

**Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken
FY 2025 State Department Budget Request
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
May 22, 2024**

Chairman McCaul, Ranking Member Meeks, distinguished members of the Committee: thank you for the opportunity to testify before you.

And thank you for your partnership to advance American leadership in the world that is so essential for delivering on the priorities that matter to our people at home.

The need for U.S. global leadership – and cooperation with allies and partners – has never been greater.

The People’s Republic of China is pursuing military, economic, and geopolitical preeminence, challenging our vision for a free, open, secure, and prosperous international order.

Russia is committing aggression not only against Ukraine, but against the principles at the heart of the UN Charter – sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence – that are the building blocks of global peace and security.

In the Middle East, we’re standing with Israel in its efforts to ensure what happened on October 7th never happens again, as we do everything we can to bring an end to the terrible human suffering in Gaza and prevent the conflict from spreading.

U.S. leadership is needed to address humanitarian crises elsewhere around the world, including in Sudan and Haiti, where millions have been displaced and many killed... and to address global issues that no country can solve alone, including food security, the changing climate, transnational corruption, and the fentanyl crisis.

But, with support from Congress, we can and we are approaching these challenges from a position of strength. Because of the actions we've taken, the U.S. is stronger economically, diplomatically, and militarily than we were three years ago.

We've made historic investments at home in our competitiveness, innovation, and infrastructure. We've renewed our alliances, built new ones, and secured unprecedented alignment with key partners in Europe, Asia, and beyond.

We've delivered essential American aid to Ukraine... and we've rallied the international community to share the burden. For every dollar we've sent in economic and development assistance, others have collectively invested three more.

Many doubted whether bipartisan support for Ukraine and other urgent national security priorities could endure. But last month, Congress demonstrated to the world that we will not pull back, when you passed President Biden's supplemental funding bill by an overwhelming margin.

Our investment abroad does not come at the expense of our strength at home – far from it. Most of the supplemental is being spent here in the United States, building up our defense industrial base and creating and supporting thousands of American jobs.

We need to keep up this momentum. That requires a State Department budget that will fully resource our response to the challenges of our time.

The President's FY 2025 budget – requesting \$58.8 billion for the State Department and USAID – does that in two key ways.

First, it funds the essential missions of our Department and USAID. The budget will ensure the United States continues to be the partner of choice that countries turn to when they need to solve big problems. In an era of renewed great power competition, we must present the strongest possible offer: one that is relevant and responsive to countries' needs, and that advances our security and economic interests.

That's why we're requesting \$2 billion for a new fund to build high-quality, sustainable infrastructure around the world. Crucially, investments like these create jobs for Americans and expand markets for our businesses.

We're requesting resources for the World Bank. With \$1 billion in U.S. funding, we can unlock another \$36 billion in development fund capacity to direct to the top priorities of emerging economies. That's an enormous return on our investment – and essential for competing with China around the world.

The budget also includes \$1.7 billion for international organizations, including the United Nations, APEC, and the Inter-American Development Bank, to help shape them in ways that reflect our interests and values.

We're asking for \$500 million to give more people around the world access to secure Internet and digital technologies. Doing so will support the U.S. economy through the export of our technology products... and it will help ensure we, and our fellow democracies, remain the leaders and standard-setters in key technologies like artificial intelligence.

Our budget includes funding to address global issues that affect the lives and livelihoods of the American people, as well as people around the world – especially the synthetic drugs crisis. It also funds our response to irregular migration, global food insecurity, public health, and climate and energy security.

We're also asking Congress to fully fund the State Department's educational and cultural exchanges. They are one of our best and most cost-effective tools for advancing U.S. values and interests around the world – and they support the students, researchers, and young professionals from our communities who study and work abroad.

To outcompete our strategic rivals, we need to invest in the foundation of our strength abroad: America's diplomatic corps. That's the second pillar of this budget.

Our budget makes a strong investment in expanding our overseas presence, opening posts in the Pacific Islands and Eastern Caribbean.

It will also continue our modernization of American diplomacy. We are organizing the department and attracting and retaining the talent needed to take on 21st century challenges... investing in our people in Washington and at our posts overseas with training and technology... and promoting agility, innovation, and efficiency in our processes.

Last year's enacted budget level represented a five percent cut from the year before. That challenges our efforts to deliver the results Congress and the American people deserve.

I urge you to support this budget, which helps us address the most pressing foreign policy priorities of the coming year... and lays the foundation for strong U.S. leadership in the years ahead.

I'm grateful for this committee's partnership and your time. And I look forward to answering your questions.