

April 27, 2009

Dear Member of Congress:

We are writing to urge your support for the \$886,900,000 requested for United Nations and other peacekeeping accounts included in President Obama's FY 2009 Supplemental Funding request. As you know, American support for UN peacekeeping missions plays a critical role in promoting regional and global stability, preventing outbreaks in violence, and creating conditions that promote peaceful solutions to conflict.

The United States has correctly played a leadership role in supporting UN peacekeeping activities, and it voted for the establishment of all 16 missions currently deployed in places such as Darfur, Lebanon, and Haiti. These missions directly promote America's interests by providing a proven and effective way to share the cost of promoting global peace and security. But as the U.S. has supported the continuation and expansion of these peacekeeping missions, the funding we have provided has not kept pace with our commitments, which strains our credibility in the international community. Fully funding President Obama's request will provide critical and tangible support as he reasserts U.S. global leadership and recommits to multilateral diplomacy. Specifically, it will ensure that we can address our peacekeeping obligations for 2009, pay past funding shortfalls, and prevent further destabilization in troubled nations of the world, including Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Somalia.

In Chad, which neighbors Darfur, 5,000 UN peacekeeping troops are taking the place of EU forces to thwart rebel activity and banditry, which is threatening aid supplies. Full funding for this mission is urgent because the region has become even more volatile with the Sudanese Government's recent expulsion of 16 humanitarian organizations. As a result, more than one million civilians in Sudan are currently projected to lose access to food, water, and medicine within the next month. These aid restrictions could cause new movements of people, putting extra pressure on Chad, which already hosts 290,000 refugees from Darfur. In DRC, the Security Council authorized additional troops to, among other things, stabilize the eastern part of the country and prevent a civil war there from sparking a larger region-wide conflict. In Somalia, additional funding in both the Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) and Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) accounts will help the current African Union mission provide security for key infrastructure and humanitarian assistance.

Moreover, in today's economic climate, fulfilling our obligations to UN peacekeeping is a smart investment. According to the Government Accountability Office, UN peacekeeping is 8 times less expensive—just 12¢ on the dollar—than fielding a comparative U.S. force.

As always, we are appreciative of your leadership on issues relating to U.S. support for the International Affairs Budget in general and the UN in particular. We hope you will continue this support by including sufficient funds in the FY 2009 Supplemental Appropriations bill and the FY 2010 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations bill to fully fund UN peacekeeping accounts.

Sincerely,

20/20 Vision

3D Security Initiative

African Medical & Research Foundation USA	Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
American Humanist Association	Mercy Corps
American Jewish World Service	Open Society Policy Center
Americans for Democratic Action, Inc.	Operation USA
Americans for UNFPA	Oxfam America
Amnesty International	Presbyterian Church (USA), Washington Office
Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team	Refugees International
Better World Campaign	Resolve Uganda
Center for American Progress	Save Darfur Coalition
Center for International Policy	The Humpty Dumpty Institute
Center for War/Peace Studies	The Institute for Inclusive Security
Church World Service	The Peace Alliance
Citizens for Global Solutions	United Nations Association of Maryland
Congressional Hunger Center	United Nations Association of the National Capital Area
Council for a Livable World	United Nations Association of the USA
EarthAction	Women's Action for New Directions
Episcopal Relief & Development	Women's Campaign International
Fellowship of Reconciliation USA	Women's Refugee Commission
Friends Committee on National Legislation	
Genocide Intervention Network	
Global Action to Prevent War	
Horn of Africa Community Center	
International Crisis Group	
International Rescue Committee	