



**Chairwoman Barbara Lee**  
**Subcommittee on Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs**  
**Hearing: Fiscal Year 2023 Member Day**  
**May 17, 2022**

*\*As Prepared\**

Good afternoon and again I want to welcome and thank each of my distinguished colleagues for attending our virtual hearing and testifying. I also want to welcome the newest member of our Subcommittee, Congresswoman Julia Letlow. We are glad to have you and look forward to working together.

We have heard from many agencies and their justifications for their fiscal year 2023 budget request. However, it is important to me to also hear directly from Members on their priorities for the FY23 State and Foreign Operations bill.

In particular, I welcome Member testimony before this subcommittee, because it demonstrates the value that our House colleagues put on these important investments in building a more just, inclusive and prosperous world. The diplomacy, development, humanitarian, and security assistance programs funded through this bill are critical to supporting the poorest and most vulnerable people, including women and children, as well as mitigating crises such as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

With limited resources, I strive to write a bill and report that takes into consideration both agency and Member input. The more we can raise our collective voices about the value of these programs, the more success we will have in making sure we can secure the resources to fund them sufficiently.

Distinguished colleagues, more than ever before, the international challenges America faces have a direct impact on the American people. Whether it's alleviating starvation and food insecurity, advancing women's empowerment, tackling global health crises, securing our partners and vulnerable countries from the malign influence of authoritarianism, increasing staff diversity and equity within our own agencies—*just to name a few*—these challenges necessitate Congress to cooperate, work together in a bipartisan manner, and lead.

And though that is not always an easy path, I believe Congress has shown that at the end of the day we can work together, alongside the Administration and our multilateral partners, to provide



for programs that protect the American people and their security and uphold our development and foreign policy priorities.

I look forward to hearing your testimonies.