peacekeeping troops to protect civilians in places like Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Peacekeeping Operations finances the training and equipping of peacekeeping troops before they deploy to conflict countries and the professionalization of militia groups into formal military forces committed to protecting their people.

International Development Association in the World Bank provides debt relief for some of the poorest countries in the world.

Debt Restructuring funds relieve debt burdens for the poorest countries freeing up resources to invest more in education and health care. The full amount budgeted could be used to forgive all of Sudan's debt to the United States if Sudan fulfills all the requirements.

Accounts in italics are subaccounts of Global Health Programs (USAID).