



March 17, 2016

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Vice Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairwoman Mikulski, Chairman Rogers, and Ranking Member Lowey:

As Co-Chairs of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition's (USGLC) National Security Advisory Council, a group of more than 160 retired three- and four-star flag and general officers, we write to you to express our support for the International Affairs Budget and urge you to ensure a strong 302(b) allocation for the State-Foreign Operations Appropriations bill.

We believe that strategic investments in development and diplomacy, alongside a strong defense, are critical to keeping America safe, preventing conflict, and avoiding having to put our men and women in uniform in harm's way. We know from our decades of military experience that with so many crises facing the world—from the rise of ISIS in the Middle East and North Africa, to Russia's annexation of Crimea and aggression in Eastern Europe, to growing concern over pandemic threats—now is not the time for America to pull back from the world.

Even with the constrained budget environment, we believe International Affairs programs are critical to our national security, and our country cannot afford to cut these vital programs. Total spending for International Affairs has dropped 12% since FY10 when adjusted for inflation, and non-war related "base" programs have been reduced nearly 30% over the same period of time. We fear these cuts hamper our ability to keep pace with growing global challenges and respond to the numerous humanitarian crises confronting the world.

We urge you to consider the growing threats facing the United States and the need for a strong International Affairs Budget to confront these challenges when finalizing the FY17 302(b) allocations. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JG Stavridis".

Admiral James G. Stavridis, USN (Ret.)
Co-Chair, National Security Advisory Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony C. Zinni".

General Anthony C. Zinni, USMC (Ret.)
Co-Chair, National Security Advisory Council

CC: The Honorable Lindsey Graham
The Honorable Patrick Leahy
The Honorable Kay Granger