

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2022

Introduction

Since our founding by Congress in 1984 as a national, nonpartisan, independent institute charged with the mission of preventing, mitigating, and resolving violent conflict abroad, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has risen to meet the most pressing challenges to global peace and security. From the depths of the Cold War to the post–Cold War landscape with historic levels of refugees, violent extremism, civil wars, environmental shocks, and extreme poverty concentrated in fragile states, the Institute has adapted our strategies and tools for addressing violent conflict.

Today, global challenges have yet again evolved and intensified. The threats that emanate from fragile states continue to be primary drivers of violent conflict. Meanwhile, the rise of global and regional competition is extending and exacerbating violent conflicts in these fragile states. Global threats that require greater international cooperation are increasing and deepening just as the international systems that enable this cooperation are under heightened strain.

The 2020–2022 USIP Strategic Plan spans what will be a period of significant disruption, escalating disorder, and increased complexity. This strategy is designed to provide USIP's global team with a clear pathway for addressing this new, more complex environment and for enabling the agility and creativity necessary to fulfill our mission in a fast-changing world.

Nancy Lindborg President Stephen J. Hadley Chair, Board of Directors

Cover photo by Timothy Hursley



It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it.
 And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it.
 ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

VISION

A world without violent conflict.

MISSION

To prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflicts around the world by engaging directly in conflict zones and linking analysis, training, and field programming in partnership with those working for sustainable peace.

CORE PRINCIPLES

USIP BELIEVES CONFLICTS CAN BE RESOLVED WITHOUT VIOLENCE.

Conflict is inevitable and not necessarily a bad thing. Managed through nonviolent means, societal conflict is often a transformative force for positive change.

USIP ADAPTS TO THE DYNAMICS OF EACH CONFLICT.

Efforts to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflicts should be tailored to each issue because the complexity of violent conflict requires responses with constant adaptation.

USIP IS GUIDED BY FACTS.

Efforts to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflicts must be grounded in empirical evidence and rigorously evaluated for impact.

USIP PARTNERS.

Our impact is wider and more enduring when we work with partners in government, academia, multilateral organizations, civil society, and business around the world.

USIP KNOWS THAT SUSTAINABLE PEACE STRENGTHENS THE SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES.

Widespread violence displaces populations and threatens the stability and economic growth of the United States and its allies. Focusing on priority contexts, we address the contagious effects of violence and help strengthen international security arrangements that protect human rights and dignity for all global citizens.

USIP INNOVATES, LEARNS, AND SHARES.

We test new ways of addressing challenges, incorporate lessons learned into future work, and share our knowledge, techniques, experiences, and resources to help others build peace.

VALUES

COMMITMENT

- Demonstrate passion to achieve our mission.
- Approach our work with energy and persistence.
- Foster a unified sense of purpose.

OPENNESS

- Be curious, creative, and agile.
- Embrace change.
- Learn from our programs and the people in places we work.
- Address issues with open, direct, and respectful communication.

RESPECT

- Act with honesty, integrity, authenticity, and humility.
- Treat others with dignity and empathy.
- Seek diversity of backgrounds, approaches, and ideas.

TEAMWORK

- Build and maintain trust among all staff.
- Commit to the well-being and success of teammates.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Take responsibility for our actions and for upholding USIP's mission.
- Respect decisions and policies.
- Use resources wisely.

NONPARTISANSHIP

- Commit to nonpartisanship in our work.
- Conduct balanced and objective research, education, and training.
- Engage people from all sides of issues.

USIP: Making Peace Possible

Founded in 1984, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) dedicated our early years to partnering with academic institutions to support the development of peace studies. That approach quickly evolved to include policy research and analysis that supported high-level diplomatic exchanges between states.

After the Soviet Union collapsed, the Institute increasingly focused on violent conflicts within states, deploying teams first to the Balkans and then to Iraq to apply directly the practical tools of peacebuilding. As the world became increasingly multipolar and multi-stakeholder, the Institute focused on building peace from the bottom up and top down, primarily in fragile states across Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, as well as Colombia.

In 2015, USIP articulated a theory of change that assumes the absence of violent conflict alone is not sufficient to ensure peace; rather we must work within a transformation framework that recognizes the conditions necessary for sustainable peace: inclusive societies and political processes, economic opportunities, citizen security, and access to justice. Our activities empower individuals, institutions, and governments to apply analysis, knowledge, and practical tools to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict and to create the conditions necessary for the sound and inclusive social compacts that lead to peaceful societies.

A CHANGING STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE

In today's rapidly changing world, USIP has necessarily evolved again. USIP's distinct strengths and capabilities remain vital for preventing, mitigating, and resolving violent conflict. Looking forward, we will deploy them with a refreshed approach and focus that enable USIP to respond to the increasingly complex threats to global peace and security that emanate from:

- Fragile states where broken social compacts
 continue to create conditions that enable violence;
- Resurgent interstate competition that challenges systems for cooperation while exacerbating and prolonging conflicts in fragile states;
- Rising global challenges such as the proliferation of information and communications technologies, a rapidly growing youth population concentrated in more fragile states, and a dangerous combination of environmental shocks and poor governance; and
- The fraying of alliances and a beleaguered system for international cooperation at a time of rising challenges.

Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding barriers, quietly building new structures.
 JOHN F. KENNEDY

Therefore, in pursuit of our mission, USIP has updated our theory of change and priorities, so that we can lean into this time of significant disruption by:

- Sharpening our ability to work in complexity and constant change;
- Redoubling our focus on **empowering people** civil society, citizens, youth, women, religious actors—with the tools to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict;
- Concentrating on preventing and resolving violent conflicts by promoting resilience in fragile states at every level of society;
 - Addressing growing regional and global competition, primarily with a focus on how this competition complicates and prolongs violent conflict in fragile states and regions; and
- Supporting the emergence of more **effective** systems for regional and international cooperation based on shared values and revitalized, reformed institutions.

As we turn to the future, we draw from more than three decades of experience to affirm our conviction that peace is practical, possible, and above all, a constant process. In the rapidly changing, more complex strategic landscape we now face, these convictions will continue to guide our work.

PEACE IS PRACTICAL, POSSIBLE, AND A PROCESS

PEACE IS PRACTICAL

USIP's work is cost-effective, reducing the loss of lives and resources by preventing conflicts from turning violent and escalating into wars.

PEACE IS POSSIBLE

Peace results from the practical application of ideas and skills. Peacebuilding can be learned. Even protracted conflicts can be brought to an end.

PEACE IS A PROCESS

Conflict will always be present in society, but with effective institutions and empowered individuals it can be managed. The work of building and maintaining peace requires the constant application of knowledge and core tools to transform disagreements into positive action rather than violent conflict.



Core Strengths: Who We Are and What We Do

Amid this complex, rapidly evolving strategic landscape, USIP's five core strengths enable the Institute to address pressing peace and security challenges.

NONPARTISAN GOVERNMENT PARTNER AND TRUSTED INTERMEDIARY

USIP's distinct status—as formally independent but with a special link to the U.S. government—enables us to serve as a trusted connector among foreign governments, civil societies, and U.S. government officials. USIP's work complements and supports other U.S. government efforts in-country. The Institute also has the latitude to maintain a sustained presence in conflict zones, enabling our teams to build the trust, relationships, and knowledge necessary to work toward our mission.

While ISIS seized much of **Iraq** in 2014, one region, Mahmoudiya, rebuffed ISIS. Why? The local tribes remain committed to a decade-old peace agreement, signed after an intensive USIP-designed mediation. Today, USIP is supporting Iraqi communities to heal the deep divides left by the ISIS occupation through reconciliation dialogues that have produced six agreements. Those accords have permitted the return of more than a half-million displaced Iraqis.

TOP-DOWN AND BOTTOM-UP WORK IN CONFLICT ZONES

A sustained, successful peace requires a committed national government as well as the support and involvement of an inclusive, engaged civil society. USIP has the capability to work in conflict-affected countries at the community level as well as with national and regional governments, with a focus on connecting top-down and bottom-up initiatives.

USIP has worked on the ground in Afghanistan for 17 years, helping Afghans build nonviolent solutions to the country's long conflict. This mission directly supports the United States' strategic interest in helping achieve a political settlement to end the war and ensure U.S. security is protected. In promoting an inclusive, sustained Afghan peace process, the Institute applies the experience and relationships we have built since 2002, and since the opening of our field office in Kabul in 2008. USIP works from the ground up, with local government and civil society partners in most of Afghanistan's provinces. And we work from the top down, informing U.S. and Afghan policymakers through research, analysis, and track 2 dialogues.





LINKING RESEARCH, TRAINING, AND POLICY TO PRACTICAL ACTION

USIP's teams combine researchers, policy analysts, educators, and practitioners—both in conflict zones and Washington, D.C.—in a culture of collaboration that unlocks better ideas and effective action. The Institute applies research through training, education, policy recommendations, and application of best practices in conflict zones.

In **Tunisia**, USIP is pioneering modernized training for the police and National Guard. Abuses by police trained under the previous repressive regime continue to be a chronic trigger for public anger, violence, and recruitment by extremists. USIP's community-focused training program is building policing agencies that prioritize serving and building trust with citizens, which is vital for the country's struggle against terrorism.

STRENGTH IN PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

USIP is committed to supporting, engaging, and educating the field of peacebuilding by working with a diverse set of partners. We work with partners in conflict zones and elsewhere around the world to support individuals, academic partners, organizations, and communities of practice through research, convening key stakeholders, programming, grants, fellowships, and promotion of strategies to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict.

In the fragile states most prone to violent crises, **youth** populations are disproportionately large, with fully 50 percent of people younger than 18. This makes young civic leaders a vital, strategic force for a more peaceful future. USIP therefore conducts a focused program to train and mentor young civil society leaders, ages 18 to 35, working for peace in their communities. Since 2014, this program, called Generation Change, has trained more than 200 youth leaders from 24 countries facing violent conflict. During 2017, these young leaders engaged nearly 120,000 citizens across their communities, notably through training, mediation efforts, and local dialogues to resolve conflicts.



DISTINCT CONVENING POWER

USIP draws on our exceptional convening power to create opportunities for diverse audiences to exchange knowledge, experiences, and ideas necessary for creative solutions to difficult challenges. We serve as an important, neutral platform for bringing together government and nongovernment, diplomacy, security, and development actors and participants across political views. The Institute also serves as a venue for hosting global leaders, is a convener for timely bipartisan U.S. policy conversations, and is a trusted convener for track 1.5 and track 2 diplomacy.

At the request of Congress, USIP **facilitates bipartisan commissions** on the toughest policy issues, including, most recently, how to address the underlying causes of extremism in fragile states and policy options for the complicated conflict in Syria. USIP's convening power enables the Institute to bring people together from across the political spectrum and various backgrounds to undertake comprehensive examinations of pressing peace and security challenges.

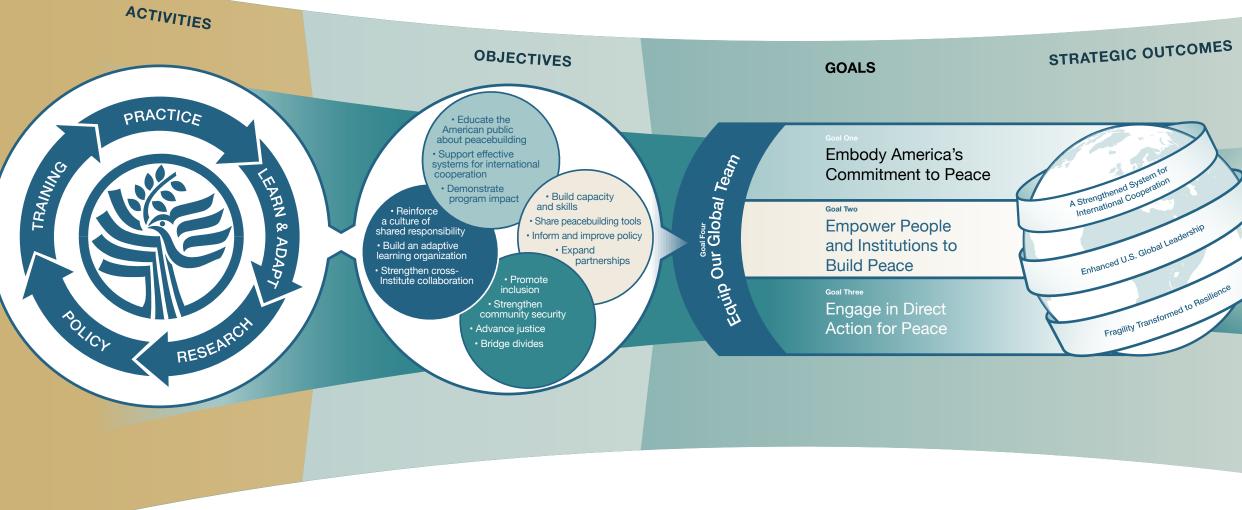


Theory of Change

USIP's theory of change has evolved with the changing global landscape, where state fragility persists and conflicts are complicated by the rise of interstate competition, and while new, more urgent threats to peace require a more effective, strengthened international system for cooperation, supported by U.S. global leadership.

In response, USIP's teams will draw upon our core strengths to conduct activities that drive us toward objectives necessary for reaching our goals in service of three strategic outcomes. In this shifting strategic environment, these strategic outcomes-enhanced U.S. leadership to prevent and resolve violent conflict, a strengthened international system for cooperation, and transformation of fragility to resilience-are critical for achieving our mission.

Global violence continues to emanate from fragile states, where the social contract is broken or absent, and state institutions lack the legitimacy or capability to serve their people. We will continue to focus on peacebuilding objectives that promote inclusion, strengthen community security, advance justice, and bridge divides in fragile environments as vital elements for transforming fragility into resilience.



However, in the years ahead, it will not be enough to work only within states to transform fragility to resilience—a more complex global context demands more. Our updated theory of change envisions USIP's capabilities as important tools for contributing to U.S. global leadership in preventing and resolving violent conflict and for supporting and strengthening a values-based international system for cooperation.

VISION

To prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflicts around the world by engaging directly in conflict zones and linking analysis, training, and field programming in partnership with those working for sustainable peace.

MISSION

A world without violent conflict.

Goal One Embody America's Commitment to Peace

Created by and for the American people and funded by Congress, USIP represents the nation's shared values and commitment to peace around the world. In establishing the Institute, the USIP Act affirmed a "deep public need" for "a living institution embodying the heritage, ideals, and concerns of the American people for peace."

The Institute serves as a symbol, hub, and nonpartisan resource for the American people. All our work rests on the promise that USIP will embody America's commitment to peace in everything we do and everywhere we work.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

USIP will contribute to more effective systems for international cooperation to meet today's global challenges. We understand that emerging and escalating collective problems—transnational extremist organizations, pandemics, environmental shocks, new technologies exploited to stoke violence or societal discord, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons—require collective solutions. At the same time, we affirm the need for reform and realignment of systems, capacities, and shared values for promoting peace.

Strengthen the evidence base for peacebuilding

programs. A key element of embodying the American commitment to peace is to demonstrate that our mission is practical and effective. USIP will continue to bring together academic, practitioner, and policy communities to share and consolidate lessons learned and evidence on the impact of peacebuilding.

Educate, engage, and inform Americans across the country about USIP's work and our presence on the National Mall as a monument to America's commitment to peace. USIP will continue to engage the public as partners in peacebuilding using cutting-edge digital communications and expanding access to high-quality educational materials that teach young people how conflicts can be resolved.

ACTIVITIES

Educate and engage Americans about USIP's work
 Convene diverse audiences
 Develop and share policy recommendations
 Promote USIP's headquarters presence on the National Mall
 Develop and deliver strengthened training and education
 Strengthen monitoring and evaluation
 Learn and adapt

OBJECTIVES

- Enhance the Institute's role as a forum for peace
 Support effective systems for international cooperation
 Expand the American public's understanding of the U.S. role in peacebuilding
- Demonstrate evidence of program impact

GOAL

Embody America's Commitment to Peace

66 Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the ability to cope with conflict by peaceful means.
 RONALD REAGAN

Goal Two Empower People and Institutions to Build Peace

Develop and promote improved knowledge, tools, and policy recommendations for more effective strategy, policy, and programs that build sustainable peace.

USIP is a premier global resource for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners in the field. Through our work, we develop research and analysis that deepen understanding of the complexities of conflict and inform practical tools and skills. At USIP's global headquarters, experts from many sectors and views share their expertise, advancing the Institute's thought leadership and fostering rich communities of practice. USIP's recommendations improve policy and practice to more effectively prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict.

Issues, Stakeholders, and Peacebuilding Toolbox

To achieve this goal, USIP organizes our approach in a three-part frame. We prioritize a core set of issues vital for enabling fragility to resilience transformation. We develop and refine core peacebuilding tools and train others on their application. And we seek to enable inclusive processes that are essential for a sustained peace, with a special focus on those most routinely excluded across all contexts: women, youth, and religious actors.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Deepen our research and thought leadership on how the interplay of **environmental shocks**, rapid population growth, and poor governance affects the risks of violence in the places we work.

Expand our peacebuilding toolbox with a new focus on **systems thinking** to inform understanding of and responses to complex conflict dynamics. Additionally, we will broaden our understanding of the role and use of information technologies to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict.

Redouble our focus on honing and disseminating the **core tools** essential for addressing violent conflict at the community, state, or interstate level: dialogue, mediation, negotiation, with a renewed focus on revitalizing track 1.5 and track 2 dialogues, critical for resolving peacefully threats arising from major and regional power competition.

Empower individuals and institutions through improved training and education programs, greater alignment of our grants and fellowship programs against the new strategic landscape, greater accessibility of archived scholarship and research, and expansion of our global network of partners and institutions.

66 Peace, with all the world is my sincere wish. I am sure it is our true policy, and am persuaded it is the ardent desire of the government. ??

ACTIVITIES

Research key issues for transforming fragility to resilience
Develop, test, and strengthen peacebuilding tools
Convene diverse audiences
Develop and share policy recommendations
Develop and deliver strengthened training and education
Align grants and fellowship programs to our research agenda
Develop updated tools for conflict analysis
Strengthen monitoring and evaluation
Learn and adapt

OBJECTIVES

- Deepen understanding, build capacity, and skills
- Develop and share peacebuilding tools for practitioners
- Inform and improve policy on key issues for transforming fragility to resilience
 - Strengthen and expand partnerships

GOAL

Empower People and Institutions to Build Peace

Fragility to Resilience: Key Issue Areas	Cross-Cutting Stakeholders	Peacebuilding Toolbox
Governance, justice and security	• Women	Conflict analysis
Closing civic space	Youth	Systems thinking
Violent extremism	Religious actors	• Negotiation, mediation and dialogue
Environment and conflict		Reconciliation
		Peace-process support
		Nonviolent action
		 Training and education

Goal Three Engage in Direct Action for Peace

Prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict by applying USIP expertise, resources, and approaches in specific conflict zones.

USIP works directly in countries and regions affected by violent conflict, or at high risk of a future outbreak, by applying analysis, practical tools, and strategies to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict. Based on our experience and research, USIP emphasizes an approach that works from the top down—engaging with government leaders and other elites—and from the bottom up—engaging with individuals and community, grassroots, and faith-based groups, and an emphasis on women and youth—to build a more sustainable peace. Increasingly, conflict resolution also requires working from the outside in, as neighboring states and major powers play larger roles in internal conflicts.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To address the continued challenge of state fragility, the regional spillover of violent conflict and the increased competition from regional and global actors, USIP directly applies our tools in three ways:

SUSTAINED IN-COUNTRY PRESENCE

In select countries of significant national security interest, the Institute invests in sustaining a longterm presence. Because our in-country teams are supported by experts at headquarters, USIP provides in-depth analysis of complex conflicts for policymakers and practitioners, supports a broad network of local partners, and directly applies our tools and strategies to reduce violence and lay the groundwork for sustainable peace.

USIP maintains a long-term focus in these conflicts, enabling our teams to foster in-country relationships based on trust and to move more freely "outside the wire" than U.S. government counterparts. Moving from fragility to resilience is a generational undertaking, making such sustained efforts a critical element for long-term success.

Based on their importance to U.S. national security and implications for regional and international peace and security, our current country priorities within this category are: **Afghanistan, Burma, Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan,** and **Tunisia.**

2 REGIONS OF FOCUS

USIP deploys teams and contributes analysis, tools, and strategies across a large swath of fragile regions that include Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, the Sahel and Horn of Africa and select areas of Latin America. In many of these regions, state fragility has resulted in flows of migrants, refugees, arms, violent extremists, and ethnic and tribal violence that cross boundaries and even regions. These states are far more vulnerable to transborder conflicts resulting from environmental shocks and to the competition of outside stakeholders. Working at the grassroots, national, and regional levels, USIP empowers its partners to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflicts more effectively. Using research, working groups, and convening to promote new ideas and strategies, the Institute strives to provide partners with knowledge and tools as they work for greater peace and resilience in these regions from the top down, bottom up, and outside in.



3 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL INTERSTATE COMPETITION

In today's global context, rising interstate competition is influencing how conflict manifests and persists in fragile states, as well as threatening regional and global peace and stability. Since 2016, USIP has focused on the rise of China and will continue to do so as Beijing further projects its influence globally.

We will strive to identify areas in which the United States and other major powers can benefit from cooperation on matters of mutual concern and facilitate those efforts where appropriate. We are increasing our focus on convening experts, producing analysis, and identifying policy options to better respond to the challenges to peace posed by competition. Priority areas include:

- The Red Sea, where Gulf states and other regional powers are projecting conflict and competition into the fragile Horn of Africa;
- China, with an emphasis on analysis and programs to increase understanding and options for addressing its continued push for investment and influence on conflict contexts across the globe; and
- North Korea with a focus on high-level dialogue, analysis, and development of strategic options for resolving this decades-old conflict.

In addition, we will develop a new portfolio to expand analysis and policy recommendations for addressing a more assertive **Russia** as it attempts to expand its influence in the post-Soviet sphere, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, with a special emphasis on Ukraine.

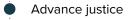


ACTIVITIES



OBJECTIVES

- Promote inclusion
- Strengthen community security



- Bridge divides
- Inform and improve policy in conflict-affected countries

GOAL

Engage in Direct Action for Peace

No national security actor or private nonprofit organization can perform USIP's congressionally mandated mission, and certainly none has ever done so at such a small cost to the American taxpayer.
 GEORGE P. SHULTZ

Goal Four Equip Our Global Team

Build an agile, high-performing, learning organization that delivers the best possible outcomes in support of USIP's mission, values, and goals.

USIP will continue to support our workforce to be effective in a fast-changing environment. Individually and collectively, we will challenge ourselves to model the behaviors and values that enable peace and conflict resolution. We will recruit, reward, develop, and deploy the most talented individuals with the skills and passion to fulfill our mission. At the same time, we will challenge and support our people, ensuring that they are fully prepared for the demanding work of peacebuilding. The Institute will seek out and develop strong leaders who, in addition to being experts in their field, bring out the best in others and model integrity, respect, accountability, and trust.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Reinforce a **culture of shared responsibility** that translates into a deep commitment to each other, our work, and the people and partners we serve.

Provide our workforce with learning and development opportunities that **encourage individual and collective growth**.

Increase the ability of our teams to rapidly **adapt** to an ever-changing landscape.

Create opportunities for collaboration and creative problem-solving.

Establish organizational policies, processes, and systems that are as user-friendly as possible and appropriate.

ACTIVITIES

Recruit, develop, and reward the best talent
 Continue frequent and varied internal communications
 Expand leadership development offerings
 Create opportunities for cross-Institute collaboration
 Continue commitment to the safety and security of our people
 Learn and adapt

OBJECTIVES

Reinforce a culture of shared responsibility
 Build a more adaptive learning organization
 Strengthen collaboration across the Institute
 Support more effective and efficient systems and processes

GOAL

Equip our Global Team

In our joy, we think we hear a whisper.
At first it is too soft. Then only half heard.
We listen carefully as it gathers strength.
We hear a sweetness.
The word is Peace.
It is loud now. It is louder.
Louder than the explosion of bombs. ??



About USIP

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) was founded by a combination of congressional commitment and citizen action. Beginning in the 1960s, members of Congress who had served in World War II and were shaped by their battlefield experience began to introduce legislation to create a national peace academy. In the 1970s, a grassroots movement across the United States spurred this effort on. Congress passed legislation that President Reagan signed into law in 1984, establishing the Institute as "an independent, nonprofit, national institute to serve the American people and the federal government" through work to promote "international peace and the resolution of conflicts among the nations and peoples of the world without recourse to violence."

The Institute is governed by a 15-person Board of Directors composed of the secretary of state and the secretary of defense or their designees, the president of the National Defense University, and 12 others—half Republican and half Democrat—each confirmed by the U.S. Senate. USIP's teams work in many of the world's most volatile regions. In 2011, the Institute moved to our permanent home at the northwest corner of the National Mall.







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