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April 13, 2010

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
State, Foreign Operations Subcommittee
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
State, Foreign Operations Subcommittee
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Granger:

The tragic earthquake in Haiti has led to an enormous outpouring of humanitarian assistance from the international community. It is encouraging that the U.S. government has led the way in delivering much needed aid to those who continue to struggle to recover and rebuild.

In order to strengthen the U.S. response to Haiti and to continue to maintain the U.S. ability to cover humanitarian needs in other parts of the world, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the relief and development agency of the Catholic Bishops in the United States, urge you to approve a robust Supplemental funding request.

The USCCB and CRS support foreign assistance based on our belief that each person is created in the image of God. Aid to poor people overseas protects human life and dignity by promoting human development and reducing crushing poverty, deadly diseases and malnutrition. Our positions are also informed by our relationships with the Catholic Church in developing nations and CRS' daily on-the-ground work in about one hundred countries. As you know, CRS was one of the very first responders in Haiti, where CRS already had over 300 staff working with Church and other partners on disaster preparedness and development issues, among others.

The supplemental should include funding for the following foreign assistance priorities in order to help relieve the suffering and improve the livelihoods of millions of people around the world.

\$4.097 billion Total Supplemental Request:

- **\$2.5 billion for longer-term reconstruction in Haiti**
- **\$1.597 billion for Global emergency needs**
 - **\$702 million for International Disaster Assistance**
 - **\$580 million for Food Assistance**
 - **\$165 million for Migration and Refugee Assistance**
 - **\$97 million for the Office of Refugee Resettlement**
 - **\$53 million for Economic Support Fund in Sudan**

\$2.5 billion for long term reconstruction in Haiti: The emergency relief response in Haiti has begun to focus on assisting people to recover and rebuild from the disaster. At the March 31

Haiti Donors Meeting, the United States pledged \$1.15 billion dollars for FY 2010-2011. The Inter-American Development Bank estimates that reconstruction needs could amount to between \$8.1 billion and \$13.9 billion. As one of Haiti's closest neighbors, the U.S. could be expected to contribute about 25% of the needs, bringing the United States contribution to **\$2.5 billion**.

This assistance should prioritize **three crucial needs**. UNICEF has estimated that approximately 380,000 children lost one or both parents, and 50,000 were living in one of 600 orphanages. There is a desperate need to offer care, reunification services, and protection from abuse. A second priority is the need to rebuild public water and sanitation infrastructure. In the immediate term this reconstruction will avoid the spread of disease. Linked to this is the third urgent need to rebuild people's homes. Well over 200,000 homes were destroyed in the earthquake. In the immediate term, adequate temporary housing is needed to keep people safe and comfortable from the vagaries of the rainy season. New permanent homes should be built according to a rational urban plan and using cost-effective techniques that provide adequate water and sanitation, and make the homes earthquake-proof.

To respond to the moral mandate to take care of the least of God's children, all three of these important programs should give priority to those living in poverty. The international community should see this disaster as an opportunity to make an ethical commitment to address the dire conditions of poverty that have plagued Haiti for decades.

\$1.597 billion for Global Emergency Needs: The Disaster in Haiti demanded an immediate and vigorous response from the United States that placed Haiti at the top of our nation's global emergency priorities. Now that the response has been launched, it must be built upon during the rest of Fiscal Year 2010. We also must rebuild the capacity and resources needed to continue emergency initiatives in other parts of the world. USCCB and CRS urge the Congress to appropriate no less than \$1.597 billion to the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and to other agencies that respond to humanitarian crises. We recommend that these funds go to the following programs:

- **\$702 million for International Disaster Assistance (IDA):** This amount will replenish the OFDA accounts so that the Office can continue its ability to respond quickly and efficiently to ongoing crisis situations. Congress should ensure that this request is sufficient to replenish the OFDA accounts and to implement ongoing emergency operations in Haiti in fiscal year 2010. Moreover, we request that Congress provide \$18 million to respond to the infrastructure damages in El Salvador resulting from Tropical Storm Ida in November 2009. These funds would be used to repair and rebuild bridges, schools, clinics, and homes, and to mitigate future disasters, especially by the implementation of an early warning system at the local and regional levels.
- **\$580 million for Food Assistance:** The current global economic crisis and the food crisis that preceded it have driven millions of additional people into poverty. This additional funding will provide needed food assistance to countries such as Sudan, Ethiopia, and Kenya, where conflict and drought have threatened the food security of many people. Other food **needs exist in Afghanistan and Pakistan** due to the ongoing war and the displacement of large numbers of people that conflict has caused.

- **\$165 million for Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA):** This additional funding will ensure level funding for humanitarian programs for refugees in Africa, where the largest number of refugees in the world live. These resources will also cover needs in the Middle East for displaced Iraqis and in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal.
- **\$97 million for the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)** within the Department of Health and Human Services. We recommend a FY 2010 supplemental appropriation of at least \$97 million to provide \$30 million in funding for Emergency Housing Assistance, \$32 million in additional funds for the Matching Grant program, and \$35 million for the extension of refugee Cash and Medical Assistance from eight to twelve months.
- **\$53 million for Economic Support Fund in Sudan:** Sudan is in the last and most crucial year of implementing its Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and many challenges remain to be overcome if the country is not to slide back into civil war. The additional funds requested should increase conflict mitigation, stabilization, and transition capacity in Southern Sudan, including activities focused on the government of Southern Sudan and civil society. Funds should also build a local peace and security framework, expand coordination for civilian protection, and strengthen civil society efforts for the peace process in Darfur. Lastly, resources should be used to increase U.S. government capacity and programming in Eastern Sudan to address political tensions, unemployed youth, ethnic tensions, and the lack of public services.

Thank you for your leadership in promoting human development, reducing poverty, and building a more stable and secure world through international assistance.

Sincerely yours,



Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard
Bishop of Albany
Chairman
Committee on International Justice and Peace



Ken Hackett
President
Catholic Relief Services

Cc: Chairman David Obey
The Honorable Jerry Lewis
The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
The Honorable Jack Kingston