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SENATE COMMITTEE COMPLETES WORK ON FY2017 STATE & FOREIGN OPERATIONS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Measure Advances U.S. Interests Abroad, Increases Aid to Israel, Counters Extremism; Supports International Religious Freedom, Humanitarian Aid & Global Health Programs

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Senate Committee on Appropriations today approved the FY2017 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill, a \$52.08 billion measure to advance U.S. interests abroad by promoting democracy, supporting U.S. allies and countering extremism.

The Senate measure, approved 30 to 0, provides critical funding to protect U.S. Foreign Service Officers and other personnel serving overseas. The measure includes a significant increase in military aid to Israel. It funds global health programs, protects international religious freedom, and provides resources to address the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons resulting from conflict, particularly in the Middle East.

“This legislation will help the U.S. respond to new and evolving global challenges. The security, economic, health, and humanitarian assistance in this bill is important to protecting American interests abroad,” said Appropriations Committee **Chairman Thad Cochran** (R-Miss.). “I commend Senator Graham for crafting a bill that strategically targets foreign assistance and supports our diplomatic and humanitarian missions.”

“The importance of foreign assistance to our national security interest is unquestionable – just ask any soldier who has served in Iraq or Afghanistan. The challenges our diplomats and development specialists face are increasingly complex and dynamic, and this bill provides necessary support for their protection. The legislation provides critical funding for the development and security programs that are necessary for addressing root causes of extremism,” said **U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham** (R-S.C.), chairman of the Senate State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee. “I am committed to standing by our allies during this turbulent time, and call on my colleagues to do the same by considering this bill on the Senate floor at the earliest possible time.”

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Overall, the bill provides \$52.08 billion in discretionary funding for the U.S. Department of State, foreign operations, and related programs for FY2017, which is \$591 million below the FY2016 enacted level, and \$687.4 million below the President's budget request. Of this amount, \$37.19 billion is for enduring costs (\$687.5 million below the President's request and \$591 million below the FY2016 enacted level) and \$14.89 billion is for Overseas Contingency Operations or OCO (equal to the budget request and the FY2016 enacted level).

Bill Highlights:

Strengthens Israel's Security – \$3.4 billion for military aid for Israel, an increase of \$300 million above the President's budget request, and continues restrictions on the U.N. Human Rights Council.

Promotes and Protects International Religious Freedom – \$26 million for programs to promote international religious freedom, and \$25 million for a new Atrocities Prevention Fund. In addition, the bill provides \$6 million for the Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom and \$2 million for the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom in the Near East and Central Asia, amounts above the President's request.

Strengthens Embassy Security – \$6.1 billion, equal to the President's budget request, for embassy security to ensure the safety of American diplomats, development professionals and facilities abroad.

Counters Extremism and Supports Key Allies – The bill fully funds the President's request for assistance for Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Colombia, and Ukraine, and increases assistance for Tunisia and Georgia above the President's request. In addition, the bill continues conditions on assistance related to Russian aggression against Crimea, and includes a new provision regarding Russian aggression toward Georgia. The bill also:

- Provides \$44.5 million for the Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai, \$10 million above the request.
- Establishes a new Near East and Africa Relief and Recovery Fund to address needs in areas liberated from extremists, and requires the U.S. Institute of Peace to develop a comprehensive plan to counter extremism in the Sahel, Horn of Africa, and Near East region. In addition, the bill provides \$28 million for a new program to assist women and girls at risk from extremism in predominantly Muslim and other countries.
- Provides \$1.3 billion for military assistance for Egypt in a manner similar to the prior fiscal year, and also provides \$75 million in economic assistance.

Provides Assistance for Refugees – \$3.06 billion for Migration and Refugee Assistance, which is equal to FY2016 enacted level.

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Increases Assistance for East Asia and the Pacific Region – The bill provides strategic direction for assistance for the East Asia and Pacific region, and provides not less than \$50 million above the President’s request for assistance for that region.

Protects Life – The bill continues provisions relating to abortion, including the Tiahrt, Helms, and Kemp-Kasten Amendments.

STRENGTHENING GLOBAL HEALTH

Global Health Program – A total of \$8.67 billion for Global Health Programs, \$161.6 million above the FY2016 enacted level and \$88.5 million above the President’s request.

HIV/AIDS – Approximately \$6 billion for global HIV/AIDS assistance, including \$5.67 billion for the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), of which \$1.35 billion is for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and \$330 million is for HIV/AIDS programs administered by USAID.

Polio – A total of not less than \$59 million for polio eradication efforts, including not less than \$7.5 million for programs for Pakistan and Afghanistan. This level is equal to the FY2016 enacted level, and \$7.3 million above the President’s request.

Maternal and Child Health – \$814.5 million for maternal and child health programs, which is equal to the President’s request, and includes \$275 million for the GAVI Alliance.

Malaria – \$745 million to combat malaria, which is \$71 million above the FY2016 enacted level. Authority requested by the President to repurpose Ebola funds for malaria programs is not provided.

Tuberculosis – The bill rejects the President’s proposed cuts to tuberculosis funding, and provides \$241 million for tuberculosis eradication efforts, \$5 million above the FY2016 enacted level and \$50 million above the President’s request.

Pandemic Influenza and Other Emerging Threats – \$72.5 million for pandemic influenza, which is equal to the FY2016 enacted level and the President’s request. The Committee again provides authority for the Secretary of State to tap into other accounts to address global health crises.

Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) – \$100 million to combat NTDs, which is equal to the FY2016 enacted level and \$13.5 million above the President’s request.

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Nutrition – The bill rejects the President’s proposed cuts to nutrition funding, and provides \$125 million for nutrition programs, which is equal to the FY16 enacted level and \$16.5 million above the President’s request.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE

The bill provides a total of \$8.32 billion – of which \$6.46 billion is base funding and \$1.86 billion is OCO funding – for international security assistance, which is \$214.7 million above the President’s budget. This funding will bolster international stability and protect the homeland by providing critical assistance for counterterrorism and nonproliferation programs, peacekeeping operations, foreign military training and education programs, as well as financing for critical military equipment for our partners around the world.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS AND OTHER FUNDING

Administration of Foreign Affairs – \$11.82 billion for the administration of foreign affairs, including funding for the operations of the Department of State. The bill provides \$6.1 billion, the full amount requested, for embassy security, including funds for security upgrades and security personnel at diplomatic facilities abroad. Funding is also provided to implement the recommendations of the Benghazi Accountability Review Board report. The total amount provided for the administration of foreign affairs is \$545.5 million above the FY2016 level.

USAID Operations – \$1.37 billion for USAID operating expenses, an increase of \$92 million from the FY2016 enacted level and \$30 million below the President’s request.

Democracy Programs – \$2.58 billion for democracy programs, and an additional \$170 million for the National Endowment for Democracy and \$150.5 million for the Democracy Fund account.

Palestinian Authority – The bill retains restrictions on assistance for the West Bank and Gaza in current law, as well as restrictions on assistance for the Palestinian Authority. The bill includes the Palestine Liberation Organization along with the Palestinian Authority, and any successor or affiliated organizations, in the assistance reductions required by amounts such entities provide as payments for acts of terrorism.

Multilateral Assistance – \$2.34 billion for multilateral assistance, which includes funding to meet U.S. commitments to international financial institutions. This funding level is \$276.7 million below the FY2016 enacted level and \$275.4 million below the President’s request.

The bill does not fund the United Nations (U.N.) Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

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(Multilateral Assistance continued)

The bill promotes U.N. peacekeeping reforms and restricts assistance for units that are involved in sexual exploitation and abuse.

REFORMS, SAVINGS, AND REDUCING GOVERNMENT WASTE

The bill and accompanying report include numerous oversight provisions to ensure the proper use of taxpayer funds and accountability of the administration. For instance, the bill provides the President's request for the Department of State and USAID Inspector Generals (IG), including the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, and directs implementation of key IG and Government Accountability Office recommendations. A new provision is included prohibiting the use of funds in the bill to deny an Inspector General funded under the bill timely access to any records, documents, or other materials, or to impede the access of such IG to such records, documents, or materials. In addition, the bill:

- Prohibits Department of State and USAID funding for the use or establishment of email servers outside the .gov domain, or which are not fitted for automatic federal records management;
- Conditions assistance for the U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America in a manner similar to the prior fiscal year, and updates and strengthens conditions on assistance for Afghanistan and Pakistan;
- Requires that any new country strategies developed by USAID and the Department of State include a plan to transition assistance for the country to other donors or budget support from the recipient country;
- Enhances the effectiveness of humanitarian aid through the collection of data to improve the understanding of the needs and perceptions of beneficiaries; and
- Limits conference expenses.

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