



FY21 Appropriations State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee Hearing with Administrator Green

March 3, 2020

Opening Statement of Chairwoman Nita M. Lowey

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

Administrator Green, thank you for joining us today. I thank you for your stewardship of USAID during difficult times and for the dedication of our development professionals.

USAID helps the world's most vulnerable, assists in recovery from natural disasters and humanitarian crises, and supports countries' efforts to strengthen governance, rule of law, and human rights. This isn't just the "right thing to do;" it strengthens our national security and advances American interests.

And, you certainly have your work cut out for you. There are more than 70 million refugees and displaced people around the world, which is fueled by conflict, natural disasters, and climate change. Ebola continues to simmer in the Democratic Republic of Congo, while the novel coronavirus outbreak threatens to become a pandemic. And despite significant progress on our development priorities, we are currently off track to meet the UN's Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Our development and humanitarian efforts are our best hope to tackle these issues. This is why Congress has disregarded the Administration's last three budget requests, instead providing sufficient resources to effectively and efficiently fund some of our most critical foreign policy priorities.

The Administration's fiscal year 2021 budget request includes funding for several development initiatives that we support, such as women's economic empowerment, investments to strengthen emerging private sectors, and global health security. However, the Administration cannot be successful in these initiatives if we under- or de-fund the basics, which is exactly what the proposed 20% cut to our foreign assistance programs would do.

For example, if enacted, this request would cut basic education by 66% and family planning by 59%. The Administration cannot seriously believe that millions of women can achieve economic empowerment if they are unable to read, write, do math, or control the timing and number of children they have. Any benefit from an increase in global health security would surely be offset by the proposed 34% cut to all other global health programs.

Instead of requesting funding and implementing policies to ensure USAID can be successful, the Administration seems intent on putting every possible barrier in your way. This is certainly true of the expansion of the Global Gag Rule, the Kemp-Kasten determination against UNFPA, and unfair stigmatization of multilaterals as wasteful and working against U.S. interests. The Administration's multiple policy reviews have also led to program delays and suspension of assistance.

This subcommittee has always believed that our national security is strongest when defense, diplomacy, and development are equally funded. Without robust funding for development and humanitarian programs, the U.S. will fail to maintain our position as a leader on the global stage. This will not only harm the world's most vulnerable; it puts U.S. lives at risk and reduces our influence. We cannot, and will not, allow this to happen.

Again, thank you for testifying today, and I look forward to our discussion. Before we move to your testimony, let me turn to Mr. Rogers, the Ranking Member, for his opening statement.