

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 18, 2016

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations  
Room HT-2, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey:

We write to express our strong support for fully funding our nation's UN peacekeeping dues as part of the FY 2017 State/Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. With nearly 125,000 personnel serving in 16 missions around the world, UN peacekeeping constitutes the largest deployed multinational military force in the world. These operations help promote our nation's core security goals and values without requiring the commitment of U.S. troops. They are also a cost-effective investment of taxpayer funds, as UN missions are eight times cheaper overall than U.S. forces acting alone. This is why they have been championed by both Republican and Democratic Administrations.

UN peacekeepers have had some noteworthy achievements in recent years. For example, UN missions in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire played a central role in ensuring stability and facilitating free and fair elections in these countries. As a result of their efforts, both missions are currently in the process of drawing down. However, over the coming year, UN peacekeepers will continue to face unprecedented challenges in several major theaters of operation. In South Sudan, UN forces are currently working to protect nearly 200,000 civilians who have sought refuge at UN bases to escape a brutal two-year civil war. Meanwhile, in Mali, peacekeepers working to secure that country's vast northern region have increasingly come under threat from extremist groups, including a North African affiliate of al-Qaeda. Since the UN Mission in Mali first deployed in July 2013, 51 UN personnel have been killed in attacks by insurgents, with seven more killed just a few weeks ago. Further south, UN peacekeepers will continue to be needed to help neutralize armed groups operating in eastern Congo and secure the country ahead of national elections scheduled for the end of 2016. Outside of Africa, UN peacekeeping forces will continue to work to reduce tensions in the Middle East and ensure stability in Haiti.

In light of these ongoing risks and challenges, it is essential that Congress continue to honor our nation's obligations by fully funding our peacekeeping dues via the State Department's Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account. We request the inclusion of legislative language lifting the arbitrary 25% cap on U.S. contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, thereby allowing the U.S. to pay its peacekeeping dues at the full assessed rate of 28.57%. We would also like to express our support for a funding level of \$2.445 billion for CIPA in FY 17.

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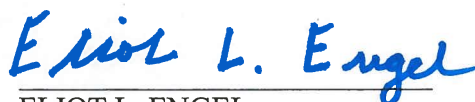
This figure is slightly higher than the \$2.394 billion CIPA request included in the President's FY 17 budget, because it assumes additional funding to cover estimated U.S. costs for the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). While the Administration requested no FY 17 funding for UNMIL, and the UN Security Council has stated that it intends to consider closing the mission, the Council is not slated to review UNMIL's mandate until December 2016. In the meantime, there are still more than 3,500 UN troops in Liberia working to provide civilian protection, facilitate humanitarian assistance, and promote human rights. As a result, the U.S. will incur a Liberia-related assessment from the UN in FY 17.

While the U.S. pays a larger portion of the UN's peacekeeping budget than any other country, we have veto power over the size of that budget because of our status as a permanent member of the Security Council. That special status also puts the U.S. in a unique position to push for peacekeeping reform. The UN's implementation of the U.S.-supported Global Field Support Strategy (GFSS), for example, resulted in an 18% reduction in the cost per peacekeeper between 2008 and 2015, and a decline in the number of support and security staff serving on UN peacekeeping missions by 3,000 over the same period. Moreover, in response to recent horrifying allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) committed by peacekeepers in the Central African Republic, in September 2015 UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced a series of proposals to combat SEA in peacekeeping. These initiatives include, among other things: "naming and shaming" individual troop-contributing countries (TCCs) by publishing country-specific information on SEA allegations; repatriating entire peacekeeping contingents when there are failures in command and control or evidence of violations by TCCs; and establishing a trust fund to assist victims of SEA. To ensure further progress on these and other reform measures, it is critical that the U.S. continue to engage constructively with the UN, including by paying our dues in full. To do otherwise reduces our credibility, cedes the terms of the debate to countries that do not share our priorities, and alienates our allies.

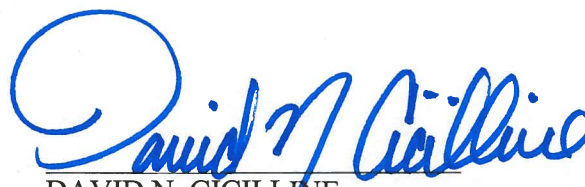
We would also like to express our support for two other peacekeeping-related items: the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) account and the Mechanism for Peace Operations Response (MPOR). We request that both of these accounts be fully funded at the levels included in the President's FY 17 budget.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests and for your longstanding support of UN peacekeeping. We hope that you will continue to ensure that these critical accounts receive the resources they need for UN peacekeeping missions to fulfill their mandates in FY 17.

Sincerely,




ELIOT L. ENGEL  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Foreign Affairs

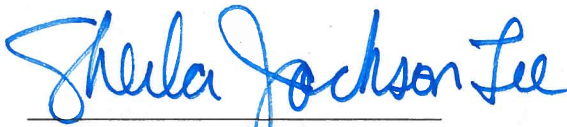



DAVID N. CICILLINE  
Member of Congress & Co-Chair, Congressional  
Peacekeeping Caucus

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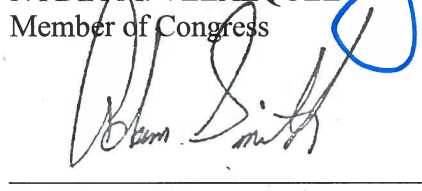
  
BARBARA LEE  
Member of Congress

  
GWEN MOORE  
Member of Congress

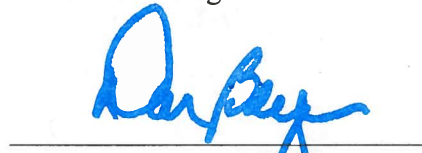
  
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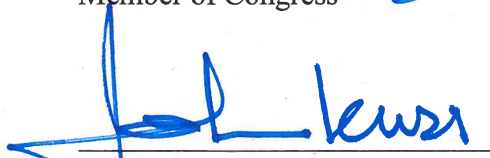
  
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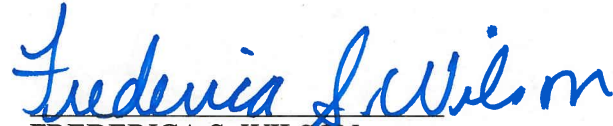
  
JOHN LEWIS  
Member of Congress

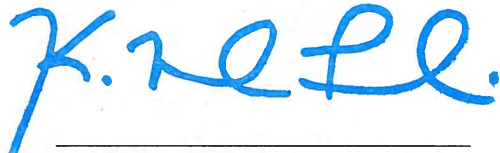
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JOHN GARAMENDI  
Member of Congress


  
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