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

July 6, 2016

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I am extremely pleased to note that last evening the House of Representatives cleared an amended version of the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act (H.R. 3766) following Senate passage of the identical legislation last week. This action was the last legislative hurdle before the bill could be sent to the President for his signature.

As I have noted in prior statements about this important bill as it progressed through the legislative process, last evening’s accomplishment is the result of several years of work and sustained leadership on behalf of the bill’s sponsors, including its initial champion, Congressman Ted Poe (R-TX), with whom I partnered on an earlier version in the 112th Congress. Together with bipartisan efforts by the bill’s lead sponsors Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA) in the House and my former colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), both taxpayers who provide funding for U.S. foreign aid programs and those who receive that aid in the form of vital food, medicines, water, and education programs to name just a few, may now have greater confidence in the quality and effectiveness of these programs.

By requiring greater transparency and regular reporting to a publicly available website in describing where U.S. aid is being spent and on what projects, as well as setting standards for monitoring and evaluating these programs, Congress is more deeply invested in the oversight of these important programs. With greater effectiveness, we are encouraged that those most in need of U.S. aid may benefit from our assistance so that they may move out of poverty, chronic hunger and other life-threatening challenges and into a world of opportunity in which they may support themselves and their families.

I extend my sincere congratulations to each of the bill’s sponsors, as well as the leaders of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) and Ranking Member Eliot Engel (D-NY) and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker (R-TN) and Ranking Member Ben
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Cardin (D-MD) for their fine and committed efforts to finalizing this important, bipartisan, foreign assistance legislation.