Statement of Senator Richard G. Lugar (Ret.) on House Passage of Aid Transparency Legislation

December 9, 2015

As a long time champion of the role of effective foreign assistance in U.S. foreign policy and the lead Senate sponsor of the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act in the 112th Congress, I was extremely gratified to learn of House passage of similar legislation introduced this Congress by the bill’s House champion, Congressman Ted Poe (R-TX) yesterday.

During my tenure at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including as its Chairman and Ranking Republican member, I witnessed the vital role that foreign assistance, separate and distinct from U.S. diplomacy and military actions, plays in U.S. foreign policy. It is the critical long-term investment in key sectors – food security, health, education, economic development - that helps to bring greater stability and economic growth across the globe. Improving upon the effectiveness of our foreign assistance programs is a must in today’s world.

More than ever the expenditure of every U.S. taxpayer dollar must be effectively spent in the development space, not just for taxpayer accountability, but also for greatest impact for those receiving our assistance. Legislation requiring increased accountability of these funds, both by requiring greater transparency and strengthened systems for monitoring and evaluating these programs, takes an important step in ensuring effectiveness.

I applaud the U.S. House of Representatives in recognizing the important role that they play in bringing greater transparency and accountability to U.S. foreign assistance and congratulate my former colleague, Congressman Poe, on his continued leadership of this important policy.