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Press Release

US Academic Leaders Strongly Oppose the US Administration’s Freeze of Foreign Assistance.

The Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) www.cugh.org is the world’s largest consortium of academic institutions engaged in addressing global health challenges across research, education and service. Over 110 US academic institutions are members of the organization.

CUGH strongly opposes the US administration’s announcement this week that it is freezing all funds for Official Development Assistance (ODA) for the fiscal year 2018-2019. ODA has historically received bipartisan support because most Republican and Democratic lawmakers see this as a way to effectively support US security and economic interests. Legislators have also agreed that this is morally the correct thing to do. Freezing aid undermines these interests.

The amount of funds affected is miniscule ($2- $4 Billion) compared to the total US federal budget of $4.407 Trillion. The total FY2019 budget for official development assistance is approximately $50 Billion or about 1% of the total federal budget.

This freeze blocks US funding in 10 areas including contributions to: global health, development assistance, multilateral organizations (which includes over 30 UN agencies), peacekeeping operations, and international narcotics control. These cuts will undermine US efforts to address an array of global health challenges such as: preventing pandemics, conflict prevention, food security, reducing maternal and child deaths, addressing HIV, TB, malaria and much more.

This action will also have powerful, negative, domestic effects. Investments in global health in the US creates jobs and enhances the economy. It enables the US to be the world’s leader in research and innovation. Freezing these investments undermines the US’ ability to maintain this global position and will have a deleterious effect on America’s scientific and academic community, its economy and security.

CUGH strongly encourages President Trump to act in the national interest and unfreeze these funds.

Sincerely,

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