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**GRANGER OPENING STATEMENT: FY 15 BUDGET REQUEST FOR  
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs will come to order.

I want to welcome the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, Dr. Shah. We look forward to hearing your testimony on the fiscal year 2015 budget request for U.S.A.I.D.

The details of the Administration's proposals are slowly coming in, but I already see a few troubling issues from the information I have.

The Administration prioritizes its initiatives at the expense of Congressional priorities.

For example, it is difficult to justify the proposal to reduce humanitarian accounts by 25 percent at a time when significant needs remain, particularly in Syria and Africa.

U.S.A.I.D. is doing good work to improve the health of millions of people around the world, yet there is a decrease overall for many of the life-saving global health programs.

You also propose a dramatic reduction in biodiversity programs that support important conservation activities and critical efforts to combat wildlife poaching and trafficking.

I hope we can work together on these and many other budget issues.

Next, I want to raise some concerns about how U.S.A.I.D. does business.

Since I joined this subcommittee five years ago, I have heard that the United States must do more to address "aid effectiveness". Of course, this is an important goal. But not when "aid effectiveness" is translated as providing more assistance directly to developing countries and organizations that may not have the capacity to program the funds. In many of these places, corruption is also a serious concern.

I have concerns about this and other elements of your "U.S.A.I.D. Forward" initiative. I question the assumption that foreign governments and local organizations are more effective implementers than U.S. organizations. I am also cautious about their ability to manage U.S. taxpayer dollars.

That is why the fiscal year 2014 State Foreign Operation bill strengthened standards and requirements to ensure proper oversight. I appreciate the work we have done together to increase oversight of direct assistance to foreign governments since I began including conditions in the fiscal year 2012 bill, and I hope we can do the same for local organizations.

Dr. Shah, these are just a few of the issues I hope we will get to discuss today.

I want to close by thanking you and the men and women of U.S.A.I.D. who are committed to solving some of the most difficult global development issues around the world. All of us on this subcommittee understand and appreciate that work.

I'll now turn to my Ranking Member, Mrs. Lowey, for her opening remarks.

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