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December 8, 2011

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

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Norm Dicks
Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators and Representatives:

As the Conference Committee for the remaining FY 2012 appropriations bills meets, we urge you to oppose additional cuts to poverty-focused humanitarian and development assistance in the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs budget as a way to offset other increases. Such cuts will undermine integral human development, poverty reduction initiatives, and stability in the world's poorest countries and communities. They could also weaken our long-term security, since poverty and hopelessness can lead to instability, conflict, and terrorism.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) have repeatedly acknowledged the difficult challenges that Congress faces to get the nation's financial house in order: fulfilling the demands of justice and obligations to future generations; controlling future debt and deficits; and protecting the life and dignity of those who are poor and vulnerable. However, our nation must be fiscally responsible in morally responsible ways.

The State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations should protect critical poverty-focused development and humanitarian accounts previously identified by USCCB and CRS (see the attached table). These life-saving programs include agricultural assistance for subsistence farmers and adaptation to climate change for vulnerable communities. They supply life-saving medicines for people living with HIV/AIDS and vaccines for preventable diseases, assistance to orphans and vulnerable children and disaster assistance in places like Haiti. They also fund peacekeeping forces to protect innocent civilians in troubled areas such as Sudan and the Congo, and support migrants and refugees fleeing conflict or persecution in nations such as Iraq. The famine in East Africa is a grim reminder of the lives that are at stake.

The FY 2011 budget cut poverty-focused programs by 8% from FY 2010, an already significant and harmful reduction. USCCB and CRS were pleased that the Senate Appropriations Committee reported a bill that largely protects current funding levels for poverty-focused accounts. If further action is needed to reduce deficit spending, instead of cuts to the poor overseas, we urge you to consider balanced adjustments across the entire federal budget, including defense, revenue, agricultural subsidies, and fair and just entitlement reform. If the

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State and Foreign Operations budget must be reduced, then we ask you to protect critical poverty-focused development and humanitarian accounts and other parts of the budget focused on the poor. The budget is a moral document that should give priority to those who are poor and vulnerable at home and abroad.

As we have said in the past, the USCCB and CRS stand ready to work with leaders of both parties for a budget that reduces future deficits, protects poor and vulnerable people at home and abroad, advances the common good, and promotes human life and dignity. But we oppose an appropriations bill that places a disproportionate, deadly burden on the poorest people in the poorest places on earth. We urge you to reject disproportionate, unwise, and unjust cuts to programs that give life to people living in poverty across the world.

Sincerely yours,

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Most Reverend Richard E. Pates
Bishop of Des Moines
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace



Mr. Ken Hackett
President
Catholic Relief Services

Encl.



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



<u>FUNDING ACCOUNT TITLE (\$ in thousands)</u>	<u>FY 2010¹</u>	<u>FY 2011²</u>	<u>House FY 2012³</u>	<u>House FY10-12 % Diff</u>	<u>Senate Proposed FY 2012</u>
Child Survival and Maternal Health (including vaccines)	549,000	unknown	unknown	~ -8%	595,000
Vulnerable Children (orphans and displaced children)	15,000	unknown	unknown	~ -8%	17,500
HIV/AIDS (USAID Programs)	350,000	unknown	unknown	~ -8%	350,000
Other Infectious Diseases (neglected tropical diseases)	981,000	unknown	unknown	~ -8%	1,015,000
Global Health and Child Survival (includes PEPFAR)	5,359,000	5,334,310	unknown	~ -8%	5,250,000
Development Assistance (e.g. Feed the Future, climate change)	2,520,000	2,518,950	2,068,000	-18%	2,550,000
International Disaster Assistance	1,305,000	863,270	757,652	-42%	1,000,000
Transition Initiatives (post-conflict countries)	55,000	54,890	54,890	-0%	58,500
Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA)	1,850,000	1,686,620	1,496,873	-19%	1,800,000
Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance	45,000	49,000	32,000	-29%	(in MRA)
Millennium Challenge Account (development projects)	1,105,000	898,200	898,200	-19%	898,200
P.L. 480 Title II Food for Peace	1,840,000	1,497,000	1,040,198	-43%	1,562,000
McGovern-Dole International Food for Education	209,500	199,101	180,000	-14%	188,000
Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities	2,221,500	1,883,931	1,690,517	-24%	1,917,900
Peacekeeping Operations	331,500	304,390	304,390	-8%	292,000
International Development Association (including debt relief)	1,334,500	1,232,530	940,500	-30%	1,355,000
Debt Restructuring	60,000	49,900	unknown	-17%	15,000
TOTAL	\$ 20,131,000	-8%	-13%	-20%	18,864,100
	(about 0.6% of budget)				

¹ FY 2010 Enacted Budget including Supplemental

² FY 2011 Enacted Budget. Unknown sub-accounts flat-funded in FY 2011.

³ FY 2012 House State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee proposal. Unknown sub-accounts cut on average 8%.