August 9, 2019

Dear Members of the House Appropriations Committee:

The 100-plus member Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) is the leading global network for organizations working to end violent conflict and sustain peace worldwide. Our members include some of the world’s largest development organizations, most innovative academic institutions, and most influential humanitarian and faith-based groups. We build coalitions in key areas of strategy and policy to elevate the entire peacebuilding field, tackling issues too large for any one organization to address alone.

We are writing to express our profound concern about the administration’s order to freeze as much as $4 billion in congressionally-approved funds for foreign assistance, and about reports that it may be preparing to request a rescission of these funds. **We urge you to use your appropriations power to reject a potential rescission and to ensure that the funds are released in a timely fashion, as intended by Congress.**

The hold placed on these funds come at a time when deaths from organized violence have risen over 230 percent globally in the past 10 years. Just fifteen years ago, approximately 80% of humanitarian aid went to helping the victims of natural disasters, but today that ratio is reversed, with 80% of aid going to meet the needs of victims of violent conflict. Wars and violence have triggered the worst displacement and refugee crisis ever recorded, displacing 68.5 million people from their homes. Violent conflict also fuels violent extremism. Over 99% of all deaths caused by terrorism in 2017 occurred in countries involved in violent conflict or with high levels of political terror.

This effort targets as little as 0.09% of the Federal Budget, but this small sliver represents 7% of the funding for the civilian national security tools of the United States. Cutting U.S. diplomacy and development programs undermines national security, damages economic interests, and weakens U.S. moral leadership in the world. Evidence proves that such measures would ultimately risk American lives at home, cost the U.S. taxpayer more in the long run, and endanger America’s military overseas.

This potential rescission would have a **significant impact** on the ability of the United States to prevent and manage violent conflict worldwide. It would undermine the programs that are already established on the ground that further the national security interests of the United States abroad and are critical to preventing violent conflict.

Once again, we urge you to use your appropriations power to reject this potential rescission of critical foreign assistance.
Sincerely,

1. Alliance for Peacebuilding
2. Alliance for Middle East Peace
3. American Jewish World Service
4. Basic Education Coalition
5. Better World Campaign
6. The Bridgeway Group
7. Catalyst for Peace
8. Charity & Security Network
9. Colors of Connection
10. Cure Violence Global
11. Darfur Women Action Group
12. Department of Peace Operations (DPO)-PATRIR
13. Educators’ Institute for Human Rights
14. Enough Project
15. Envision Zimbabwe Women’s Trust
16. FHI 360
17. Friends Committee on National Legislation
18. Global Campaign for Education-US
19. GPPAC Foundation
20. Green String Network
21. Humanity United Action
22. InterAction
23. International Alert
24. International Civil Society Action Network
25. Invisible Children
26. Jewish World Watch
27. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice
28. Leadership Conference of Women Religious
29. Maryknoll Office for Global Concern
30. Mercy Corps
31. Minnesota Peace Project
32. Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute
33. Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies
34. Nonviolent Peaceforce
35. Nuru International
36. Office of Peacebuilding and Policy, Church of the Brethren
37. Outward Bound center for Peacebuilding
38. PartnersGlobal
39. Peace Direct
40. Peace Research and Education Program, New York University
41. Rural Education and Agriculture Development Organization (READO)
42. Search for Common Ground
43. Stop Genocide Now
44. Win Without War
45. Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security
46. World Learning / School for International Training
47. Young-adult Empowerment Initiative