



FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION

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Saving Lives and Treasure: Investing in the Peaceful Prevention of Deadly Conflict

Public Witness Testimony, Submitted to the

House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

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Since 1943, FCNL has lobbied Congress to prevent war and help build a more peaceful, just world. After all these years, we are encouraged by the consensus now emerging among policymakers that the U.S. needs to invest more in developing *nonmilitary* tools for addressing global problems and preventing deadly conflict *before* it erupts. Such investments would save not only lives, but significant taxpayer dollars as well. As Friends, we have seen that the peaceful prevention of deadly conflict is possible through partnerships with local civil society around the world. Our request specifically pertains to the Complex Crises Fund, Conflict Stabilization Operations, Transition Initiatives, the Global Security Contingency Fund, Palestinian Development Assistance, Migration and Refugees Assistance, Contributions to International Organizations and Contributions to International Peacekeeping at the State Department and USAID.

We agree with Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, Secretary of State John Kerry, and bipartisan leaders in Congress who recognize the importance of strengthening civilian capacity in order to meet today's complex security and humanitarian challenges.

The international affairs budget includes a number of modest but important investments that will preserve scarce resources by improving the U.S. government's ability to prevent and mitigate conflict. The initiatives outlined below represent relatively small investments that could save billions of dollars and thousands of lives by preventing crises from turning violent, stemming mass atrocities, and avoiding costly interventions.

Complex Crises Fund (CCF)

The Complex Crises Fund (CCF) provides USAID with a critical source of flexible funding "to prevent and respond to emerging or unforeseen crises." The HELP Commission, Council on Foreign Relations, and Albright-Cohen Genocide Prevention Task Force have all called for such a fund for civilian agencies. Without flexible funding, civilian agencies are often unable to act quickly when conflicts escalate or to undertake rapid stabilization, prevention, and crisis response activities. Previously, the Department of Defense had been left to fill this gap, undertaking its own crisis response activities or transferring funding to civilian agencies under the temporary Sec. 1207 authority granted by Congress since 2006. The Sec. 1207 authority expired at the end of 2010, with the CCF replacing it. The CCF was used last year by USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives in Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Tunisia, and Sri Lanka.

We urge you to fully fund the Administration's FY2014 request for the Complex Crises Fund.

Conflict Stabilization Operations (CSO)

The Conflict Stabilization Operations bureau was created out of the 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, and funds the Civilian Response Corps (CRC) and the former Office for the Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). The CSO Bureau absorbs the mandate and activities of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, and is charged with leading integrated, civilian efforts to prevent, respond to, and stabilize crises all over the world. CSO serves as the home bureau for State Department expertise on these issues.

Over the past year, the CSO bureau has worked in four priority engagements, including Kenya. In Kenya, CSO has helped connect key community members in volatile areas in order to strengthen networks for peace. In the Rift Valley, CSO has helped facilitate the formation of a Kenyan-led group of interfaith, youth and humanitarian leaders that meet weekly to coordinate around initiatives such as voter registration outreach and mapping of early warning systems. In the coast, they made possible the hiring of 25-30 local Kenyan monitors in tense areas beginning in January of 2013, who will add capacity to violence prevention networks already in place.

We urge you to fully fund the Administration's FY2014 request for Conflict Stabilization Operations.

Transition Initiatives (TI)

The international affairs budget also includes funding for the Transition Initiatives (TI) account, which supports programs that help fragile or conflict-prone countries transition to peace and stability. Since 1994, OTI, part of USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, has laid the foundation for long-term development in 31 conflict-prone countries by promoting reconciliation, jumpstarting local economies, supporting nascent independent media, and fostering peace and democracy through innovative programming. In countries undergoing a transition from authoritarianism to democracy, violent conflict to peace, or pivotal political events, these initiatives can serve as catalysts for positive political change. TI has developed a strong track record over 15 years in applying short-term assistance to leverage opportunities for advancing peace and mitigating violence.

We urge you to fully fund the Administration's FY2014 request for USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives.

Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF)

The FY12 budget requested \$50 million for a new account, the Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF), to enhance foreign militaries as well as to provide justice sector rule of law and stabilization assistance. The fund was not authorized, however funding for these purposes was allocated for the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund for FY12. The fund is to be pooled jointly between the Department of State and Department of Defense, and the Secretary of State must consult with the Secretary of Defense before using these funds. This fund is very similar to the 1207 transfer funds which were allowed to expire in 2010, in part because your committee and other congressional appropriators believed civilian agencies should be given direct authority over their own funding streams. FCNL is concerned that the administration's proposed GSCF recreates the 1207 authority and perpetuates the militarization of aid.

While DoD may act as the implementer for some security assistance programs, the State Department and civilian leaders should decide how U.S. taxpayer dollars are spent on foreign assistance.

We urge you to include report language that would focus the GSCF specifically on civilian rule of law and comprehensive justice reform, and appropriate this account solely to the Department of State and USAID, rather than a joint account with the Department of Defense. We urge appropriators to exercise vigilant oversight over this account as it is implemented.

Contributions to International Organizations

The CIO account provides money to pay U.S. assessed dues at 45 international organizations including the World Health Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Trade Organization, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and the United Nations. These organizations help advance a wide range of shared goals, including promoting economic growth, monitoring weapons proliferation, creating global trade norms, and addressing global health pandemics.

We urge you to fully fund the Administration's FY2014 request for Contributions to International Organizations.

Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities

UN peace operations are cost-efficient and often prove vital in consolidating the peace in countries emerging from conflict. Funding these operations through the CIPA account saves lives in Darfur, Chad, Liberia, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and other conflict zones. By supporting UN peacekeeping, we lessen the burden on our own forces and reduce our own expenditures. In 2006, a Government Accountability Office (GAO) study concluded that UN peacekeeping is *eight times less expensive* than funding a U.S. force.

We urge you to fully fund the Administration's FY2015 request for Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities.

Palestinian Development Assistance

This account provides crucial economic funding and budgetary support for the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza. U.S. development assistance to the Palestinian Authority is an important investment in the long-term stability of the Middle East. This funding has repeatedly come under threat from Congress, as some lawmakers have sought to punish the Palestinian Authority and Palestinians as a whole for seeking U.N. statehood recognition and for pursuing reconciliation efforts between the political parties of Hamas and Fatah. FCNL urges Congress to reject punitive efforts against the Palestinian Authority for seeking a non-violent, multilateral approach to self-determination at the U.N. and to encourage comprehensive negotiations in good faith between Israel and a unified Palestinian government, encouraging rather than impeding Palestinian reconciliation efforts.

We urge you to support Economic Support Funds for the Palestinian Authority, and reject onerous, punitive restrictions on aid.

Migration and Refugee Assistance

This account provides protection and assistance needs of refugees, conflict victims, stateless persons, and vulnerable migrants worldwide. Funds primarily support the programs of international organizations, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of

the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The President's FY 13 budget request for the MRA account is \$1.6254 billion. FCNL, along with a host of humanitarian and refugee advocacy groups, supports increasing this funding for the MRA account to \$1.875 billion. A funding level of \$1.875 billion for FY 13 would match the FY12 total funding level enacted.

We urge you to the Administration's FY2014 request for Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) account.

Counterterrorism and Military Assistance focused on Africa

In the past, the Administration has requested that accounts including Antiterrorism Assistance, International Military Education and Training, and Foreign Military Financing provide counterterrorism and military assistance to a number of countries in Africa. As concerns around militant extremism on the continent grow, we fear that a focus on military approaches that can exacerbate violence – rather than on those dedicated to addressing root causes of conflict – may undermine U.S. support for what is most effective in countering violent extremism: peaceful, just societies. A number of governments and security forces receiving U.S. security assistance have used counterterrorism as justification for human rights abuses and political oppression, exacerbating the potential for radicalization and instability. At times, U.S. equipment and resources have been used to perpetuate deadly conflict. The U.S. should evaluate the dangers of these policies moving forward, as well as consider how they may contribute to negative dynamics.

We urge you to closely monitor lethal counterterror and military assistance to African countries, as well as to include report language that ensures evaluation of its impact on issues of governance and human rights.