

The Honorable James E. Risch

Chairman
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen

Ranking Member
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Brian J. Mast

Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Gregory W. Meeks

Ranking Member
House Foreign Affairs Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

cc:

The Honorable Marco A. Rubio

Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

16 July, 2025

Dear Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, Chairman Mast, Ranking Member Meeks,

We write as former senior United States government officials who have served under both parties and who strongly support the longstanding U.S. commitment to aid and protect the world's refugees: former leaders of the State Department's refugee bureau, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM); former senior U.S. government humanitarian officials; and former high level foreign policy and national security officials.

For decades, USAID and the PRM Bureau have been the U.S. government's major sources of refugee and humanitarian assistance around the world. PRM also has played the lead role in resettling refugees legally admitted to the United States.

We are shocked and dismayed at Secretary Rubio's decision to dramatically downsize and effectively dismantle PRM, while shifting the bureau's focus away from protecting and assisting refugees and toward expelling people from the United States.

This is compounded by the shameful gutting of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, which has long played a key role in monitoring and upholding the human rights of displaced people. Coming on the heels of the administration's elimination of USAID, **these actions leave the U.S. government without any meaningful operational or diplomatic tools to address displacement and humanitarian crises overseas.** They also disregard decades of U.S. Congressional intent and legislation.

This elimination of U.S. leadership on refugee and humanitarian issues will gravely harm U.S. interests, undermine our country's leadership and ability to project American values abroad, and allow global crises to spin further out of control.

Global displacement is historically high – but this only becomes an unmanageable challenge if we make the choice not to manage it. Despite the furor over asylum seekers entering the United States, the reality is that most forcibly displaced people choose to remain in or near their countries of origin – often supported by U.S. humanitarian assistance. Of 123 million forcibly displaced people globally, 72 million (58%) stay within their home countries. Of the 31 million who have left their countries and become refugees, three quarters are hosted by low- and middle-income neighboring countries; only a small percentage each year are resettled or seek asylum in the U.S. or other high-income countries.

The U.S. retrenchment from global refugee and humanitarian leadership will leave displaced people and the countries hosting them in an extremely precarious position, straining host-nation resources even further and elevating the likelihood that displaced people will see migration to a rich country as their only option.

The damage is already visible. U.S. funding cuts have forced stark reductions in lifesaving refugee aid, prompting food protests in Kenyan refugee camps; halted basic medical care to refugees in numerous countries, including amidst Sudan's famine; undermined the safe return of Syrian refugees to their homeland; and torn down countless other critical humanitarian programs.

This toll will only deepen with the evisceration of PRM, which leaves the U.S. government without any remaining tools to manage global humanitarian crises. Despite Secretary Rubio's stated commitment to preserve lifesaving programs, even critical humanitarian programs that were spared by the initial rounds of cuts are now facing closure. The Department's reorganization plan

has transferred only minimal humanitarian capacity from USAID over to State and has now excised PRM's humanitarian capacity as well. As the residual humanitarian programs begin reaching their expiration toward the end of the USG fiscal year, there simply are not enough personnel at State to extend program funding and maintain even the minimal remaining humanitarian portfolio. **In short, U.S.-funded humanitarian operations around the world face widespread collapse unless there are drastic reversals to the current plan.**

As President Reagan said in 1980 upon accepting his nomination for president, the United States has long sought to be “a refuge for all those people in the world who yearn to breathe free...Jews and Christians enduring persecution behind the Iron Curtain; the boat people of Southeast Asia, Cuba, and of Haiti; the victims of drought and famine in Africa, the freedom fighters of Afghanistan.”

That is a proud and vital American legacy – but it is at risk of being shattered by the current administration's actions. We implore you to act urgently to avert such a total collapse in U.S. humanitarian and refugee leadership.

Respectfully,

- Amb. Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, Fmr. Ambassador to the Republic of Malta
- David Abramowitz, Fmr. Chief Counsel, House Foreign Affairs Committee
- Gordon Adams, Fmr. Associate Director, Office of Management and Budget
- Amb. Jonathan Addleton, Fmr. U.S. Ambassador; Five-Time USAID Mission Director
- Amb. Cynthia H. Akuetteh, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Bernard W. Aronson, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs
- J. Brian Atwood, Fmr. Administrator of USAID
- Amb. Harriet Babbitt, Fmr. Ambassador; Fmr. Deputy Administrator of USAID
- Amb. Frederick D. Barton, Fmr. Ambassador; Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State (ret.)
- Amb. Adrian A. Basora, Fmr. Ambassador to the Czech Republic (ret.)
- Amb. Leslie Bassett, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Robert Bauerlein, Fmr. Director, Office of Policy and Resources, Department of State; Fmr. Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs
- Amb. Robert M. Beecroft, Fmr. Head of OSCE Mission, Sarajevo (ret.)
- Daniel Benjamin, Fmr. State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism
- Amb. James K. Bishop, Fmr. Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs

- Charles O. Blaha, Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Jonah Blank, Fmr. Policy Director, South and Southeast Asia, Senate Foreign Relations Committee
- Merrie Blocker, Senior Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Amb. Peter W. Bodde, Fmr. Ambassador to Malawi, Nepal, Libya (Ret.)
- Amb. Barbara K. Bodine, Fmr. Ambassador; Career Senior Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Janet L. Bogue, U.S. Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Amb. Michele Thoren Bond, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs
- Anita Botti, Fmr. Senior PRM staff for U.S. Admissions and Resettlement
- Amb. Aurelia Brazeal, Fmr. Ambassador to Ethiopia, Kenya, Federated States of Micronesia (ret.)
- Amb. Kenneth C. Brill, Fmr. Ambassador across Democratic and Republican Administrations (ret.)
- Amb. Steven A. Browning, Fmr. Ambassador; Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (ret.)
- Amb. Albert P. Burleigh, Fmr. Ambassador to the United Nations, Sri Lanka and the Maldives (ret.)
- Scott Busby, Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
- Donald Camp, Fmr. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs
- Elizabeth Campbell, Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
- Amb. Piper Anne Wind Campbell, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Johnnie Carson, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs
- Elizabeth Carswell, Fmr. Chief of Staff, ODNI Advanced Campaign Cell
- Amb. Robert F. Cekuta, Fmr. U.S. Ambassador to Azerbaijan
- Amb. Wendy J. Chamberlin, Ambassador to Pakistan (ret.); Fmr. UNHCR Deputy High Commissioner
- Sarah Charles, Fmr. Assistant to the Administrator, USAID Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance
- Sandra Clark, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)

- Frances D. Cook, Fmr. Ambassador; Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary, Refugee Bureau (ret.)
- Thomas Countryman, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation
- Jock Covey, Fmr. Foreign Service (ret.)
- Chester A. Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs
- Amb. Ryan Crocker, Fmr. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Syria, Kuwait, Lebanon
- Amb. James B. Cunningham, Fmr. Ambassador to the United Nations, Israel, Afghanistan
- Mary Curtin, Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Amb. Jeffrey Davidow, Fmr. Ambassador to Mexico, Venezuela, Zambia (ret.)
- Jennifer L. Davis, Fmr. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
- Arthur “Gene” Dewey, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
- Amb. Greg Delawie, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Kurt D. Donnelly, Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Energy Resources
- Amb. Shaun Donnelly, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Peter Eicher, Fmr. Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Michael Eiland, US Army (ret.)
- Amb. Harriet Elam-Thomas, Fmr. Ambassador to Senegal
- Amb. Gregory W. Engle, Fmr. Ambassador to the Togolese Republic (ret.)
- Tom Engle, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State (ret.)
- Amb. John M. Evans, Fmr. Ambassador to Armenia
- Amb. John Feeley, Fmr. Ambassador; Fmr. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (ret.)
- Amb. Gerald Feierstein, Fmr. Ambassador to Yemen
- Jeffrey Feltman, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs; Fmr. United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs
- Amb. Kathleen M. Fitzpatrick, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Amb. James B. Foley, Ambassador; Fmr. State Department Coordinator for Iraqi Refugee Issues (ret.)
- Amb. Robert Ford, Fmr. Ambassador to Syria, Algeria (ret.)

- Bennett Freeman, Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
- Susan K. Fritz, USAID Senior Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Amb. Julie Furuta-Toy, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Amb. Peter W. Galbraith, Fmr. Ambassador to Croatia; Fmr. Assistant Secretary General, United Nations (ret.)
- Larry Garber, Fmr. USAID Mission Director for West Bank and Gaza
- Robert Goldberg, Fmr. U.S. State Department Official
- Amb. Gordon Gray, Fmr. Ambassador to Tunisia
- Morton H. Halperin, Fmr. Director of the Policy Planning Staff, Department of State; Fmr. Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Democracy at the National Security Council; Fmr. Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense
- Amb. Patricia M. Haslach, Fmr. Acting Assistant Secretary and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, Department of State
- Gen. Michael V. Hayden, Fmr. Director of the Central Intelligence Agency; Fmr. Director of the National Security Agency
- Amb. Donald S. Hays, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Robert G. Herman, Fmr. State Department Official, Policy Planning Staff
- Carla A. Hills, Fmr. U.S. Trade Representative; Fmr. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
- Heather Hodges, Fmr. Ambassador to Moldova, Ecuador
- Christopher J. Hoh, Senior Advisor, Department of State
- James B. Holthaus, Veteran, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, U.S. Army
- Amb. Michael S. Hoza, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Amb. Edmund J. Hull, Fmr. Ambassador to Yemen
- Heather Hurlburt, Fmr. Chief of Staff, USTR
- Amb. Tom Hushek, Ambassador to South Sudan (ret.)
- Amb. Robert Hutchings, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Amb. Karl F. Inderfurth, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State; Fmr. U.S. Representative for Special Political Affairs to the United Nations
- Amb. Janice Jacobs, Fmr. Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau (ret.)

- Susan Jacobs, Fmr. Special Advisor, U.S. State Department Office of Children's Issues; Fmr. Senior Policy Advisor in the Bureau of Consular Affairs
- Amb. Makila James, Fmr. Ambassador; Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State (ret.)
- Lindsay Jenkins, Fmr. Senior Advisor, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
- Oliver John, Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Amb. Beth Jones, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia; Fmr. U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan
- Amb. Deborah Jones, Fmr. Ambassador to Kuwait, Libya (ret.)
- Amb. Richard D. Kauzlarich, Fmr. Ambassador to Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina (ret.)
- David Kaye, Fmr. Counsel, Department of State
- Amb. Laura Kennedy, Fmr. Ambassador to Turkmenistan; Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
- Christopher Kojm, Fmr. Chair, National Intelligence Council
- Jeremy Konyndyk, President of Refugees International; Fmr. Director of the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, USAID
- Charles Kupchan, Fmr. Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for European Affairs, National Security Council
- Amb. Daniel Kurtzer, Fmr. Ambassador to Egypt, Israel
- Anthony Lake, Fmr. National Security Advisor; Fmr. Executive Director of UNICEF (ret.)
- Amb. Dawn Liberi, Fmr. Ambassador to Burundi (ret.)
- Karin Lissakers, Fmr. Deputy Director, Policy Planning, USDS
- Amb. Carmen Lomellin, Fmr. Ambassador to the OAS
- Bennet Lowenthal, Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Frank E. Loy, Fmr. Under Secretary for Global Affairs
- Corbin B. Lyday, Fmr. Senior Policy Analyst, USAID
- Amb. Deborah R. Malac, Ambassador to Uganda, Liberia (ret.)
- Tom Malinowski, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State; Fmr. Member of Congress
- Amb. Eileen A. Malloy, U.S. Ambassador (ret.), Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe
- Jeanne M. Maloney, Ambassador (ret.)
- Dana R. Mansuri, Career Minister, USAID (ret.)

- Amb. Nancy McEldowney, Fmr. Ambassador; Fmr. National Security Advisor to the Vice President
- Amb. Kevin McGuire, Senior Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Margaret McKelvey, Director of African Refugee Assistance, Department of State (ret.)
- Brian P. McKeon, Fmr. Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources
- Amb. Elizabeth McKune, Fmr. Ambassador to Qatar (ret.)
- Jeffrey Meer, Fmr. Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Amb. James D. Melville, Jr., Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Jamie Metzl, Fmr. Director for Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs, National Security Council
- Amb. Elisabeth Millard, Fmr. Ambassador to Tajikistan; Fmr. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the State Department's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs (ret.)
- J. Stephen Morrison, Fmr. Policy Planning Staff, Department of State
- Lissa Muscatine, Fmr. Director of Speechwriting, Department of State
- Michael Myers, Fmr. Director, Office of Humanitarian and Refugee Affairs, U.S. Department of Defense
- Amb. Richard B. Norland, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Diana Ohlbaum, Fmr. Deputy Director, USAID Office of Transition Initiatives
- Diane Orentlicher, Former Deputy for War Crimes Issues, Department of State
- Amb. Ted Osius, Fmr. Ambassador to Vietnam (ret.)
- Maria Otero, Fmr. Under Secretary of State
- Beth Paige, Career Minister (ret.)
- Amb. Geeta Pasi, Fmr. Principal Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs; Fmr. U.S. Ambassador to Djibouti, Chad
- Annie Pforzheimer, Fmr. Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy Kabul
- Theodore Piccone, Fmr. State Department Policy Planning Staff
- Amb. Thomas R. Pickering, Fmr. Under Secretary of State; Fmr. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
- Amb. Nancy J. Powell, Fmr. Ambassador; Refugee Officer (ret.)
- Michael Posner, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State, Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
- John Prendergast, Fmr. NSC and State Department staff member
- Amb. Maureen Quinn, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)

- Amb. Stephen J. Rapp, Fmr. Ambassador-at-Large, GCJ
- Amb. Charles A. Ray, Fmr. Ambassador to Zimbabwe; Senior FSO (ret.)
- Susan Reichle, USAID Senior Foreign Service officer; Counselor (ret.)
- Amb. David D. Reimer, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Amb. Susan E. Rice, Fmr. National Security Advisor; Fmr. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
- Anne C. Richard, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
- Stephen Rickard, Fmr. Senior Advisor, Bureau of South Asian Affairs
- Amb. David M. Robinson, Fmr. Ambassador; Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State (ret.)
- Amb. Peter F. Romero, Fmr. Ambassador to Ecuador; Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State
- Lionel Rosenblatt, Fmr. PRM official
- Amb. Leslie Rowe, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Barnett R. Rubin, Fmr. Senior Advisor to the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan
- Amb. Eric S. Rubin, Fmr. Ambassador to Bulgaria
- Amb. Janet A. Sanderson, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Amb. Teresita C. Schaffer, Fmr. Ambassador to Sri Lanka
- James A. Schear, Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
- Michael Schiffer, Fmr. Assistant Administrator, Asia Bureau, USAID
- Mark L. Schnet, Fmr. Assistant Administrator, USAID; Fmr. PDAS State Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Bureau
- Eric Schwartz, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
- Daniel Serwer, Minister-Counselor, U.S. Department of State; Fmr. U.S. Special Envoy and Coordinator for the Bosnian Federation
- Joe Sestak, Fmr. Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy; Fmr. Congressman
- Amb. John Shattuck, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; Fmr. Ambassador to the Czech Republic
- Anne-Marie Slaughter, Fmr. Director of Policy Planning, U.S. Department of State
- Donald Steinberg, Fmr. USAID Deputy Administrator; Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration

- Amb. Daniel Spiegel, Fmr. Ambassador to the European Office of the United Nations
- Amb. Daniel B. Smith, Fmr. Director of the Foreign Service Institute; Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research (ret.)
- Gayle Smith, Fmr. Administrator of USAID
- Thomas Staal, Fmr. USAID Counselor
- Amb. Mark C. Storella, Fmr. U.S. Ambassador to Zambia; Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
- Monica Stein-Olson, Career Minister, USAID (ret.)
- Kathleen Stephens, Fmr. Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Jane Stromseth, Fmr. Deputy for Global Criminal Justice, U.S. Department of State; Fmr. Director, National Security Council staff
- Arsalan Suleman, Fmr. Acting U.S. Special Envoy to the OIC
- Diana Swain, Fmr. USAID Mission Director
- Amb. Harry K. Thomas Jr., Fmr. Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Philippines, Bangladesh (ret.)
- Amb. Kurt W. Tong, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Margaret A. Tutwiler, Fmr. Senior Advisor, Global Food Security, Obama Administration
- Gary Usrey, Fmr. Senior Advisor, U.S. Mission to the United Nations
- Arturo A. Valenzuela, Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs; Fmr. Special Assistant to the President and Director for WHA, National Security Council
- Lynn N. Vega, Career Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Amb. Alexander Vershbow, Fmr. Ambassador to NATO, Russia, Republic of Korea; Fmr. Assistant Secretary of Defense; Fmr. NATO Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Alexander F. Watson, Fmr. Ambassador (ret.)
- Amb. Earl Anthony Wayne, Fmr. Ambassador; Fmr. Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs
- Lynne Weil, Fmr. Senior Advisor, U.S. Department of State
- Amb. David B. Wharton, Fmr. Ambassador to Zimbabwe; Fmr. Acting Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (ret.)
- Amb. Philip C. Wilcox, Jr., Fmr. Chief of Mission and Consul General in Jerusalem (ret.)
- Amb. Bisa Williams, Fmr. Ambassador to Niger (ret.)
- Samuel Witten, Fmr. Acting Assistant Secretary for Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

- David T. Wolfson, Senior Foreign Service Officer (ret.)
- Marcia K. Wong, Fmr. Deputy Assistant to the Administrator, USAID
- Sarah Yager, Fmr. Senior Advisor on Human Rights, Chairman's Office at The Joint Staff, U.S. Department of Defense, Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy, U.S. Mission to the United Nations
- Amb. Marie Yovanovitch, Fmr. Ambassador to Ukraine, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan
- Jane B. Zimmerman, Fmr. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor