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November 28, 2016

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
Chair  
Senate Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign  
Operations, and Related Programs  
290 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chair  
House Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign  
Operations, and Related Programs  
1026 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign  
Operations, and Related Programs  
437 Russell Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign  
Operations, and Related Programs  
2365 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Leahy, Chairman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey:

With deep appreciation for the United States Congress' steadfast commitments to humanitarian and development needs around the globe, we write to strongly urge you to incorporate the Administration's amendment request for humanitarian relief and recovery activities in your final appropriations for Fiscal Year 2017. While we are immensely grateful for the proposed funding to key humanitarian accounts in your bills – \$3.2 billion for Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA), \$2.8 billion for International Disaster Assistance (IDA), \$1.6 billion for Food for Peace (FFP), and \$60 million for Emergency Refugee and Migrant Assistance (ERMA) – we strongly urge you to appropriate new Overseas Contingency Operations funds in addition to these amounts to address unmet humanitarian needs.

The Committees on International Justice and Peace and Migration of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) believe that as the world's wealthiest nation, we have an obligation to help the innocent who fall victim to war, to protect the marginalized, and to lift people out of poverty. In 2015 alone, CRS served more than 100 million people in more than 100 countries. For decades, CRS has leveraged donations from U.S. Catholics raised through programs like CRS Ricebowl with public money to maximize the impact of programs overseas. We also partner with local Catholic organizations and others on the ground who have the trust of local populations to maximize the impact of assistance.

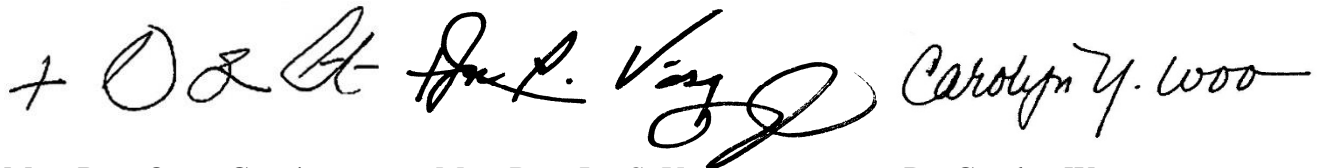
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We urge you to respond generously to the Administration's request of November 11 for additional humanitarian and recovery assistance. In partnership with Caritas Iraq and others, CRS continues to help the more than 80,000 people affected by the liberation of Fallujah and others displaced from Hawija. But existing funding is insufficient. More than 50,000 people have already fled Mosul, joining the approximately 3.3 million Iraqis who have been internally displaced since ISIS began occupying parts of Iraq in 2014. As we have already learned in Iraq, individuals, communities, and countries divided by war face significant challenges amidst their suffering. They must rebuild their communities, and establish inclusive governance that protects majorities and minorities. We must provide them with humanitarian help and durable solutions to their plight because it's the right thing to do, and because their security and prosperity is critical to the stability of the entire region.

The needs in Iraq are in addition to increased suffering elsewhere in the world since the State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs appropriations bills were passed: the Southern African drought, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the Lake Chad Basin, to name a few.

This new Overseas Contingency Operations funding will help to protect programs responding to crises like these that don't make the headlines. At USCCB and CRS, we know through our own emergency appeals that when Americans are asked to help, they respond generously.

Sincerely yours,



Most Rev. Oscar Cantú  
Bishop of Las Cruces  
Chairman, Committee on  
International Justice and Peace

Most Rev. Joe S. Vasquez  
Bishop of Austin  
Chairman, Committee on  
Migration

Dr. Carolyn Woo  
President/CEO  
Catholic Relief Services