

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 20, 2026

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State

Dear Secretary Rubio,

We write to request information regarding the State Department's proposed objectives for its foreign assistance priorities in Europe and Eurasia. The dissolution of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and transfer of selected foreign assistance responsibilities to the Department of State represent the most consequential restructuring of U.S. foreign assistance in decades. Foreign assistance plays a central role in advancing our national security and democratic values. Therefore, we believe the Department should be more transparent and forward-leaning regarding the use of foreign assistance funds to support America's interests and be accountable to Congress and the American people.

Unfortunately, after more than 1,300 State Department employees were fired through Reductions in Force (RIFs) and the administration's illegal dismantling of USAID, we are concerned that the impacts of the Department's reorganization extend well beyond internal bureaucratic reshuffling.¹ Importantly, these cuts, RIFs, and reorganizations have left Europe and Eurasia's most vulnerable states without the necessary support to strengthen energy security; promote successful justice and rural development initiatives, European Union integration, democratic resilience, and cybersecurity; and provide opportunities to U.S. businesses looking to invest in the region. Put simply, this administration has left an unprecedented aid gap that the Department has yet to fill.²

We appreciate the briefing from Department officials provided to Committee and Subcommittee staff on February 25, 2026. In this briefing, the Department outlined the following priorities for its foreign assistance in Europe: 1) shifting financial assistance to European partners; 2) implementing the President's "peace agenda"; 3) prioritizing U.S. safety and security; 4) advancing U.S. business interests and increasing U.S. exports; 5) advancing U.S. diplomatic objectives; and 6) securing a stable Europe through life-saving assistance and crisis prevention. We are concerned that the limited priorities outlined in this briefing and many accompanying congressional notifications received by the Committee lack the necessary clarity and detail to ensure Congress and the American people are fully informed of this administration's priorities in Europe.

First, the administration's foreign aid cuts have been short-sighted and self-defeating. The foreign assistance budget of the United States is minimal and has been below 1% of GDP since 1963.³ Even

¹ "State Department lays off over 1,300 employees under Trump administration plan," Matthew Lee, Farnoush Amiri, Manuel Balce Ceneta, Associated Press News, July 11, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/layoffs-diplomats-state-department-trump-rubio-bfdb86767b7bd5b6570819d404a7782e>.

² "The Great Aid Recession: 2025's Humanitarian Crash in Nine Charts," Sam Vigersky, The Council on Foreign Relations, December 23, 2025, <https://www.cfr.org/articles/great-aid-recession-2025s-humanitarian-crash-nine-charts>.

³ "What is US Foreign Assistance?" George Ingram, The Brookings Institution, September 12, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/what-is-us-foreign-assistance/>.

small amounts of foreign assistance spending can go a long way, and we believe that U.S. foreign assistance in Europe achieves U.S. foreign policy goals, like weakening Russia's ability to engage in energy blackmail and other subversive tactics. The administration claims its foreign aid cuts encourage burden-sharing, yet it failed to consult our European allies prior to canceling hundreds of programs in the Europe and Eurasia region. These actions leave critical assistance gaps that threaten our national security and embolden our adversaries, such as Russia and the People's Republic of China.

Second, we are deeply concerned regarding the Trump administration's lack of prioritization of humanitarian assistance and human rights in its foreign assistance strategy in Europe. In countries like Azerbaijan and Russia, state authorities have detained journalists from U.S.-funded media and cracked down on any display of dissent.⁴ Russia also continues to target Ukrainian civilians and infrastructure essential for the wellbeing and survival of the civilian population in its war of aggression in Ukraine, exacerbating humanitarian needs across the country.⁵ Rather than focusing solely on economic and diplomatic objectives, the United States should protect vulnerable populations through foreign assistance and demand full respect for the rules of war through its established channels with both the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

Third, the United States has long been an advocate for democratic values. This administration's failure to support vulnerable democracies in Europe is again short-sighted. For example, previous bipartisan administrations have provided important capacity-building support to anti-corruption agencies in countries like Ukraine and Moldova.⁶ In Belarus, U.S. support for the democratic movement supports American values and promotes the best interests of Belarusian citizens who live under a pro-Russia authoritarian regime.⁷ Democratic institutions deliver rights and civil liberties for citizens, and the United States should be ensuring its foreign assistance dollars, including the \$2.175 billion appropriated for the Democracy Fund in the FY26 NSRP appropriations bill, are used to support like-minded allies and partners to strengthen democracies, rather than turn a blind eye to the authoritarian tendencies of bad actors.⁸

Finally, we are concerned at the lack of publicly available metrics and performance indicators regarding how the Department will assess and measure the effectiveness of U.S. foreign assistance in Europe. Simply put, there has been no comprehensive, publicly available strategic framework released outlining the EUR bureau's development assistance goals, metrics for success, or geographic priorities. Moreover, performance indicators for determining spending decisions have not been shared with congressional authorizers or appropriators. A State Department Office of Inspector General (OIG) review noted that the realignment of USAID functions presents serious challenges and risks

⁴ "RFE/RL Journalist In Azerbaijan Sentenced To 9 Years," Will Tizard, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, June 20, 2025, <https://www.rferl.org/a/azerbaijan-baku-court-sentence-rfe-journalist-debunk-mehralizada-economy/33450122.html>

⁵ "Russia: Crackdown on Dissent Escalates," Human Rights Watch, February 4, 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2026/02/04/russia-crackdown-on-dissent-escalates>

⁶ "Supporting a Democratic and Secure Moldova," Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, July 12, 2023, <https://www.csce.gov/hearings/supporting-a-democratic-and-secure-moldova/>.

⁷ "U.S. Support for Democracy in Belarus," U.S. Department of State, December 4, 2024, <https://2021-2025.state.gov/u-s-support-for-democracy-in-belarus/>.

⁸ 140 Stat. 526

undermining the effectiveness of U.S. development efforts without clear plans and adequate workforce planning.⁹

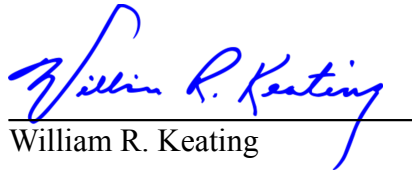
To ensure that congressionally appropriated funds are used effectively and in accordance with congressional intent, please provide the following information by June 2, 2026.

1. Any written strategic plans, guidance, or policy documents that outline how the EUR bureau intends to spend congressionally appropriated foreign assistance funds for FY26, including through the NSIP, AIOF, and Human Rights and Democracy Fund.
 - a. Provide similar documents for FY25 for the Assistance for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia Account; Economic Support Fund; Development Assistance Account; and Democracy Fund;
2. A comprehensive list of the current name, location, funding amount, and duration of all the Department's active foreign assistance programs in Europe and Eurasia, as well as the bureau which manages said programs.
3. How does the Department intend to coordinate across bureaus to ensure a coherent approach to foreign assistance that avoids duplication? Please be specific.
4. Detail the specific priorities for EUR-managed foreign assistance in the region.
5. How does the Department plan to utilize funding from each of the following accounts for foreign assistance programming in Europe: America First Opportunity Fund (AIOF) Global Health Programs, International Humanitarian Assistance, U.S. Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance, National Security Investment Programs, Human Rights and Democracy Fund, INCLE, NADR, PKO;
6. What is the Department's spend plan for the Human Rights and Democracy Fund budget line within EUR countries?
7. Identify the metrics, performance indicators, and evaluation frameworks that the EUR bureau will use to determine where and how funds will be allocated and how outcomes will be measured.
8. A breakdown of the number of staff EUR has hired to undertake foreign assistance responsibilities, including:
 - a. Total direct hire staff (including a breakdown of Foreign Service vs Civil Service placements)
 - b. Total locally employed staff in Europe

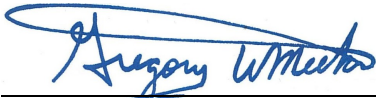
⁹ "Oversight of USAID-Funded Humanitarian Assistance Programming Impacted by Staffing Reductions and Pause on Foreign Assistance," USAID Office of Inspector General, February 10, 2025, <https://oig.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2025-02/USAID%20OIG%20-%20Oversight%20of%20USAID-Funded%20Humanitarian%20Assistance%20Programming%20021025.pdf>.

- c. Total number of contractors based in Washington, D.C. and in the Europe and Eurasia region
 - d. The number of individuals formerly employed by USAID
9. Describe steps the Department is taking to ensure effective internal controls, monitoring, and evaluation of EUR-managed foreign aid awards.

Sincerely,



William R. Keating
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Europe



Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
House Committee on Foreign
Affairs



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



Julie Johnson
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Sarah McBride
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