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**GRANGER OPENING STATEMENT: FY 2014 STATE AND FOREIGN
OPERATIONS APPROPRIATIONS MARK UP**

Good morning and welcome to the Subcommittee markup of the Fiscal Year 2014 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill.

I want to begin by thanking Ranking Member Lowey for her dedication to this Subcommittee and her leadership as Ranking Member of the Full Committee. Mrs. Lowey and I have a strong working relationship and we are both invested in the important work in the Subcommittee. It is a pleasure to work with her and I respect her very much.

I want to thank all the members of our Subcommittee – from both sides of the aisle – for their participation and thoughtful contributions to this bill. We held seven hearings to address time-sensitive issues, such as embassy security and Syria, and we have had meetings to address global health, the situation in the Middle East and illegal wildlife trafficking. Thank you all for your continued engagement and support.

As you know, the bill before us reduces funding by billions of dollars from current levels, reflecting the very real economic and financial problems that we face here at home. Given this challenge, the bill protects the most critical priorities first – spending directly related to our national security. This means we are not able to fund everything at the levels we have in previous years, including programs that I support.

There are many security priorities in this bill, but first and foremost, we need to keep American diplomatic staff safe while they represent the United States abroad. The terrorist attack in Benghazi and protests at other diplomatic posts last fall were tragic and we hope they never happen again. This bill continues to recognize the security risks our diplomatic posts face and fully funds the embassy security request at \$4.8 billion.

We recognize the instability and unpredictable environment in the Middle East, and continue strong support for our key allies in the region, Israel and Jordan. At the same time, security challenges continue much closer to home, so the bill supports our partners in Latin America to strengthen law enforcement and fight drug-trafficking.

The bill also focuses on democracy promotion and international broadcasting to help promote American values abroad. Life-saving HIV/AIDS and humanitarian assistance programs are also prioritized.

The bill supports efforts to address the wildlife poaching and trafficking crisis. This is more than just a conservation issue. This is a national security issue. The illegal wildlife trade is a multi-billion dollar industry that threatens the stability of African countries and supports criminal and terrorist networks, both of which affect the security of the United States. We provide funds to strengthen anti-poaching law enforcement, reduce consumer demand, and enhance regional and diplomatic cooperation, in order to meet these urgent needs.

In order to do all of this, the bill eliminates, reduces, or puts on “pause” many lower-priority programs.

This bill also contains many important policy provisions. Around the world in places where the United States has security interests, we cannot predict how things will turn out, so we provide the Administration the ability to respond, but we strengthen conditions so that Congress can oversee the funds.

Everyone is closely watching the situation in Egypt, and the relationship between the United States and Egypt has never been more critical. For that reason, this bill continues funding if certain conditions are met.

First and foremost, we see the Egyptian military continuing to uphold security arrangements, including the peace treaty with Israel, even while they address many competing priorities at home. We expect the strong military-to-military relationship that Egypt has with Israel, and with the United States, to continue. We also make it clear in our conditions that we want Egypt to embrace democracy, not just democratic elections. We remain hopeful for the Egyptian people as they continue to go through this very difficult transition.

We support efforts to restart negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in the near future. Peace is not possible through unilateral statehood efforts and this bill tightens conditions on aid for the Palestinian Authority in this regard.

Our economic assistance will stop if the Palestinian Authority achieves statehood or equivalent status at United Nations agencies, if they pursue actions at the International Criminal Court, or if they form a unity government with Hamas.

As a result of the Palestinians being granted membership in UNESCO, the bill does not provide funding for that agency, consistent with the law that prohibits it.

This bill continues to support our key strategic partner Israel by fully funding the Memorandum of Understanding. This Subcommittee understands just how critical it is to support Israel. Whether it is the ongoing threat from Iran trying to pursue a nuclear weapon – or the instability that continues in the region – Israel’s security faces serious threats and the support from Congress has never been stronger.

This Subcommittee understands the risks, and we understand what is at stake for both Israel and the United States.

This bill also supports our critical partner and ally, Jordan, by including the requested \$660 million for economic and security assistance. Jordan’s economy is under tremendous strain because they are dealing with the spillover from the conflict in Syria. Jordan needs our support,

and we include additional funding for the costs associated with the hundreds of thousands of refugees they have welcomed into the country.

Our partners in Latin America remain a priority. This bill continues to support our neighbor Mexico. Mexico's security has a direct impact on our national security. We want to work with the new government to address our shared concerns and build a lasting security and economic relationship that benefits both of our countries.

We also commend the government of Colombia on their success against drug trafficking, and include funds to support the great work they are doing to train security forces from other countries.

This bill includes funding in a separate Overseas Contingency Operations section called OCO. This spending allows critical programs to be funded in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, as well as in places where terrorism and instability threaten U.S. interests. OCO spending goes down 42 percent in this bill, as missions in the front-line countries scale back.

As U.S. forces draw down in Afghanistan, we have to ensure that our State Department and USAID staff – those who are responsible for delivering assistance – are safe and secure.

There are serious concerns about how security is being handled by the government of Afghanistan. This bill withholds a portion of funding until we get a transition plan and more details on how we are going to keep our people safe on the ground.

In addition, this bill focuses on oversight, accountability, and the rights of Afghan women and girls – issues Mrs. Lowey first included while she was Chair.

This bill continues conditions from the prior year for Pakistan by prohibiting funds unless the government of Pakistan is cooperating with the United States on counterterrorism efforts and other issues.

Moving to multilateral assistance, this bill supports contributions to the international financial institutions that benefit the poorest countries. It also imposes conditions on multilateral development banks to ensure transparency and accountability.

The bill increases accountability for the money we provide to the United Nations and other international organizations. Thanks to language we started in Fiscal Year 2012 to change how we do business with the UN, more UN agencies are putting their audits and reviews online for American taxpayers to see.

This bill includes language ensuring that funds do not support abortions. It also eliminates funds for the UN Population Fund – UNFPA. Mrs. Lowey and I have clear differences on these issues, and as I have said before, we have agreed to disagree.

In closing, this bill makes tough funding choices and addresses many complex foreign policy problems, but these are the choices we have to make in this budget environment and in a rapidly changing world.

I know it is said often, but I want to express my most sincere gratitude for the hard work of the staff. They were given a difficult task and did an outstanding job.

The staff's loyalty and dedication is recognized. From the Majority Staff, I want to thank the Clerk Anne Marie Chotvacs, Craig Higgins, Alice Hogans, Susan Adams, Clelia Alvarado, and Jamie Guinn.

From my personal staff, I want to thank Johnnie Kaberle and Joe Wang.

From the Minority Staff, I want to recognize Steve Marchese and Erin Kolodjeski, and Talia Dubovi in Mrs. Lowey's personal office.

I will now turn to Ranking Member Lowey for her opening statement.

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