



The International Affairs Budget in Fiscal Year 2024

Over the last four years, millions of people were pushed into extreme poverty due to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, erasing forward progress in poverty reduction efforts. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has exacerbated these challenges including igniting a global hunger crisis. Global food insecurity has now more than doubled since 2019. Due to current growing global challenges, it is critical that Congress support the International Affairs Budget.

Why is the International Affairs Budget important?

The International Affairs Budget supports critical development and diplomacy programs around the world. Programs funded by the International Affairs Budget create U.S. jobs by opening new markets to American businesses. These programs also protect our national security by fighting terrorism and preventing conflicts. The International Affairs Budget is an efficient investment that:

- staffs all U.S. embassies overseas
- fights pandemic disease
- provides emergency response after natural disasters
- implements agriculture programs to promote stability and prevent hunger
- saves millions of lives with HIV/AIDS medications
- provides essential good governance assistance to emerging democracies

How much is currently allocated?

The International Affairs Budget received a total of \$78.3 billion in the FY2023 spending package, which passed in December 2022. This included \$61.7 billion in base funding, and \$16.6 billion in emergency funds for Ukraine. **Still, the International Affairs Budget leverages less than 1% of the overall budget.**

Support for the International Affairs Budget

While we celebrate Congress's support towards America's development and diplomacy programs in years past, more work remains to address gaps in global funding, especially as the world has changed so drastically the last few years. For example, 265 million people globally were at risk of starvation in 2022. **Now more than ever, it is vital to prioritize international funding and provide relief to the world's most vulnerable communities, in turn, protecting the health and security of all Americans.**

On March 7, 2023 **nearly 20 former combatant commanders** wrote to Congress asking policymakers to continue to protect resources for America's International Affairs Budget, asserting that, "Doing so is critical to keeping our nation safe and prosperous."

In February 2020, right before the FY2021 budget request was released, former **Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen** wrote a letter to congressional leadership warning that, "The more we cut the International Affairs Budget, the higher the risk for longer and deadlier military operations." This remains true today.

Specific Ask: The Borgen Project urges Congress to support the International Affairs Budget at no less than the current FY23 level as the absolute baseline for funding in FY24. We also ask that Congress be prepared to provide additional supplemental packages necessary for responding to emergency situations, such as countering Putin's war on the Ukrainian people and our allies.



Congressional Leaders who Support the International Affairs Budget

“General Mattis, ‘Mad Dog’ Mattis, says that if we slash State Department funding, he’s going to have to order a lot more ammunition. And over 100 admirals and generals – retired admirals and generals – have said essentially the same thing. So I’m absolutely shocked at the Administration’s puny request...”

– **Representative Hal Rogers (R-K-5)**

"For decades, Republicans and Democrats have agreed on foundational principles of U.S. leadership in the world. We engage with the world. We consistently and reliably support our allies. We lead by example, especially on our core values. We fight for the rule of law, for human rights, and for democratic institutions because doing so makes us safer and more secure.”

– **Senator Chris Coons (D-DE)**

“Foreign assistance is an insurance policy. Investing over there, even though we have needs here, makes us safer.”

– **Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC)**

“I just want to point out that foreign assistance is just 1% of our budget, but it pays large dividends... We must make these investments not just because it is the right thing to do, but also because it helps contribute to economic growth, and just as importantly, stability.”

– **Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD)**

“In fact, an estimated 200 million more people are likely to be pushed into extreme poverty by 2030 due to the severe long term impact of the pandemic, reversing 20 years of progress... A robust FY 2022 International Affairs Budget can help not only support more equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics around the world, but also strengthen health infrastructures, shore up food assistance programs, and provide other life-saving aid to those in need.”

– **Senators Todd Young (R-IN) and Dick Durbin (D-IL)**

“This is a critical time for global investment and cooperation as we fight back a global pandemic, and we have much work to do.”

– **Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA-13)**