

Civil Society Calls for Legal Protections of Peacebuilding Organizations

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WASHINGTON, DC - Ten years ago, on June 21, 2010 the Supreme Court ruled against the [Humanitarian Law Project](#) in a case that effectively expanded the criminal prohibition on providing material support to terrorism to include many peacebuilding activities.

The Charity & Security Network is joined by 22 civil society organizations in a [statement](#) that highlights the need for policy change that promotes a new era of sustainable peacebuilding.

In their [joint statement](#), the groups note that effective peacebuilding requires dialogue with all sides of conflict, which often includes listed terrorist organizations. However, the 2010 ruling prohibits providing vaguely defined “material support” to listed organizations, including training or expert advice, even if such activities are meant to build peace and reduce violence.

The [statement](#) comes at a time where violent conflict is on the rise. The majority of the reported 20 million refugees worldwide are fleeing conflict, and 80 percent of humanitarian needs are driven by conflict.

However, [research shows](#) that the public both understands the need for peacebuilding and supports dialogue with listed terrorist organizations.

- 74 percent of surveyed adults in the U.S. believe that peacebuilding plays a vital role in preventing violent conflicts and that the US should invest more in peacebuilding programs.
- 76 percent of surveyed adults in the U.S. support international organizations engaging in dialogue with listed terrorist organizations to promote peace.

Historic moments like the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland and the end of apartheid in South Africa would not have been possible without engaging the Irish Republican Army or the African National Congress, both listed terrorist organizations at the time.

Policies that allow for dialogue with listed organizations would support the progress made by the [Global Fragility Act](#) passed in late 2019 in addressing the root causes of conflict.

The Charity & Security Network is a Washington-based resource center and a leader on nonprofit issues related to counterterrorism policies. In 2019 we celebrated our 10th anniversary of promoting the rights of civil society organizations to build sustainable peace, provide aid to communities in need and protect human rights.

Find out more at charityandsecurity.org and follow us on Twitter at [@charitysecurity](https://twitter.com/charitysecurity).

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