

# OneAID Community Updates

March 7, 2025

## Key Updates

- The administration is considering [criminal referrals](#) to the DoJ for USAID employees and/or grantees over alleged waste, fraud, and abuse, per Pete Marocco at a March 5 HFAC meeting. He also declined to comment on whether the Administration will pay for completed work following the March 5 Supreme Court ruling.
- **Legal Updates:**
  - **In the USAID implementing partners lawsuit** the government was ordered to pay plaintiffs for work completed before February 13 by 6 pm on March 10. The judge requested both sides propose a timeline for other payments by 12:00 ET on March 7 and heard arguments on Constitutional/separation of powers issues regarding executive and legislative roles in foreign affairs and foreign aid. A Preliminary Injunction favoring plaintiffs is expected within two weeks.
  - **In the USAID Personal Services Contractors lawsuit, the [temporary Restraining Order \(TRO\) was denied](#)** by the judge on March 6, who found no “irreparable harm.”
- **The president of the United States African Development Foundation (USADF) lawsuit [filed a lawsuit](#)** to block DOGE and Pete Marocco’s illegal takeover of the agency.
- **Keep calling your senators and representatives.** Choose one terminated life-saving program, and demand an explanation for its cancellation and ask when the U.S. Government will honor its contracts and pay its bills. There are three major asks for Congress right now, so ask your representative to:
  1. **Support foreign assistance funding in the continuing resolution**, which Congress must pass by March 14. Provide an outline for the plan to reverse the dismantling of USAID and spend duly appropriated funds.
  2. **Urge the Trump administration to halt and reverse all terminations of active foreign assistance programs and resume the disbursement of Congressionally appropriated foreign assistance funds**, in line with Congressional power of the purse.
  3. **Ensure the payment system is fully operational and staffed with capable personnel to implement waived programs and disburse past-due funds.** The Supreme Court rejected the Trump administration’s request to lift a lower-court order demanding the government quickly pay, meaning **the administration MUST pay implementing partners for over \$2 billion in work completed.** Without immediate action, partners face bankruptcy and the international development sector faces imminent collapse.

More details below...

### **Marocco Considers Criminal Referrals, Silent on Whether the Administration will Pay Implementing Partners What They’re Owed – HFAC Hearing Recap**

- On March 5, State Office of Foreign Assistance Director Pete Marocco had a closed-door meeting with the House Foreign Affairs Committee. During the meeting, Marocco claimed the administration had found waste, fraud, and abuse and is considering

criminal referrals with the Department of Justice against USAID employees and grant recipients. ([The Hill](#))

- Democratic committee members told media that Marocco provided no specifics on the administration's aid review or program cuts, saying in a statement *"what's happening under Mr. Marocco is not reform—it is a wrecking ball that violates the law and makes our country less safe while compromising our values, creating opportunities for our adversaries and abandoning decades long partnerships."* ([Reuters](#), [SFRC](#))
- Marocco avoided answering whether the administration will comply with the March 5 Supreme Court ruling rejecting the administration's freeze on overdue foreign aid payments. He also admitted that the waivers intended for lifesaving aid are not being implemented, according to Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX).
- As the Trump administration continues to delay payment for overdue bills to the aid groups hired to implement USAID programs, aid groups working in-country report privately that communities are questioning US commitments to meet essential needs. They say: "It will no longer be safe for us to implement if we keep not paying our vendors. We will not be welcome in communities. We know Congress wants to keep some things—very well, pay us so [that] we can still exist when you make up your mind."

#### **USAID Implementing Partners Lawsuit: Marathon Hearing on Merits, Logistics**

- **Background:** USAID implementing partners (IP) have an ongoing legal challenge to the stop work order and 90-day pause on foreign assistance. Judge Ali of the U.S. District Court for D.C. issued a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) and a motion to enforce it, requiring the government to pay \$2 billion in obligated aid by February 26. The administration sought to vacate the order, but, on March 5, the Supreme Court denied the request ([CNN](#)) and kicked the case back to Judge Ali to *"clarify what obligations the Government must fulfill to ensure compliance with the TRO, with due regard for the feasibility of any compliance timelines."* ([AP](#))
- **Update:** During a four hour hearing on March 6, Judge Ali heard arguments on 1) the underlying merits of the IP's case (legality of EO on the foreign assistance pause and the Stop Work Order put in place to implement the EO), and 2) setting a feasible timeline to comply with the Supreme Court's directive on the TRO enforcement order.
  - Regarding the TRO enforcement order, Judge Ali will order defendants to pay the all named plaintiffs' invoices), along with all organizations holding Letters of Credit with Health and Human Services (HHS), for work completed before February 13 by 18:00 ET on March 10. Counsel from both sides are required to submit proposed deadlines for other required payments under the original TRO by 12:00, March 7. He anticipates identifying a payment plan in a forthcoming preliminary injunction. Judge Ali also noted the original TRO (which he granted on February 13) is broader than simply completing payments; he plans to address other issues in future orders/rulings such as rescinding contract terminations.
  - Judge Ali's ultimate decision with respect to the broader relief sought by the IPs—who originally sought to stop the President and other defendants from enforcing the EO in its entirety—will depend on his interpretation of

Constitutional and appropriations law related to the extent to which Presidents can overrule Congressional appropriations related to foreign assistance. The judge seemed favorable to the position of the implementing partners that relief under the APA would not be limited to the named plaintiffs in the case.

- Parties agreed plaintiffs received some payments overnight, totaling approximately \$70 million. Judge Ali pointedly noted at the end of argument as he was issuing his ruling with instructions for written proposals by noon Friday, that prior to January 17, USAID issued thousands of payments daily. With just 2-3000 payments now in arrears for IP payments across the board, the Monday deadline should be achievable for this smaller subset of payments. The judge stated he was inclined to select a timeline somewhere between Monday and the 30-45 days requested by defendants to make all payees whole. The Judge appeared highly motivated to respond to the Supreme Court and its requirement of a feasible timeline.
- Also of note, the Judge raised a case several times that was not referenced by either side—"Aiken County"—in which then-federal district judge Kavanaugh, found very clearly that the power of the purse is core to separation of powers and must be respected. This reference by Judge Ali would seem to be a strong hint to plaintiffs to cite this case which, when appealed to SCOTUS as is expected, might garner Justice Kavanaugh's vote in favor of plaintiffs. The Impoundment Act along with APA is now squarely on the table. The case by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) filed on March 5, focuses on impoundment but since it is at an earlier stage, this IP case is most likely to get to SCOTUS first, with Justice Alito's dissent basically inviting writ certiorari, in which case could lead to a definitive ruling on impoundment by SCOTUS by the close of its annual session in June.

### **USAID Personal Services Contractors Lawsuit: Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) Denied on by Judge who Found No "Irreparable Harm"**

- **Background:** The [Personal Services Contractor \(PSC\) Association](#) filed suit on February 18, challenging Executive Order 14169 and subsequent actions that effectively suspended U.S. foreign aid and began dismantling USAID. The plaintiffs, representing USAID PSCs—who are key members and a large proportion of USAID staff—allege these actions have caused severe disruption, as contractors have been locked out of facilities and email, are facing eviction overseas, losing access to healthcare, and being unable to carry out humanitarian aid work. A TRO was requested asking to be allowed to resume work.
- **Update:** On March 6, Judge Nichols of the U.S. District Court for D.C. denied the TRO because:
  - The judge views the case as a federal contract dispute for which plaintiffs should seek relief in either the U.S. Court of Federal Claims or the Civilian Board of Contract appeals; and
  - The plaintiffs did not establish imminent and irreparable harm (requirements for a TRO), due to the judge's perception that plaintiffs were located in relatively safe

areas. Plaintiffs argued that uprooting lives overseas, particularly for people with medical conditions, is irreparable harm. Judge Nichols, however, felt that contractors could request waivers to return at a later date or be addressed via money damages. ([Devex](#))

### **President of United States African Development Foundation Files Suit to Block DOGE and Pete Marocco's Illegal Takeover of the Small, Congressionally-Established Independent Agency**

- President of the United States African Development Foundation (USADF) Ward Brehm filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for D.C. to prevent DOGE from unlawfully accessing USADF, removing him as President, and shutting down the agency. ([Democracy Forward](#))
- [The suit](#), brought by Democracy Forward, argues that DOGE's actions violate the Appointments Clause and the African Development Foundation Act.
- USADF plays a critical role in fostering economic stability in fragile regions by investing in over 1,000 African-owned businesses and organizations, lifting millions out of poverty, and contributing to global security. Brehm and Democracy Forward warn that shutting down USADF would harm both African communities and U.S. interests, destabilizing conflict-prone areas and undermining efforts to create safer, more resilient societies. Democracy Forward vows to use all available legal tools to block what it calls an unlawful overreach by DOGE.

### **Upcoming events**

- March 7: [Stand Up for Science](#) is supporting rallies in D.C. and [31 other cities](#).
- March 8: [International Women's Day](#). Hundreds of [events and marches](#) planned.

### **Consistent Topline Messages (Talking Points)**

#### **Preserving Foreign Assistance as a U.S. Foreign Policy Tool**

- An effort from the Trump administration and Congress to reform and streamline U.S. foreign assistance is welcome, however, **the current approach is not a serious reform effort**: it is an ineffective, sloppy power grab that is—unintentionally or not—destroying U.S. foreign assistance apparatus and depriving the U.S. of a critical soft-power tool. Foreign assistance keeps us safer here at home while demonstrating American generosity and saving millions of lives worldwide.
- This flawed power grab is evident in the **broken waiver process, which lacked clear procedures and failed to operate effectively, as well as in last week's cancellation of over 10,000 State and USAID contracts**, some of which had already been granted waivers.
- Despite the Administration's claims, **even life-saving and critical national security projects approved for waivers by Secretary Rubio have not received funding**. This stems from rushed, careless efforts to alter USAID's financial system (Phoenix), rendering it non-operational and incapable of processing payments. This includes efforts to stem an Ebola outbreak that could infect Americans, HIV prevention and treatment, and sensitive work in conflict zones.

- The Trump Administration’s efforts to dismantle USAID has **left the U.S. without the systems, experienced personnel, or partners necessary to responsibly and strategically implement foreign assistance.**
- Americans agree: foreign assistance is a powerful U.S. soft-power tool, and [89 percent](#) of Americans support spending at least 1 percent of our federal budget on foreign aid. For this reason, **Congress must halt these illegal actions by DOGE and instead implement a more strategic, sensible reform effort that restores the legislative branch’s important oversight function.**

### **USAID: The first, but not the last**

- USAID is the playbook for President Trump and Elon Musk’s plan for a **rapid and potentially illegal overhaul of the U.S. Government** without required Congressional approval and oversight for agencies codified by statute. Reform is welcome, but what DOGE is doing is not reform, it is taking a sledgehammer to destroy a vital tool of U.S. national security.
- Rep. Bacon (R-NE) underscored this in his comments to the Wall Street Journal: “[USAID was] funding a lot of stupid stuff—that’s a fact. But they’re also doing a lot of good stuff too. So you don’t want to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Instead of taking a sledgehammer, let’s get out the scalpel.”
- **Some Republican Senators have joined their Democratic colleagues in expressing alarm** over the Trump administration’s foreign aid freeze and gutting of USAID. [Lindsey Graham \(R-SC\)](#), [Lisa Murkowski \(R-AK\)](#), and [Susan Collins \(R-ME\)](#) wrote to Secretary Rubio stating they believe the State Department is acting unlawfully by failing to notify and consult Congress during the process.
- Instead of undertaking a reform effort—working closely with Congress as is required by law—DOGE has taken a “burn it all down” approach, including mass firings and major infringements on Congress’s power of the purse. This may work for tech firms, but it is a **dangerous approach for government institutions that must remain accountable to taxpayers, enforce and follow laws, and deliver public goods.**

## **Current Impact**

### **American Economy and Jobs:**

- [Confirmed Job Losses from our partners at USAIDStopWork](#): 13,715 Americans have lost their jobs, been furloughed, or placed on administrative leave. 58,705 jobs globally (non-American) have been lost as of March 5, 2025.
- In **Ohio**, farmers export half their soybeans and over 1 million tons of U.S. farm products are purchased annually through USAID programs to provide food aid overseas. Some producers depend on USAID food programs and cutting USAID programs, combined with other existing stressors in agriculture, is impacting farmers. ([Ohio WYSO](#))
- USAID has directed millions of dollars to state colleges and universities for their technical and research capabilities. These programs have been halted as a result of the foreign aid freeze:
  - **Michigan** State University and **Mississippi** State University both received

five-year grants in 2024 from USAID to strengthen STEM programs in Malawi and help alleviate poverty by improving nutrition through aquatic foods in Asia and Africa. The aid disruptions have reportedly halted research at land grant universities in at least 13 states focused on fighting hunger and malnutrition. ([Forbes](#))

- The University of **Illinois** Soybean Innovation Lab was forced to lay off all 30 lab staff and plans to close the lab on April 15, dealing a blow to African soybean farmers who depend on technical assistance to boost agricultural yields. ([Forbes](#))
- **Arizona** State University partnered with USAID for over a decade to address issues like border security, reducing reliance on global competitors like China, creating skilled labor forces, and building alliances in parts of the world that are strategically important, all of which provided economic benefits to the U.S. ([ASU](#))

### **Humanitarian Assistance**

- The **International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)**—a global network of humanitarian NGOs—prepared a report to provide a snapshot of the immediate consequences and emerging trends resulting from the abrupt shifts U.S. foreign aid policy: lives are at risk with vulnerable populations most affected, confusion and panic are widespread, access challenges and security risks are increasing, there are heightened expectations on remaining operational organizations, the global humanitarian system is significantly weakened, and local and international NGOs face financial collapse. (ReliefWeb - [Report](#) and [Slides](#))
- As a result of USAID funding cuts, the UN World Food Program (WFP) has been forced to drastically reduce food aid:
  - In **Bangladesh**, WFP was forced to cut food rations for Rohingya refugees in half, impacting over one million refugees in the world's largest refugee settlement, which will have significant health and safety impacts. ([ReliefWeb](#))
  - In **Kenya**, thousands of refugees clashed with police in a refugee camp after receiving news that WFP was forced to cut 40% of the basic minimum food ration due to U.S. foreign aid cuts. ([Guardian](#))

### **Democracy, Rights, and Governance**

- The **Brookings Institution** facilitated a roundtable discussion on global south perspectives on U.S. development assistance changes and future directions. One participant described the disruption to the U.S. foreign assistance structure and system as having broken trust and faith, not just with U.S. assistance but with the entire international development system. ([ReliefWeb](#))
- In **North Korea**, UN envoy warned U.S. funding cuts will impair the work of human rights organizations that play a crucial role in promoting and protecting the human rights of people in North Korea in the complete absence of civil society. ([ReliefWeb](#))
- In **Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela**, USAID funding cuts are hampering local organizations' work to promote and strengthen democracy and freedom of speech. ([CBS News - Video](#))

## National/International Media Review

- KFF: [The Trump Administration's Foreign Aid Freeze and Global Health: The Biggest Gaps Left on the Donor Landscape](#)
- NY Times: [A Timeline of Cuts, Legal Orders and Chaos at U.S.A.I.D.](#)
- ABC News (Video): [Head of International Rescue Committee on the USAID cuts](#)
- Devex: ['That money is going to sink us!': USAID-funded startups fight to survive](#)
- Washington Post: [Trump's foreign aid demolition hits major Christian charities](#)
- The Economist: [Donald Trump's cuts to USAID will hurt Asia, too](#)
- Center for Global Development: [Report - The Future of US Foreign Assistance: How Low Can They Go?](#)
- USA Today (Opinion): [DOGE fired me from USAID. I'll be fine, but America is in trouble](#)
- NY Times (Opinion): [Trump Purged These Watchdogs From Government](#)
- Newsweek (Opinion): [Restore USAID and Rescue Children from Deadly Malnutrition](#)
- Financial Times: [Foreign aid can be effective without the US](#)
- Ukraine Business News: [JICA intends to finance energy and infrastructure projects in Ukraine instead of USAID](#)
- Swiss Info: [USAID freeze 'earthquake': Swiss development agency head](#)

## Local Media Review

- KOSU: [How USAID cuts are impacting the personal economy of one Oklahoma contractor](#)
- WECT (Video): [Wilmington woman who works with USAID speaks out on funding freeze](#)
- 10News (Video): [East TN native who lost USAID job warns that layoffs could have extensive impact](#)
- Charlotte Observer (Opinion): [I lost my job working with USAID. I won't go silently with so much at stake](#)
- Portland Press Herald (Opinion): [Dismantling of USAID is just cruel](#)

## Additional Resources for Information and Messaging from Our Partners

- [USAIDStopWork website](#) and [USAIDStopWork Bluesky](#)
- Friends of USAID: [Instagram](#), [X/Twitter](#), [YouTube](#)