

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6174

To support the inclusive and meaningful participation of youth in peace building and conflict prevention, management, and resolution, as well as post-conflict relief and recovery efforts.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 10, 2020

Ms. MENG (for herself, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. PHILLIPS, and Mr. CURTIS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To support the inclusive and meaningful participation of youth in peace building and conflict prevention, management, and resolution, as well as post-conflict relief and recovery efforts.

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 “Youth, Peace, and Se-
5 curity Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) There are currently 1.8 billion youth in the
2 world, the largest number ever to have existed.

3 (2) Youth represent the majority of the popu-
4 lation in many conflict-affected countries, where on
5 average 50 percent of the population is below the
6 age of 20, and in some countries more than 70 per-
7 cent of the population is below the age of 30.

8 (3) Around the world, youth remain under-rep-
9 resented in peace building and conflict prevention,
10 management, and resolution, and post-conflict relief
11 and recovery efforts.

12 (4) Violence impacts over 1 billion people glob-
13 ally each year.

14 (5) Youth and youth-led groups and movements
15 led by them have demonstrated the capacity to play
16 critical roles in—

17 (A) de-escalating conflict from spreading;

18 (B) preventing recurring cycles of violence
19 in communities;

20 (C) effectively encouraging defection from
21 armed groups;

22 (D) improving the effectiveness and sus-
23 tainability of peace agreements;

24 (E) improving social cohesion and resil-
25 ience to violence and recruitment; and

1 (F) strengthening a culture of peace and
2 security.

3 (6) Youth are critical actors in grassroots com-
4 munity development, despite operational risks and
5 limited technical and financial support for their
6 work.

7 (7) Preventive and resilience-based approaches
8 to youth are more effective at reducing violence than
9 hard security responses and at-risk and remedial ap-
10 proaches, which are often counterproductive.

11 (8) Youth who have participated in United
12 States-supported civic engagement and development
13 programs were less likely to participate in or support
14 political violence.

15 (9) Youth participation in the design and imple-
16 mentation of community development strategies is
17 critical for effectively reducing violence and extre-
18 mism, and increasing peace.

19 (10) United Nations Security Council Resolu-
20 tion 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security, which was
21 adopted on December 9, 2015, formalized an inter-
22 national framework to address the role of youth in
23 building and sustaining peace and preventing con-
24 flict.

1 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

2 It is the sense of Congress that the United States
3 Government should—

4 (1) promote the meaningful participation of
5 youth in peace building and conflict prevention,
6 management, and resolution, as well as post-conflict
7 relief and recovery efforts, reinforced through diplo-
8 matic efforts and programs;

9 (2) provide assistance to and build the capacity
10 of youth-led organizations dedicated to advancing
11 peace and review administrative and bureaucratic
12 impediments to achieving this aim;

13 (3) build on existing United States Government
14 strategies addressing youth to ensure the meaningful
15 and inclusive participation of youth in decision mak-
16 ing at all levels and, at a minimum, such decision
17 making should be designed and assessed in consulta-
18 tion with diverse, representative youth;

19 (4) integrate youth outreach and engagement
20 into relevant conflict-resolution, leadership, and de-
21 mocracy and governance programs supported by the
22 United States Government; and

23 (5) include age- and gender-responsive policies
24 and programming in the design, implementation,
25 and evaluation of relevant United States foreign as-
26 sistance programs.

1 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

2 It shall be the policy of the United States to promote
3 the inclusive and meaningful participation of youth in
4 peace building and conflict prevention, management, and
5 resolution, as well as post-conflict relief and recovery ef-
6 forts, reinforced through diplomatic efforts and assistance
7 programs that—

8 (1) elevate and incorporate mainstream, the
9 perspectives and interests of affected youth into con-
10 flict-prevention, violence-reduction, and post-conflict
11 peace building activities and strategies;

12 (2) increase meaningful and inclusive youth
13 participation in program planning and policy devel-
14 opment related to conflict-prevention and violence-re-
15 duction and security-sector initiatives funded by the
16 United States Government;

17 (3) promote the safety, economic security, and
18 dignity of youth in conflict and other high-risk envi-
19 ronments;

20 (4) provide technical and financial support to
21 diverse youth-led groups, initiatives, and innovations
22 working on issues of peace and security;

23 (5) support the equal access of youth to United
24 States foreign assistance aid distribution mecha-
25 nisms and services;

1 (6) encourage partner governments to adopt
2 plans to increase meaningful youth participation in
3 peace and security processes and decision-making in-
4 stitutions; and

5 (7) recognize the unique context girls and
6 young women experience in conflict settings by ad-
7 justing programs and policies that pertain to the
8 achievement of the strategy and policy goals of this
9 Act to protect girls and young women’s physical
10 safety, economic security, and dignity, while sup-
11 porting their equal access to aid distribution and
12 prioritizing programs to improve outcomes in gender
13 equality and their empowerment.

14 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF YOUTH COORDINATOR.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall designate a
16 current employee of the United States Agency for Inter-
17 national Development (USAID) serving in a career or
18 non-career position in the Senior Executive Service or at
19 the level of a Deputy Assistant Administrator or higher
20 to serve concurrently as a coordinator for components of
21 overseas conflict prevention, management, and resolution,
22 and post-conflict relief and recovery efforts related to
23 youth (in this section referred to as the “Coordinator”).
24 The position of the Coordinator shall be located in

1 USAID’s Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Inno-
2 vation.

3 (b) DUTIES.—The Coordinator shall—

4 (1) have the primary responsibility for the co-
5 ordination of all resources and international activi-
6 ties of the United States Government appropriated
7 or used for overseas conflict prevention, manage-
8 ment, and resolution, and post-conflict relief and re-
9 covery efforts related to youth;

10 (2) lead implementation of the strategy estab-
11 lished under section 6;

12 (3) lead revision, not less frequently than once
13 every 5 years, of the strategy established under sec-
14 tion 6;

15 (4) establish an advisory group of experts to
16 advise the Coordinator on the development and im-
17 plementation of the strategy established under sec-
18 tion 6—

19 (A) which shall be composed of representa-
20 tives of relevant civil society, international orga-
21 nizations, and United States Government enti-
22 ties;

23 (B) of which not less than 30 percent of
24 such representatives should be youth; and

1 (C) which shall facilitate exchanges be-
2 tween a diverse range of youth leaders across
3 the country to connect youth and government
4 officials around the world on the youth, peace,
5 and security agenda and use these exchanges to
6 provide insight and improvements to the strat-
7 egy;

8 (5) coordinate with relevant Federal agencies,
9 including the Department of Defense, the Depart-
10 ment of State, and the National Security Agency,
11 the United Nations Youth Envoy and Envoy on
12 Children in Armed Conflict, the private sector and
13 relevant partner entities as appropriate, to carry out
14 the strategy established under section 6 and to align
15 current and future investments with effective, evi-
16 dence based interventions;

17 (6) provide direction to the design and oversight
18 of grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements
19 with nongovernmental organizations and private sec-
20 tor entities for the purpose of carrying out the strat-
21 egy established under section 6; and

22 (7) support the designation of a Youth Point of
23 Contact (YPOC) in diplomatic overseas missions and
24 United States Agency for International Development
25 bureaus, as selected by the Coordinator.

1 (c) RESTRICTION ON ADDITIONAL OR SUPPLE-
2 MENTAL COMPENSATION.—The Coordinator shall receive
3 no additional or supplemental compensation as a result of
4 carrying out responsibilities and duties under this section.

5 **SEC. 6. STRATEGY.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the
7 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State,
8 in coordination with the USAID Administrator, shall co-
9 ordinate the development and implementation of a United
10 States whole-of-government strategy to accomplish the
11 policy objective set forth in section 4, which shall—

12 (1) prioritize funding programs that provide
13 training and technical assistance to youth engaged
14 in peace building, violence prevention, mediation,
15 and negotiation and peacekeeping to the extent prac-
16 ticable;

17 (2) integrate youth consultation in program de-
18 sign and implementation as assessment criteria with-
19 in the procurement process during the United States
20 foreign assistance and acquisition application proc-
21 ess;

22 (3) create standards for collecting and ana-
23 lyzing age and gender data for the purpose of devel-
24 oping and enhancing early warning and response
25 systems for conflict, mass violence, and atrocities;

1 (4) support youth peace builders to participate
2 in communities of practice and virtual mentorships
3 programs aimed at improving monitoring, evalua-
4 tion, reporting, and program management capacities;

5 (5) encourage the development of youth-inclu-
6 sive transitional justice and accountability mecha-
7 nisms, disengagement, and reintegration programs;

8 (6) support inclusive education with a focus on
9 context-specific critical thinking skills, socioemotion-
10 al learning, and conflict resolution;

11 (7) identify and address barriers through age-
12 disaggregated analysis to youth participation in pro-
13 grams described in paragraph (1) and improve pro-
14 gram design and targeting;

15 (8) include youth in assessments of United
16 States peace and security initiatives; and

17 (9) support the use of quotas for the direct and
18 gender-equitable participation of youth in all phases
19 of formal peace and political transition processes,
20 from pre-negotiation to implementation, including in
21 national dialogues, constitution-making, transitional
22 justice, and other political processes related to peace
23 and security.

24 (b) AGENCY-SPECIFIC PLANS.—The strategy shall
25 include specific implementation plans from each relevant

1 Federal agency that describes the anticipated technical, fi-
2 nancial, and in-kind contributions to integrate the strategy
3 into ongoing planning processes.

4 (c) REGIONAL PLANS.—The strategy shall include
5 specific implementation plans and consideration in con-
6 sultation with each regional bureau within the United
7 States Agency for International Development, the Depart-
8 ment of State, and the Department of Defense as part
9 of ongoing planning processes including relevant Country
10 Development Cooperation Strategies and Joint Regional
11 Strategies.

12 **SEC. 7. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO EXPAND TRAINING,**
13 **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND GRANTS MAN-**
14 **AGED AND CONTROLLED BY YOUTH LEAD-**
15 **ERS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 252 of the Foreign Assist-
17 ance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2211a) is amended—

18 (1) in subsection (a)—

19 (A) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at
20 the end;

21 (B) in paragraph (6), by striking the pe-
22 riod at the end and inserting “; and”; and

23 (C) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(7) assistance to expand training, technical as-
2 sistance, and grant management managed and con-
3 trolled by youth leaders.”; and

4 (2) by adding at the end the following:

5 “(d) DEFINITION.—In subsection (a)(7), the term
6 ‘youth’ means individuals who have attained the age of
7 16 but have not attained the age of 30.”.

8 (b) YOUTH, PEACE, AND SECURITY FUND.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Coordinator is author-
10 ized to provide grants, emergency assistance, and
11 technical assistance to eligible youth-led civil society
12 organizations and youth peace building implementers
13 who seek to achieve the following:

14 (A) Peace building.

15 (B) Conflict prevention.

16 (C) Conflict management.

17 (D) Conflict resolution.

18 (E) Post-conflict relief and recovery ef-
19 forts.

20 (F) Assistance for those who require im-
21 mediate support in the face of legal and safety
22 concerns due to their participation in the activi-
23 ties described in subparagraph (A), (B), (C),
24 (D), or (E).

1 (2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

2 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums

3 as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.

4 Amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization

5 of appropriations under this paragraph may be re-

6 ferred to as the “Youth, Peace, and Security Fund”.

7 **SEC. 8. YOUTH DEFINED.**

8 In this Act, the term “youth” means individuals who

9 have attained the age of 16 but have not attained the age

10 of 30.

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