

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 18, 2009

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

Dear Mr. President:

As you know, the humanitarian crisis in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, which is the result of increased fighting between the Pakistan Army and militants, is reaching historic and catastrophic proportions. Over one million people have already been displaced, in what is believed to be the single largest civilian migration in the region since the 1947 Partition. Worryingly, the numbers of displaced are continuing to grow. We must help the Pakistani government protect the civilian population while fighting continues and provide assistance to the displaced to ensure this crisis does not lead to greater unrest throughout the rest of the country.

United Nations officials have called for a "massive international effort" to address the crisis, warning that absent such an effort, it will be "absolutely impossible" to provide assistance. Reports indicate that there are significant gaps in the basic assistance currently being provided, including food, water, shelter, and sanitation. In addition, some 80 to 90 percent of those displaced are relying on the hospitality of family and friends already under strain from the global economic crisis.

We are deeply concerned that if not adequately addressed, the crisis could undermine the Pakistani government and compromise our ability to help stabilize the country. We note with concern that the media is reporting the charity wings of designated terrorist organizations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba are already rushing to provide assistance in the absence of a sufficient government response.

For this reason, we are writing to urge you to work in full partnership with the Government of Pakistan to mount an immediate U.S. response that addresses both the short-term and long-term needs of the displaced. We believe that nothing less than an immediate, large-scale response that mobilizes the resources of the entire U.S. government, as well as the private sector, is required to ensure the Pakistani people receive the help they need.

As we saw in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia and the 2005 earthquake in northern Pakistan, the United States possesses unique capabilities to provide swift and effective aid for civilian populations suffering from unprecedented

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humanitarian crises. We believe that we have both a moral and strategic imperative to help provide an immediate response to the crisis unfolding in Pakistan.

We thank you for your attention to this urgent and critical matter.

Sincerely,



Russell D. Feingold  
United States Senator



Joseph I. Lieberman  
United States Senator



Lindsey Graham  
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey Jr.  
United States Senator



Jon Kyl  
United States Senator

CC: Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton  
Secretary of Defense Robert Gates  
General (Ret.) James Jones, National Security Advisor  
Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke, Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan  
General David Petraeus, Commander, U.S. Central Command