

**FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING,  
AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005**

U.S. SENATE,  
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

NONDEPARTMENTAL WITNESSES

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The subcommittee was unable to hold hearings on nondepartmental witnesses. The statements of those submitting written testimony are as follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CENTER FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Mr. Chairman, ranking member Leahy and members of the subcommittee, I appreciate this opportunity to update you on the success of two programs which have been funded by the Agency for International Development over the years with this Subcommittee's support: the East Central European Scholarship Program (ECESP) and the Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships (CASS). As you are no doubt aware, these two programs were initiated by the Congress, and I am proud to say that they have fully measured up to the confidence members of the Senate have shown in them.

I would also make the point that these two models, with appropriate adaptations, can effectively serve national policy objectives in the regions in which they currently operate as well as elsewhere. Instability such as that confronting Haiti, Venezuela and Colombia in this hemisphere and the challenges of establishing strong market economies and democratic institutions in the Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union argue for U.S.-supported intensive training programs carefully tailored to economic development strategies and toward government and private sector institution building. These programs provide excellent opportunities at the same time to emphasize our democratic values. CASS and ECESP have the experience and record of success to help meet national objectives in these regions—and others—without delay.

Last fall, an opinion piece was published in The Washington Post entitled, "Letting Fear Flourish." The article made the point that "Throughout the hemisphere, new leaders are promulgating a kind of rhetoric about U.S. imperialistic ambitions eerily reminiscent of Cold War conspiracy theories of a generation ago. The problem this time around is that Washington is doing little to improve its image in the region and to counter such notions and the fears they engender." The article goes on to reference ". . . the Central American Peace Scholarship program, which brought thousands of economically disadvantaged students to junior colleges in the United States, . . ." CASS is the current embodiment of the highly successful Central American Peace Scholarship program. The article went on to note that "a new generation of nontraditional Latin American leaders rises—leaders who have not experienced cultural and academic exchanges." While recent attention has focused on the importance of bolstering U.S. public diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim world, I would hasten to add that we should refocus attention as well on our neighbors to the South. Further, I offer up CASS as a ready-to-go approach to meeting this need and one with a proven track record.

CASS and ECESP take somewhat different approaches and focus on different needs and populations, but they share common goals:

—strengthening understanding of the United States and our values,

- establishing effective government and non-profit institutions and supporting free market development, and
- building a well-educated middle class capable of providing leadership in civic society critical to sustaining the economic and political progress of nations facing tremendous challenges.

The East Central European Scholarship Program (ECESP) trains professionals who can spearhead the processes of democratic, economic and social transformation of their societies. Community and government leaders, experts, administrators, managers, and educators in East Central Europe are provided with the knowledge and skill base to become leaders and agents of change. This is accomplished through a range of U.S.-based, in-country and regional training programs leading to certificates and, in some instances, degrees. Five goals define what ECESP has worked to achieve in the countries served:

- more effective, responsive and accountable systems of local government,
- stronger institutions fostering democratic decision making and civil society,
- more efficient health and social service delivery systems,
- support for sustainable economic development, and
- approaches to education that is responsive to local needs in changing environments.

In the first 8 years of its existence, ECESP provided a dynamic long-term educational experience to approximately 700 participants from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. Many of the ECESP-trained individuals have contributed significantly to the transformation, both economically and politically, of those nations and their entry into the European Union. Since 1998, an additional 924 participants have been trained from Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania with another 72 participants prepared to start training in May and August this year. Again, those who have been trained from this second group of nations have been key players in the reform of their governmental and economic systems.

ECESP alumni have returned home to careers in the public and private sectors, which have contributed, to the economic and social development of their countries. They have held high government positions and have entered the business world. One example is Arben Ahmetja of Albania who, after completing the ECESP program in public administration became Executive Director of H-Communications, the first private telecommunications company in Albania. The company is bringing for the first time phone service to rural areas of Albania. Subsequently, he has returned to public service as the Vice Minister for Energy and Industrial Development. In that capacity, he has focused on strategies to improve the utilization of natural resources, which is key to Albania's economic development strategy.

ECESP funds are overwhelmingly expended in the United States, with 86 percent committed at U.S. colleges and universities. Today, major ECESP programs operate at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and the University of Kentucky. The program is having the impact that was intended. In fact, the program has been a contributing factor to the "graduation" of some countries out of USAID assistance programs. An evaluation funded by USAID found that "[M]any [ECESP] returnees have taken on important policy roles, high positions in dimensions of public life, key positions in the growing private sector, and significant roles in advocacy and social improvement." It also noted "[L]ong term (U.S. based training) appears to have a substantial impact on the attitude, vision and career path of participants."

We appreciate the fact that the Appropriations Committees recognize the potential of the ECESP approach and during last year's appropriations process encouraged USAID to expand ECESP so that it can serve the Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union. While we have had initial conversations with USAID officials about means of following up on the recommendations accompanying the fiscal year 2004 foreign operations appropriations, we have been advised that existing funds, which are managed by the missions for the region, are already obligated under large Indefinite Quantity Contracts of multi-year duration.

Although secularism has prevailed in Central Asia, democracy has not taken root. Economic development is slow, unemployment rates are very high, youth is disaffected and looking to more radical solutions, and most Central Asian republics still face the daunting task of health reform. These factors continue to threaten the stability of this region. ECESP's expertise in building grass roots democracy and training for privatization and economic development, financial and banking reform, active labor market strategies, and health care reform can help alleviate the situation. Unfortunately, the concentration of training activities in the region under large Indefinite Quantity Contracts and the lack of additional resources in the proposed budget have made it impossible to follow up on the fiscal year 2004 recommendations. We ask your help in addressing this situation.

Clearly, there are a number of cultural and economic-sector differences between the Central Asian region and the areas where ECESP has functioned to date. Nevertheless, the experience we have had in being a successful partner in efforts to reshape political, social and economic realities in former Soviet bloc countries can bear on the challenges facing Central Asian republics. The experience of working in Albania, a country with no history of democracy and civil society development, is of particular relevance. Furthermore, Georgetown University is also home to two highly regarded National Resource Centers with expertise in this region. They can and have worked with CIED to ensure the necessary program adaptations and regional connections that will enable CIED to move quickly and effectively into this critical region.

Georgetown's Center for Intercultural Education and Development is ready to work with you and USAID to continue the mission we have effectively served to date and to expand our services with modifications necessary to reflect the realities and needs of other nations.

Whereas ECESP focuses on meeting the training needs of professionals, CASS provides training to disadvantaged students with demonstrated leadership qualities at U.S. educational institutions. Today, we partner with eighteen colleges, universities and community colleges in twelve states. The program provides technical training in agriculture, business, primary education, various industrial technologies, environmental sciences, and health care and infectious disease control. The training programs are carefully tailored to ensure that they also strengthen civic responsibility and leadership skills of participants. CASS has successfully served groups that historically have been overlooked in our foreign aid programs—women, ethnic minorities, the rural poor and individuals with disabilities. We are also extremely proud that the program includes the right mix of training and placement services to achieve a 98 percent rate of return to participants' home countries and a 92 percent alumni employment record. Alumni are working in fields that support private sector growth, humanitarian assistance and development objectives of their home countries. There are currently 417 CASS scholars in the United States and over 5,300 alumni contributing to the social and economic growth of their home countries.

Nearly 90 percent of CASS funds are spent in U.S. communities. CASS students are involved in the life of the communities where they are hosted. Visiting students have tutored K–12 students in foreign languages, worked to fill and place sandbags to fight flooding along the Mississippi River, and regularly help on an array of other types of community service. On a number of the participating campuses, CASS students have been the only international presence.

The U.S. host institutions provide a 25 percent local match to augment the AID funds. Providing the match is posing a serious challenge to some of the host institutions that have seen their state funding reduced in the face of state budgetary troubles. These partner institutions have proven highly effective in achieving the program's mission; hence, we are very concerned that the match requirement not result in schools not being able to continue their participation. This factor makes it particularly important that the participating institutions know that they can count on the CASS program continuing so that their campus investments continue to provide long-range benefits.

As the Committee is aware, the CASS program is in its second year of a 5-year agreement with USAID. The new agreement includes new activities in Mexico in support of the Administration's efforts to strengthen the United States-Mexican relationship. Those new activities include the implementation of a regional strategy to foster growth through training and development. Economically disadvantaged Mexican youth will receive technical and leadership training at U.S. community colleges alongside North American students and CASS scholars from Central America and the Caribbean.

To build on Mexico's strong regional development efforts, CASS is focusing on the less developed, marginalized populations of Mexico. Fields of study are selected for the potential they provide scholars to participate in opportunities created by export-driven economic growth, while ensuring environmental protection, through course work in agricultural production, industrial and information technologies, and industry-related environmental technologies.

In 2003, CASS targeted recruitment in the states of San Luis Potosi, Queretaro and Guanajuato. In 2004, CASS expanded recruitment to include indigenous candidates from the states of Chiapas and Jalisco. Fields of study include Quality Control, Industrial Engineering Technology, Computer Information Technology, Agribusiness for Export, Food Technology, Telecommunications, and Strengthening Education for Indigenous Children. As members of the Subcommittee are well aware,

in recent years Chiapas has experienced considerable political instability. The CASS training is part of a strategy to address underlying economic issues there.

In addition, the Center for Intercultural Education and Development has worked with USAID outside the framework of our CASS agreement to develop a scholarship program aimed at bringing individuals from Cuba to the United States for training purposes. I think it is fair to say that USAID was interested in us managing this particular initiative because of the success of CASS in handling the training of populations that many aid programs do not reach. At this point, CIED has secured strong support from partner colleges slated to provide training and has 20 scholars selected to begin training. However, in light of the current political environment vis-à-vis Cuba, the issuance of visas and other paperwork necessary for prospective students to leave Cuba have resulted in delays. The 20 scholars are poised to commence their studies in the United States as soon as these overarching issues are resolved.

Finally with regard to CASS, I might add an observation regarding the current situation in Haiti and its impact on CASS alumni in the country and the 33 Haitian students currently studying in the United States. Sixteen Haitian students are preparing to return home this summer when they complete their 2-year training programs. When they do, CASS staff in Haiti will be there to receive them. CASS will provide them with a reentry seminar and job fair specifically geared to their particular employment skills. A network of successful alumni is also there to provide support to returning graduates, helping them in their readjustment to Haiti. Despite the difficult political situation in Haiti, CASS alumni are excelling and we are confident that, despite the unrest, these individuals will be successfully placed and contribute to the nation's economic well-being.

I would like to cite the example of CASS alumnus Pierrot Marcel, who was born in Jérémie, an isolated town in the western end of Haiti, where services, supplies, and communication lines with urban centers are scarce. Children in Jérémie rarely finish secondary school and most everyone depends on menial jobs to survive. The average family income ranges from \$90–\$300 per year. Despite this, Pierrot was able to finish high school and in 1990 he was awarded a CASS scholarship.

Upon returning to Haiti, he secured employment with the Fondation Haitienne de Développement. Later he was hired as a local consultant by USAID, which he saw as “an opportunity to pay back the U.S. Government for (his) scholarship.” He worked the following 5 years with CARE International training farmers in marketing, management and food processing techniques. He taught them how to increase their income by adding value to their products such as processing raw cassava into cassava flour and cassava bread and shipping the final product to supermarkets as far away as Port-au-Prince. Pierrot has also helped connect cacao farmers with the Hershey chocolate plant in the United States.

Pierrot Marcel is currently the Manager of the Jérémie Station for Tropical Airways d'Haiti S.A. and supervises all flights to his hometown. In addition, he founded the “Grande Anse 2009” school which, to date, has trained about 480 people in computer skills, employs nine people and has been accredited by the Haiti Ministry of Education. On a personal level, Pierrot has financed the education of each of his younger brothers.

Over 500 Haitians have joined Pierrot Marcel in making the most of their CASS opportunity, which as a result has impacted their lives and those of countless others. Additional support specifically targeted for Haiti would enable CASS to develop a construction-training program for Haitians similar to the successful reconstruction initiatives CASS launched after Hurricane Mitch in Central America. Likewise, CASS could quickly implement expanded training in the field of agriculture, which is central to the Haitian economy. Such programs could play a critical role in developing a strong workforce capable of handling infrastructure repairs and revitalizing Haitian agriculture both of which are essential to putting the Haitian economy back on track while fostering political stability.

At this critical juncture, both in terms of the nation's foreign policy priorities and with regard to defining the future of these two programs, we request your continued support in this year's appropriations process.

Thank you.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) urges the Committee to continue its strong tradition of support to international conservation by appropriating, in fiscal year 2005, \$175 million for conservation of biodiversity within the Development Assistance account of the Agency for International Development (AID), enough to begin address-

ing critical funding gaps; \$178 million for the Global Environment facility (GEF), enough to allow for full payment of the U.S. pledge and progress toward payment of accumulated arrears; \$30 million for the Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA), a debt-for-forest program that leverages taxpayers' funds with private donations from groups like the Conservancy; and \$8.4 million for international conservation programs within the International Organizations and Programs (IO&P) account at the Department of State.

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth, by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. Our work in the United States and abroad is closely related. For example, it is not possible to protect migratory birds in their summer ranges, inside the United States, without also taking care of their winter ranges in Latin America and the Caribbean. More broadly, a healthy natural environment is a key element in genuinely sustainable economic and social development around the world. Too often, short-term considerations drive bad choices, whose results can be catastrophic for both the natural world and for the people who live with and by means of that world. When a tropical rain forest is destroyed the people, who live in and depend upon that forest, often go extinct nearly as fast as the animals.

In our work outside the United States, we support local conservation groups that work to raise the effective level of protection at parks and nature preserves established by the local governments. We work with local communities to increase the constituency for conservation. We support sustainable development projects to improve the productivity and standard of living of rural people living in and near protected areas. We work cooperatively with landowners to promote conservation on private lands. We are a private, non-profit organization. Our recent private capital fund campaign raised more than \$1 billion. One hundred twenty million dollars will be for our work outside the United States. About 83 percent of our operating budget is raised from non-governmental sources, but government grants fill a critical need. For example, the assistance we receive through our cooperative relationship with AID is vital to our international operations. It is difficult to raise private dollars for international operating (as distinct from capital) expenses. Without AID's support, these programs would be severely damaged.

Our Parks in Peril (PiP) program in Latin America and the Caribbean and our similar efforts in the Asia/Pacific region are widely regarded as among the most successful and respected in the world. Our conservation work helps bring real protection to more than sixty major "sites"—parks and nature preserves in 27 foreign countries, comprising over 80 million acres, while also generating economic benefits to communities and individuals. In a typical recent year, AID has supported PiP with about \$6 million. The leverage on the U.S. Government's investment in PiP is very high—more than \$300 million raised by us and by our local partners for conservation work at or near the PiP sites. We have signed a new 5-year agreement for Parks in Peril, under which we will leverage its proven methodology to many more places through at least 2006. Your Committee has praised Parks in Peril in its past reports, and we hope you will do so again.

We are also grateful for AID's support to our other international projects, especially through the Global Conservation Program (GCP) and through the President's Initiative Against Illegal Logging. The GCP, for example, helps support our work on the coral reef that surrounds Komodo Island in Indonesia: for park rangers, marine patrol boats to enforce the ban on destructive fishing, and alternative development projects for local people.

AID's support to biodiversity is by far the largest portion of all U.S. Government funding to international conservation: \$155 million in fiscal year 2004. Your Committee has long supported AID's biodiversity work. We recognize the need for priorities at this moment of international crises. But, in view of the critical needs for survival of the world's natural heritage and the strong contribution that a healthy environment makes to social and political peace, we urge the Committee to raise overall grants to environmental work by AID. The Nature Conservancy as part of an alliance of conservation groups urges that AID's biodiversity funding (part of its environmental line item) for fiscal year 2005 be increased by \$20 million to \$175 million. Even after such an increase, the AID environmental share of the \$21.3 billion Foreign Operations total will remain small—barely 1 percent. Should an increase for biodiversity prove impossible despite your best efforts, we strongly urge the Committee to provide clear legislative guidance that AID's actual investment in conservation of global biodiversity should at the least not decline, and that only in situ conservation should count against the congressionally mandated level.

The Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA), known as the Portman Act, is also funded within Foreign Operations. The Administration has requested \$20 million for

fiscal year 2005 in the Treasury account, the same as in fiscal year 2004. We strongly support this request, and recommend that if possible it be increased to \$30 million. If more funds were available, the TFCA could certainly put them to prompt and good use. The TFCA uses debt reduction deals to create long-term income streams to protect forests. The Conservancy donated more than \$1 million each to the TFCA deal with Belize and Panama, and over \$400,000 each to the deals with Peru and Colombia. These debt-for-forest deals leverage the U.S. taxpayers' dollar: typically, there is about \$2 of conservation benefit for each \$1 of appropriated funds. If TFCA gets \$20 million, it will be possible to do several deals beyond Colombia, including such countries as Jamaica, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Paraguay. TNC stands willing to donate additional private funds in each case. If TFCA receives \$30 million, the size of the deals could be increased and additional countries could participate.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is the largest single source of environmental funds (including conservation) in the world, leveraging U.S. Government contributions four-to-one. The Administration's request level for fiscal year 2005 is \$121 million, down significantly from the \$138 million and \$147 million appropriated in the last 2 years. This fiscal year 2005 level of funding would be barely adequate to meet the U.S. pledge level, and would allow virtually no progress toward paying the U.S. arrears. We urge the Committee to fund the GEF at \$178 million, enough to meet the Administration's original goal of clearing all arrears within 3 or 4 years.

TNC appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony for the record, and in closing suggests the following Committee report language regarding biodiversity, Parks in Peril, and the Tropical Forest Conservation Act.

Draft Report Language:

#### AID'S SUPPORT TO CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY

The Committee has repeatedly urged that AID make biodiversity conservation a high priority. The Committee directs that \$175 million shall be made available for programs and activities that directly protect biodiversity in developing countries. The Committee further directs that, in meeting this goal, AID shall count only programs that help in situ protection of native wild animals and plants.

#### PARKS IN PERIL

The Committee strongly reiterates its continued support for the AID Parks in Peril (PiP) program, a partnership with the Nature Conservancy to promote biodiversity conservation in imperiled ecosystems throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

#### TROPICAL FOREST CONSERVATION ACT (TFCA)

The Committee strongly supports this program, which brings "leverage" to forest conservation. Under TFCA debt deals, the amount directed to forest conservation is always substantially more than the U.S. appropriated funds. The Committee directs that, of the amount appropriated, up to \$1 million may be used for costs of U.S. federal agencies to administer the program.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY,  
*Lexington, KY, May 5, 2004.*

Attn: BRYTT BROOKS,  
*Office of Senator Mitch McConnell, Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Senate Committee on Appropriations, Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATOR MCCONNELL: On behalf of the Kentucky Chapter of The Nature Conservancy I wanted to offer our support for the fiscal year 2005 budget of the Agency for International Development (AID) and other programs that conserve biological diversity in developing countries.

Our international programs and those of dozens of conservation organizations globally, benefit from AID support. Parks in Peril is a successful, multi-year Nature Conservancy effort that benefits from important AID help. I urge your committee to again put language strongly supportive of AID biodiversity conservation work and of Parks in peril in the report.

We support more AID biodiversity money for the Tropical Forest Conservation Act, up from \$20 million to \$30 million if possible. We also support the international program of the U.S. Forest Service. While they are appropriated in Interior, not Foreign Operations, they do work on the Mexico side of the San Pedro and we are supporting an increase from \$6 to \$8 million.

Thank you for your past support. Please feel free to call me at 859-259-9655.  
Sincerely yours,

JAMES R. ALDRICH,  
*Vice President / State Director.*

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

Chairman McConnell, Senator Leahy, members of the Subcommittee, Rotary International appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony in support of the polio eradication activities of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The effort to eradicate polio has been likened to a race—a race to reach the last child. This race requires the dedication to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve success. Like some great relay team, the major partners in the global polio eradication effort have joined with national governments around the world in an unprecedented demonstration of commitment to cross the finish line of this historic public health goal. We cannot allow the great distance we have traveled to diminish our resolve. Though we may be weary, our adversary is weakening. The victory over polio is closer than ever!!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you Chairman McConnell, Senator Leahy and members of the Subcommittee for your tremendous commitment to this effort. Without your support of USAID's polio eradication activities, the battle against polio would be impossible. We appreciate the long-term investment you have made through USAID to strengthen the basic health care infrastructure of many polio-endemic countries. This solid infrastructure has provided the foundation on which the polio eradication program has succeeded. Additional support of the polio eradication program further strengthens this infrastructure because it gives confidence to the health care workers, provides dramatic assistance to families who no longer suffer the ravages of polio, and provides hope that other diseases can also be eliminated.

PROGRESS IN THE GLOBAL PROGRAM TO ERADICATE POLIO

Thanks to your leadership in appropriating funds, the international effort to eradicate polio has made tremendous progress.

—The number of polio cases has fallen from an estimated 350,000 in 1988 to less than 800 in 2003—a more than 99 percent decline in reported cases (see Exhibit A). More than 200 countries and territories are polio-free, including 4 of the 5 most populous countries in the world (China, United States, Indonesia, and Brazil).

—Transmission of the poliovirus has never been more geographically confined. The Western Hemisphere, the Western Pacific and the European regions have been certified polio-free and wild poliovirus transmission is confined to a limited number of polio “hot-spots” within six countries.

—More than 2 billion children worldwide have been immunized during NIDs in the last 5 years, including more than 150 million in a single day in India.

—All polio-endemic countries in the world have conducted NIDs and established high quality surveillance of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP). The eradication of polio in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and Somalia shows that polio eradication strategies are successful even in countries affected by civil unrest.

From the launch of the global initiative in 1988, to the eradication target date of 2005, 5 million people who would otherwise have been paralyzed will be walking because they have been immunized against polio. Tens of thousands of public health workers have been trained to investigate cases of acute flaccid paralysis and manage massive immunization programs. Cold chain, transport and communications systems for immunization have been strengthened. A network of 147 polio laboratories has been established to analyze suspected cases of polio and monitor transmission of polio. This network will continue to support the surveillance of other diseases long after polio has been eradicated.

Give the tremendous progress that has been made in reducing the incidence of polio and diminishing the areas in which the virus circulates, the world currently faces an unprecedented opportunity to stop the transmission of wild poliovirus. However, significant challenges remain as obstacles to the ultimate achievement of our goal of a polio-free world. In 2003, Nigeria surpassed India to become the country with the highest number of polio cases. The surge in polio cases in Nigeria also resulted in importations of cases into several of the countries that neighbor Nigeria. The risk of importations into west and central African countries, and around the world, is magnified by financial constraints that limit the scope of immunization activities.

Continued political commitment is essential in all polio endemic countries, to support the acceleration of eradication activities. The ongoing support of donor countries is essential to assure the necessary human and financial resources are made available to polio-endemic countries. Access to children is needed, particularly in Nigeria, where political and financial differences between key states and the federal government were unexpectedly given voice in the form of untrue rumors about the safety of the oral polio vaccine. As a result, immunization activities in the states that need them most were delayed and/or suspended during the effort to address local concerns. Polio-free countries must maintain high levels of routine polio immunization and surveillance. The continued leadership of the United States is critical to ensure we meet these challenges.

#### THE ROLE OF ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

Since 1985, Rotary International, a global association of more than 30,000 Rotary clubs, with a membership of over 1.2 million business and professional leaders in 166 countries, has been committed to battling this crippling disease. In the United States today there are nearly 7,700 Rotary clubs with some 400,000 members. All of our clubs work to promote humanitarian service, high ethical standards in all vocations, and international understanding. Rotary International stands hand-in-hand with the United States Government and governments around the world to fight polio through local volunteer support of National Immunization Days, raising awareness about polio eradication, and providing financial support for the initiative. In 2003, members of Rotary clubs around the world announced the results of their second polio eradication fundraising campaign. Rotarians far exceeded the U.S. \$80 million goal they had set by raising U.S. \$119 million in cash and commitments. Rotary firmly believes that the vision of a world without polio can be realized and that the time for action is now. By the time the world is certified polio-free, Rotary's contribution to the global polio eradication effort will exceed U.S. \$600 million.

Rotary International's commitment to the global polio eradication represents the largest contribution by an international service organization to a public health initiative ever. These funds have been allocated for polio vaccine, operational costs, laboratory surveillance, cold chain, training and social mobilization in 122 countries. More importantly, tens of thousands of Rotarians have been mobilized to work together with their national ministries of health, UNICEF and WHO, and with health providers at the grassroots level in thousands of communities.

In the United States, Rotary has formed and leads the United States Coalition for the Eradication of Polio, a group of committed child health advocates that includes Rotary, the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Task Force for Child Survival and Development, the United Nations Foundation, and the U.S. Fund for UNICEF. These organizations join us in expressing our gratitude to you for your staunch support of the international program to eradicate polio. For fiscal year 2004, you appropriated a total of \$27.5 million for the polio eradication efforts of USAID. This investment has helped to make the United States the leader among donor nations in the drive to eradicate this crippling disease.

#### FISCAL YEAR 2005 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2005, we are requesting that your Subcommittee specify \$30 million for global polio eradication in USAID's budget. These funds will support USAID's delivery of vaccine and the development of the infrastructure necessary to maintain its Polio Eradication Initiative. This would represent a funding increase of \$2.5 million from the fiscal year 2004 level. This funding level will provide much-needed stability to the program and ensure that the United States remains a leader in the global polio eradication effort. In addition, we are seeking report language specifying that this funding is provided specifically to combat polio. It is important to meet this level of funding due to the increased costs of the accelerated eradication program, and to respond to the increase in supplementary immunization activities in endemic countries, the need to maintain immunity in polio-free areas and maintain certification standard surveillance.

#### THE ROLE OF THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID)

In April 1996, with the support of the 104th Congress and in response to the strong urging of your Subcommittee, USAID launched its own Polio Eradication Initiative to coordinate agency-wide efforts to help eradicate polio. Over the subsequent 4 years, despite decreases in the overall Child Survival budget, Congress directed that \$25 million be allocated to USAID's international polio eradication efforts. In fiscal year 2001, Congress increased this allocation to \$27.5 million—an amount

that was maintained since that time. Some of USAID's achievements in the past, and their planned Polio Eradication Initiative activities in 2004, include:

*Increased National Activities Throughout Africa.*—USAID-supported synchronized multi-country national immunization days in 20 West and Central African countries reached more than 96 million children in 2001 and 2002. In 2002, São Tomé and Príncipe joined the group of West African countries that synchronized NIDs. Sub-national immunization days targeting children under age 5 were conducted mainly in countries of East and Southern Africa. In East Africa, five countries participated in coordinated cross-border activities. Border districts in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya, and Somalia shared data about wild poliovirus and surveillance indicators. These activities will continue and expand during 2003.

*Intensified Efforts in South East Asia.*—WHO's South East Asia region accounted for more than 80 percent of the global total of polio cases in 2002. Across the region, USAID grants to WHO, UNICEF, and the International Clinical Epidemiology Network supported immunization programs, NIDs, and follow-up campaigns. USAID support for these partners also strengthened planning, surveillance, laboratory, training, social mobilization, and information collection activities. USAID also supported country-specific activities in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Nepal.

*PVO and NGO Collaborations.*—In India, private voluntary organizations (PVOs) belonging to USAID's Child Survival and Resources Collaboration (CORE) Group helped the vaccination program in Uttar Pradesh state reach high-risk Muslim families. At the request of the Ministry of Health, the PVOs and their local partners provided support for social mobilization and marshalling volunteers to counsel Muslim families who were resisting immunizations for their children. In Calcutta, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that partners with a CORE PVO was asked to cover slum wards because of its outstanding record of service. Because of the high-quality work performed by the NGO's volunteers, the health department assigned them the task of cross-checking for missed children during follow-up efforts. CORE NGOs are tackling the most difficult to reach populations in Nepal, Angola and Ethiopia in addition to India. Hundreds of thousands of children who had never been immunized against polio were located and vaccinated due to the diligence of CORE volunteers. All CORE members have identified AFP cases and participate on national interagency coordinating committees.

*Global Contributions.*—USAID supported the certification commission in the European region, provides funds for accreditation and operations of the global laboratory network, intensified efforts in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and continued its role in polio communication through VOA and UNICEF. Working in collaboration with WHO USAID has developed guidelines for validating polio containment activities. USAID staff at all levels are actively engaged in planning, monitoring and evaluating activities and serve as observers during NIDs.

#### OTHER BENEFITS OF POLIO ERADICATION

Increased political and financial support for childhood immunization has many documented long-term benefits. Polio eradication is helping countries to develop public health and disease surveillance systems useful in the control of other vaccine-preventable infectious diseases. Already all 47 countries of the Americas are free of indigenous measles, due in part to improvements in the public health infrastructure implemented during the war on polio. The disease surveillance system—the network of laboratories and trained personnel established during the Polio Eradication Initiative—is now being used to track measles, rubella, yellow fever, meningitis, and other deadly infectious diseases. NIDs for polio have been used as an opportunity to give children essential vitamin A, which, like polio, is administered orally, saving the lives of 1.25 million children since 1998. The campaign to eliminate polio from communities has led to an increased public awareness of the benefits of immunization, creating a “culture of immunization” and resulting in increased usage of primary health care and higher immunization rates for other vaccines. It has improved public health communications and taught nations important lessons about vaccine storage and distribution, and the logistics of organizing nation-wide health programs. Additionally, the unprecedented cooperation between the public and private sectors serves as a model for other public health initiatives. Polio eradication is a cost-effective public health investment, as its benefits accrue forever.

#### RESOURCES NEEDED TO FINISH THE JOB OF POLIO ERADICATION

The World Health Organization estimates that \$765 million is needed from donors for the period 2004–2005 to help polio-endemic countries complete the polio eradication strategy. In the Americas, some 80 percent of the cost of polio eradication efforts was borne by the national governments themselves. However, as the battle

against polio is taken to the poorest, least-developed nations on earth, and those in the midst of civil conflict, many of the remaining polio-endemic nations can contribute only a small percentage of the needed funds. In some countries, up to 100 percent of the NID and other polio eradication costs must be met by external donor sources. We ask the United States to continue its financial leadership in order to see this initiative to its successful conclusion as quickly as possible.

The United States' commitment to polio eradication has stimulated other countries to increase their support. Other countries that have followed America's lead and made special grants for the global Polio Eradication Initiative include the United Kingdom (\$425 million), the Netherlands (\$112 million), and Canada (\$85 million). Japan, which has contributed \$231 million, recently expanded its support to polio eradication efforts in Africa. Even the tiny country of Luxembourg has invested in global polio eradication by contributing \$4.2 million. In both 2002 and 2003 the members of the G8 committed to provide sufficient resources to eradicate polio as part of its Africa Action Plan. In addition to the ongoing contributions made by historic donors such as United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, new commitments of \$37 million and \$4 million were made by France and Russia in response to the G8 pledge.

Intense political commitment on the part of endemic nations is also essential to ensuring polio eradication is achieved. In January 2004, health ministers of the six remaining endemic countries (Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Niger, Nigeria, and Pakistan) gathered at a meeting convened at WHO in Geneva to declare their commitment to supporting intensified supplementary immunization activities in the "Geneva Declaration for the Eradication of Poliomyelitis." In addition, resolutions supporting polio eradication were taken by the African Union and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Each of these resolutions encourages member states to place a high priority on completing the job of polio eradication.

Your discipline, commitment and endurance have brought us to the brink of victory in the great race against this ancient scourge. Polio cripples and kills. It deprives our children of the capacity to run, walk and play. Other great health crises loom on the horizon. Your continued support for this initiative helps ensure that today's children possess the strength and vitality to grow up and fight against the health threats of future generations.

## Wild poliovirus in 2003

### 6 endemic countries

Exhibit A

