

## OUTLOOK

Over the years, U.S. foreign aid has been used to decrease poverty, promote political stability and democracy, and keep allies strong. Recognizing that the nearly 1.3 billion people living in poverty and amidst environmental decay present a serious problem, the nations of the world are reevaluating their efforts to relieve the struggle of developing countries. The population explosion is straining Earth's food supplies, forests, and oceans. Nearly one-fifth of the world's people still do not have enough food, adequate shelter, and sanitation. Global leaders are now considering ways to improve the lives of the world's people in need and the very health of Earth itself. At a time in the United States when no federal programs are safe from budget cuts, U.S. leaders must decide what kind of foreign aid commitment their country should and can make.

## THE DEBATE: WORLD POVERTY AND FOREIGN AID

### Foreign Aid Is in the U.S. National Interest.

**PRO:** The United States cannot afford to ignore the developing world. Providing economic and development assistance to less developed countries will help make them democratic and allies of the United States. The need for military intervention in the future can be diminished if the United States enables these nations to stabilize their economies, feed their people, and educate their children.

**CON:** The United States must prioritize its federal spending. Giving money to foreign governments is not as important as attending to domestic issues, such as reducing the federal budget deficit.

Foreign aid programs have been ineffective and have not made strong trading partners or military alliances out of recipient nations. The United States cannot afford to come to the aid of every impoverished nation.

### The United States Agency for International Development Should Be Abolished.

**PRO:** USAID should be abolished because it is a wasteful and ineffective government agency. Its programs have only aided corrupt governments that squander U.S. dollars while doing little to eliminate poverty. The federal government should leave the job of aiding developing countries to private organizations.

**CON:** Because foreign aid is an important component of U.S. foreign policy, the government should continue to fund USAID. The agency has demonstrated its ability to adapt to new budget restraints by streamlining its operations and cutting costs. Private organizations should not bear the entire burden for improving conditions in the developing world.

### The United States Should Promote Family Planning To Curb Population Growth.

**PRO:** World poverty can only be reduced if population growth is brought under control. Millions of couples want information about birth control but cannot get it. The United States should share information with developing countries. Providing family planning information will enable women in developing countries—and their children—to have a better chance to escape poverty.

**CON:** The United States should not provide any aid that might be used to support abortion. Instead, it should provide the economic support that will help developing countries modernize. Improving the economies of developing nations will encourage their people to have smaller families. Decisions about family size should not be influenced by U.S. governmental policies.