April 15, 2015

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, urge you to act expeditiously to nominate a permanent Administrator to the United States Agency for International Development. Having a Senate-confirmed appointee at the helm of USAID is essential to advancing U.S. development goals and the aid effectiveness agenda.

We have been pleased to see the administration prioritize development alongside defense and diplomacy as a key pillar of U.S. foreign policy. Under the leadership of Administrator Rajiv Shah and Acting Administrator Alfonso Lenhardt, USAID has proven the important role that foreign assistance plays in support of our policy goals. Without a confirmed political appointment, this continued elevation and inclusion of the development voice is at risk.

In recent years, USAID has made dramatic steps in strengthening its capacity to deliver results for the American people and for people in developing countries around the world. The USAID Forward agenda, for example, is focused on ensuring that U.S. development assistance supports the outcomes of the Busan Partnerships for Effective Development Cooperation, including ownership of development priorities by developing countries, a focus on results and sustainable impact, creating new partnerships for development including all local actors, and ensuring co-operation is transparent and accountable to all citizens.

When the Administrator position was vacant in 2009 for nearly a full year, USAID and its programs suffered. As an agency that already lacks a Cabinet-level voice, having strong leadership at the top is important that foreign assistance plays in support of our policy goals. Without a confirmed political appointment, this continued elevation and inclusion of the development voice is at risk.

We ask that you nominate a new Administrator as soon as possible to sustain strong U.S. leadership on development programs that are vital to our national interests and an expression of our core values.

Sincerely,

The Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN) was created to build upon the bipartisan consensus that has emerged over the last decade that the U.S. should play a leadership role in achieving economic growth and reducing poverty and suffering around the world, and that we can play our role more effectively, efficiently, and transparently. For more information, please visit www.modernizeaid.net.