



Chairman Harold “Hal” Rogers

House Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

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

CHAIRMAN HAL ROGERS’ OPENING STATEMENT: SFOPS Appropriations Subcommittee FY19 Budget Hearing for the USAID

Good morning. The hearing will come to order.

Ambassador Green, welcome back to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs. I appreciate your being here today to testify on USAID’s fiscal year 2019 budget request.

We look forward to hearing from you on how the budget request supports the Administration’s national security strategy, as well as the Department of State and USAID’s joint strategic plan, while decreasing the reliance on foreign aid.

I would like to thank our Full Committee Chairman and Ranking Member for their leadership on these issues. Chairman Frelinghuysen is well versed on foreign assistance, so I am pleased to have his interest and input. Last year, Ranking Member Lowey and I continued our long-standing tradition of working together to advance our shared goals and I expect that will continue through the appropriations process again this year.

The President’s fiscal year 2019 budget request for programs within the jurisdiction of this Subcommittee is \$41.7 billion, which is \$12.3 billion, or 23%, below the fiscal year 2018 enacted level. I am once again dismayed by the magnitude of these cuts. Even after a budget agreement was struck, proposing such a significant cut for the second year in a row calls into question the value the Administration places in diplomacy and development and its irrefutable contribution to our national security.

While I support many of the goals proposed in this budget, the funding levels requested, as compared to the enacted level, call into question how such goals would be met. For example, the budget purports to counter Russian aggression, but the funding associated with those efforts is reduced by more than half. The request also claims to support U.S. leadership in Global Health, yet the budget reduces such funding by nearly 23%. USAID released a new mission statement that emphasizes democratic values, but funding requested for democracy programs is cut by 39%.

There is bipartisan support in this Subcommittee for continued investments in soft power, particularly at a time when diplomatic and development challenges have grown both in

number and complexity. Just as we did in fiscal year 2018, this Subcommittee will carefully review the proposals in the budget, assess the current diplomatic and development challenges, and determine the funding amounts for such programs and activities within our allocation. In addition to setting funding levels, the State-Foreign Operations bill will continue to focus on oversight and ensuring transparency for every taxpayer dollar spent.

Before I close, I want to mention USAID's reorganization, or transformation, as I understand you now call it. We discussed this at your last hearing and I want to thank you for your efforts to share additional information. I know you are just beginning your outreach on the details of the proposals, so I encourage you to keep this Subcommittee informed and be open and responsive to feedback. I also urge you to proceed carefully. The transformation touches nearly all aspects of your Agency. Implementation will need to be done in a manner that enables USAID to implement, monitor, and evaluate programs and activities in a timely manner.

Finally, I want to thank the men and women of USAID who are doing important work during difficult times, both abroad and here at home. We appreciate their service to our country.

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