

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights and the Special Rapporteur on the right to food

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(Please use this reference in your reply)

24 July 2025

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights and Special Rapporteur on the right to food, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 53/10 and 58/10.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning the significant negative human rights and poverty-related impact arising from recent decisions regarding foreign development assistance, specifically the suspension of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding and related measures (OMB Memorandum M-25-13¹ and the State Department Notice on implementation²) initiated by Executive Order 14169³, "Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid" and the subsequent dismantling of the USAID. This letter is also sent in follow-up to the most recent report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, which expressed concern about the drastic reduction of development assistance by a range of countries, including the United States of America.⁴

According to information received:

On 20 January 2025, Executive Order 14169, mandated a 90-day pause in United States foreign development assistance to assess programmatic efficiencies and consistency with U.S. foreign policy. More than six months later, the vast majority of programs remain suspended or have been terminated, and humanitarian actors still lack clarity regarding aid flows, jeopardizing the lives, health, and livelihoods of poor and vulnerable populations globally.

The suspension of funding for critical health programs, food security initiatives, and humanitarian assistance reportedly affects the lives and well-being of millions globally. The abrupt and chaotic termination of funding has disproportionately harmed people living in poverty, cutting off access to essential services at a time of heightened global vulnerability. It has been estimated that more than 100 people could be dying each hour as a result of the cuts to humanitarian aid⁵. Some other estimates suggested that by 7 June 2025, avoidable deaths of 104,382 adults and 217,808 children resulted from the

¹ U.S. Office of Management and Budget. *Memorandum M-25-13: Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid*. Washington, D.C.: The White House, January 2025.

² U.S. Department of State. *Notice on Implementation of Executive Order 14169*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 24 January 2025.

³ U.S. President. *Executive Order 14169: Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid*. 20 January 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/reevaluating-and-realigning-united-states-foreign-aid/>.

⁴ See A/HRC/59/51, para. 39-48.

⁵ Brooke Nichols, "Tracking Anticipated Deaths from USAID Funding Cuts," *Boston University School of Public Health*, 7 June 2025, <https://www.bu.edu/sph/news/articles/2025/tracking-anticipated-deaths-from-usaid-funding-cuts/>.

retreat of USAID, related to disruptions in critical services such as HIV and tuberculosis treatment, food and nutrition support. Funding suspensions are disproportionately hurting the world's poorest, by halting access to life-sustaining care and services. Projections in April indicated that a full suspension of USAID's health funding could lead to up to 25 million additional deaths globally⁶.

The 90-day period specified for the assessment of development assistance programs, which began on 20 January 2025, expired on 20 April 2025. While an internal State Department email dated 17 April 2025 announced a 30-day extension, no comprehensive assessment report has been made publicly available to date⁷.

On 10 June 2025, all U.S. embassies were reportedly instructed to implement the Department's plan to abolish all USAID overseas positions by 30 September 2025⁸. This decision is particularly troubling in light of widespread poverty impacts and the loss of on-the-ground capacity to deliver life-saving services to poor and marginalized communities. Issuing such a directive without public disclosure of the review's findings or methodology raises serious concerns about the dismantling of field-based development capacity and the U.S. government's ability to respond to humanitarian and development needs globally. We respectfully urge the State Department to release the full assessment report, including its human rights and poverty impact analysis, without further delay, in the interest of transparency and accountability.

Several legal proceedings have challenged Executive Order 14169 and the subsequent funding freezes. Multiple lawsuits, including *AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition v. U.S. Department of State*⁹, *Global Health Council v. Trump*¹⁰, and *Personal Services Contractor Association v. Trump*¹¹, have been brought by USAID contractors, non-governmental organizations, and public health advocates. These cases allege that the suspension of congressionally appropriated foreign aid violates the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (Pub. L. 79-404, 60 Stat. 237), particularly with respect to constitutional separation of powers and the executive branch's statutory authority. The courts have acknowledged the seriousness of these claims. In both the *AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition* and *Global Health Council* cases, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia granted partial temporary restraining orders, citing potential irreparable harm and a likelihood of success on the APA claims.

On 1 July 2025, the U.S. Secretary of State announced that USAID would officially cease implementing development assistance programmes and that the remaining programmes would be implemented by the State Department.

⁶ Tatalović, Mico. "US Foreign-Aid Freeze Could Cause Tens of Millions of Deaths, Models Suggest." *Nature*, 24 April 2025. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-025-01191-z>.

⁷ Biondi, Giacomo. *Impact Assessment of USAID Cuts to UNDP*. Unpublished report, 2025. On file with author.

⁸ Associated Press, *Rubio Orders Firings of All USAID Staffers Overseas to Move Forward*, 10 June 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/c1b34c9ba9ffaa2153364eebb115fde9>.

⁹ *AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition v. U.S. Department of State*, No. 1:25-cv-00400 (D.D.C. filed February 6, 2025).

¹⁰ *Global Health Council v. Trump*, No. 1:25-cv-00402 (D.D.C. filed 6 February 2025).

¹¹ *PSC Association v. Trump*, No. 1:25-cv-00412 (D.D.C. filed 10 February 2025).

In addition to these developments related to USAID, on 18 July 2025, the Senate and House of Representatives approved by a vote of 51 to 48 a bill (Rescissions Act of 2025) that eliminates approximately USD 9 billion of funds that Congress had previously appropriated in fiscal years 2024 and 2025 for foreign aid programmes.

According to the information received, the suspension and termination of United States foreign development assistance since January 2025 has so far had far-reaching impacts, including:

- **Large-scale reductions in food assistance in poverty-affected regions**¹². Community kitchens have reportedly shut down in places like Sudan and Yemen due to USAID funding cuts, depriving millions of people of food in areas facing famine conditions and halting nutrition services for over 14 million children¹³. Such reductions hit the poorest first and hardest, compounding the daily struggle for survival. Reductions in nutrition programs have also led to negative impacts like increased gender-based violence and reduced attendance in children’s learning centers¹⁴. The World Food Programme (WFP) has been forced to cut food rations in numerous countries, worsening conditions for the most vulnerable, while operating on less than half its requested budget¹⁵. This occurs while global hunger levels remain high, with over 295 million people facing acute food insecurity across 53 countries¹⁶, and while conflicts, climate shocks and economic instability, make donor support literally vital for impoverished communities already on the margins of survival. The Danish Refugee Council (DRC), which had to suspend food assistance and daily malnutrition treatment for thousands of children and families in Cameroon and Nigeria, estimates that over two million people risk losing access to essential, life-saving services due to funding shortfalls¹⁷. In South Sudan, aid cuts have disrupted emergency nutritional support for children, while in Afghanistan, the funding freeze is expected to dramatically escalate humanitarian needs, especially regarding livelihoods, food security, health and nutrition¹⁸.

¹² Mundeve, Hayley. “Confusion Deepens over USAID Cuts as Errors Pile Up.” *Devex*, 11 April 2025. <https://www.devex.com/news/sponsored/confusion-deepens-over-usaid-cuts-as-errors-pile-up-109820>.

¹³ Omer, Nimo. “Monday Briefing: How Trump’s Cuts to USAID Are Already Harming the World’s Worst Off.” *The Guardian*, 21 April 2025. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/apr/21/first-edition-usaid-cuts-global-development>.

¹⁴ Rejol, Morch, and Yu. *Impact Assessment of the U.S. Funding Suspensions for FAO, WFP, and IFAD*. Unpublished report, 2025. On file with author.

¹⁵ Mersie, Ayenat. “Already Strapped for Cash, WFP Faces Post-USAID Future.” *Devex*, 12 March 2025. <https://www.devex.com/news/sponsored/already-strapped-for-cash-wfp-faces-post-usaid-future-109342>.

¹⁶ *Global Report on Food Crises 2025*, FSIN: <https://www.fsinplatform.org/report/global-report-food-crises-2025>.

¹⁷ Amnesty International, *Lives at Risk: Chaotic and Abrupt Cuts to Foreign Aid Put Millions of Lives at Risk*. Research Briefing. London: Amnesty International, 29 May 2025, p. 25. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr51/9408/2025/en/>, 25.

¹⁸ Amnesty International. *Lives at Risk*, 2025.

- Disruption to essential health services, including HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB), and Malaria, and other infectious diseases, disproportionately harming poor and marginalized populations worldwide.** Partial suspensions of global HIV efforts have already resulted in thousands of adult and infant deaths, according to various sources. UNAIDS has estimated that 6.3 million people will die in the next four years unless US aid is reinstated.¹⁹ Freezing support for malaria could lead to millions of additional cases and over 100,000 more deaths, while TB programs in Africa report declining case detection, limited diagnostics, staff layoffs, and curtailed outreach, jeopardizing treatment success in high-burden countries. A recent study predicts that cuts to PEPFAR and other donor programs could result in up to 3 million additional HIV-related deaths and 4 to 10 million new infections between 2025 and 2030²⁰. In Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, which rely almost entirely on PEPFAR for prevention services, thousands of health workers have already been laid off and programming has stalled. In South Africa, funding cuts have shut down clinics, and have affected programs for rape survivors, which provided critical counseling and HIV prevention. Access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has been disrupted for sex workers, transgender women, and people who use drugs, while children living with HIV in poor households are increasingly unable to access testing and treatment. In Guatemala, cuts impact health and nutrition for child survivors of sexual violence and access to HIV testing and treatment for marginalized and hard-to-reach groups. In Haiti, where 97% of the AIDS response is donor-funded, 128 PEPFAR-supported sites have closed, ending PrEP access and severely limiting care for adolescent girls and displaced LGBTIQ+ populations²¹. The situation is equally grave in humanitarian contexts, for instance in northeast Syria, where aid groups had to close clinics and reduce ambulance services. In Yemen, cuts are devastating for women and girls, forcing the shutdown of malnutrition treatment, safe shelters for gender-based violence survivors, and healthcare for children: dozens of health facilities and reproductive health clinics reportedly risk having to shut down. In South Sudan, cuts impact health services for refugees and internally displaced persons, with reports of deaths due to lack of access to medical care and transportation. These cascading service disruptions, triggered by abrupt foreign aid suspensions, are dismantling decades of progress in combating infectious diseases and deepening cycles of poverty and health inequity across the Global South.
- Reduced access to social protection and vital services.** UNFPA estimates at least 32 million program beneficiaries are affected, UNHCR

¹⁹ UN agency warns of ‘surge’ in AIDS deaths without US funding, 24 March 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/03/1161416>; and see <https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/20250305-USstop-Sitrep.pdf>

²⁰ Debra ten Brink and others, “Impact of an international HIV funding crisis on HIV infections and mortality in low-income and middle-income countries: a modelling study”, *The Lancet HIV*, Volume 0, Issue 0, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanhiv/article/PIIS2352-3018\(25\)00074-8/abstract](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanhiv/article/PIIS2352-3018(25)00074-8/abstract).

²¹ UNAIDS “Impact of US funding freeze on the global AIDS response Weekly update – week of 3 March 2025”, [unaids.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/20250305-USstop-Sitrep.pdf](https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/2025-03/20250305-USstop-Sitrep.pdf).

estimates 12.8 million displaced people risk losing life-saving health interventions, IOM estimates 10 million people may forgo emergency response assistance due to budget reduction, and OCHA cuts jeopardize assistance for over 3 million people²². These losses translate to children pulled from school, mothers giving birth without trained health workers, and families forced back into hunger and destitution.

- **Difference in treatment on suspect grounds, leading to discrimination in violation of human rights law.** Marginalized groups, including women, LGBTIQ+ people, racialized communities, migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, are the worst hit by the cuts. Indeed, the waiver process specifically excluded funding for programs related to gender, LGBTIQ+ rights, sexual and reproductive health, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), refugee rights, and climate justice.
- **Loss of support for refugees and asylum-seekers.** For people fleeing conflict and persecution, the risks have intensified. Approximately US\$ 2.3 billion in migration and asylum-related awards and grants from USAID and the US Department of State have been terminated²³. Services essential for displaced populations, such as camp management, water trucking, healthcare, and education, are being severely disrupted, impacting both emergency responses and long-term assistance. Refugee women and girls are losing access to services that kept them safe from violence. Children are left without teachers or schools, pushing them into child labor, trafficking, or early marriage. The IOM experienced a 30% reduction in estimated donor funding, scaling back projects affecting over 6,000 staff²⁴. The Norwegian Refugee Council was forced to suspend US-funded humanitarian work in nearly 20 countries, impacting support for hundreds of thousands of people. Even projects with granted waivers faced significant barriers to accessing funds. In Costa Rica, a 41% funding cut seriously impacts UNHCR's ability to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees and asylum seekers²⁵. Capacity to register new asylum seekers has dropped by 77%²⁶. In Haiti, cuts strain essential services for individuals collectively expelled from the Dominican Republic, impacting organizations providing basic assistance, shelter, and psychological support along the border: the situation for pregnant individuals, new mothers, and newborns deported from the Dominican Republic is particularly concerning. In Mexico, shelters supporting migrants and asylum seekers are at risk of closing or having to charge vulnerable individuals, and organizations providing legal support and other essential services have had to close offices and lay off staff. The crisis extends across Asia: in Myanmar and Thailand,

²² Schmitz, Lilly. *Impact Assessment of U.S. Funding Cuts on UNFPA*. Unpublished report, 2025. On file with author.

²³ Migration Policy Institute, "Can Innovation Help Blunt the Impact of Foreign Aid Cuts on Migration Management Programs?", April 2025, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/news/foreign-aid-cuts-migration-management>.

²⁴ IOM, "Update on IOM Operations Amid Budget Cuts", 18 March 2025, <https://www.iom.int/news/update-iom-operations-amid-budget-cuts>.

²⁵ UNHCR, "Costa Rica's solidarity with refugees threatened by major funding cuts, warns UNHCR", 9 May 2025, <https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing-notes/costa-rica-s-solidarity-refugees-threatened-major-funding-cuts-warns-unhcr>.

²⁶ UNHCR, "Costa Rica's Solidarity with Refugees," 9 May 2025.

U.S. funding cuts have derailed health and protection programming, including services for HIV, TB, and malaria²⁷. Hospitals in refugee camps on the Thai side of the border, run through USAID funding, abruptly shut down, leading to deaths.

- **Loss of income and livelihoods for aid workers and implementing partners.** Faced with budget cuts, organisations which have been depending on USAID have been forced not only to reduce their activities, but also to lay off workers. In Pakistan alone, 487 staff members of implementing partners lost their jobs, including healthcare providers and GBV frontline workers²⁸. Each salary often supports multiple family members, meaning the ripple effects extend well beyond the individual. These workforce losses constrain operational capacity and deprive local workers, many of whom are women, of economic opportunity. This compounds community poverty, especially in fragile settings where aid-related employment supports entire economies. As “stop-work” orders took effect, entire departments at major aid agencies were dismantled, programs shut down worldwide, and large-scale layoffs of career staff were carried out²⁹. Local and national organizations, and shelters, have been hit the hardest by funding cuts, risking complete dissolution as they have limited or no other sources of funding and limited reserves.
- **Shrinking of civic space.** The abrupt and arbitrary nature of these decisions also threatens to weaken civil society organizations in many countries, undermining in particular organizations that protect and promote human rights. If funding is not restored, a wide range of civil society groups risk permanent closure, with long-term consequences for civic space and democratic resilience in multiple countries.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of these allegations, we fear that these abrupt cuts to development assistance programmes are creating a humanitarian crisis that disproportionately impacts the survival, well-being, and human rights of the world’s poorest and most vulnerable people. Should the suspension of United States foreign development assistance be maintained, we have serious concerns that the protection and enjoyment of human rights will be undermined in countries that have received significant USAID funding, in particular if the concerned partner countries are unable to compensate for the abrupt shortfall of financial support to critical programmes, including in the field of health care or food security. We are also concerned that the justification for withdrawing support is neither transparent nor fully rationale to achieve U.S. foreign policy goals that include the promotion and protection of the rule of law and human rights in partner countries.

We fear that the funding cuts will disproportionately affect the human rights of persons living in poverty or vulnerability, further entrenching their marginalization and

²⁷ Amnesty International, “Myanmar: Recklessly abrupt US aid stoppage poses existential threat to human rights”, 13 February 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/02/myanmar-recklessly-abrupt-us-aid-stoppage-poses-existential-threat-to-human-rights/>.

²⁸ Ibid., 14.

²⁹ AP News, “Trump’s administration is pulling almost all USAID workers off the job worldwide”, 5 February 2025, <https://www.apnews.com/article/trump-usaid-layoffs-7e0a159d8a419c4c9388ab02e8259f23>.

discrimination whether it is based on social or health status, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, birth or other prohibited grounds. As women, LGBTIQ+ people, racialized communities, migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, are the worst hit by the cuts, we are deeply worried that this signals a disturbing message: that certain communities are considered unworthy of rights-based support.

We also have serious concerns regarding a lack of due process, consultation, and transparency surrounding the decisions to cut funding and their implementation. Executive Order 14169 itself mandated a review after the pause had begun. The suddenness, lack of clarity, and failure to consult with affected organizations and implementing partners exacerbate the negative impacts, making it harder for organizations delivering aid to people in poverty to adapt or seek alternative funding. This procedural deficiency potentially leaves vulnerable populations without predictable support or mechanisms for redress. This lack of clear process, with specific funding details sometimes available only through data leaks, makes it particularly challenging for organizations providing vital aid to plan, adapt, and maintain essential services. Reports and legal challenges suggest a lack of adequate due process, consultation, and transparency, leading to allegations of arbitrary and capricious action and disregard for reliance interests, as illustrated by the issuing abrupt stop-work orders. The abrupt suspension of funding of hundreds of programs implemented in the United States of America and abroad, without even giving a notice period, poses a severe threat to both U.S. and foreign organizations reliant on funding from the United States, risking the complete cessation of operations for many. This lack of transparency and clarity, failure to consult, and seemingly arbitrary and far-reaching measures pose a significant risk of causing long-term damage to associations and humanitarian efforts globally, deeply affecting the exercise of the freedom of association, among other rights. Most importantly, these gaps in process directly translate into increased poverty and suffering, disproportionately borne by the world's poorest.

As part of the review of the United States foreign development assistance, we would urge the international human rights duties of the United States of America to be a paramount consideration. The United States of America are a party to international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). They also have signed several other human rights treaties, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), implying that they should refrain in good faith from acting in a way that violates the objectives of these treaties, thus depriving any future ratification from its object and purpose (Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 1155 UNTS 331 (1969), art. 18).

Moreover, as member of the United Nations, the United States of America are bound by articles 55 and 56 of the UN Charter to “take joint and separate actions” to “promote universal respect and observance, of human rights and fundamental freedoms far all without distinction to race, sex, language or religion”, “with a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations”. These duties are not limited to guaranteeing the enjoyment of human rights by people located on the national territory of the United States of America: under certain conditions, to the extent that actions taken by the United States

of America have impacts outside its national territory, they have extraterritorial implications.³⁰

Should the above mentioned cuts to international development assistance and humanitarian aid be maintained, they would in our view result in the violation of several human rights contained in international human rights treaties, including the right to life (article 6 ICCPR), the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to food (article 11 ICESCR), and the right to the highest attainable status of physical and mental health (article 12 ICESCR).

While most of the funding cuts appear to be of a general nature, they will disproportionately affect disadvantaged and vulnerable population groups. They risk therefore further entrenching *de facto* discrimination based on social or health status, gender, age, race, birth, or other prohibited grounds, contrary to article 2 of the ICCPR and ICESCR. In addition, we are concerned that certain funding cuts may even result in direct discrimination prohibited by human rights law, as some U.S. government directives suggest that any future U.S. funding shall exclude programs related to gender, LGBTIQ+ rights, sexual and reproductive health, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and refugee rights, thus excluding largely women, LGBTIQ+ persons, refugees, minorities and other disadvantaged groups from future support by the United States.

The funding cuts also have the potential to threaten the survival of a significant number of humanitarian, civil society and human rights organizations in recipient States, and will therefore undermine as well as the right to freedom of association entrenched in article 22 of the ICCPR. Even if funding cuts would not result in closing their operations, their ability to promote and protect human rights would be significantly harmed.

The ongoing legal proceedings in US Courts that are challenging Executive Order 14169 and the subsequent funding freezes raise concerns about adherence to the rule of law and established administrative procedures and failure to consult stakeholders. Reports and legal challenges suggest a lack of adequate due process, consultation, and transparency surrounding the decisions to pause and terminate funding and projects. For instance, *U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security*³¹ underscores the potential for such funding freezes to disrupt essential services provided to refugees and vulnerable communities. Similarly, *American Foreign Service Association v. U.S. Department of State*³² questions the legality of major agency restructuring without sufficient legislative oversight or procedural safeguards. Adherence to the principles of legality, necessity, and proportionality is paramount when administrative decisions, particularly those with significant human rights implications, affect access to essential services and support for the poorest and most vulnerable populations. These principles ensure that policies do not inadvertently exacerbate inequalities or undermine the fundamental human rights of those already facing extreme hardship. The courts' willingness to grant temporary relief reflects recognition that poor communities may suffer irreversible harm while

³⁰ *The Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. Maastricht, 28 September 2011. <https://www.etoconsortium.org/en/the-maastricht-principles/>.

³¹ *U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security*, No. 1:25-cv-00465 (D.D.C. filed 19 February 2025).

³² *American Foreign Service Association v. U.S. Department of State*, No. 1:25-cv-00435 (D.D.C. filed 14 February 2025).

policy questions are litigated.

In connection with the above alleged facts and concerns, please refer to the **Annex on Reference to international human rights law** attached to this letter which cites international human rights instruments and standards relevant to these allegations.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please provide any information whether any human rights impact assessment has been carried out before these funding cuts were made and if any mitigation measures have been taken to allow recipient States of development assistance and civil society organizations that have benefitted from USAID to adjust to the cuts of the development assistance. In this context could you kindly provide us with the results of the 90-day assessment of USAID mandated by Executive Order 14169.
3. Please specify whether any measures have been taken or are planned to be implemented to ensure that vital, life-saving humanitarian assistance, health programmes and programmes ensuring food security can be maintained in countries that have so far received support by USAID.

We would request that you treat this communication as a constructive contribution to the ongoing review of the impacts of USAID's operations in the countries where it has been active. We express the hope that, beyond its strictly humanitarian impacts, the human rights implications of the suspension of USAID's operations will be considered in the review, based on the undertakings of the United States of America as a member of the United Nations and as a party to major international human rights treaties.

This communication and any response received from your Excellency's Government will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) within 60 days. They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

We may publicly express our concerns in the near future as, in our view, the information which we have received, most of which is from official governmental sources, is sufficiently reliable to indicate a matter warranting immediate attention. We also believe that the wider public should be alerted to the potential implications of the suspension and termination of activities of USAID. If we issue a press release, it will indicate that we have been in contact with your Excellency's Government's to clarify the issue/s in question.

We would kindly request your Excellency's Government to share this letter as well with the Speaker of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Please be informed that a copy of this letter has also been sent to Afghanistan, Cameroon, Costa

Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Malawi, Mexico, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, South Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

In closing, we reiterate our readiness to provide your Excellency's Government with any technical advice to ensure that the ongoing review of the development assistance would take into account the obligations of the United States of America under the Charter of the United Nations and the human rights treaties it has acceded to.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Olivier De Schutter
Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights

Michael Fakhri
Special Rapporteur on the right to food

Annex

Reference to international human rights law

In connection with the above alleged facts and concerns, we would like to draw the attention of Your Excellency's Government to the applicable international human rights norms and standards, as well as authoritative guidance on their interpretation.

We would like to draw the attention of your Excellency's Government to right to life contained in article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Human Rights Committee has clarified in its general comment No. 36 on the right to life that "the duty to protect life also implies that States parties should take appropriate measures to address the general conditions in society that may give rise to direct threats to life or prevent individuals from enjoying their right to life with dignity", including "life-threatening diseases, such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria [...], widespread hunger and malnutrition and extreme poverty and homelessness." (paragraph 26)

In addition, we would like to draw the attention of your Excellency's Government to article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the right of everyone "to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food." Article 11 (1) of ICESCR further recognizes "the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing, and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions."

ICESCR requires States to "take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of the right to food" (article 11(1)). According to general comment 12, the obligations to respect existing access to adequate food requires State parties to refrain from taking any pressures that result in preventing such access. The obligation to protect requires measures by the State to ensure that enterprises or individuals do not deprive individuals of their access to adequate food. The obligation to fulfil (facilitate) means the State must pro-actively engage in activities intended to strengthen people's access to and utilization of resources and means to ensure their livelihood, including their access to land in order to ensure their food security. (para. 15.) Whenever an individual or group is unable, for reasons beyond their control, to enjoy the right to adequate food by the means at their disposal, States have the obligation to fulfil (provide) that right directly.

We would also like to draw your attention to article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which enshrines the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The right to health is also guaranteed as part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 25, which is read in terms of the individual's potential, the social and environmental conditions affecting the individual's health, and in terms of health services. General comment No. 14 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights describes the normative content of article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the legal obligations undertaken by States Parties to respect, protect and fulfil the right to physical and mental health.