



March 20, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Chairwoman  
Appropriations Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Vice Chairman  
Appropriations Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski and Vice Chairman Shelby:

As Co-Chairs of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition's National Security Advisory Council, a group of more than 150 retired three- and four-star Generals and Admirals, we urge you to support a strong 302(b) allocation for the FY15 State-Foreign Operations bill.

As career flag officers, we know from experience that U.S. foreign assistance is a critical component, complementing a robust military, of America's national security strategy. We have seen these programs help achieve U.S. foreign policy goals at a far lower cost (in lives and dollars) than the military.

As our friend and former head of Central Command General James Mattis told the Senate Armed Services Committee last year, "If you don't fund the State Department fully, then I need to buy more ammunition." The military cannot on its own provide American influence and leadership – it must work hand-in-hand with diplomacy and development in order to meet the global challenges and opportunities that lie before us. Today's threats are vastly different from those we faced in the past – we face sectarian violence and extremist and terrorist threats with no respect for national boundaries. The programs funded through the International Affairs Budget are the preventive medicine needed to mitigate these threats and maintain the peace after military intervention.

While we recognize the very tight spending cap for FY15, development and diplomacy programs – only 1% of the federal budget – have already been cut 14% in the last four years. Further reductions in the coming fiscal year would diminish America's influence at a time of increasing global threats and competitors.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

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

Admiral James 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

*A full list of the National Security Advisory Council is attached.*

CC: The Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader  
The Honorable Pat Leahy, Chairman, State-Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee  
The Honorable Lindsey Graham, Ranking Member, State-Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee

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