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The Next Step in Changing the World

December 2, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As representatives of 103 member groups of the Peace Corps community, we ask you to revive the call to service in the Peace Corps by seeking robust Peace Corps funding in your Fiscal Year 2015 budget request and moving Peace Corps funding back towards its Fiscal Year 2010 high-water mark of \$400 million.

We applaud your July 15, 2013 Memorandum on Expanding National Service. We are pleased that representatives of the Peace Corps are included on your task force on expanding national service. **We strongly urge that task force recommendations for expansion include a robust commitment to expanded international service – including and especially service in the Peace Corps.**

In your memorandum, you note “National service and volunteering can be effective solutions to national challenges and can have positive and lasting impacts that reach beyond the immediate service experience.”

We fully agree and are proud of the role Peace Corps Volunteers have played in demonstrating our nation’s cost-effective commitment to global engagement that promotes peace through collaborative development assistance, friendship and understanding.

At the same time, tens of thousands of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) serve as a daily reminder of the ongoing service commitment our community makes here at home. A 2011 survey of RPCVs confirmed this. Sixty percent of RPCVs reported their service influenced their choice of career. For two-thirds of those respondents who served in the 2000s, that choice involved continued service in the education or non-profit sectors. Many others reported working in the areas of government service, international development, health care and business.

While we appreciate the significant fiscal challenges our nation faces, we also believe in the significant return on investment our Peace Corps Volunteers provide to our nation.

We firmly believe that one tangible way you can advance your national service agenda is to request a significant increase in Peace Corps funding and reverse the recent downward trend in the number of volunteers serving overseas.

Mr. President, we thank you for considering this request, and wish you the very best.

Sincerely,

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