



Chairman Harold “Hal” Rogers

House Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 10, 2018

CONTACT: [Danielle Smoot](#) (606) 679-8346

CHAIRMAN HAL ROGERS’ OPENING STATEMENT: SFOPS Appropriations Subcommittee FY19 Budget Hearing for the Department of Treasury’s International Affairs Programs

Good morning and welcome. The State, Foreign Operations Subcommittee will come to order.

It is a pleasure to welcome our witness, the Secretary of the Treasury, Steven Mnuchin as we consider the Department’s budget request for international programs and its policy implications for foreign affairs and national security.

But first let me acknowledge our capable Full Committee Chairman, Mr. Frelinghuysen, and my friend, the Ranking Member, Mrs. Lowey. They were instrumental in shepherding the omnibus across the finish line last month and will be bringing new bills for the House to consider shortly.

I also want to welcome all Subcommittee members back for our first hearing of the year. It is good to see you here and I look forward to working with you on this year’s bill.

Mr. Secretary, we appreciate your service to the country and are interested to hear from you on how the budget request comports with the national security strategy, supports the Department of State and USAID’s joint strategic plan, and decreases reliance on foreign aid.

The Department’s budget requests \$1.4 billion for international programs. Within that amount, over one billion is for contributions to the World Bank. In terms of dollars requested and the number of multilateral institutions to be supported, this request is conspicuously smaller than in the past. I’ve long encouraged agencies to be as efficient as possible with taxpayer dollars, in part by taking a hard look at whether a different approach could yield better outcomes at less cost. But if the Administration is deliberately reducing its engagement with multilateral banks as a

matter of policy, then it is incumbent upon the Department to inform Congress of this decision and the justification for it.

At the World Economic Forum in Davos, you supported the President's America First agenda and, as with other Cabinet members, clarified that America First does not mean America alone. Similarly, we would not expect Treasury alone to make decisions about foreign assistance and policy. On the one hand, I was pleased to see Treasury with the Departments of State and Justice issue a trifecta of sanctions against North Korea, Russia, and Iran. On the other hand, I am concerned that the Administration is proposing to eliminate all of Treasury's multilateral funding for food security and to cut in half USAID's bilateral funding for such assistance. In your testimony today, I would appreciate answers about food security assistance: How did Treasury and USAID reach this decision? Did the agencies debate the effectiveness of bilateral versus multilateral assistance? What are the expected consequences of significantly reduced food security assistance on global economic and political stability?

Mr. Secretary, this Subcommittee has the responsibility to scrutinize not only the numbers in the budget, but also the policies behind them. Therefore, you should expect a good number of questions about the Department's budget and policies and we would expect timely and substantive responses.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for meeting with us. Your time, attention, and service are greatly appreciated.

#####