May 23, 2013

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-146A Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Mikulski and Shelby,

As you consider the 302(b) allocations for the Senate Appropriations Subcommittees, we ask that you support the President’s budget request funding level of $51.8 billion for the State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee. Adopting the President’s funding level helps to ensure the highest possible funding for international humanitarian and poverty-focused development assistance for fiscal year 2014.

The Federal Budget expresses our character and values as a people. Drastic cuts to international humanitarian and poverty-focused development programs will exacerbate poverty and hunger around the world. That is why we are deeply concerned that the allocations in the House State Foreign Operations Subcommittee are approximately 19 percent lower than the current fiscal year 2013 levels.

Many of our organizations and our U.S. constituencies work as humanitarians around the world to alleviate the devastating impact of poverty, disease, humanitarian disasters, violent conflict and environmental degradation. Our efforts are grounded in the common commitment of our faith traditions to alleviate suffering and help all people experience the fullness of life that God intends.

Many of the programs that our organizations operate overseas are supported through church donations and our associated international development agencies. This work helps to break the cycles of poverty and introduce productive opportunities for individuals, families, and communities around the world. U.S. federal humanitarian and poverty-focused development initiatives are an irreplaceable element in our shared commitment to eradicating extreme poverty and greatly multiply life-saving and life-enriching achievements.

Congress must give priority to programs that protect and support the lives and dignity of those most vulnerable and impoverished. Our nation has the resources and the responsibility to support the alleviation and elimination of global poverty, which is why we urge you to adopt the President’s fiscal year 2014 budget request for State and Foreign Operations.

Sincerely,

American Friends Service Committee
American Jewish World Service
Bread for the World
Catholic Relief Services
Children's Medical Ministries
Church of the Brethren, Office of Public Witness
Church World Service
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Conference of Major Superiors of Men
Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice
The Episcopal Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Franciscan Action Network
IMA World Health
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Lutheran World Relief
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Mennonite Central Committee, U.S.
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
United Methodist Church, Imagine No Malaria Campaign