

February 7, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader Schumer:

As the Congress begins work on the federal budget for Fiscal Year 2021, I want to offer my strong support for fully funding the International Affairs Budget which is essential to keeping America safe in a complicated and dangerous world.

I wrote to Congress on this topic in 2010 when I had the honor of serving as our nation's Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and, as you know well, the urgent and unpredictable threats our nation faces have only grown. Consistently and in a bipartisan fashion, you have prudently invested resources to address urgent global challenges from pandemic threats to food insecurity, and it has paid off in lives saved, crises averted, and, in the long run, peace and prosperity achieved.

At a time when there are more displaced people than any time since World War II, when new diseases threaten lives and economies, when post-conflict countries struggle to put the pieces back together, as active conflicts from Syria to Libya burn, and as we try to secure the hard-fought gains against the Islamic State and Al Shabab for the long term, diplomacy and global development matter.

Every military leader I served with knew this and many have testified that our civilian acuity reduces the need for military action now and in the future. In an era of great power competition, cutting these critical investments would be out of touch with the reality around the world.

If ever there was an example of teamwork that we can all admire, it is the way our troops, diplomats, and development experts work collaboratively toward a shared objective to advance our security interests and values overseas. They are truly "America's team."

This is a moment when more investment in diplomacy and development is needed not less. I hope you will support them in the most urgent and immediate way - with the resources needed to successfully execute their mission.

As always, I appreciate your strong support of America's global leadership and your commitment to the safety and prosperity of our great nation.

Sincerely,

M.G. Mullen
17th CTCS

*The more we cut the International
Affairs Budget, the higher the risk
for longer and deadlier
military operations.*
M.