

April 6, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Janet Yellen
Secretary, Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20220

Dear President Biden and Secretary Yellen,

We are writing to request that the United States' representative at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) use her voice and vote to support a new allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDR) to counteract clear recessionary pressures in the global economy.

Many economists believe that the Federal Reserve's and other central banks' continuing interest rate hikes could push the U.S. economy and the world into a downturn. International financial institutions have [warned](#) that 2023 will be a "tougher" year, with many developing countries [suffering](#) a "sharp, long-lasting slowdown" that could "cause poverty rates to rise."

Recessions are both costly and deadly. With the Congressional Budget Office [projecting](#) stagnant growth, a global recession this year would depress demand for American exports, which would lead to the potential loss of millions of American manufacturing jobs. Recession would also result in a "sizeable and highly significant increase in mortality" in emerging economies, especially children's mortality, according to [research](#) from the Bank for International Settlements. According to this econometric research, the number of lives lost in developing countries from a world recession could be in the millions.

One of the few tools to mitigate the risks of recession at home and abroad that is available to your administration without Congressional action is to support a new issuance of [SDRs](#) at the IMF. Previously, the August 2021 issuance [proved](#) to be a lifeline for developing countries enduring the Covid-induced global economic downturn, enabling over 100 countries to repay debts, avert balance of payments crises, and purchase lifesaving imports like food and vaccines.

A [new issuance](#) of \$650 billion in SDRs does not require additional Congressional action; costs U.S. taxpayers nothing; reduces the frequency and impact of crises, as well as economic downturns, around the world; addresses significant causes of social and political unrest; and boosts U.S. exports. The latter creates jobs for American workers.

Already, nearly [150 civil society organizations](#) support a new issuance of SDRs, including the AFL-CIO, International Chamber of Commerce, Oxfam, International Crisis Group, Partners In Health, as well as [dozens of members of Congress](#); [the UN Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy, and Finance](#); [the UN Economic Commission for Africa](#); [UN Secretary-General António Guterres](#); the [African Union](#); [leading economists](#); and many more.

A new issuance of SDRs would be good for the world and good for America. It would save lives and livelihoods around the world and in the United States.

We urge you to commit the Department of Treasury to supporting this zero-cost measure at the next Executive Board meeting of the IMF to make an enormous difference for our own citizens and people around the world.

Sincerely,

Action Corps

ActionAid USA

Advocacy Network for Africa

Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN)

AFL-CIO

American Friends Service Committee

Baltimore Nonviolence Center

Brooklyn For Peace

Center for American Progress

Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR)

Center for Economic and Social Rights

Communication Workers of America

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces

Demand Progress Education Fund

Franciscan Action Network

Freedom Forward

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Friends in Solidarity

Friends of the Earth US

Gender Action

Health Advocacy International

Hindus for Human Rights

Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Loreto Generalate

International Crisis Group

Islamic Relief USA

Just Foreign Policy

Justice Is Global

Latin America Working Group (LAWG)
Leadership Team of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, Dayton, Ohio
MADRE
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace, and Security
Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment
Oxfam America
Partners In Health
Pax Christi USA
Public Citizen
RootsAction.org
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team
Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, LA
The Society for Children Orphaned By AIDS Inc. (SOCOBA)
Sojourners
Stop TB USA
United Church of Christ, Justice and Local Ministries
UNITE HERE
United Steelworkers (USW)
Win Without War