

March \_\_, 2010

The Honorable Kent Conrad, Chairman  
The Honorable Judd Gregg, Ranking Member  
Committee on the Budget  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Conrad and Ranking Member Gregg:

As you prepare the Fiscal Year 2011 Senate Budget Resolution, we strongly urge you to support full funding for the President's \$58.5 billion budget request for the U.S. International Affairs Budget in the Chairman's mark. A robust International Affairs Budget reinforces the continued bipartisan commitment of Congress and current and past Administrations to invest in the strategic tools that are essential to strengthen our national security, foster economic growth, and promote America's moral leadership.

Although it represents less than 1.5% of the total federal budget, the International Affairs Budget funds America's development and diplomacy tools – two of the three pillars of U.S. national security. The majority of the proposed \$6.1 billion increase for the International Affairs Budget in FY 2011 is devoted to the Frontline States of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq. The actual increase in International Affairs spending from FY 2010 to FY 2011 is only 2.8%, including pending FY 2010 supplemental funding. Such funding is not only critical to our national security and reducing the heavy toll on American men and women in uniform, but it is also instrumental in helping to improve lives through global health, democracy, agriculture, and education programs.

As Secretary Clinton has stated: "Our agenda is ambitious because our times demand it. America is called to lead – and we need the tools and resources to exercise our leadership wisely and effectively. We can bury our heads in the sand and pay the consequences later, or we can make hard-nosed, targeted investments now – addressing the security challenges of today while building a foundation for security and prosperity in the future."

That is why both the Obama and Bush Administrations designate the International Affairs Budget as part of our overall "national security agencies" budget, along with the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and Veterans Affairs. National security and foreign policy experts from across the political spectrum support an increase in the International Affairs Budget as an essential component of our national security.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates says it clearly: "It has become clear that America's civilian institutions of diplomacy and development have been chronically undermanned and underfunded for far too long -- relative to what we traditionally spend on the military, and more important, relative to the responsibilities and challenges our nation has around the world."

In addition to our national security, the International Affairs Budget is vital to our economic security and the U.S. economy. More than 1 in 5 U.S. jobs are tied to global trade – and trade has tripled as a share of our national economy in the past four decades. Today, developing countries represent an increasingly significant growth market for American exports. In order to create jobs

here at home, we must invest in America's export promotion tools – including the Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. Accessing emerging markets for American goods and services is vital to our economic recovery.

For these and many other reasons, there is strong bipartisan support for the International Affairs Budget in Congress. Last December, 247 Members of Congress, including a bipartisan majority of 58 Senators, sent a letter to President Obama urging his support for a robust FY11 International Affairs Budget request. In addition, as you know, last year the Senate restored by voice vote a proposed \$4 billion cut to the FY10 International Affairs Budget.

Mr. Chairman, we urge you to support the Administration's full request level of \$58.5 billion for the FY11 International Affairs Budget. These relatively modest programs are critical and highly cost-effective investments in a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Sincerely,