

Trump places 10,000 USAID workers on leave and orders them to return to United States

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Washington, February 6 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump has ordered nearly the entire staff of the U.S. Agency for International Development to be placed on administrative leave beginning on Friday, and ordered thousands of personnel working overseas to return to the United States.

The order impacts some 10,000 USAID workers around the world. Democratic lawmakers have called it an illegal move to shutter an aid agency that was created through an act of Congress.

In related news, an executive order signed by President Trump Tuesday orders the U.S. to withdraw from the United Nations Human Rights Council and end U.S. support for UNRWA, the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees.

Trump also ordered a review of the U.N.'s cultural agency, UNESCO. This follows Trump's January 24 decision to halt billions of dollars of UN funding pending a 90-day review.

Among the many casualties is the sexual reproductive health agency, the U.N. Population Fund. Pio Smith, the agency's Asia-Pacific director, told reporters: "I am deeply concerned that millions of women and girls now face life-threatening risks due to the lack of access to UNFPA's crucial services across Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan. ... Take the example of Afghanistan: Between 2025 and 2028, we estimate that the absence of U.S. support will result in 1,200 additional maternal deaths and 109,000 additional unintended pregnancies."

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