April 24, 2020

Dear Members of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs:

The Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP), a global membership organization with 120+ members working in 153 countries around the world, greatly appreciates Congress’ quick action passing the CARES Act and including much-needed assistance for nonprofit organizations to ensure the uninterrupted programming of critical development, humanitarian assistance, and peacebuilding work both in the United States and globally. This funding provides not only much-needed emergency assistance for individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofits affected by the coronavirus pandemic in the United States, but it also provides vital international development aid for conflict-affected and fragile states to assist in the effective prevention and mitigation of the pandemic.

Unfortunately, the length of time it will take to respond to contain the pandemic effectively will be longer than initially anticipated, and appropriations thus far are not enough to address the ongoing impact of the crisis. In future supplemental funding, AfP requests the following:

1. **Replenish and extend the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) beyond June 30.**
   Unfortunately, the pandemic will not be contained in eight weeks, and small businesses and nonprofits will need additional protection beyond this initial period as they rebuild lost revenue streams. Many nonprofits also were unable to benefit from the PPP before initial funds were depleted. The authorization period should be extended for at least four months.

2. **Increase funding for conflict prevention and response, violence prevention, and governance programs**, as outlined in the USAID/State Department Joint Strategy Pillar Four, which specifically states, “prepare for, mitigate, and address second order economic, civilian security, stabilization, and governance impacts of COVID-19, in part to prevent development backsliding.” As Congress considers the next legislative package in May, we request no less than $12 billion for international development assistance to respond to the pandemic. Beyond the global health dimension of the pandemic, as it bears down on conflict-affected and fragile states, this crisis will undermine anchors of stability and increase the risk of grievances. This is not the time to scale back conflict prevention programs. While significant resources need to be allocated for the health and humanitarian aid, resources must be included in these other sectors as well, such as the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) and the Complex Crises Fund (CCF). For OTI, we request an additional $20 million. For the CCF, we request a total of $100 million, as well as the removal of the five percent overhead cap, to scale up the Global
Fragility Act and be more responsive to the secondary effects of the pandemic. Past experience, including violence linked to Ebola outbreaks in Africa and other increases in violence during the SARS, AIDS, and 1918 Spanish Flu epidemics, reminds us that conflict sensitivity and violence prevention must be integrated into all pandemic responses.

3. **Ensure the Global Fragility Act (GFA) is properly resourced in a timely manner.** We request dedicated funding for the GFA in the additional supplemental funding relief package. The bipartisan GFA is a historic and long-sought-after victory for the peacebuilding field and creates the first-ever comprehensive U.S. government strategy to tackle and prevent alarming levels of global conflict. While there are considerable challenges to implementing the GFA, it offers a tremendous opportunity to reform the U.S. government’s strategy in at least five conflict-affected and fragile countries/regions through a coordinated multidimensional approach. This particular toll of the global pandemic in exacerbating already-fragile states highlights the need to take a holistic, coordinated effort to end chronic crises and strengthen fragile states now more than ever.

4. **Support the Lankford Amendment**, which would increase the CARES Act’s $300 limit on the charitable giving deduction to $4,000, or one-third of the standard deduction, for the remainder of 2020. Many nonprofits rely on generous donations from the American public as a substantial part of their budgets. The Lankford Amendment would incentivize additional donations during a time of sustained economic hardship when nonprofits need it most.

Again, we are grateful for the rapid Congressional response to this pandemic and are committed to doing our part to mitigate its devastating consequences and help societies recover in the aftermath. Your leadership and continued efforts are vital to protect businesses and nonprofits in their mission-critical work to address the global pandemic in conflict-affected and fragile states and to curb its destabilizing impact.

Sincerely,
The Alliance for Peacebuilding
Cure Violence Global
The Alliance for Middle East Peace
United Nations Association of the National Capital Area
Institute of World Affairs
Center for Policy Analysis of Horn of Africa
Peace Direct
International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
Nuru International
Generations For Peace
Tanenbaum | Center for Interreligious Understanding
Search for Common Ground
Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at EMU
Charity and Security Network
The Bridgeway Group
NewGen Peacebuilders
Mercy Corps
American Friends Service Committee
CDA Collaborative