**Colin Thomas-Jensen Joins Aurora as Director of Communications, Advocacy, and Impact**

*Former Senior USAID official to advance the organization’s global humanitarian outreach*

**WASHINGTON, D.C., January 31, 2025** – The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative today announced the appointment of Colin Thomas-Jensen as Director of Communications, Advocacy, and Impact. Thomas-Jensen will lead efforts to support the initiative’s growing network of local humanitarians, including advocating for more effective, sustainable funding for individuals and local organizations that offer assistance and protection in communities with the greatest need.

Thomas-Jensen joins Aurora from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), where he was the National Security Advisor to the USAID Administrator.

“I am thrilled with the opportunity to advance Aurora’s efforts on behalf of brave local humanitarians on the front lines of the world’s most acute crises,” Thomas-Jensen said. “With governments and armed groups increasingly emboldened to restrict humanitarian access for international relief efforts, it has never been more important to strengthen the global network of local responders and advocate for innovative and sustainable initiatives to support their life-saving work.”

Thomas-Jensen began his career as a humanitarian responder with USAID in Sudan during the Darfur Genocide. Through his work with the International Crisis Group and the Enough Project, Mr. Thomas-Jensen has developed and led impactful advocacy efforts for more effective international responses to genocide and mass atrocities. From 2010 to 2017, he worked in senior policymaking roles with the Department of State and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations.

“We are delighted to welcome Colin Thomas-Jensen to the Aurora team. Colin’s strong belief in our collective responsibility to address the world’s most pressing challenges echoes the very core of Aurora’s mission,” said Armine Afeyan, CEO of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative. “His experience advancing humanitarian and human rights efforts will undoubtedly help us achieve even greater impact in this pivotal phase of our journey.”

Founded on behalf of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide and in gratitude to their saviors, the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative seeks to address on-the-ground humanitarian challenges around the world. To date, Aurora has already changed the lives of more than 3.4 million people across 60 countries and territories, deploying funding toward 463 projects that support emergency response, food, water, education, medical care, psychosocial support and more for underserved communities.

Aurora will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year with a series of landmark events, including the Human Rights and Humanitarian Forum in Los Angeles in May, the announcement of the 2025 Aurora Humanitarians in New York in September, and the reveal of the 2025 Laureate during the Aurora Prize Ceremony at Ellis Island in November.

**About Colin Thomas-Jensen**

Prior to joining Aurora, Colin was the National Security Advisor to the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development. Previously, he was a Senior Expert for Peace Processes at the United States Institute of Peace and the Senior Advisor for Africa at WestExec Advisors. From 2013 to 2017, he was a Senior Policy Advisor to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Deputy Director of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations’ Washington, D.C. office. From 2010 to 2012, he worked at the U.S. Department of State as the Special Advisor to the U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan. Earlier in his career, Colin worked for USAID as a humanitarian responder in Darfur, Sudan, in 2004, and in Haiti following the 2010 earthquake.

Colin has held senior research and policy positions with the Center for American Progress, where he helped found the Enough Project, and at the International Crisis Group. In 2017 and 2018, he was a member of the United Nations Panel of Experts for South Sudan. His research and analysis have appeared in Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Current History, and the Christian Science Monitor.

After graduating from Pomona College, Colin served as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer, teaching high school English in Ethiopia and Mozambique. He holds an MA in African Studies from the University of London’s School for Oriental and African Studies.

**About the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative**

The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative seeks to address on-the-ground humanitarian challenges around the world with a focus on helping the most destitute. Uniquely dedicated to discovering and supporting the world’s unsung humanitarian heroes in order to enable and raise awareness of their courageous work, Aurora has made a significant impact on the lives of those in greatest need. For more information, please visit [www.AuroraPrize.com.](https://www.AuroraPrize.com)

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