



May 30, 2014

The Honorable John F. Kerry
 Office of the Secretary of State
 United States Department of State
 2201 C Street, NW, Room 7226
 Washington, DC 20520

Mr. Brian C. Deese
 Office of the Director
 Office of Management and Budget
 1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 252
 Washington, DC 20503

Dear Secretary Kerry & Deputy Director Deese:

We write today as organizations greatly concerned about the crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) and strongly supportive of international efforts to restore order and ameliorate the severe human suffering. In light of the decision by the Security Council to authorize a UN peacekeeping mission in CAR and vote of support from the U.S. Mission to the UN, we urge the Administration to take all necessary steps to ensure that the peacekeeping operation is fully funded in FY2015. **Specifically, we urge the Administration to immediately issue a formal request to Congress requesting funding for the UN Peacekeeping mission in CAR, MINUSCA.**

We are concerned that, absent a formal budget request, Congress will not provide sufficient FY2015 funding for MINUSCA. As the absence of funding for the UN Mali peacekeeping mission in the FY2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill clearly demonstrated, Congress has been hesitant to appropriate money for UN missions that are not formally requested in the President's budget. An explicit FY2015 budget request for MINUSCA – either under Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account or the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) account with language calling for assessed expenses of MINUSCA to be paid out of PKO – is thus vital to ensuring that a mission in CAR be funded.

While we welcome the request for the Peacekeeping Response Mechanism (PKRM), and hoped it could pay for at least part of the CAR mission funding, the mechanism may not be approved by Congress in the FY2015 appropriations cycle. Congress has been consistently reluctant to approve the creation of new contingency funding mechanisms for undefined needs. As funding for the CAR mission in FY2015 is essential, we urge the Administration to submit a formal Budget Amendment for the operation, to be derived from the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) account, for at least \$300 million – the initial estimate for the U.S. share of costs in FY2015. We ask that these additional resources come not at the expense of other OCO funding for humanitarian and peacekeeping-related activities.

As both the House and Senate State/Foreign Operations subcommittees are expected to mark up in the coming weeks, we call for urgent consideration of this request.

The international community's next steps in Central African Republic (CAR) will, without question, determine how many more civilians will be killed, attacked, or forced to flee. While we understand the many stresses on the U.S. foreign assistance budget, the U.S. voted in support of MINUSCA, has stated its commitment to helping to protect civilians and end the crisis in CAR in many different forms over the past 10 months, and has a standing responsibility to fund 28.3% of all peacekeeping missions. A deficit in U.S. funding could cripple the mission's ability to promote stability during the initial deployment or fulfill its civilian protection mandate, and we believe a formal Administration request to Congress is the best way to guarantee U.S. funding at this juncture.

Thank you. We deeply appreciate your consideration of this request and your continued support to the people of the CAR.

Sincerely,

Americans for UNESCO
The Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation
Better World Campaign
Catholic Relief Services
GlobalSolutions.org
Humanity United
Human Rights Watch
InterAction
The International Federation for Human Rights
International Medical Corps
International Rescue Committee
Invisible Children

Jesuit Refugee Service/USA
Jewish World Watch
The Mentor Initiative
MercyCorps
Oxfam America
Pax Christi International
The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative
Refugees International
Save the Children
Central African Diaspora Association (SEWA)
STAND
United Nations Association of the USA