

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3368

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

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 22, 2018

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. GRAHAM) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To reduce global fragility and violence by improving the capacity of the United States to reduce and address the causes of violence, instability, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

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

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) According to the United Nations, an un-
2 precedented 68,500,000 people around the world are
3 currently forcibly displaced from their homes. This
4 is the highest level of global displacement ever re-
5 corded.

6 (2) According to the World Bank, violence and
7 violent conflict, rather than natural disasters, are
8 now the leading causes of displacement worldwide,
9 driving 80 percent of humanitarian needs. The Bank
10 also notes that the same conflicts have accounted for
11 the majority of forcibly displaced persons every year
12 since 1991.

13 (3) According to the World Health Organiza-
14 tion, preventable forms of violence kill at least
15 1,400,000 people each year and cause debilitating
16 physical and mental harm to many others.

17 (4) According to the Global Peace Index 2018,
18 published by the Institute for Economics and Peace,
19 violence containment costs the global economy
20 \$14,760,000,000,000 a year, or 12.4 percent of the
21 world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Index
22 also states, "Over the last decade, countries with the
23 largest improvements in peace recorded seven times
24 higher per capita GDP growth than those that dete-
25 riorated the most."

1 (5) Violence and violent conflict underpin many
2 of the United States Government's key national se-
3 curity challenges. Notably, violent conflicts allow for
4 environments in which terrorist organizations recruit
5 and thrive, while the combination of violence, cor-
6 ruption, poverty, poor governance, and underdevelop-
7 ment often enable transnational gangs and criminal
8 networks to wreak havoc and commit atrocities
9 worldwide.

10 (6) According to new research by the University
11 of Maryland and the University of Pittsburgh, expo-
12 sure to violence increases support for violence and
13 violent extremism. Research increasingly finds expo-
14 sure to violence as a predictor of future participation
15 in violence, including violent extremism.

16 (7) Since 2002, a body of research has emerged
17 on failed or fragile states. The World Bank defines
18 a fragile state as a low-income country characterized
19 by weak state capacity or weak state legitimacy,
20 leaving citizens vulnerable to a range of shocks.

21 (8) United States foreign policy and assistance
22 efforts in highly violent and fragile states remain
23 governed by an outdated patchwork of authorities
24 that prioritize responding to immediate needs rather
25 than solving the underlying problems that cause

1 them. United States ambassadors, United States
2 Agency for International Development mission direc-
3 tors, and Department of Defense combatant com-
4 manders do not have the policy framework or tools
5 they need to direct United States policy or assist-
6 ance towards a long-term, overarching strategy with
7 the end goal of reduced fragility and violence in
8 fragile and violence-affected states.

9 (9) Lessons learned over the past 20 years, doc-
10 umented by the 2013 Special Inspector General for
11 Iraq Reconstruction Lessons Learned Study, the
12 2016 Fragility Study Group Report, and the 2018
13 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Lessons
14 Learned Study on Stabilization show that effective,
15 sustained United States efforts to reduce violence
16 and stabilize fragile and violence-affected states re-
17 quire clearly defined goals and strategies, adequate
18 long-term funding, rigorous and iterative conflict
19 analysis, coordination across the United States Gov-
20 ernment, including strong civil-military coordination,
21 and integration with national and subnational part-
22 ners, including local civil society organizations, local
23 justice systems, and local governance structures.

24 (10) The “Stabilization Assistance Review: A
25 Framework for Maximizing the Effectiveness of U.S.

1 Government Efforts to Stabilize Conflict-Affected
2 Areas” states, “The United States has strong na-
3 tional security and economic interests in reducing
4 levels of violence and promoting stability in areas af-
5 fected by armed conflict, especially to consolidate se-
6 curity gains against ISIS and other non-state armed
7 groups.” The Review further states, “Stabilization is
8 an inherently political endeavor that requires align-
9 ing U.S. Government efforts—diplomatic engage-
10 ment, foreign assistance, and defense—toward sup-
11 porting locally legitimate authorities and systems to
12 peaceably manage conflict and prevent violence.”

13 (11) United States National Security Strategies
14 over the past 15 years have regularly affirmed that
15 the United States has a national security interest in
16 improving its capacity to prevent, manage, and miti-
17 gate violence and violent conflicts in order to miti-
18 gate the consequences of armed conflict, including
19 humanitarian disasters, terrorism, organized crime,
20 increased risk of mass atrocities, and reversed devel-
21 opment.

22 (12) According to the Small Arms Survey, the
23 extent to which the international community will be
24 able to bring down global levels of violence will de-
25 pend largely on the actions taken by states to

1 achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, which
2 will require more tangible commitments to improve
3 governance, promote inclusive development, and pro-
4 tect human rights, among other things.

5 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

6 It shall be the policy of the United States—

7 (1) to ensure that all relevant United States
8 Government departments and agencies coordinate to
9 achieve coherent, long-term goals for programs de-
10 signed to reduce and address the causes of violence,
11 instability, and fragility in fragile and violence-af-
12 fected states, including when implementing the Glob-
13 al Fragility and Violence Reduction Initiative devel-
14 oped under section 4;

15 (2) to improve the global, regional, and local co-
16 ordination of relevant international and multilateral
17 development and donor organizations on efforts to
18 reduce and address the causes of violence, insta-
19 bility, and fragility in fragile and violence-affected
20 states;

21 (3) to increase support for foreign assistance
22 programs and activities that reduce and address the
23 causes of violence, instability, and fragility, including
24 programs intended to improve the indicators de-
25 scribed in section 4(f);

1 (4) to increase United States support for the
2 research and development of effective approaches to
3 reduce and address the causes of violence, insta-
4 bility, and fragility; and

5 (5) to improve the monitoring, evaluation,
6 learning, and adaptation tools and authorities for
7 relevant United States Government departments and
8 agencies working to reduce and address the causes
9 of violence, instability, and fragility.

10 **SEC. 4. GLOBAL INITIATIVE TO REDUCE GLOBAL FRA-**
11 **GILITY AND VIOLENCE.**

12 (a) INITIATIVE.—Not later than 180 days after the
13 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State
14 and Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
15 national Development, in coordination with the Secretary
16 of Defense and the heads of other relevant Federal depart-
17 ments and agencies, shall develop and submit to the ap-
18 propriate congressional committees a 10-year interagency
19 initiative to be referred to as the “Global Initiative to Re-
20 duce Fragility and Violence”, relating to reducing and ad-
21 dressing the causes of violence, instability, and fragility
22 in no less than six priority countries.

23 (b) AGENCY AND DEPARTMENT ROLES AND RESPON-
24 SIBILITIES.—With respect to the Global Initiative to Re-

1 duce Fragility and Violence required under subsection
2 (a)—

3 (1) the Department of State shall be the overall
4 lead for establishing United States foreign policy
5 and advancing diplomatic and political efforts;

6 (2) the United States Agency for International
7 Development shall be the lead implementing agency
8 for non-security programs;

9 (3) the Department of Defense shall support
10 the activities of the Department of State and the
11 United States Agency for International Development
12 as appropriate, including by providing requisite secu-
13 rity and reinforcing civilian efforts with the concur-
14 rence of the Secretary of State and Administrator of
15 the United States Agency for International Develop-
16 ment; and

17 (4) other Federal agencies and departments
18 shall support the activities of the Department of
19 State and United States Agency for International
20 Development as appropriate, with the concurrence of
21 the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the
22 United States Agency for International Develop-
23 ment.

24 (c) INITIATIVE ELEMENTS.—The initiative required
25 under subsection (a) shall include 10-year plans of action

1 for United States Government activities in each of the pri-
2 ority countries designated pursuant to subsection (c), in-
3 cluding development, security, and other assistance activi-
4 ties that are relevant to reducing and addressing the
5 causes of violence, instability, and fragility, including the
6 following activities:

7 (1) Interagency plans for implementation that
8 include processes for coordination among and within
9 relevant Federal departments and agencies.

10 (2) Interagency assessments of the risk factors
11 for violence, instability, and fragility, as well as
12 sources of resilience.

13 (3) Interagency plans to ensure country owner-
14 ship and the inclusion of appropriate local actors, in-
15 cluding governance and civil society entities and or-
16 ganizations led by women, youth, and underrep-
17 resented communities, in developing, implementing,
18 monitoring, evaluating, and updating relevant as-
19 pects of each priority country plan.

20 (4) Clear, transparent, and measurable polit-
21 ical, diplomatic, security, and developmental bench-
22 marks, timetables, and performance metrics for each
23 priority country, with a focus on outcome metrics,
24 including metrics that capture grievances and pat-
25 terns that cause violence and, where applicable, align

1 with best practice indicators determined by Sustain-
2 able Development Goal #16 and the OECD Devel-
3 opment Assistance Committee's Fragility Frame-
4 work.

5 (5) Interagency plans for monitoring and eval-
6 uation, adaptive management, and iterative learning
7 that provide for regular and iterative policy and pro-
8 gram adaptations based on monitoring and evalua-
9 tion findings and other evidence generated in each
10 priority country and across priority countries.

11 (6) Descriptions of the available policy tools to
12 reduce and address the causes of violence, insta-
13 bility, and fragility in each priority country.

14 (7) Descriptions of the resources and authori-
15 ties that would be required for each relevant Federal
16 department and agency to best implement each pri-
17 ority country plan, as well as evidence-based
18 iterative updates to the plans.

19 (8) Descriptions of potential areas of improved
20 partnership between the United States Government
21 and recipient countries, international development
22 organizations, relevant international donors, multi-
23 lateral organizations, and the private sector on ef-
24 forts to reduce and address the causes of violence,
25 instability, and fragility in each priority country.

1 (9) Descriptions of potential areas of improved
2 public and private sector research and development,
3 including from academic, philanthropic, and civil so-
4 ciety organizations, on more effective approaches to
5 reducing and addressing the causes of violence, in-
6 stability, and fragility in fragile and violence-affected
7 states.

8 (d) PRIORITY COUNTRY DESIGNATION.—The Sec-
9 retary of State and the Administrator of the United States
10 Agency for International Development, in coordination
11 with the Secretary of Defense, shall carry out the following
12 actions:

13 (1) Develop the list of candidate countries
14 under consideration for the initiative required under
15 this section on the basis of specified criteria, includ-
16 ing the following:

17 (A) Current levels of violence, instability,
18 and fragility, as determined by empirical data,
19 such as the following, to the extent such data
20 are available:

21 (i) Total levels of deaths due to vio-
22 lence and violence-related deaths per
23 100,000 population in the candidate coun-
24 try under consideration.

1 (ii) Total levels of violent injuries or
2 violence exposure levels and violent injuries
3 or violence exposure levels per 100,000
4 population in such country.

5 (iii) Levels of persons forcibly dis-
6 placed, whether internally or internation-
7 ally, due to violence or violent conflict in
8 such country.

9 (iv) Total levels of gender-based vio-
10 lence and violence against children and
11 youth in such country.

12 (v) Prevalence of physical or sexual vi-
13 olence in the last 12 months in such coun-
14 try.

15 (vi) Levels of mortality due to armed
16 group violence in such country.

17 (vii) Levels of citizen support for
18 armed groups in such country.

19 (viii) The country's ranking on select
20 global fragility lists and select good govern-
21 ance indexes.

22 (ix) The country's ranking on select
23 United States Government conflict and
24 atrocity early warning watch lists.

1 (x) The country’s vulnerability to cur-
2 rent or future transnational threats.

3 (B) An assessment of the potential for
4 United States Government activities to reduce
5 and address the causes of violence, instability,
6 and fragility in each candidate country under
7 consideration, including the willingness and ca-
8 pability of relevant entities within each such
9 country to participate in the Global Initiative to
10 Reduce Fragility and Violence.

11 (2) Organize the candidate countries under con-
12 sideration into the categories of “Core Country” and
13 “Prevention Country”, such that—

14 (A) a candidate country shall be a Core
15 Country for purposes of country selection where
16 current levels of violence, instability, and fra-
17 gility are highest in the world, as determined by
18 the data specified in paragraph (1); and

19 (B) a candidate country shall be a Preven-
20 tion Country for purposes of country selection
21 where current levels of violence, instability, and
22 fragility are lower, as determined by the data
23 specified in paragraph (1), but warning signs
24 for future violence, instability, and fragility are
25 significant and strategic prevention efforts are

1 likely to make a meaningful difference in miti-
2 gating or preventing future violence, instability,
3 and fragility.

4 (3) Designate, on the basis of the criteria speci-
5 fied in paragraph (1), not less than six priority
6 countries, organized with not fewer than three coun-
7 tries in each of the Core and Prevention categories
8 described in paragraph (2) and not more than three
9 countries in each geographic region, as defined by
10 the Department of State.

11 (4) Consider, when making designations pursu-
12 ant to paragraph (3), designating multiple countries
13 in the same region if the drivers of violence, insta-
14 bility, and fragility are transnational in that region.

15 (e) STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION.—In addition to
16 the individuals specified in subsection (a), the initiative
17 required under this section shall be developed in coordina-
18 tion with—

19 (1) the United States Ambassador, the United
20 States Agency for International Development Mis-
21 sion Director, the relevant Department of Defense
22 Combatant Commander, and relevant interagency
23 country teams in each applicable country; and

24 (2) representatives of local civil society, national
25 and local governance entities, international develop-

1 ment organizations, relevant international donors,
2 multilateral organizations, and relevant private, aca-
3 demic, and philanthropic entities, as appropriate.

4 (f) CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION.—The Secretary
5 of State, the Administrator of the United States Agency
6 for International Development, and the Secretary of De-
7 fense (or their respective designees), shall provide brief-
8 ings to the appropriate congressional committees not later
9 than—

10 (1) 45 days after the date of the enactment of
11 this Act regarding the countries selected as priority
12 countries for the initiative required under this sec-
13 tion;

14 (2) 90 days after such date of enactment re-
15 garding progress on the individual priority country
16 plans for the initiative; and

17 (3) 30 days after submission of the initiative re-
18 garding the implementation plans for the initiative.

19 (g) MEASURING VIOLENCE, INSTABILITY, AND FRA-
20 GILITY.—For the purposes of implementing, monitoring,
21 and evaluating the effectiveness of the individual country
22 plans required under subsection (a), progress towards re-
23 ducing and addressing the causes of violence, instability,
24 and fragility shall be measured by indicators established
25 for each priority country by relevant interagency country

1 teams, through consultations with the stakeholders speci-
2 fied in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (d). The indi-
3 cators shall be based on the data described in subsection
4 (c)(1)(A), as appropriate, and updated regularly to ac-
5 count for any improvements in the available indicators and
6 to include indicators for additional priority areas, such
7 as—

8 (1) improving inclusive, transparent, and ac-
9 countable power structures, including effective, le-
10 gitimate, and resilient national and subnational in-
11 stitutions;

12 (2) improving effective and respected conflict
13 prevention, mitigation, management, and resolution
14 mechanisms;

15 (3) reducing levels of citizen support for violent
16 extremism and adversarial armed groups;

17 (4) ensuring strong foundations for political
18 and economic inclusion, reconciliation, and other
19 measures of democracy and governance, including
20 plurality, nondiscrimination, human rights, rule of
21 law, and equal access to justice;

22 (5) addressing political, social, economic, and
23 environmental vulnerabilities, grievances, and con-
24 flicts;

1 (6) ensuring inclusive economic development
2 and sound business environments; and

3 (7) improving resilience to transnational
4 stresses and shocks, including from organized crime
5 and violent extremist organizations.

6 **SEC. 5. IMPLEMENTATION AND UPDATES OF PRIORITY**
7 **COUNTRY PLANS.**

8 The Secretary of State, the Administrator of the
9 United States Agency for International Development, the
10 Secretary of Defense, and the heads of other relevant Fed-
11 eral agencies and departments, along with relevant United
12 States Ambassadors, United States Agency for Inter-
13 national Development Mission Directors, Department of
14 Defense Combatant Commanders, and other relevant indi-
15 viduals with responsibility over activities in each priority
16 country designated pursuant to section 4 shall ensure
17 that—

18 (1) the Global Initiative to Reduce Fragility
19 and Violence and individual priority country plans
20 required under section 4 are implemented in each
21 priority country designated pursuant to such section;

22 (2) the initiative and individual priority country
23 plans are used to guide United States policy at a
24 senior level and incorporated into relevant strategies

1 and plans across the United States Government and
2 in each priority country;

3 (3) resources for all relevant activities in each
4 priority country are requested and utilized consistent
5 with the initiative and individual priority country
6 plans; and

7 (4) the results of program monitoring and eval-
8 uation under the initiative and individual priority
9 country plans are regularly reviewed and utilized to
10 determine continuation, modification, or termination
11 of future year programming, and regular and
12 iterative policy and program adaptations are made
13 to each plan.

14 **SEC. 6. BIENNIAL REPORTS AND CONGRESSIONAL CON-**
15 **SULTATION.**

16 (a) BIENNIAL REPORTS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years
18 after the date of the enactment of this Act, and
19 every two years thereafter until full implementation
20 of the 10-year individual country plans required
21 under section 4, the Secretary of State, the Adminis-
22 trator of the United States Agency for International
23 Development, the Secretary of Defense, and the
24 heads of other relevant Federal agencies and depart-
25 ments shall jointly submit to the appropriate con-

1 gressional committees a report on progress made
2 and lessons learned with respect to the Global Initia-
3 tive to Reduce Fragility and Violence and each indi-
4 vidual country plan required under section 4.

5 (2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under
6 paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

7 (A) Descriptions of steps taken to incor-
8 porate the initiative and individual country
9 plans into relevant strategies and plans.

10 (B) Detailed accountings of all funding re-
11 ceived and obligated to implement each indi-
12 vidual country plan during the past two years,
13 as well as funding requested, planned, and pro-
14 jected for the following two years.

15 (C) Descriptions of progress made towards
16 the goals and objectives established for each in-
17 dividual country, including progress towards
18 achieving the specific targets, metrics, and indi-
19 cators described in section 4.

20 (D) Descriptions of changes made to pro-
21 grams based on the results of monitoring and
22 evaluation in accordance with sections 4 and 5.

23 (b) CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION.—The Sec-
24 retary of State, the Administrator of the United States
25 Agency for International Development, the Secretary of

1 Defense, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies
2 and departments (or their respective designees) shall joint-
3 ly consult with the appropriate congressional committees
4 not less often than annually regarding progress made on
5 the initiative and individual priority country plans re-
6 quired under section 4. The consultation requirement
7 under this subsection shall terminate upon full implemen-
8 tation of the 10-year individual priority country plans re-
9 quired under such section.

10 **SEC. 7. ASSISTANCE FOR THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE TO RE-**
11 **DUCE FRAGILITY AND VIOLENCE.**

12 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provi-
13 sion of law, including minimum funding requirements for
14 funding directives, funds made available in any prior or
15 future Act making appropriations for the Department of
16 State, foreign operations, and related programs for pri-
17 ority countries designated under this Act may be made
18 available to support the Global Initiative to Reduce Fra-
19 gility and Violence and individual priority country plans
20 described in this Act.

21 (b) **CONSULTATION AND NOTIFICATION.**—Any exer-
22 cise of the authority under subsection (a) shall be subject
23 to prior consultation with, and the regular notification
24 procedures of, the appropriate congressional committees.

1 **SEC. 8. GAO REVIEW.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years after the
3 date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
4 of the United States shall conduct an independent review
5 of all United States assistance activities in each priority
6 country designated pursuant to section 4.

7 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The review re-
8 quired under subsection (a) shall include—

9 (1) an assessment of the extent to which United
10 States Government activities in each priority country
11 designated pursuant to section 4 are being imple-
12 mented in accordance with the relevant individual
13 country plan required under such section;

14 (2) descriptions of the United States Govern-
15 ment assistance activities that are being imple-
16 mented in accordance with each individual priority
17 country plan, including the role of each relevant
18 Federal department or agency in each activity, the
19 entities responsible for implementing each activity,
20 and the funding level for each activity;

21 (3) assessments of the processes and procedures
22 for coordinating among and within each relevant
23 United States Government department and agency
24 when implementing each individual priority country
25 plan;

1 (4) assessments of the monitoring and evalua-
2 tion efforts under each individual priority country
3 plan, including assessments of the progress made
4 and lessons learned with respect to each such plan,
5 as well as any changes made to activities based on
6 the results of such monitoring and evaluation; and

7 (5) recommendations for changes necessary to
8 better implement United States Government assist-
9 ance activities in accordance with individual priority
10 country plans, as well as recommendations for any
11 changes to such plans.

12 **SEC. 9. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-**
13 **FINED.**

14 In this Act, the term “appropriate congressional com-
15 mittees” means—

16 (1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the
17 Committee on Armed Services, and the Committee
18 on Appropriations of the Senate; and

19 (2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the
20 Committee on Armed Services, and the Committee
21 on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

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