



Department of Social Development and World Peace

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • FAX 202-541-3339
WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/SDWP

March 13, 2006

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator:

As the Senate considers the Fiscal Year 2007 Budget Resolution, I am writing on behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to respectfully request that you support efforts to restore funding for the 150 foreign affairs account to \$35.1 billion, the level requested by the President. The resolution reported by the Senate Budget Committee on March 9, 2006 falls short of this goal by \$2 billion.

We believe it is vital that the United States display a strong commitment to combating poverty and despair around the world through robust funding for humanitarian and development assistance. On March 3, 2006, Bishop William P. Skylstad, President of the Bishops' Conference, wrote urging you to ensure that our nation's budget give priority to social investments that promote the well-being of the poor in our country and around the world. He wrote: "Our nation also has inescapable international responsibilities that clearly include increased investments in promoting peace, security and international development. In a globalized economy, stronger and more effective responses to the development and health needs of the poorest people on earth, like those in Africa, and our efforts to assist and protect refugees are moral imperatives."

I urge you to support the restoration of \$2 billion to the 150 foreign affairs account. The moral measure of our nation's budget policy is whether it enhances or undermines the lives and dignity of those most in need.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski
Bishop of Orlando
Chairman, Committee on International Policy