

**Written Testimony by Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to the
House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
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On behalf of the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I thank the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs for this opportunity to submit testimony on appropriations for FY 2020. Together with Catholic Relief Services, the Catholic Church’s overseas relief and development agency, I urge you to preserve funding for the international poverty-reducing, humanitarian, and development accounts specified in the table below which address factors that cause or exacerbate poverty such as health, infrastructure, armed conflict, and forced migration.

Agency	Account	Amount in \$,000
USAID	Maternal Health and Child Health	\$845,000
USAID	Nutrition	\$145,000
USAID	Vulnerable Children (orphans and displaced)	\$27,000
USAID	HIV/AIDS (USAID Programs)	\$330,000
USAID	Malaria, TB, Global Health Security & other NTDs	\$1,262,950
DOS/PEPFAR	HIV/AIDS (State Funding/PEPFAR)	\$5,930,000
USAID	Development Assistance (including water, education)	\$3,100,000
USAID/OFDA	International Disaster Assistance	\$4,500,000
DOS/PRM	Migration and Refugee Assistance	\$3,604,000
DOS/PRM	Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance	\$1000
USAID	Complex Crises Fund and Atrocities Prevention Board	\$35,750
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation	\$905,000
DOS/IO	Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities	\$1,825,000
DOS/IO	Peacekeeping Operations and Peace	\$552,940
DOS/IO	U.S. Institute of Peace	\$38,634
DOS/IO	Green Climate Fund	\$500,000
DOS/IO	Combatting Trafficking in Persons	\$80,822

Generous and effective international assistance is a moral imperative to assist “the least of these” by promoting human life and dignity, advancing solidarity with the poor, and enhancing human security in our world. Such aid gives life to our values as a nation and is an essential component of United States leadership in the world.

In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis argues: “The need to resolve the structural causes of poverty cannot be delayed, not only for the pragmatic reason of its urgency for the good order of society, but because society needs to be cured of a sickness which is weakening and frustrating it, and which can only lead to new crises... Inequality is the root of social ills” (#202). He calls on all nations to express true solidarity with the poor and to address the growing inequality in the world that “eventually engenders a violence which recourse to arms cannot and never will be able to resolve” (#60). He also stresses that among the poorest and most abandoned are migrants and refugees “who need more humane conditions and need the causes of their migration to be addressed,” (*World Day of Migrants & Refugees (2015)*).

The American people are historically generous to people in low-income countries. A 2016 Kaiser Family Foundation survey found that 15% Americans believe international assistance is more than half of the federal budget. The average estimate was 31%. The actual amount of the federal budget allocated to international assistance is approximately 1%, while the accounts that the USCCB supports total only about 0.6%. I urge you to protect international assistance that saves lives and reduces instability and widespread forced displacement.

Reflections on Foreign Aid Reform Elements

I would like to offer some strategic recommendations on how the United States can rebalance and refocus its international assistance to better align with the problems and threats that our world faces. **I strongly recommend that the United States reorient its vision and international affairs strategy towards a more robust diplomatic and development-centered engagement to end our endless wars and prevent conflict in the poor and fragile countries of the world. To reach this goal, the United States should also design and develop a systematic and strategic partnership with American civil society, in particular faith-based organizations, and increase its support to civil society and faith-based communities in the developing world. I also urge the United States to concentrate more resources in conflict prevention in the fragile countries of the world, particularly in Africa and Latin America.**

1. Towards a more just balance among defense, diplomacy, and development with a greater emphasis on conflict prevention.

After 17 years of war in Afghanistan and 15 in Iraq, it is self-evident that there is no military-driven solution to these conflicts, that there can be no military victory. Yet some observers argue that a withdrawal after 17 years would be precipitous. The only victory that could guarantee peace and prosperity in Afghanistan and Iraq and eventually in Syria and Yemen must come from sustained, open, and inclusive negotiations between legitimate political leaders from all sides of the conflicts in these countries. As a party to these conflicts, the United States should shift resources to its diplomats, regional strategists, and civil society builders to facilitate

and support these negotiations. The leaders and stakeholders to these conflicts have to realize together that a just and lasting peace cannot be won and imposed by a military victory. A just peace can only come from a new shared social contract that creates legitimate, accountable government, public administration, military, and police and promotes a free and vibrant populace living in a society that guarantees their full civil and human rights.

How long can we ask our men and women in the armed services to fight the same people over the same ground in an endless attempt to stave off military defeat, if we are not making every effort to win the peace that will allow our forces to return home to their families satisfied to have left peace in their wake? In 2017, over 120 retired generals and admirals wrote to Congress that State Department, Peace Corps, and development “are critical to preventing conflict and reducing the need to put our men and women in uniform in harm’s way.”¹ In 2013, former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis testified before Congress, “If you don’t fully fund State Department, I need to buy more ammunition.”² Although true, the sad reality is that the ammunition cannot win peace.

Despite this, State Department’s budget is historically low in comparison to that of defense. In 1950, State’s budget was around half the size of defense. Today State receives only 10% of what the Defense Department is allocated. Since 9/11, most of the increases to State’s budget has gone to improve physical security at overseas posts. We live in a world in transition from the post-Cold War world order that was dominated by the United States to a more multi-polar universe dominated by an increasing number of conflicts, large flows of refugees escaping those conflicts, threats from terrorist groups, and challenges to the existing world order from Russia, China and a rise of nationalism that proposes walls on borders instead of bridges. In such a world the United States urgently needs to deploy skilled diplomats who can see through the noise of the headlines to a clear and objective understanding of the trendlines and the root causes of conflict and instability. We need regional and diplomatic experts capable of negotiating the peace while our military staves off war.

The Church has understood this imperative for years. We have proclaimed the moral imperative to build just peace and fund poverty-reducing development and humanitarian assistance as the only path to security for all. Pope Benedict XVI taught in his 2009 World Day of Peace Message, “to fight poverty is to build peace” (#15). Pope Francis agrees: “Today in many places we hear a call for greater security. But until exclusion and inequality in society and between people are reversed, it will be impossible to eliminate violence....” (*The Joy of the Gospel*, # 59).

2. Transitioning to Preventing State Fragility and Violent Conflict

While the United States rebuilds robust diplomatic and peacebuilding structures and institutions, we also must transform our understanding of conflict in the world. Shortly after the 9/11 attacks the US Bishops’ Conference warned, “Our nation must join with others in addressing policies and problems that provide fertile ground in which terrorism can thrive.” We urge our political leaders to look beyond a limited focus on counter-terrorism to address the

¹ https://www.usglc.org/downloads/2017/02/FY18_International_Affairs_Budget_House_Senate.pdf

² <https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4658822/mattis-ammunition>

poverty and powerlessness that make some people easier recruits for violence and terror. The United States entered Afghanistan with a strategy to counter violent extremism. To combat the Taliban government the military then fought to counter violent insurgency. After 17 years, terrorist groups are weakened, but remain and the insurgent Taliban are gaining ground.

Since independence almost 59 years ago, the country of Mali has known latent, and at other times, violent conflict between the nomadic Tuareg in the three northern provinces and the Sub-Saharan African people in the center and south of the country. In 2012 a large group of Tuareg left Libya when Muammar Khaddafi fell. They returned to Mali with Libyan heavy weaponry. They took total control over northern Mali and then launched an attack into central Mali. It took the rapid intervention of French military forces with U.S. logistical support to turn them back. Seven years later, despite an agreement to resolve the political and social grievances from the Tuareg, the latent conflict remains waiting for the next crisis to reignite violence.

Years before Mali, Somalia fell into disarray. The state collapsed and became a safe haven for terrorist groups. Boko Haram in Nigeria evolved from a small unknown fringe religious group to stage terrorist attacks in the capital Abuja and gained control over a large part of Northeast Nigeria. In these countries, the presence of terror groups is really the last symptom of the massive failure of the state to rule and govern; it has transitioned from a fragile state to a failed state. Concentrating on the terrorist presence in such a country is like giving an aspirin to a man dying of malaria to treat the headache.

Fragility and conflicts also exist in the Central African Republic, Cameroon, South Sudan, Sudan, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo where insurgents operate, causing enormous suffering in the absence of ‘terrorists’. Here conflict is the result of poor governance, group grievances, mismanagement of latent conflict, repression, human rights violations, and crushing poverty.

Human rights groups, think tanks, and peacebuilding organizations have urged the U.S. Government to change its focus on countering violent extremism to preventing fragility and the violent conflict that often results from fragility. Pax Christi and Catholic academics are working to develop a theological and practical theory of how to transform violent conflict to Just Peace, which is a sustainable peace based on justice and reconciliation.

The Institute of Peace is developing a report called “Beyond the Homeland – Protecting America from Extremism in Fragile States”. Their conclusion is *Going forward, the priority for U.S. policy should be to strengthen fragile states—to help them build resilience against the alarming growth of violent extremism within their own societies*. The World Bank published a report, Pathways for Peace, with the goal of laying the groundwork for a new focus on preventing conflict before it destroys a country turning it into a potential playground for future terrorists.

The USCCB supported the Elie Wiesel Global Atrocities Prevention Act, which was passed by the 115th Congress. The bill affirmed the Atrocities Prevention Board efforts to coordinate all relevant Federal Government agencies to address fragility and prevent conflict. The act also called for resources. The past Administration created the Complex Crisis Fund to

finance short term efforts to head off conflict before it breaks out. The USCCB also supported the 115th Congress' Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act that would push the Administration to develop and adopt best practices and strategies in 6 pilot countries. I was very pleased to see the strong bipartisan reintroduction of the bill, now known as the Global Fragility Act, on March 7, and hope to see it advance expeditiously into law.

I urge the Congress and the Administration to focus on and invest more State and USAID resources in reducing fragility in the world and preventing violent conflict. The U.S. should increase the capacity of the State Department Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations and expand programs by the USAID Office of Transitional Initiatives, Conflict Management and Mitigation, and the Complex Crises Fund and integrate peacebuilding and social cohesion efforts into development programs in agriculture and livelihood promotion.

3. Leave No One Behind: Greater Funding to the Poorest and Most Fragile States

The Brookings Institution estimates that in 2030, 31 countries will be home to 80% of people living in extreme poverty. Africa now accounts for two-thirds of the world's extreme poor and will reach nine-tenths by 2030. If Africa is the center of poverty in the world, it is also ground zero when it comes to fragility and conflict. Of the 25 most fragile countries in the 2018 Fragile State Index created by the Fund for Peace, 19 are in Africa. Of the 84 conflicts in the world in 2017 the Upsala Conflict Data Program estimates that 50 are in Africa.

While these 31 countries currently account for two thirds of the world's people living in extreme poverty and 60% of the world's conflicts, they receive less than one quarter of total programmable aid from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development countries. To redress the particular conditions in fragile states USAID should:

- Develop a more “expeditionary” development approach that is more rapid, nimble, and risk tolerant using cooperative agreements instead of rigid contracts. (CGD, 2018)
- Increase funding to poverty-reducing programs like those in the table above.
- Redouble its programs in governance, reducing corruption, conflict prevention, and mitigation.
- Increase humanitarian assistance in countries in the throes of conflict.
- Fund inclusive growth programs, especially micro-finance, to lift up the poor.
- Enlist and promote social investment firms and other U.S. businesses to increase their engagement in fragile countries.
- Invest heavily in civil society development, especially facilitated by faith-based groups. Too often corrupt or predatory governments ally with large businesses to protect the interests of a small elite. A more vibrant micro-business climate and a strong and organized civil society can defend the interests of the poor and marginalized.
- Increase funding for human rights, freedom of the press and religion, and other democracy-building activities as investments in sustainable peace and prosperity.
- Form strategic and flexible partnerships with U.S. faith-based groups like Catholic Relief Services and secular NGOs to engage micro-businesses and civil society in fragile countries. Teaming the best of American civil society with their counterparts in fragile states is a dynamic strategy.

4. Massive increase in Funding for the Prevention and Mitigation of Climate Change

Pope Benedict XVI was known as the environmental Pope. Pope Francis' issued the encyclical *Laudato Si* and greatly affirmed our stance on climate change. *"Never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years."* We must all change our day-to-day actions to live more sustainably. *"Reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility."* On a larger scale, our leaders must be held accountable. *"Those who will have to suffer the consequences . . . will not forget this failure of conscience and responsibility."*

The vast majority of the carbon dioxide currently in our atmosphere is ours, but those who will bear the consequences of the resultant climate change will be the poorest countries of the world. The United States must lead the well-off countries of the world (and others like China and India) in a worldwide effort to cut emissions and help poor nations adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. **The United States should increase its allocations to the Green Climate Fund and finance other programs through U.S. NGOs to work with poorest communities to help them build resilience to increasing floods, droughts, crop pests, and diseases.**