

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Financial Services
2129 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 23, 2026

Ms. Kristalina
Georgieva Managing
Director International
Monetary Fund 700
19th St NW
Washington, DC 20431

Dear Managing Director Georgieva:

As many low- and middle- income countries continue to face public debt crises, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and its sovereign financing agreements will continue to play a consequential role shaping how nations adapt to those challenges. Statistics released last month by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (“UNCTAD”) show that public debt in developing economies totaled \$31 trillion in 2024, and that 3.4 billion people live in countries that spend more on interest payments than on either health or education.¹ Many of these countries repeatedly and in rapid succession turn to the IMF, in addition to other private creditors, for loans. Given the growing amount that countries are paying to service debt and their recurring needs, the IMF must consider how its policies can avoid contributing to a debt trap and, instead, be leveraged to build more sustainable economies.

Two widely recognized factors of the numerous economic crises of recent decades are corruption and financial mismanagement; in some cases, these are the root causes of nations’ difficulties.² According to the IMF’s findings, weak governance and loopholes enabling abuse and loss of financing are deeply intertwined with a country’s economic performance and ability to meet targets contained in IMF loan agreements.³ We commend the IMF’s recognition of corruption as a macrocritical challenge to the success of a loan program and support the Fund’s elevation of these matters in its engagement with member countries.

Unfortunately, we are currently seeing a rise in corruption and autocracy across the world, including within our own system in the United States.⁴ To address these concerns, preventing the further spread of these crises and ensuring that its financing is used for its intended purposes, the IMF should redouble its efforts to guarantee that governments have in place, or are in the process of implementing, internationally recognized baseline measures of good governance and public financial management.

We encourage the IMF to consider taking the following steps to strengthen the effectiveness of IMF programs and safeguard public funds:

¹ See United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, “A World of Debt,” June 26, 2025, <https://unctad.org/publication/world-of-debt>

² See Associated Press, “A world apart, Lebanon and Sri Lanka share economic collapse,” June 24, 2022, available at <https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-lebanon-asia-55efa30436d38e5885d74d204d7f572b>; World Economic Forum, “Why fighting corruption is key to addressing the world’s most pressing problems,” Dec. 5, 2022, available at <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2022/12/why-fighting-corruption-is-key-to-addressing-the-world-s-most-pressing-problems/>

³ See IMF, “Review of 1997 Guidance Note on Governance - A Proposed Framework for Enhanced Fund Engagement,” April 2018, <https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Publications/PP/2018/pp030918govpaper.ashx>

⁴ See Transparency International, “2025 Corruption Perceptions Index,” February 10, 2026, <https://us.transparency.org/news/transparency-international-release-latest-corruption-perceptions-index>

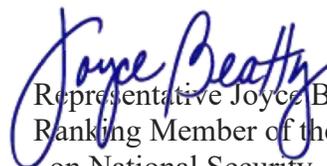
1. Establish criteria that would require countries in or at risk of debt distress to undergo and publish the results of Governance Diagnostic exercises when engaged in an active IMF financing arrangement or when applying for a new program;
2. Continue to elevate financial integrity and governance issues in the Fund's other primary tools for bilateral financial monitoring such as Article IV consultations and Financial Sector Assessment Programs (FSAPs);
3. Incorporate concrete, time-bound governance reforms in loan agreements, and hold governments accountable for implementation; and,
4. Meaningfully engage in-country experts and outside stakeholders throughout the lifecycle of a loan program—from initial assessment and design to monitoring the implementation of commitments.

We appreciate the progress that the IMF has made in this area, while recognizing the urgent need for further reforms. We stand ready to support these additional efforts to advance responsible lending and economic stability through improved governance.

Sincerely,



Representative Maxine Waters
Ranking Member
Committee on Financial Services



Representative Joyce Beatty
Ranking Member of the Subcommittee
on National Security, Illicit Finance and
International Financial Institutions
Committee on Financial Services

CC:

The Honorable Representative French Hill, Chair, Committee on Financial Services

The Honorable Representative Warren Davidson, Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions