



International Justice and Peace
3211 4th Street, NE
Washington, DC 20017
Tel. (202) 541-3160
Fax (202) 541-3339



228 West Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
Tel. (410) 625-2220
Fax (410) 685-1635

May 11, 2009

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice-Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Vice-Chairman Cochran:

As the Senate Appropriations Committee considers the Fiscal Year 2009 supplemental appropriations bill, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the relief and development agency of the Catholic Bishops of the United States, urge you to include funding for the foreign assistance priorities set forth below in order to help relieve the suffering and improve the livelihoods of millions of people around the world.

Additional funding through the supplemental bill is essential to meet critical needs in Sudan, Iraq, Gaza and the West Bank, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Zimbabwe and a number of other countries, and to strengthen peace-keeping efforts, especially in Haiti and countries of Africa in crisis.

The Bishops' Conference and CRS support foreign assistance based on our belief that each person is created in the image of God. Aid to poor people overseas protects human life and dignity by promoting human development and reducing crushing poverty, deadly diseases and malnutrition. Our reflections are also informed by our relationships with the Catholic Church in developing nations and CRS' daily on-the-ground work in about 100 countries.

Specifically, we strongly support appropriation of these amounts in the FY09 Supplemental:

Support for the Palestinian People: at least the \$559 million requested by the President for the West Bank/Gaza to support the peace process and to meet urgent humanitarian, social and economic needs. Failure to address the situation on the ground in Gaza and the West Bank will contribute to greater instability in the Holy Land and across the Middle East. More than 80% of Gazans are now reliant on humanitarian aid. In the West Bank food insecurity, unemployment and school dropout rates are all on the rise. Together with U.S. efforts to achieve a sustainable cease-fire and a secure re-opening of Gaza's border crossings, this aid will help alleviate the needs of the civilian population and strengthen moderate voices for peace.

We also support including in the bill a provision that would allow the U.S. to provide funding to a unity government if the President certifies that that government renounces violence, recognizes Israel and accepts previous agreements. Alleviating the humanitarian suffering of the Palestinian people and building their capacity for a future state is in the best interests of both Israelis and Palestinians who long for a just peace.

International Disaster Assistance: (IDA): \$200 million for the IDA account to provide emergency aid for Darfur, Zimbabwe, Somalia, Ethiopia and other nations, and for internally displaced persons in Pakistan.

Letter to Senators Inouye and Cochran

May 11, 2009

Page 2

Migration and Refugee Assistance: \$343 million for migration and refugee assistance for Iraq, Gaza and the West Bank, Pakistan and Afghanistan, the DRC, Palestinians in Lebanon, Burmese refugees, and to respond to the food crisis in Africa.

Food Aid: \$764 million for P. L. 480 food aid and \$100 million for the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust. We appreciate the House Appropriations Committee's proposal to increase food aid by \$200 million over the President's request. We believe, however, that a total of \$864 million is necessary to meet the needs of the rising number of poor people around the world as a result of the global financial crisis and to ensure the availability of funds to meet unanticipated emergency needs in Africa and elsewhere.

Contributions to International Peacekeeping Account (CIPA) and Peacekeeping Operations (PKO): \$837 million for CIPA to sustain current UN peacekeeping operations in Darfur, Southern Sudan, Haiti and elsewhere, and to fund an expanded mission in the DRC and a new mission in Chad and the Central African Republic. We also urge support for \$50 million for the PKO account for the DRC and Somalia.

Assistance in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq: \$2.459 billion for funding for Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, especially for economic recovery and social services for war-ravaged and vulnerable people in these countries.

Global Financial Crisis: \$448 million, as requested by the President, to strengthen social safety net and other programs that are essential to enable poor countries to respond to the harmful impact of the global financial crisis on their people.

Development Assistance: \$38 million, as requested by the President, for peace, reconciliation and poverty reduction efforts in Kenya.

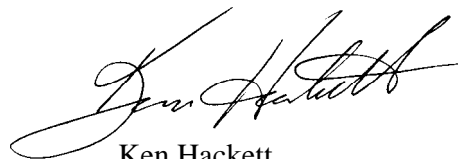
Finally, we urge approval of the President's request to authorize the three-year U.S. contribution of \$3.7 billion to the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) and \$468 million to the African Development Fund (ADF). These authorizations allow payments to IDA and ADF of already appropriated funds that are essential for the U.S. to meet its share of costs under the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). MDRI debt relief is made more urgent by the need to free up resources to enable poor countries to address unanticipated needs arising from the global financial crisis.

Thank you for your leadership in promoting human development, reducing poverty, and building a more stable and secure world through international assistance.

Sincerely yours,



Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard
Bishop of Albany
Chairman
Committee on International Justice and Peace



Ken Hackett
President
Catholic Relief Services