

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

May 4, 2021

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
Chairman
Committee on the Budget
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Yarmuth
Chairman
Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jason Smith
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Sanders and Yarmuth and Ranking Members Graham and Smith:

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.

Given the now unprecedented number of global challenges facing the international community, we urge you to support no less than **\$71.6 billion** for the FY 2022 International Affairs Budget, the 150 account, which is a **\$14 billion increase from FY 2021 bill**. 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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