

115TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 5273

AN ACT

To reduce global fragility and violence by improving the capacity of the United States to reduce and address the causes of violence, violent conflict, and fragility, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Global Fragility and
3 Violence Reduction Act of 2018”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) According to the United Nations, an un-
7 precedented 68.5 million people around the world,
8 the highest level ever recorded, are currently forcibly
9 displaced from their homes.

10 (2) According to the World Bank, violence and
11 violent conflict are now the leading causes of dis-
12 placement and food insecurity worldwide, driving 80
13 percent of humanitarian needs, with the same con-
14 flicts accounting for the majority of forcibly dis-
15 placed persons every year since 1991.

16 (3) According to the World Health Organiza-
17 tion, preventable forms of violence kill at least 1.4
18 million people each year. According to the Institute
19 for Economics and Peace, violence containment costs
20 the global economy \$14.76 trillion a year, or 12.4
21 percent of the world’s GDP. If violence were to de-
22 crease uniformly across the world by just 10 per-
23 cent, the global economy would gain \$1.48 trillion
24 each year.

25 (4) Violence and violent conflict underpin many
26 of the United States Government’s key national se-

1 security challenges. Notably, violent conflicts allow for
2 environments in which terrorist organizations recruit
3 and thrive, while the combination of violence, cor-
4 ruption, poverty, poor governance, and underdevelop-
5 ment often enables transnational gangs and criminal
6 networks to wreak havoc and commit atrocities
7 worldwide.

8 (5) According to new research by the University
9 of Maryland and University of Pittsburgh, exposure
10 to violence increases support for violence and violent
11 extremism. Research increasingly finds exposure to
12 violence as a predictor of future participation in vio-
13 lence, including violent extremism.

14 (6) United States foreign policy and assistance
15 efforts in highly violent and fragile states remain
16 governed by an outdated patchwork of authorities
17 that prioritize responding to immediate needs rather
18 than solving the problems that cause them.

19 (7) Lessons learned over the past 20 years, doc-
20 umented by the 2013 Special Inspector General for
21 Iraq Reconstruction Lessons Learned Study, the
22 2016 Fragility Study Group report, and the 2018
23 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Lessons
24 Learned Study on Stabilization, show that effective,
25 sustained United States efforts to reduce violence

1 and stabilize fragile and violence-affected states re-
2 quire clearly defined goals and strategies, adequate
3 long-term funding, rigorous and iterative conflict
4 analysis, coordination across the United States Gov-
5 ernment, including strong civil-military coordination,
6 and integration with national and sub-national part-
7 ners, including local civil society organizations, local
8 justice systems, and local governance structures.

9 (8) The “Stabilization Assistance Review” re-
10 leased in 2018 by the Departments of State and De-
11 fense and the United States Agency for Inter-
12 national Development states, “The United States
13 has strong national security and economic interests
14 in reducing levels of violence and promoting stability
15 in areas affected by armed conflict.” The Review
16 further states, “Stabilization is an inherently polit-
17 ical endeavor that requires aligning U.S. Govern-
18 ment efforts – diplomatic engagement, foreign as-
19 sistance, and defense – toward supporting locally le-
20 gitimate authorities and systems to peaceably man-
21 age conflict and prevent violence.”.

22 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

23 It is the policy of the United States to—

24 (1) ensure that all relevant Federal depart-
25 ments and agencies coordinate to achieve coherent,

1 long-term goals for programs designed to prevent vi-
2 olence, stabilize conflict-affected areas, and address
3 the long-term causes of violence and fragility, includ-
4 ing when implementing the Global Fragility and Vio-
5 lence Reduction Initiative described in section 5(a);

6 (2) seek to improve global, regional, and local
7 coordination of relevant international and multilat-
8 eral development and donor organizations regarding
9 efforts to prevent violence, stabilize conflict-affected
10 areas, and address the long-term causes of violence
11 and fragility in fragile and violence-affected coun-
12 tries, and, where practicable and appropriate, align
13 such efforts with multilateral goals and indicators;

14 (3) expand and enhance the effectiveness of
15 United States foreign assistance programs and ac-
16 tivities to prevent violence, stabilize conflict-affected
17 areas, and address the long-term causes of violence
18 and fragility, including programs intended to im-
19 prove the indicators described in section 5(d)(1);

20 (4) support the research and development of ef-
21 fective approaches to prevent violence, stabilize con-
22 flict-affected areas, and address the long-term
23 causes of violence and fragility; and

24 (5) improve the monitoring, evaluation, learn-
25 ing, and adaptation tools and authorities for relevant

1 Federal departments and agencies working to pre-
2 vent violence, stabilize conflict-affected areas, and
3 address the long-term causes of violence and fra-
4 gility.

5 **SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING ASSISTANCE FOR**
6 **THE GLOBAL FRAGILITY AND VIOLENCE RE-**
7 **DUCTION INITIATIVE.**

8 It is the sense of Congress that the President, the
9 Secretary of State, the Administrator of USAID, the Sec-
10 retary of Defense, and the heads of other relevant Federal
11 departments and agencies, should work with Congress to
12 provide sufficient types and levels of funding to—

13 (1) allow for more adaptive program planning
14 and implementation under the initiative and priority
15 country or regional plans required under section 5,
16 including through exemptions from specific and min-
17 imum funding levels when such exemptions would
18 make programs better able to respond to monitoring
19 and evaluation or changed circumstances in relevant
20 countries;

21 (2) better integrate conflict and violence reduc-
22 tion activities into other program areas where appro-
23 priate; and

24 (3) contribute to the creation of transparent
25 and accountable multilateral funds, initiatives, and

1 strategies to enhance and better coordinate both pri-
2 vate and public efforts to prevent violence, stabilize
3 conflict-affected areas, and address the long-term
4 causes of violence and fragility.

5 **SEC. 5. GLOBAL INITIATIVE TO REDUCE FRAGILITY AND VI-**
6 **OLENCE.**

7 (a) INITIATIVE.—The Secretary of State, in coordina-
8 tion with the Administrator of the United States Agency
9 for International Development (USAID), the Secretary of
10 Defense, and the heads of other relevant Federal depart-
11 ments and agencies, shall establish an interagency initia-
12 tive, to be referred to as the “Global Initiative to Reduce
13 Fragility and Violence”, to prevent violence, stabilize con-
14 flict-affected areas, and address the long-term causes of
15 violence and fragility.

16 (b) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Not later than 180
17 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
18 retary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of
19 USAID, the Secretary of Defense, and the heads of other
20 relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall develop
21 and submit to the appropriate congressional committees
22 an interagency implementation plan for the Global Initia-
23 tive to Reduce Fragility and Violence established pursuant
24 to subsection (a) that includes the following:

1 (1) Descriptions of the overall goals, objectives,
2 criteria, and metrics guiding the implementation, in-
3 cluding with respect to prioritizing countries and
4 measuring progress.

5 (2) A list of the priority countries and regions
6 selected pursuant to subsection (d)(2).

7 (3) Identification of the roles and responsibil-
8 ities of each participating Federal department or
9 agency, while ensuring that with respect to activities
10 relating to stabilization—

11 (A) the Department of State shall be the
12 overall lead for establishing United States for-
13 eign policy and advancing diplomatic and polit-
14 ical efforts;

15 (B) USAID shall be the lead implementing
16 agency for development, humanitarian, and re-
17 lated non-security programs;

18 (C) the Department of Defense shall sup-
19 port the activities of the Department of State
20 and USAID as appropriate, including by pro-
21 viding requisite security and reinforcing civilian
22 efforts, with the concurrence of the Secretary of
23 State and Administrator of USAID; and

24 (D) other Federal departments and agen-
25 cies shall support the activities of the Depart-

1 ment of State and USAID as appropriate, with
2 the concurrence of the Secretary of State and
3 Administrator of USAID.

4 (4) Identification of the authorities, staffing,
5 and other resource requirements needed to effec-
6 tively implement the initiative.

7 (5) Descriptions of the organizational steps the
8 Department of State, USAID, the Department of
9 Defense, and each other relevant Federal depart-
10 ment or agency will take to improve planning, co-
11 ordination, implementation, monitoring, evaluation,
12 adaptive management, and iterative learning with re-
13 spect to the programs under such initiative.

14 (6) Descriptions of the steps each relevant Fed-
15 eral department or agency will take to improve co-
16 ordination and collaboration under such initiative
17 with international development organizations, inter-
18 national donors, multilateral organizations, and the
19 private sector.

20 (7) Descriptions of potential areas of improved
21 public and private sector research and development,
22 including with academic, philanthropic, and civil so-
23 ciety organizations, on more effective approaches to
24 preventing violence, stabilizing conflict-affected

1 areas, and addressing the long-term causes of vio-
2 lence and fragility.

3 (8) Plans for regularly evaluating and updating,
4 on an iterative basis—

5 (A) the Global Initiative to Reduce Fra-
6 gility and Violence;

7 (B) the interagency implementation plan
8 described in this subsection; and

9 (C) the priority country and regional plans
10 described in subsection (c).

11 (c) PRIORITY COUNTRY AND REGIONAL PLANS.—

12 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of
13 this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the
14 Administrator of USAID, the Secretary of Defense, and
15 the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agen-
16 cies, shall develop and submit to the appropriate congres-
17 sional committees 10-year plans to align and integrate the

18 diplomatic, development, security, and other relevant ac-
19 tivities of the United States Government with the initiative
20 required under subsection (a) for each of the priority

21 countries and regions designated pursuant to subsection
22 (d). Such priority country and regional plans shall include:
23 (1) Specific interagency plans for coordination
24 and implementation under the country or regional
25 plan.

1 (2) Descriptions of how and when the relevant
2 goals, objectives, and plans for each priority country
3 or region will be incorporated into relevant United
4 States country plans and strategies, including De-
5 partment of State Integrated Country Strategies,
6 USAID Country Development Cooperation Strate-
7 gies, and Department of Defense Campaign Plans,
8 Operational Plans, and Regional Strategies, as well
9 as any equivalent or successor plans or strategies.

10 (3) Interagency plans to ensure that appro-
11 priate local actors, including government and civil
12 society entities and organizations led by women,
13 youth, or under-represented communities, have roles
14 in developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating,
15 and updating relevant aspects of each such country
16 or regional plan.

17 (4) Clear, transparent, and measurable diplo-
18 matic, development, and security benchmarks, time-
19 tables, and performance metrics for each such coun-
20 try and region that align with best practices where
21 applicable.

22 (5) Interagency plans for monitoring and eval-
23 uation, adaptive management, and iterative learning
24 that provide for regular and iterative policy and pro-
25 gram adaptations based on outcomes, lessons

1 learned, and other evidence gathered from each such
2 country or region and across such countries and re-
3 gions.

4 (6) Descriptions of the available policy tools to
5 prevent violence, stabilize conflict-affected areas, and
6 address the long-term causes of violence and fra-
7 gility in each such country or region.

8 (7) Descriptions of the resources and authori-
9 ties that would be required for each relevant Federal
10 department or agency to best implement each such
11 country or regional plan, as well as evidence-based
12 iterative updates to such plans.

13 (8) Descriptions of potential areas of improved
14 partnership with respect to such country or region,
15 regarding efforts to prevent violence, stabilize con-
16 flict-affected areas, and address the long-term
17 causes of violence and fragility, between the United
18 States Government and—

19 (A) international development organiza-
20 tions;

21 (B) relevant international donors;

22 (C) multilateral organizations; and

23 (D) the private sector.

24 (d) DESIGNATION OF PRIORITY COUNTRIES AND RE-
25 GIONS.—

1 (1) IDENTIFICATION OF CANDIDATE COUNTRIES
2 AND REGIONS.—The Secretary of State, in coordina-
3 tion with the Administrator of USAID and the Sec-
4 retary of Defense and in consultation with the ap-
5 propriate congressional committees, shall develop a
6 list of candidate countries and regions to be consid-
7 ered for inclusion under the initiative on the basis
8 of—

9 (A) clearly defined indicators of high levels
10 of violence and fragility in such country or re-
11 gion, such as—

12 (i) violence committed by armed
13 groups, gender-based violence, and violence
14 against children and youth;

15 (ii) prevalence of, and citizen support
16 for, adversarial armed groups;

17 (iii) internal and external population
18 displacement;

19 (iv) patterns of human rights viola-
20 tions, including early warning indicators of
21 the commission of genocide or other atroc-
22 ities;

23 (v) poor governance, pervasive corrup-
24 tion, and political instability; and

1 (vi) vulnerability to current or future
2 transnational threats; and

3 (B) the capacity and opportunity to work
4 across Federal departments and agencies and
5 with local partners and other donors to prevent
6 violence, stabilize conflict-affected areas, and
7 address the long-term causes of violence and
8 fragility with respect to such country or region,
9 including by measurably—

10 (i) improving inclusive, transparent,
11 and accountable power structures, includ-
12 ing effective, legitimate, and resilient na-
13 tional and sub-national institutions;

14 (ii) improving effective and respected
15 conflict prevention, mitigation, manage-
16 ment, and resolution mechanisms;

17 (iii) reducing levels of support among
18 the residents of such country or region for
19 violence, violent extremism, and adversarial
20 armed groups;

21 (iv) ensuring strong foundations for
22 plurality, non-discrimination, human
23 rights, rule of law, and equal access to jus-
24 tice;

1 (v) addressing political, social, eco-
2 nomic, and environmental vulnerabilities,
3 grievances, and conflicts;

4 (vi) ensuring inclusive economic devel-
5 opment and enabling business environ-
6 ments; and

7 (vii) improving resilience to
8 transnational stresses and shocks, includ-
9 ing from organized crime, violent extremist
10 organizations, and economic and food mar-
11 kets crises.

12 (2) SELECTION OF PRIORITY COUNTRIES AND
13 REGIONS.—From among the candidate countries and
14 regions identified pursuant to paragraph (1), the
15 Secretary of State, in coordination with the Admin-
16 istrator of USAID and the Secretary of Defense,
17 shall select certain countries as “priority countries”
18 and certain regions as “priority regions” in a man-
19 ner that ensures that—

20 (A) countries and regions are selected in a
21 sufficient number and of sufficient diversity to
22 provide indicators of the various drivers and
23 early warnings of violence, conflict, and fra-
24 gility, as well as best practices for United
25 States efforts to prevent violence, stabilize con-

1 flict-affected areas, and address the long-term
2 causes of violence and fragility;

3 (B) not fewer than three countries or re-
4 gions are designated as “Stabilization Coun-
5 tries” or “Stabilization Regions”, in which the
6 current levels of violence, violent conflict, or fra-
7 gility are among the highest in the world;

8 (C) not fewer than three countries or re-
9 gions are designated as “Prevention Countries”
10 or “Prevention Regions”, in which current lev-
11 els of violence, violent conflict, or fragility are
12 lower than such levels in Stabilization Countries
13 or Stabilization Regions but warning signs for
14 future violence, conflict, or fragility are signifi-
15 cant;

16 (D) regions, rather than individual coun-
17 tries, are selected where the threat or spillover
18 of violence, conflict, or fragility threatens the
19 stability of multiple countries within a single
20 geographic region; and

21 (E) the countries and regions selected are
22 in the areas of responsibility of at least three
23 geographic bureaus of the Department of State.

24 (e) STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION.—The initiative
25 required under subsection (a) shall be developed in coordi-

1 nation with representatives of local civil society and na-
2 tional and local governance entities, as well as relevant
3 international development organizations, multilateral or-
4 ganizations, donors, and relevant private, academic, and
5 philanthropic entities, as appropriate.

6 (f) CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION.—The Secretary
7 of State, the Administrator of USAID, and the Secretary
8 of Defense shall provide regular briefings on the imple-
9 mentation of this Act to any appropriate congressional
10 committee upon the request of such committee.

11 (g) MEASURING VIOLENCE, VIOLENT CONFLICT, AND
12 FRAGILITY.—For the purposes of implementing, moni-
13 toring, and evaluating the effectiveness of the priority
14 country and regional plans required under subsection (c),
15 progress towards preventing violence, stabilizing conflict-
16 affected areas, and addressing the long-term causes of vio-
17 lence and fragility shall be measured by indicators estab-
18 lished for each such country by relevant inter-agency coun-
19 try teams for each such country, informed by consultations
20 with the stakeholders specified in subsection (e).

21 **SEC. 6. IMPLEMENTATION AND UPDATES OF PRIORITY**
22 **COUNTRY AND REGIONAL PLANS.**

23 The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Ad-
24 ministrator of USAID, the Secretary of Defense, and the
25 heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies,

1 and in consultation with the relevant United States Am-
2 bassadors, USAID Mission Directors, geographic Combat-
3 ant Commanders, and other relevant individuals with re-
4 sponsibility over activities in each priority country or re-
5 gion designated pursuant to section 5, shall ensure that—

6 (1) the Global Initiative to Reduce Fragility
7 and Violence and the priority country and regional
8 plans required under such section are implemented,
9 updated, and coordinated on a regular and iterative
10 basis;

11 (2) such initiative and country and regional
12 plans are used to guide United States Government
13 policy at a senior level and incorporated into rel-
14 evant strategies and plans across the United States
15 Government and in each such country;

16 (3) resources for all relevant activities and re-
17 quirements of such initiative and country and re-
18 gional plans are prioritized, requested, and used con-
19 sistent with such initiative and country and regional
20 plans; and

21 (4) the results of program monitoring and eval-
22 uation under such initiative and country and re-
23 gional plans are regularly reviewed and used to de-
24 termine continuation, modification, or termination of
25 future year programming.

1 **SEC. 7. BIENNIAL REPORTS AND CONGRESSIONAL CON-**
2 **SULTATION.**

3 (a) BIENNIAL REPORTS.—Not later than two years
4 after the date of the enactment of this Act and every two
5 years thereafter until the date that is 10 years after the
6 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State,
7 the Administrator of USAID, the Secretary of Defense,
8 and the heads of other relevant Federal departments and
9 agencies shall jointly submit to the appropriate congress-
10 sional committees a report on progress made and lessons
11 learned with respect to the Global Initiative to Reduce
12 Fragility and Violence and each priority country or re-
13 gional plan required under section 5, including—

14 (1) descriptions of steps taken to incorporate
15 such initiative and such country or regional plans
16 into relevant strategies and plans that affect such
17 countries or regions;

18 (2) accountings of all funding received and obli-
19 gated to implement each such country or regional
20 plan during the past two years, as well as funding
21 requested, planned, and projected for the following
22 two years;

23 (3) descriptions of progress made towards the
24 goals and objectives established for each such pri-
25 ority country or region, including progress made to-

1 wards achieving the specific targets, metrics, and in-
2 dicators described in section 5(b); and

3 (4) descriptions of updates made during the
4 past two years to the goals, objectives, plans of ac-
5 tion, and other elements described in section 5 for
6 each such country or regional plan, as well as any
7 changes made to programs based on the results of
8 monitoring and evaluation.

9 (b) CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION.—In addition to
10 the reports required under subsection (a), the Secretary
11 of State, the Administrator of USAID, the Secretary of
12 Defense, and the heads of other relevant Federal depart-
13 ments and agencies shall jointly consult with the appro-
14 priate congressional committees at least once a year re-
15 garding progress made on the initiative and priority coun-
16 try and regional plans required under section 5.

17 **SEC. 8. GAO REVIEW.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the
19 date of the enactment of this Act and every two years
20 thereafter until the date that is 10 years after the date
21 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of
22 the United States shall consult with the Chairman and
23 Ranking Member of the Foreign Relations Committee of
24 the Senate and the Foreign Affairs Committee of the
25 House of Representatives regarding opportunities for

1 independent review of the activities under the Global Ini-
2 tiative to Reduce Fragility and Violence and the priority
3 country and regional plans required by section 5, includ-
4 ing—

5 (1) opportunities to—

6 (A) assess the extent to which United
7 States Government activities in each priority
8 country designated pursuant to section 5 are
9 being implemented in accordance with the ini-
10 tiative and the relevant country or regional plan
11 required under such section;

12 (B) assess the processes and procedures
13 for coordinating among and within each rel-
14 evant Federal department or agency when im-
15 plementing such initiative and each such coun-
16 try or regional plan;

17 (C) assess the monitoring and evaluation
18 efforts under such initiative and each such
19 country or regional plan, including assessments
20 of the progress made and lessons learned with
21 respect to each such plan, as well as any
22 changes made to activities based on the results
23 of such monitoring and evaluation; and

24 (D) recommend changes necessary to bet-
25 ter implement United States Government activi-

1 ties in accordance with such initiative and coun-
2 try and regional plans, as well as recommenda-
3 tions for any changes to such initiative or
4 plans; and

5 (2) such other matters the Comptroller General
6 determines to be appropriate.

7 (b) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—All relevant
8 Federal departments and agencies shall make all relevant
9 data, documents, and other information available to the
10 Comptroller General for purposes of conducting inde-
11 pendent reviews pursuant to this section.

12 **SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.**

13 In this Act—

14 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
15 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
16 mittees” means—

17 (A) the Committees on Foreign Relations,
18 Armed Services, and Appropriations of the Sen-
19 ate; and

20 (B) the Committees on Foreign Affairs,
21 Armed Services, and Appropriations of the
22 House of Representatives.

23 (2) RELEVANT FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OR
24 AGENCY.—The term “relevant Federal department
25 or agency” means the Department of the Treasury

1 and any other Federal department or agency the
2 President determines is relevant to carry out the
3 purposes of this Act.

 Passed the House of Representatives November 27,
2018.

Attest:

Clerk.

115TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

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AN ACT

To reduce global fragility and violence by improving the capacity of the United States to reduce and address the causes of violence, violent conflict, and fragility, and for other purposes.