

**OPEN LETTER FROM 22 FAITH ORGANIZATIONS EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR
EXPANDING BASE FOREIGN AID FUNDING IN THE FY2022 SFOPS BILL**

May 4, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ricard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Leahy and DeLauro and Ranking Members Shelby and Granger:

We are a group of faith communities and 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. investments in international humanitarian, human rights, peacebuilding and poverty-focused assistance. These programs are vital to alleviating suffering from hunger and thirst, extreme poverty, debilitating illness, complex emergencies and violent conflict. As a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its enduring effects, supporting robust foreign assistance funding could not be more critical.

As you release 302(b) funding allocations for fiscal year 2022, we urge you to support no less than **\$69.1 billion** for the State and Foreign Operations (SFOPS) appropriations bill, **a \$13.5 billion increase from the FY21 non-emergency enacted level**. This request amounts to less than one percent of the U.S. federal budget yet devotes significant resources for peacebuilding, humanitarian and poverty-focused foreign assistance. These critical programs provide a strong return on investment to the U.S. taxpayer, by helping create a healthier world and generating goodwill toward the United States. Additionally, the Institute of Economics and Peace has shown that every dollar invested in conflict prevention saves \$16 in the cost of conflict — making prevention a cost-efficient investment of taxpayer dollars.

Robust and secure funding from the base account is important for on-the-ground agencies to plan effective programs and build sustainable partnerships to successfully and sustainably address poverty, violent conflict and disease. Recently, the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition identified at [least \\$14 billion](#) in new resources to support U.S. economic, health, and national security interests and to mitigate the

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global health and humanitarian impacts of the pandemic. Key investment areas identified across the assessment include investing in pandemic preparedness; responding to global health and humanitarian crises; bolstering American economic competitiveness and helping countries increase their resilience.

Using primarily privately generated resources, faith-based organizations are actively engaging around the world to assist the most vulnerable and marginalized communities. We are doing our part, but we cannot do it alone. The partnership, influence and extensive resources of the U.S. government are crucial, especially in light of the many crises facing our world today. Helping the most vulnerable thrive, at home and abroad, is at the heart of the American character and essential to global human security.

We urge you to accelerate – not slow – these critical investments in international humanitarian aid, poverty-focused assistance and peacebuilding programs. In doing so, Congress will promote strengthened U.S. global leadership to save lives and build a world of peace and prosperity to which we all aspire. The Interfaith Working Group on Foreign Assistance stands ready to work with you as you discern the nation's priorities for FY 2022.

Sincerely,

ADRA International
American Hindu World Service (AHWS)
American Jewish World Service
Bread for the World
Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation
Church World Service
Disabled Children's Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Faiths for Safe Water
Food for the Hungry
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Helping Hand for Relief and Development
Islamic Relief USA
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
National Council of Churches
Presbyterian Church (USA), Office of Public Witness
Sojourners
The Episcopal Church
The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society
Union for Reform Judaism
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
World Renew

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Faiths for Safe Water



FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY



Islamic Relief USA
WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER WORLD.



Mennonite Central Committee



National Council of Churches

