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June 7, 2011

To the Members of the United States Congress:

We write to express strong support for the authorizing and appropriating measures for the World Bank Group and for several of the regional development institutions.

Unwavering American leadership in multilateral development bank (MDB) policies and governance since World War II has provided very important returns: promoting national security interests in strategic countries; advancing U.S. business opportunities abroad; and furthering global humanitarian priorities including reducing poverty, increasing food security, opening new educational opportunities and improving governance.

MDB support to strategically important countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan is vital to ensuring the sustained development and reform needed to achieve long-term stability. MDB funding assistance in Afghanistan, for example, helped develop the legal and regulatory regime for the telecommunications sector, which has since attracted \$1 billion in private investment. Without continuing support U.S. national security investments including in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency assistance could be undermined.

In response to the recent global economic slowdown the World Bank and the regional development banks moved swiftly to expand lending and provide advice to impacted countries. Support for growth in poor and emerging economies also means preserving and advancing the interests of American companies and workers that trade and invest in these countries. The multilateral institutions have played an important role in helping open markets and spur private sector-led economic growth and employment creation – all of which pays a substantial dividend for U.S. business growth and job creation.

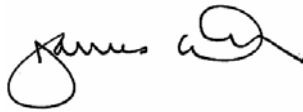
MDB funding enables the United States to leverage its investment many times over. With respect to a capital increase, a single U.S. dollar contributed yields up to \$55 over time in new resources to invest in development because of contributions of other countries and the banks' ability to borrow most of the funds they lend in private markets. Every dollar contributed to MDB soft loan windows which help the poorest counties (like Haiti, Afghanistan and Egypt) is matched by 6 dollars from other donor countries.

There is a long history of bipartisan support and leadership in the multilateral institutions including every President back to Truman and Eisenhower to today. The comparative costs are not high: the total MDB request of \$3.32 billion represents approximately 5 percent of the U.S. foreign operations account. Failure to take up shares by participating in new capital increases would reduce U.S. vote share in development banks and jeopardize the ability of the United States to continue its long history of leadership and guidance on policy directions.

Members of the Bretton Woods Committee stand ready to work with lawmakers to help make the case to the public for these increases, and we hope they will have your early and strong support. We would urge the Congress to continue its longstanding, bipartisan support for the MDBs for the good of the global system and for America's self interest.

Respectfully yours,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James C. Orr", with a stylized flourish at the end.

James C. Orr
Secretary

On Behalf of the Members of the Bretton Woods Committee