



Middle East Spotlight

The Case for Foreign Aid

In an ever more chaotic world, clear American leadership is critical. Over three billion people worldwide have benefitted from U.S. food assistance programs; nearly seven million people with AIDS/HIV have been treated thanks to the United States; and U.S. supported immunization programs save more than three million people every year. At just slightly more than one percent of the U.S. government spending, foreign aid is one of the most cost effective, impactful and positive displays of American leadership.

Foreign aid also provides benefits at home. In the current global economy—in which ninety-five percent of the world’s consumers live outside the United States and one in five American jobs is linked to U.S. exports—foreign markets are crucial to the growth of American businesses. By helping countries stabilize their governments and economies, the United States fosters new customer bases for American businesses and creates more jobs at home. As former Chairman and CEO of Caterpillar James Owens remarked, “As a business person, I understand the value of getting good return on your dollar. And that’s what we get when we fund our diplomatic efforts and international programs.”

In addition, the aid we send overseas helps the United States cope with significant, ever-evolving security challenges. American military leaders have repeatedly warned that the United States cannot meet its security challenges through military action alone—foreign aid, including active and committed American diplomacy, reinforces American military efforts to promote stability in crucial conflict zones.

Security assistance to Israel highlights the dividends of a robust foreign aid budget. U.S. aid to Israel provides the Jewish state the resources it needs to serve as an anchor of stability in the region and deter the combination of forces arrayed against it. In 2007, the United States and Israel signed a 10-year Memorandum of Understanding calling for America to provide \$30 billion in security assistance over the next decade. And in 2016, the two countries signed a new agreement that pledges \$38 billion in U.S. security assistance between 2019 and 2028, including \$5 billion for missile defense.

Cooperation between the U.S. and Israel in intelligence, homeland security, missile defense and counterterrorism has helped the United States meet its growing security challenges. As a result of the strong friendship between Israel and the United States, the Israel Defense Forces and the U.S. military share technologies and techniques that greatly benefit both nations. In June 2017, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities Thomas Harvey [praised](#) the mutually beneficial, bilateral relationship, stating, “The jointly developed Arrow and David’s Sling weapon system programs provide Israel with the capability to defend itself against imminent and emerging ballistic missile threats while benefiting the United States through technology sharing.”

When America invests in foreign aid—including for Israel’s security—it invests in its own security and prosperity. This is an important message to convey to our members of Congress.

Please visit www.aipac.org to learn more about supporting a robust U.S. foreign aid budget.