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June 11, 2015

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**GRANGER OPENING STATEMENT: FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP OF  
THE FISCAL YEAR 2016 BILL FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE,  
FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS**

I thank the Chairman for yielding and for his exceptional leadership of the Committee this year.

I also want to acknowledge the work of my friend, Mrs. Lowey, as Ranking Member of the Full Committee and the Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations. Even in a year when total spending in the bill is reduced by 11% below the request, we have tried to work together to find solutions our members can support.

We have many amendments to consider this morning, so I will give just a few brief highlights of the bill.

All of our Committee members know that we live in a dangerous world where terrorists threaten the United States, our allies and partners, and our way of life. We see Russia and China continuing to assert territorial claims against their neighbors, and the threat of a nuclear Iran is real.

That is why this bill at \$47.8 billion, 3% below last year's level, must prioritize programs that are in our national security interest, including

- embassy security;
- assistance to key countries - such as Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Ukraine;
- preventing terrorist safe havens and stopping the flow of foreign terrorist fighters; and
- democracy programs and international broadcasting.

The bill provides robust funding for security initiatives to help our neighbors in Mexico, Colombia, the Caribbean, and Central America. The funding provided for Central America continues to address the tens of thousands of unaccompanied children that have come to the United States over the last year.

As I said when we marked up this bill last summer, changes will not happen overnight in these countries. While there is now a joint plan to address shared challenges in the region, more needs to be done by the Central American countries. Security must come first before there can be prosperity.

The bill continues our bipartisan commitment to address human trafficking. We must do our part to put an end to what equates to modern day slavery.

The bill also devotes funds to combat wildlife poaching and trafficking. Many members of this committee are concerned that criminal organizations are getting rich off of this illegal activity, and we want to protect some of the world's most unique wildlife from extinction.

The bill also focuses on critical humanitarian aid and health programs by rejecting the cuts proposed for these accounts in the President's budget.

To address all of these needs, the bill excludes funding for many of the international banks, reduces the United Nations and international organizations by a billion dollars below the request, and rescinds accounts where balances have accumulated due to slow spending.

This bill addresses key policy issues, including aid to Egypt. At a time of unrest in the Middle East, the U.S. needs Egypt as our stable ally. Funds in the bill, and the conditions placed on those funds, reflect our commitment to maintaining our relationship with Egypt.

The bill makes clear statements about the Palestinian Authority (P.A.). The P.A. will not receive economic aid as long as they continue to pursue unilateral efforts at the U.N. and other international organizations, outside of a negotiated peace agreement with Israel. The bill also stops the Palestinians from having representation in Washington, D.C., if their hostile actions continue.

In closing, I hope that we can work quickly to report the bill out of Committee today.

I yield back to the Chairman.

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