

Shared Security

Reimagining U.S. Foreign Policy

A Working Paper of the American Friends Service Committee
and Friends Committee on National Legislation

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**American Friends
Service Committee**

THE AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE (AFSC), founded during World War I by Quakers who aimed to serve both humanity and country while remaining committed to nonviolence, has worked throughout the world in areas of conflict, disasters, and in oppressed communities. In 1947, AFSC was a co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of all Quakers, for its humanitarian work feeding children in postwar Europe.

THE FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION (FCNL), founded by Quakers in 1943, has a long history of nonpartisan lobbying that connects historic Quaker testimonies on peace, equality, simplicity, and truth with issues of concern to the United States government. FCNL is the oldest registered religious lobby in Washington, D.C., and fields the largest team of peace lobbyists on Capitol Hill.

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Introduction

AS THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, Quakers act in faith to create a world free from war, with equity and justice for all, where every person's potential may be fulfilled, and where we live in right relationship with the earth. We do not expect such a world to emerge easily, but we are convinced by our faith and experience that building a more peaceful, just, and sustainable global community is possible. Following the advice of William Penn, we seek to "try what love can do" to advance such a world.

Our human family faces a critical moment of great opportunity and profound global challenge. We feel called to speak from our faith and experience for a new vision of how the world community can live together more peacefully and justly, and with greater care for our shared planetary home. A better future is possible, but it will require significant changes, dedicated effort, creative cooperation, and well-directed resources.

We envision a new role for the United States in the world, based upon the pursuit of shared security as a global community. We seek a new U.S. foreign policy grounded in a deeper understanding of the challenges now facing our highly interdependent world. We believe in strategies that reflect a cooperative search for solutions to protect our planet, reduce violent conflict, advance social justice, and meet global needs. We understand that our security in this country depends on advancing global security for all.

A new U.S. global policy grounded in shared security would be both ethical and effective, keeping our communities and our world safer for generations to come. War has proven to be far too costly and ineffective, and a new policy would instead strive to match peaceful means with peaceful ends. It would reduce human suffering and advance human dignity for all.

We reject notions of national superiority and militarism that currently undergird much of U.S. foreign policy. We oppose policies and actions of our government that use violence and domination, rather than reason and cooperation, to address problems that threaten our nation and our world. We acknowledge the environmental crisis that is upon us, threatening the future of our human family. We recognize our own complicity in this and other problems threatening the global community. We commit ourselves to striving to live, as the founder of Quakerism, George Fox, said, "in the virtue of that life and power that [takes] away the occasion of all wars."

Although we cannot speak for all Friends, as staff and advisors to Quaker organizations, we can offer a new vision and invite others to help refine it. This publication considers current U.S. approaches to the world and suggests a new vision of shared security as the foundation for an ethical and effective U.S. engagement with the world, organized around four core principles:

1. Peaceful Ends through Peaceful Means
2. The Planetary Imperative
3. Global Cooperation and the Rule of Law
4. Restorative Approaches to Heal a Broken World

In proposing this new approach, we have drawn from the experiences of Quaker organizations with nearly a century of direct work in communities around the world and decades of lobbying experience on foreign policy in Washington D.C. We have also included examples from Quaker work that offer “Glimmers of Hope” that new ways of engaging with the world are possible.

We hope this working paper will begin a process that will shape and inspire discussions among policymakers and concerned citizens alike. We hope to engage and ignite conversations among our colleagues and communities who care about how the U.S. engages with the world. This is a tool to stimulate thought about new approaches to shared security in the 21st century.

We are grateful for the opportunities we have had to share ideas with and to learn from the many courageous and visionary people we are privileged to know in our work with other non-governmental and faith organizations, journalists, academics, aides and members of Congress, officials and diplomats in the executive branch, and community leaders around the world. They give us hope that the proposals expressed herein may come to pass.

A New Vision of Security

America will have to show our strength in the way that we end wars and prevent conflict—not just how we wage wars.

—PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA, 2009

The 21st century is ushering in some important, positive changes in global engagement. Research shows that the number and lethality of major interstate wars has declined since the end of the Cold War, as international peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts grow. Governments and international institutions are making new commitments to preventing genocide and war. The fields of conflict resolution and peace studies are expanding.¹

Meanwhile, new generations of activists across the globe are embracing strategies of nonviolent change. The Arab Awakening illustrated the power of new technologies in mobilizing peaceful revolutions. The global economic crisis spurred a nonviolent Occupy Movement in the United States, creating new discussions of economic inequality and potential solutions. The climate crisis also sparked a new generation of environmentalists who are reexamining the core assumptions of growth and consumption upon which current economies and policies rely.

The majority of the U.S. public recognizes these new realities. Opinion polls show that most of the U.S. public has a pragmatic and hopeful outlook for how our country should act in the world. A large majority believes we should be engaged in the world, but four in ten think the U.S. relies too heavily on the military. Most favor more cooperative approaches to solving world problems and agree the U.S. should live up to its international commitments.²

We believe the U.S. needs a more ethical, effective, and less costly foreign policy to address today's interdependent world. Complex challenges require new ways of thinking about our security. They require cooperative strategies for shared solutions. And we need new tools that match means with ends. We call this **shared security**.

A NEW WAY OF THINKING

In an interdependent world, foreign policies presented in terms of binary relationships—"us vs. them"—can no longer hold. Yet in Washington, the dominant "national security paradigm" based on identifying and destroying enemies still drives U.S. foreign policy.

We need new policies based upon appreciation of the increased complexity and intertwining of global relationships. We need more integrated problem-solving approaches that will yield far better outcomes than the current costly and ineffective ones. A foreign

policy advancing human dignity and opportunity lays a deeper foundation for lasting peace and security. We need a new model as a first step toward a more ethical and effective global policy.

Peace and conflict specialists have for some time urged adoption of a new “human security” model that focuses on safety and wellbeing for individuals and communities rather than nation-states. This approach also recognizes non-traditional challenges such as environmental stress and economic and public health crises. It gives primary attention to strengthening the social, political, economic, and environmental systems that keep people and communities safe, rather than on destroying perceived enemies. And it recognizes that civil society and non-state groups are primary actors. A human security model envisions problem solving that starts from local communities, rather than from states or international systems.

Similarly, the idea of “global security” replaces the traditional notion of the primacy of state sovereignty, with a focus on building more cooperative and effective international institutions. From this perspective, the focus of foreign policy should be on strengthening international law and cooperative problem solving at a global level, not only pursuing short-term national interests. The United Nations, regional organizations like the African Union and Organization of American States, and other multilateral groups are at the center of a global security approach.

Combining both a human security and global security approach might result in what we call **shared security**, which is grounded in the interdependent nature of our world and the need for both global and local solutions to today’s problems. In this interdependent and continually changing world, we are inextricably bound together as a global community.

The idea of shared security rejects the militarized and fear-based underpinnings of current policies, and instead upholds human dignity, helps resilient communities solve problems nonviolently, and builds a more effective system of international law. It replaces solo national interests with a shared global security.

NEW STRATEGIES FOR SHARED SOLUTIONS

Adopting **shared security** as the basis of our foreign policy would push the U.S. toward more ethical and effective problem solving. We would move away from protecting U.S. interests alone and toward pursuing common interests, shifting resources and strategies away from military approaches and toward more sophisticated nonviolent civilian capacities and joint solutions.

Strategies for more ethical and effective foreign policies would help address the greatest challenges to survival for the human family. They would strengthen international institutions and civilian rule of law, help prevent and reduce violent conflict and war, support more equitable and resilient societies, and promote nonviolent solutions.

The interconnected and interdependent nature of today's world makes effective international cooperation a necessity. It means sincerely working with other members of the global community—state and non-state actors alike—to strengthen the United Nations and other international institutions. It does not mean using multilateral institutions or coalitions to pursue only U.S. national interests—an approach which may yield short-term victories but undermines our shared human security in the long run.

Instead, it means strengthening the rule of law—international and domestic—and upholding it consistently. And it means replacing strategies that rely on secrecy and violence with approaches that address the roots of problems, build mutual trust, and promote greater participatory decision-making and power-sharing.

New strategies for **shared security** would empower local communities to address the problems they face, and ensure they are backed up by flexible and responsive support at regional and global levels. An insistence on U.S. dominance in the world could be replaced with engagement to build more resilient societies that have the resources, capacities, and support they need to solve their own problems without violence or war. The U.S. would no doubt continue to play an important role in the world, but its actions would be undertaken with greater respect and cooperative collaboration—and would be more successful and sustainable as a result.

NEW TOOLS THAT MATCH MEANS WITH ENDS

Military and civilian policymakers alike recognize the declining utility of war and use of force as effective instruments for resolving conflicts. Today's challenges to our global community—such as climate change, economic crisis, nuclear and other weapons proliferation, transnational crime, abusive regimes and extremist violence—will simply not be solved with bombs and bullets.

We can reshape the U.S. role in the world to promote a more peaceful, just, and sustainable global community. Doing so, however, will require significant changes to current policies and re-equipping the outdated, heavily militarized foreign policy.

Rather than pouring endless resources into tools and structures of military force, the U.S. should be a global innovator in preventing and ending violent conflict and enhancing avenues to effective conflict transformation and global justice. Retooling the U.S. economy toward sustainable alternative energy sources is a necessary corollary.

Reorienting U.S. foreign policy will require policy leaders to redirect funding from military to civilian sides of government. Significant parts of the State Department, USAID, and other civilian agencies will need to be redirected to work on preventing violent conflicts and ensuring a sustainable approach to human security. It will mean putting civilians in charge of foreign policy, improving diplomacy, and elevating sustainable development assistance. It will mean taking a leadership role in guiding the global community toward new approaches together,

investing in institutions that promote shared security and non-military tools to build more resilient, participatory, and sustainable communities at home and abroad.

Huge military budgets and a global military presence have become detriments, not assets, to our security. With the right leadership and vision, backed by an engaged citizenry, the U.S. can make the shift toward a new foreign policy—one grounded in shared security, shared solutions, and new tools that match peaceful means with peaceful ends.



GLIMMERS OF HOPE

Preventing War Is Possible

Friends have a long history of seeking to prevent violent conflicts and wars. However, a number of crises in the 1990s—from Rwanda to Kosovo—challenged Quaker organizations to take more seriously the need to advocate prevention of war as an alternative to what are often posed as the only options in a crisis: willful neglect or armed military intervention.

Beginning in 2000, Quakers in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Africa began discussing how to shift their work from opposing war to preventing war. Building on an emerging agenda at the United Nations under the leadership of Kofi Annan, FCNL began a program for the Peaceful Prevention of Deadly Conflict. Its goal was to educate policymakers about the need and practical possibility of preventing—instead of constantly fighting—wars. AFSC's Peace Building Unit sought to broaden long-term strategies and movements for peace. Friends in Burundi and Rwanda who lived through the violence in their communities had already been collaborating with the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) to develop community-based Alternatives to Violence and trauma healing programs, which have since spread across the region. In response to widespread

violence that erupted after Kenya's 2007 elections, Kenyan Friends created the Friends Church Peace Teams and worked to provide humanitarian relief, promote healing, and develop early warning and violence prevention programs in advance of the next elections.

In 2011, the U.S. State Department's first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review declared conflict prevention a "core mission" and dedicated a new bureau to it. FCNL helped lobby successfully for the creation of a civilian fund to "prevent and mitigate" violent conflict. In 2012, the White House established an Atrocities Prevention Board within the National Security Council.

Can such efforts really help prevent wars? In 2013, African Quakers in Kenya created community-based violence prevention programs before tense elections that many feared would erupt into mass violence. The UN, U.S., international donors and organizations, Kenyan government, and dozens of Kenyan groups all dedicated energy and resources to preventing violent conflict, demonstrating an unprecedented and remarkable shift toward putting war prevention into practice.

The Old Policies Aren't Working

We live in a changed, and changing, world. Never before has our global community been so deeply connected by technology, economics, political alliances, trade agreements, and social networks. Never before have citizens understood so clearly that our fates—as individuals, nations, and the world—are interdependent. Many problems we face as a global community—such as climate disruption, poverty and inequality, violent extremism, weapons proliferation, and transnational crime—require new approaches that rely less on military force and more on cooperative, constructive solutions.

In the 21st century, the stark bipolar world of the Cold War has been replaced by an era of increasing complexity. Paradoxically, we see both peaceful revolutions and authoritarian mass violence; increasing economic integration together with destabilizing economic inequality; growing global connections and entrenched ethnic and religious divisions; unprecedented scientific advancement as well as escalating environmental and health crises; burgeoning civil society movements amid sophisticated networks of violence and crime.

Among these changes, a new list of global problems has emerged:

- environmental crises—global warming, food insecurity, resource conflicts;
- entrenched economic inequality and financial instability;
- transnational criminal networks and extremist violence;
- intrastate wars, genocide and mass atrocities;
- weapons proliferation, from nuclear weapons to small arms;
- rapid urbanization and civilian insecurity;
- global health pandemics; and
- new frontiers of cyber and space wars.

The world of nation-states is also giving way to a new set of actors involved with these problems and searching for solutions. Non-state actors—civil society movements, community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), criminal networks and ideological groups, corporations and wealthy individuals—all play new roles on the international stage, changing the shape and nature of international politics.

Foreign policy experts have spent hours of discussion and reams of paper debating the contours of this new global era and what the U.S. role should be. Some maintain the United States will continue to dominate as the world's primary superpower, while others argue that U.S.

decline is already underway. Some offer proposals seeking to balance global leadership with selective power-sharing. Others call for new approaches that replace state politics with greater attention to the security of individuals and communities.³

One area of widespread agreement is how interconnected our global family has become. The speed and reach of information flows make events half a world away headlines in our living rooms. Economic downturns in Asia affect job prospects in Indiana. Upheavals in the Middle East drive up gas prices in Texas. Wars in Africa spark student movements in Massachusetts. Instability in Latin America spurs immigration in Arizona. Earthquake victims in Haiti flee to Florida.

We live in a time of unprecedented growth and complexity in human interaction and relationships around the globe. This fact presents great challenges and opportunities. Governments, while still primary actors on the global stage, must also engage with private actors in unprecedented ways. Private actors have resources and capacities to impact global politics, economics, and peace and security in unprecedented ways. Princeton professor Anne-Marie Slaughter, who recently led policy and planning for the U.S. State Department, calls this an era of “network centrality” and notes that it is “messy, complex and frustrating.”⁴

As the world becomes more interconnected, the problems we face in our communities have become more linked with the fate of other communities and nations. What happens in the U.S. matters around the world, and what happens around the world matters to us.

On the positive side, we know and encounter others more often. We better understand how policies made by one nation affect others around the globe. We can find new opportunities for collaboration and change. On the negative side, the experience of this shrinking world can lead to increased conflict as well as uncertainty and fear. As new forms of conflict arise, struggles over resources, power, and ideas follow different rules, or no rules at all. Old institutions and problem-solving processes have become outdated. New ones are still in formation and imperfect.

These observations are not original to Quaker organizations. In fact, the ideas are reflected in U.S. foreign and military policy documents such as the 2010 National Security Strategy, 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, and the 2011 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review. They have also been developed in documents such as A National Strategic Narrative issued in 2011 by the Woodrow Wilson Center, and in discussions at the United Nations, World Bank, and other multilateral organizations. We also see them reflected in community-based organizing across the U.S. and the globe.

But they are not yet matched by new approaches for how the United States engages with the world. Instead, the U.S. continues to apply old solutions to new problems.



GLIMMERS OF HOPE

Engaging China

In 2013, AFSC's International Affairs representative in China, Jason Tower, received a package of records from the work of AFSC's staff in China during the Chinese revolution, including credentials granting access to the territories for both sides in the conflict. Trust and goodwill built over time were the key to such universal access.

Today, as the U.S. announces its intent to shift attention toward Asia, many are concerned that this attention will be framed by militarization and competition over resources and influence. But AFSC's current work in China demonstrates multiple ways this "pivot" could instead transform U.S.-China relations toward constructive engagement built on the kinds of trust and goodwill that opened doors for our work in the region decades ago, and offer critical tools for tackling the greatest challenges we face in the 21st century.

As one example, the U.S. could signal a new era of **shared security**—and more effectively support the needs of the region—by engaging China around efforts to coordinate and enhance assistance to the Lower Mekong region in Southeast Asia.

Known as the Lower Mekong Initiative, this

program brings together the U.S., Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Myanmar for dialogue about regional security and development. Roughly a quarter of the Mekong River's water resources are in China, and China's dams control water flows all the way to the Mekong Delta in Vietnam.

To date, despite the fact that China is geographically, commercially, and politically an integral part of the region, the U.S. has refused to invite China into the program, noting that this would defeat its purpose of "enhancing U.S. strategic hegemony in Southeast Asia."

The U.S. State Department should be lauded for finally paying more attention to one of the poorest regions of the world, but it should be doing this for the right reasons and in the right way. Exclusive regional frameworks only serve to undermine the broader dialogue and cooperation that will be needed to address environmental, economic, and security concerns.

The U.S. now has an opportunity to pivot within the pivot, moving to engage China and other regional partners constructively in shared problem-solving, rather than repeating tired, unproductive models of competition for control in the region.

The Root of the Problem: Militarized Foreign Policy

Most of the pressing security challenges today have important political, economic, and cultural components, and do not necessarily lend themselves to being resolved by conventional military strength.

—U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CHUCK HAGEL, APRIL 3, 2013

The Obama administration entered the White House with promises of ending the war in Iraq, re-engaging diplomatically with the international community, reducing nuclear weapons proliferation, strengthening trade and development, addressing the climate crisis, improving relations with the Muslim world, and advancing human rights.

The administration did take some important initial steps to reshape U.S. foreign policy away from the mistakes of pre-emptive war and unilateral action. The U.S. paid its dues and re-engaged actively at the United Nations and negotiated the New START treaty with Russia. The U.S. re-opened negotiations with Iran and North Korea, ended combat operations in Iraq, and announced a renewed commitment to address global warming. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton emphasized a strategy of “smart power”—lifting up the roles of diplomacy and development as critical to national security and embracing conflict prevention as a core mission of the State Department.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and other high-ranking military leaders became strong advocates for reinvesting in civilian diplomacy and development after decades of neglect. In 2007, Gates called for a dramatic increase in the U.S. budget for diplomacy and foreign aid, arguing that we must do a better job of communicating our message overseas and that use of civilians abroad has been “ad hoc and on the fly.” High-ranking Pentagon officers (writing under the pseudonym “Mr. Y”) proposed a “New National Security Narrative” calling for radical shifts in U.S. foreign policy, away from militarized approaches and toward cooperation and civilian engagement.⁵

President Obama also invested in new tools for preventing war and violence. He launched a new interagency Atrocities Prevention Board at the National Security Council, and the State Department established a new bureau dedicated to preventing and mitigating deadly conflict. The White House launched a new Policy Directive on Global Development; issued new global health and food security initiatives; committed to reform the tangled array of foreign assistance programs; and promised to rebuild the U.S. Agency for International Development.

These shifts, however, have not changed the dominant narrative and driving force of U.S. foreign policy: military strength as the path to national security. Positive initiatives sit alongside a continued commitment to outdated models of military superiority and economic power, ultimately leading to failure on a range of issues. The public and policymakers are weary of war a decade after 9/11, but policymaking is still driven by fear and an acceptance of violent force as a solution to conflicts with those labeled as enemies. This fear-driven, militarized framing confuses the real roots of the problems we face as an interconnected global community.

Rather than implementing a new approach, the U.S. has continued to demonstrate “rule by force” rather than by law. The war on terror has shifted from large-scale invasion to covert assassinations and drone attacks, and the old assumptions—that the U.S. has the right to override international law, force regime change, and “hunt and kill” individuals wherever and whenever it sees fit—still drive the U.S. approach to extremist violence.

This foreign policy premised on the threat and use of lethal force is a fundamental failure. It feeds the growth of the violent movements it purports to address. It fuels global instability and violence and undermines the security of our communities, country, and world. Change is urgently needed.

Although he has taken steps to strengthen tools of diplomacy and development, President Obama also ramped up war operations in Afghanistan, imposed aggressive sanctions against Iran, increased the use of armed and spy drones, expanded military operations in Africa, and intervened militarily in Libya. The U.S. targets “enemy combatants”—including U.S. citizens—throughout the world and has an approved “hit list” for targeted assassinations.

The U.S. remains the world’s largest weapons supplier, with arms sales to regimes that actively oppress nonviolent, pro-democracy movements. As troops were brought home from Iraq, the Obama administration announced a new “pivot” toward Asia, shifting the focus of U.S. global military might toward the next geopolitical rival, China.

Meanwhile, a deeply divided Congress has offered little constructive oversight of U.S. foreign policy. Following the attacks of 9/11, Congress hastily passed an open-ended, boundless authorization for the use of military force (AUMF) that provides the legal basis for what seems to be a permanent, global war on terror. In addition to full-scale invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the AUMF is used as a standing mandate for a wide range of military actions taken without congressional approval, including drone strikes in Pakistan and deployment of troops to Central Africa.

The willingness of most members of Congress to give the executive branch virtually unlimited authority for the use of lethal force is highly problematic for U.S. democracy and global peace and security. It represents not only the capitulation of Congress but also the manipulation of the public’s fears to wage permanent war. The Constitution gives only Congress the right to declare war, fund the military, regulate international commerce, and approve treaties.

But Congress has failed to act as a balance to executive power over foreign policy. Destructive partisan politics consume much of the agenda of Congress, with serious lawmaking paralyzed and bipartisan efforts stymied.

When Congress fails to perform, national security suffers, thanks to ill-considered policies, delayed or inadequate resources, and insufficient personnel.

—KAY KING, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, 2010

U.S. foreign policy is still driven primarily by short-term strategic interests and insistence that the U.S. can stand outside international law whenever it chooses. These policies have failed to improve global security and have undermined human rights, poverty-reduction, and democracy. Even in its efforts to promote democracy and advance development, the U.S. too often seeks to impose its will and ensure that strategic military and economic interests are met first.

Decades of increased military spending and neglect of civilian diplomacy, development, and international cooperation have left the U.S. inadequately prepared to address many complex challenges for which military options are fundamentally mismatched. The Pentagon dominates foreign policy, with an annual budget 20 times larger than the combined budgets of the State Department, USAID, and U.S. contributions to all international organizations. U.S. military spending accounts for nearly half of all global military expenditures, far exceeding the spending of all potential U.S. adversaries *combined*.⁶

Many people in the military themselves recognize this mismatch between current budgets and solutions needed for today's problems. Having witnessed first-hand the realities of current conflicts and the limitations of military tools in managing them, many career military officers and Pentagon personnel share the view that a reorientation of US foreign policy is urgently needed. Important common ground can be found across the civilian-military divide by focusing on the core problems we face, rather than our fears, and designing the best approaches for dealing with them.

At the same time, corporations increasingly drive a foreign policy linked with an entrenched and bloated military. The rise of super-rich corporations has led to an increasing concentration of wealth and influence in the hands of an international elite whose primary drive is profit, not public good, and who have a growing influence on U.S. and global policymaking. The result: an interplay of strategic, economic, corporate, and military interests now shape foreign policy in dangerously undemocratic ways.

U.S. military strategy is designed in large part to protect access to the fossil fuels that drive our consumer culture. Minerals for our cell phones are extracted from war zones in Africa. Wars are launched to depose or install governments based on U.S. strategic and economic interests.

U.S. global policy still relies heavily on military force and is driven by an ever-smaller group of interests. In a world of complex problems that require non-military and cooperative solutions, these militarized approaches cost more lives, wasted dollars, missed opportunities, and fractured global relations—and they also fail to accomplish their stated goals. Put simply, war isn't working.



GLIMMERS OF HOPE

Engaging Somali Youth for Peace

Somalia has been at war for more than 20 years. In recent years the U.S. has designated several terrorist groups in the region, marking them for isolation and elimination by military means. Among the most prominent is al-Shabaab.

The word “Shabaab” means youth. Al-Shabaab, as well as the Somali government and other armed groups, have recruited many young people by offering employment to unskilled youth. The AFSC has found in its work in Somali communities that many young people would have opted out of violence if they had alternative job opportunities.

Building on ample evidence that sustainable livelihoods and support for community peacebuilding are key tools to ending violent conflict, AFSC has provided programs and training to increase the number of young people with conflict resolution skills and marketable trades. It has trained young people in trades ranging from

carpentry and mobile phone repair to hairdressing and baking. More training could significantly stem the tide of youth into violent groups and expand security for Somali communities.

Unfortunately, current U.S. law prohibits engagement with youth who have been associated with blacklisted groups—including al-Shabaab. AFSC has directly experienced the destructive implications of this policy. For example, in Gedo, Somalia, where conflict is rife, a proposed youth project could not be initiated because nearly every participant would have had some contact or association with prohibited groups.

AFSC’s work shows that Somali youth can contribute toward improving their livelihoods and become key peacebuilders in their communities. Changes are required to ensure that these efforts can include the very groups and individuals most needed at the table for community conflict transformation to be successful in places like Somalia.

Global Security, Economics, and the Environment

Every good that we can do, every good that we can imagine doing, will be for naught if we do not address climate change.

—VAN JONES, REBUILD THE DREAM, FEBRUARY 2013

Our national security is now enmeshed with a global environmental and economic crisis. Indeed, the U.S. military recognizes the enormous threat that environmental breakdown, climate instability, and a warming planet present to our country and world.

We have begun to experience unprecedented global changes, including:

- climate disruption and concomitant economic decline;
- peak oil and inevitable decline of petroleum-based economies;
- unsustainable growth models and a persistent debt crisis;
- increasing inequities both within and between geographic regions; and
- escalating competition over diminishing or less accessible resources.

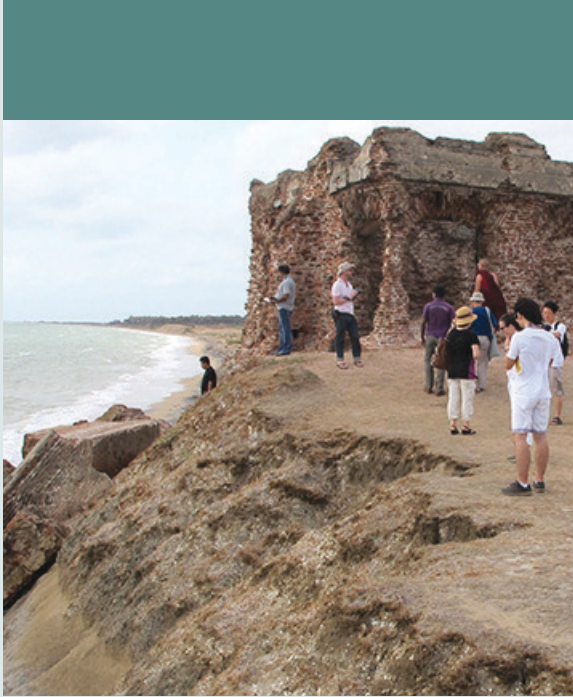
World economic activity is now exceeding the productive capacity of Earth's eco-systems by about a third. Increasing growth in population, material and energy use will degrade Earth's life support capacity even faster. Climate disruption is also diminishing world economic output (GDP) by \$1.2 trillion annually. The least developed and most vulnerable countries are expected to suffer an 11% loss of GDP by 2030, compared to a worldwide loss of 3.2%.⁷

Current economic models based on unsustainable growth are driving the environmental crisis and creating massive inequities in wealth distribution that fuel conflict. A small global group of the "super-rich" yield unprecedented control over the world's resources, while 80% of humanity lives on less than \$10 a day. Transnational corporations are often more powerful contenders for control of mineral wealth and cropland than governments. This increasing inequality of deep poverty alongside extreme wealth increasingly undermines our national and global security, and shocks our moral conscience.⁸

As demands increase for the diminishing reserves of Earth's raw materials, land, and water, increasing stress and competition is emerging within and among nations. Rebel groups, militias, and crime and drug syndicates also vie for access to territory and wealth. The movement of populations in response to climate and resource disruptions creates new stresses. As

resource conflicts intensify, the integrity of ecosystems and the wellbeing of human communities are further sacrificed, fueling a vicious cycle of degradation.

As the world's largest overall consumer of the earth's resources and major historic contributor to global warming, the U.S. has a prime responsibility to address this crisis. Our **shared security**, both national and global, requires shifting rapidly to renewable energy and economic arrangements that support ecologically sound production and access to the necessities of life for all.



GLIMMERS OF HOPE

Resource Wars or Resource Cooperation?

Concerned by the growing potential for violent conflicts over natural resources, the Quaker UN Office (QUNO) has studied the role of international water treaties as positive alternatives to future “water wars.” In a 2012 study, QUNO found,

By exploring the actual role that water plays in international conflict, we can see that while there is a danger that water can be a pretext for violence, there is no inevitable path from water scarcity to war. Even situations that are often interpreted as being ‘water wars’, such as the Darfur conflict in western Sudan, can actually be attributed to a much more complex collection of causes—economic, political, social, historical, local and global, as well as environmental.⁹

The QUNO study noted that water is one factor among many that can lead to conflict, and it has a potential role as a “multiplier” for conflict in already fragile situations. But water can also be used as a resource around which to begin building cooperation.

Water treaties can create multiple benefits: to the environment; to nations by reducing security expenditures relating to water supplies; to conservation, since improved management of water allows it to be used more efficiently; and to relations between nations, as water cooperation can be a catalyst for greater cooperation elsewhere.

Case studies from around the world show how the international community can shift from military approaches against “water wars” toward cooperative approaches through international treaties and rule of law.

Examples include the Indus Waters Treaty, which has survived two wars between India and Pakistan. The Trifinio Plan between El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala provides an example of water cooperation being used as part of a broad trans-boundary development program in an area previously affected by violence. The experience of Central Asia shows that even in difficult circumstances, large-scale violent conflict over water is rare. It also suggests how shifts in vision from competition to a benefit-sharing approach is a necessary part of fostering long-term cooperation.

Principles for a New Global Policy

A new vision of U.S. global policy can be expressed in simple principles: Demonstrate responsible leadership. Work cooperatively with other nations. Respect the rule of law. Help others in need. Protect the planet on which we all live. Choose peaceful solutions to conflicts as often as possible.

1. PEACEFUL ENDS THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS

An effective and ethical U.S. foreign policy should begin with well-equipped and adequately funded civilian institutions—such as the State Department, the Agency for International Development, the Departments of Justice and Treasury—reoriented toward the fundamental goals of advancing **shared security** and preventing and ending wars.

A new global policy requires better training for U.S. diplomats and staff in the skills needed for today's world, such as preventive diplomacy, mediation and conflict resolution, transitional justice, sustainable economies, international cooperation, and nonviolent problem-solving. Expanding the U.S. diplomatic toolbox to include innovative tools such as international mediation or monitoring teams, elders groups, restorative justice, reconciliation, and trauma healing will result in stronger resources for building peace.

Diplomacy for today's world requires new forms and improved functions. Diplomats—not military officers—could be the primary faces for U.S. engagement with the world, wherever they are most needed. Skilled civilians should be in the lead in foreign countries as well as in Washington. Diplomats need to engage with other government officials and civil society in ways that respect their different roles and do not endanger their legitimacy or independence.

The U.S. diplomatic presence in other countries can best create security through building trust and friendship, not walls and fortresses. A new approach to diplomacy involves a fundamental shift toward cooperative problem solving based on a “give and take” approach that includes substantive reciprocity.

In development policy, U.S. foreign assistance must undergo significant reform and reorientation. When aid programs are designed and implemented in ways that acknowledge local leadership, capacities for peacebuilding, and sustainable communities, they yield greater payouts and long-term change. The military should have no role in decision-making or implementation of humanitarian and development programs.

The U.S. can increase funding for preventing and mitigating violent crises and supporting communities vulnerable to negative effects of climate change. Security assistance must be seriously reformed, moving away from training and equipping foreign militaries and police to supporting comprehensive, civilian rule of law and justice systems. We can establish restor-

ative justice programs where needed. The U.S. could increase its civilian foreign assistance—which amounts to less than 0.25% of our gross national product—to the international goal of 0.7%, a small investment that can yield significant benefits for U.S. and global security.

Finally, while we believe U.S. foreign policy should support nonviolent movements for change, we caution against the U.S. government directly funding citizen-led nonviolent movements. U.S. government support to such movements is likely to undermine their legitimacy and effectiveness over the long run. Instead, the U.S. can offer support by applying diplomatic and economic pressures to abusive regimes when appropriate, curbing the global arms trade, and ensuring our own policies in those countries are not fueling violence or abuse.

2. THE PLANETARY IMPERATIVE

Our planet is in crisis. Preventing global disaster will require significant changes in environmental and economic policies. Extraction and use of fossil fuels are major causes of human-made climate disruption. These crises continue largely unabated because the true economic and environmental harm of fossil fuels are not included in their costs. A growing public environmental movement challenges policymakers to act on climate disruption.

Poverty and deprivation have no place in today's world. The earth's natural resources, shared equitably, would meet every person's needs and enable their potential to be fulfilled. Yet economic theories and practices based on unlimited growth and unaccountable damage to earth's resources exacerbate inequalities and imperil the quality of life for future generations. Global climate disruption is a significant result of this folly.

As the largest national economy and largest historic contributor of greenhouse gases, the U.S. should launch an urgent national and international effort to shift economic policies away from endless growth toward sustainability. The U.S. can lead the effort to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions dramatically by initiating a price on carbon, shifting energy supplies from fossil fuels to renewable sources, and providing assistance to peoples and ecosystems disproportionately harmed by climate disruption.

Some of the funding to help communities and ecosystems build resilience to the impacts of climate disruption could come from revenue collected from the cost of carbon use. In this increasingly global world, food and energy loops should be reoriented toward more local, sustainable, and resilient infrastructures, jobs, and livelihoods.

These changes will require massive efforts by civil society and the international community, as well as strong participation and leadership from the developing world. Climate disruption exacerbates armed conflict throughout the world and harms the world's poor disproportionately, threatening societies in ways unprecedented in human history. Global action is necessary.

To help prevent armed conflict and create lasting peace, governments should base peace agreements upon shared management of natural resources, which has a proven record of maintaining peace even among nations and peoples with historic enmity. While cultures, religions, ethnicities, and ideologies may differ, every human needs food and water. Prudent and cooperative management of these essentials can often be the foundation for shared and lasting peace.

3. GLOBAL COOPERATION AND RULE OF LAW

Our increasingly interdependent world requires international cooperation to address today's complex global problems. U.S. foreign policy should strengthen the rule of law, not rule by force. New international institutions and justice systems are needed to address global problems and to develop and enforce international laws.

The U.S. must formally end the “war on terror” and shift to an approach based on international rule of law and policing. Information sharing and cooperation with international organizations have proven effective in preventing acts of terrorism. Reorientation of U.S. policy away from global military domination and toward shared problem solving would help reduce the underlying grievances that fuel extremist groups.

The United Nations remains the most legitimate forum for working as a global community to address problems such as violent extremism or climate change. However, it too needs reform and updating. Support for the UN and its agencies, including the Peacebuilding Commission, is critical to encourage democratic decision-making and strengthen peacekeeping and prevention of deadly conflicts.

Regional organizations such as the African Union, Organization of American States, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and Arab League are taking on new roles in responding to crises. They need improved capacity for diplomacy, violence prevention, and other nonmilitary responses. Giving stronger voice to them in decision-making would critically improve the viability of the solutions and strengthen accountability of governments and multilateral institutions.

A commitment, in both words and deeds, to uphold and expand international law would serve U.S. national interests as well. In particular, the U.S. should actively support—not obstruct—expanding the mandate of the International Criminal Court to include the use of force as an international crime.

The U.S. should also sign and ratify important global treaties on arms control and human rights, including the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Mine Ban Treaty, and the Arms Trade Treaty now being developed to regulate the global trade in conventional weapons.

New international policing mechanisms to respond to mass violence against civilians may also be needed, but should begin with a focus on prevention. Ultimately, communities need the capacity for early and proper warning of pending violence. They need to be able to de-escalate conflicts, reduce the threat of violence, and protect civilians from harm. Building such capacities will require global governance that begins with local communities as the primary agents of change. It will also require giving greater voice to those impacted by violence and often marginalized from decision-making. Women and indigenous communities can share in the design of peacekeeping strategies and problem-solving approaches.

Upholding and strengthening international humanitarian and human rights law, including the Geneva Conventions, helps ensure our shared global security. For the U.S., this includes renouncing torture and ending detention of “enemy combatants” outside the bounds of international law.

Leadership and cooperation are also needed to improve the human rights mechanisms of the United Nations, including its Human Rights Council. All nations should rise above national politics and short-term expedience to consistently uphold the universal principles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The U.S. can also support the work of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, including efforts to improve monitoring and responses to situations of escalating violence.

Finally, the U.S. needs to demonstrate a commitment to cooperative international problem-solving in deed as well as word. In far too many international treaty processes, the U.S. has become an obstructor, not a leader, for addressing vital global concerns. These include: the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Mine Ban Treaty. The U.S. has stepped up to a greater leadership role in establishing a new international Arms Trade Treaty, which can help reduce the flow of weapons that fuel deadly conflict and contribute to human rights abuses.

4. RESTORATIVE APPROACHES TO HEAL A BROKEN WORLD

Fundamental to a more ethical and effective foreign policy is a serious commitment to demilitarizing approaches to global problems. We must invest in new efforts to rebuild relationships, respect human rights, and mend the harms caused by injustice and war.

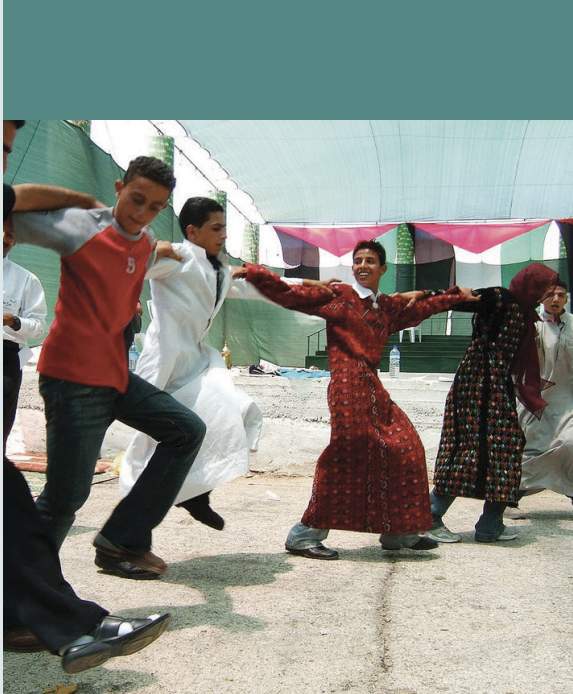
Full withdrawal of all U.S. military forces and contractors from Iraq and Afghanistan would open the way for more effective support to regional diplomacy and human development. The military has neither the tools nor the knowledge to provide effective development assistance. Instead, much greater investment and support is needed for small-scale, local peacebuilding, reconciliation, and trauma healing. These efforts help strengthen communities to participate in the rebuilding of their own countries.

On a global scale, the U.S. also can significantly reduce its military presence—which often fuels resentment and anti-U.S. sentiment—by closing military bases and covert intelligence programs. The U.S. military may still be useful in supporting humanitarian operations and disaster responses, but ultimately international civilian capacities should be built to address such crises.

Reducing the massive U.S. military presence worldwide will free billions of dollars for investing in improved civilian institutions, development aid and peacebuilding, international institutions, and a more sustainable global economy. These are much more effective strategies for protecting our shared security. Military personnel affected by these changes will need to be supported with adequate training and career development to shift to civilian jobs.

The U.S. must accelerate reduction of its own nuclear stockpiles, with the goal of zero nuclear weapons. This would boost global efforts toward a nuclear-free world. The U.S. should fund nonproliferation efforts and support nuclear free zones in the Middle East and elsewhere. It should ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Mine Ban Treaty, and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. It should lead—not impede— efforts to reduce the international trade in weapons through a new global Arms Trade Treaty and support international agreements to demilitarize space and cyberspace.

Reining in U.S. military aid and training programs—which often fuel violence and undermine security—would save money and lives. New technologies that facilitate spying and killing—including drones—violate U.S. and international law. Laws that permit U.S. military and intelligence agencies to carry out assassination and torture should be repealed, and careful vigilance is needed to ensure they do not continue.



GLIMMERS OF HOPE

Affirming Nonviolence in Israel-Palestine

During his 2009 speech in Cairo, President Barack Obama called on Palestinians to abandon violence and highlighted the examples of the U.S. civil rights movement and the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa to point out that “violence is a dead end.” However, he gave no mention of the growing movement of Palestinians and Israelis working both separately and together for nonviolent solutions to the conflict.

For more than a century, Quakers have worked to lift up the voices of peacemakers in the Middle East. In 1949, the United Nations asked AFSC to organize relief efforts for Palestinian refugees because of its experience in resettling hundreds of thousands of refugees following the Holocaust. AFSC’s continued presence in the region has allowed it to build relationships and work for a just peace across all parties to the conflict.

Unfortunately, the separation wall, expanding Israeli settlements, continuing violence on all sides, and unchecked U.S. military aid to Israel have made it more difficult than ever to realize a just peace. While statements from U.S. officials supporting nonviolence as a path for Palestinian self-determination are welcome,

U.S. actions to support Israel by rejecting efforts such as Palestinian petitions to the U.N.—particularly a 2011 resolution condemning settlements in language drawn directly from official US policy documents—greatly undermine these peaceful movements.

Quakers continue to raise awareness among public and policymakers of the courageous and often-ignored efforts of Palestinians and Israelis working for peace and an end to the occupation. AFSC has begun a new initiative to support non-violent movements in Palestine and Israel.

“If President Obama or members of Congress were to simply witness with their own eyes the nonviolent protests against the occupation, then they would see Palestinians following the traditions of Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi,” Palestinian parliamentarian Mustafa Barghouthi noted. “U.S. recognition of the Palestinian nonviolence movement against the occupation would send a powerful signal that nonviolence will succeed in ending the occupation and securing a just future for Israelis and Palestinians alike.”

Conclusion

Reorienting U.S. foreign policy to be more effective and ethical in advancing our **shared security** will not be easy. It will require confronting deeply entrenched beliefs about our country and its place in the world. It will necessitate profound shifts in government institutions, budgets, and policies. It will face strong opposition from vested interests in the current system. But it can be done.

This is not a task we can shy away from or leave to the next generation—the costs of continuing on the current path are simply too high. But it is work for which we see real possibilities for success. Employing peaceful means for peaceful ends to strengthen our interconnected security as people and nations; seeking solutions to the planetary imperative that protect the most vulnerable and shift from consumption to sustainability-oriented economies; strengthening and advancing rule of law and cooperative global problem-solving; and replacing fear-driven militarism with restorative approaches that heal—these are not just hopes, but practical human realities that can be forged through practical human initiative.

We offer this initial glimpse into a vision of **shared security** as one modest step toward bringing it into reality. We recognize the need to think, dialogue, and collaborate more with others to help clarify and refine this vision, to give it greater color, shape, and practical expression. We know others share this vision and can improve upon it. With this working paper, we hope to encourage discussion within our communities and with allies in government, the military, business and other faith and social change movements about how the U.S. can engage with the world in ways that help bring this vision into reality.

The possibilities of constructing a global community where all can live in dignity and peace are visible if we stretch our eyes over the horizon, to a new world waiting to be built. Experience tells us that this can be achieved. Faith moves us to action.

For more information on this project, ideas for how to use this publication, and to connect with others working toward a world of shared security, please visit www.sharedsecurity.org.

End Notes

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Shared Security is a joint project of:



**American Friends
Service Committee**

American Friends Service Committee
1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
(215) 241-7000
www.afsc.org



Friends Committee on National Legislation
245 Second Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 547-6000
www.fcnl.org

SHARED SECURITY

Building peace in an interdependent world



American Friends
Service Committee



Our world is changing.

Never before have the fates of individuals, communities, and nations been so intertwined. And never before have our safety and well-being depended so much on the safety and well-being of others.

Today's problems—from violent extremism and weapons proliferation to climate disruption and public health crises—cannot be solved by any one nation. To address these problems, we need to abandon failed militarized approaches and invest in the tools needed to build security in today's world. These tools include preventive diplomacy, mediation, transitional justice and reconciliation, trauma healing, community building, and sustainable economies.

We need to recognize the interdependence of our global community and build on the remarkable opportunities of our highly networked world. We need to establish a sense of shared security.



What is shared security?

Shared security is a new paradigm for promoting the safety and well-being of people throughout the world. It is based on the simple understanding that shared problems require shared solutions, and that our interests are best served when we foster peaceful and just relationships and protect the natural resources we all depend on.

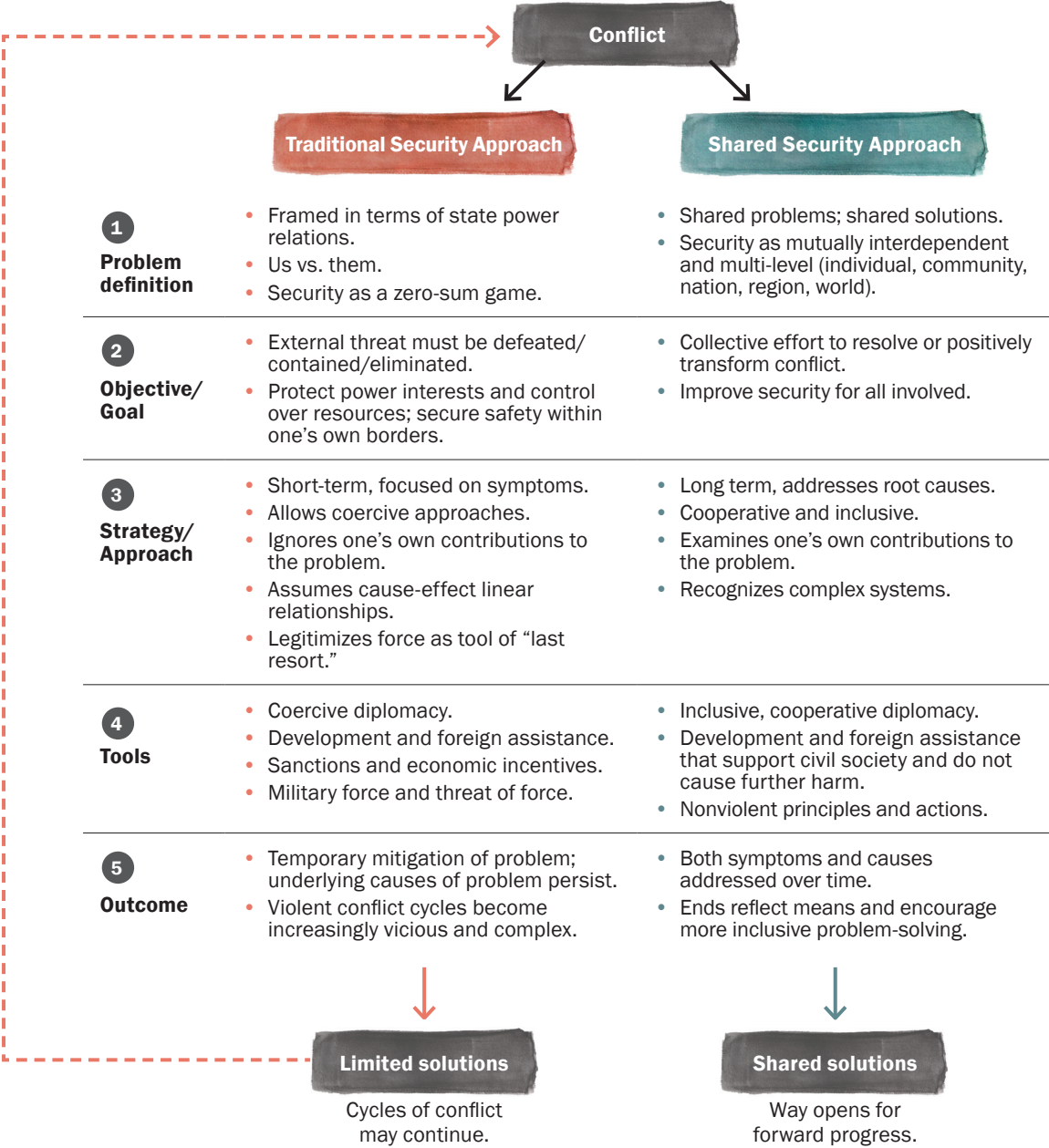
Current concepts of national or state security fail to address complex realities and fuel us/them paradigms. Wars feed the growth of violent movements, fuel instability and conflict, and undermine our own safety and well-being and that of others. As a result, outdated approaches, such as military intervention, are increasingly costly and ineffective.

Shared security is both a different way of envisioning what is needed to build a more secure and peaceful planet, and a different way of acting to reach that vision.

A healthy community is built on high levels of trust and mutual understanding, adequate resources to meet basic needs, and healthy institutions that benefit all, equally. With shared security, communities directly address any breaches in trust or violations of others' well-being, but by seeking to heal the wound that has been inflicted rather than pursuing retribution.

Shared security joins the concepts of "collective security," which emphasizes cooperation among nations, and "human security," which focuses on the dignity and well-being of communities. The result is an inclusive approach to security where diverse actors are engaged at all levels, nonviolent options are chosen, and those most affected have a say in finding solutions.

Envisioning shared security





At its core, shared security is grounded in what Desmond Tutu calls *Ubuntu*, an inherent human connectedness that leads us to say, “I am because you are.”

AFSC’s work for shared security

AFSC works with communities, decision-makers, and ally organizations to advance global shared security.

We do this by supporting evidence-based good practices, documenting success stories, and linking our work to policy recommendations. We promote nonviolent approaches to reduce violence and militarism, engage all actors in seeking peaceful solutions to conflicts, and support local people as positive change agents in their societies.

AFSC focuses its global shared security work on several key issues. They include:

- Peace building
- Reconciliation and healing
- Intra- and inter-religious conflict
- Migration
- Elections violence
- Restricted spaces
- Violent extremism
- Marginalized voices
- Business and conflict

Our work to promote shared security looks different in different places as we respond to community needs in specific contexts, but it is bound together by a search for truly shared solutions to our shared problems.



Shared security in action

In Guatemala and El Salvador

AFSC supports community members, including youth and women, in efforts to reduce urban violence. Those efforts include working with authorities to improve national policies and policing practices, neighborhood initiatives to transform public spaces, and civic opportunities for youth. These shared security approaches are repairing the social fabric, strengthening community resilience, and building greater security from the local level up.

“I learned that, as young people, we are important, and we can contribute to the future. Even when violence and crime are all around us, we can help build peace.”

—FATIMA GUADALUPE CASCO, EL SALVADOR
PEACE NETWORK PARTICIPANT

In Burundi

AFSC supports healing and recovery in the wake of civil war. Our efforts brought Burundian parliamentarians to South Africa for an international exchange on Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) prior to the launch of a TRC in Burundi. We have also partnered with many communities struggling to reintegrate ex-combatants, using a threefold approach that includes trauma healing, community building, and micro-loan and livelihood programs. Shared security approaches reinforce locally led recovery efforts and improve the chances that national peace processes will endure.

“My association members knew I was an ex-combatant, but they saw me saving, asking for loans, and always repaying on time. They believed in me, and now they treat me as [they do] others.”

—FRÉDÉRIC NGENZEBUHORU, BURUNDI
MICRO-LOAN PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

In Israel, Palestine, and the broader Middle East

AFSC supports people on all sides seeking to resolve conflicts and achieve security without violence. Internationally, we encourage inclusive regional diplomacy and urge a halt to military aid to the region. Locally, we support Palestinian and Israeli youth who are organizing to end the injustices and militarized approaches that fuel conflict in the region.

“I realized I would not be able to participate in depriving our Palestinian neighbors of their most basic freedoms in the name of security.”

—ELISHA BASKIN, AFSC FELLOW IN
JERUSALEM

In Asia and the Pacific

AFSC promotes conflict-sensitive investment practices and convenes multinational dialogues among foreign policy experts, government officials, and NGOs to explore shared security approaches to prevent conflict. In China, we worked with policy advisors from the think tank of the Ministry of Commerce to publish a book demonstrating how local community consultations can prevent conflict in complex environments. We have since helped pilot this approach between investors and NGOs in Cambodia.

“I know you guys are Quakers, but you had some real hawks in there from (both countries), and you had them thinking in different ways and engaging.”

—LAWRENCE KORB, PARTICIPANT IN A CHINA-
U.S. DIALOGUE AND EXCHANGE PROGRAM

(Lawrence Korb is a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress and the former Assistant Secretary of Defense during the Reagan administration.)



Re-imagining a world of shared security

As a global community, we have wasted too many lives and too much money under the misguided notion that we must always be ready for war and that violence is inevitable.

The simple truth, based on evidence spanning centuries, is that violence does not work to create safe and secure communities.

Yet peace can grow in the most surprising of places, with leadership from those one might least expect.

Just like war, peace requires preparation, strategy, investment, and ongoing practice. Building a global community grounded in shared security will require serious commitments to transforming political, economic, and social relationships; respecting human rights; and mending the harms caused by injustice and war.

We do not expect such a world to emerge easily, but we are convinced that it is possible. Please join us in making a commitment to shared security.



“The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy, instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth. Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate. Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

A shared security approach is both ethical and effective. It strives to match peaceful ends with peaceful means and to reduce human suffering, confronting complex and challenging problems with cooperative and practical solutions.

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1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
(215) 241-7000
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SHARED SECURITY

Nothing to fear but fear itself

In today's U.S. news coverage, entertainment media, literature, and politics, we're told time and again that we are surrounded by threats to our security. An endless parade of stories feature people who supposedly wish us harm, with immigrants, "criminals" (mostly presented as people of color), and "extremists" (mostly presented as Muslims) lined up to threaten "our" way of life. In the flawed logic that supports our militarized society, the needed responses to these "threats" are clear: more fences, more guards, harsher policing, increased military spending and military intervention.

This threat narrative has been used to justify a host of unsound practices throughout our society—and we all pay the consequences. Our personal lives are increasingly isolated and influenced by fear. Communities of color and poor communities are policed as if under occupation, not part of a democratic nation. Our justice systems reinforce white supremacy and justify violence against people of color, while the public ignores the cost and continues to reward public servants who compete to appear "tough on crime." The fruits of militarism show up in our nation's budget priorities, as well, where a lion's share of our nation's wealth is invested in weapons systems, troops, and so-called Homeland Security, with little left for developing human potential. Our engagement with the broader world is also overwhelmingly militarised, mostly comprised of military and security intervention or assistance.

All of this harmful waste is justified by an argument that it is necessary to make us more secure. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), with almost a century's experience addressing the roots of violence, poverty, and oppression worldwide, has always rejected this approach to security. And now, in the early phase of a newly effective movement for civil and human rights, AFSC is playing a vital role in revealing and challenging militaristic approaches that actually undermine security—at disproportionate cost to the lives and rights of people of color and oppressed communities globally.

To counter the flawed logic of militarism, AFSC has brought forward a framework called shared security. The concept of shared security was first developed in partnership with the FCNL in the context of rethinking U.S. foreign policy. But the principles can just as easily provide a new blueprint for our individual, community, economic, and national security needs.

Shared security is built on four core principles, each of which is vital to true, sustainable, and shared security or well-being:

- **Commitment to building peaceful and just ends through peaceful and just means.** At every level of society, we should pursue approaches that create more of what we want to reap. At the root of this approach is a concept that runs through virtually every world religion and societal code as variations on the “golden rule”—treat others as you wish to be treated. Societies built on violence reap more of the same.
- **Shared access to fair and accountable public institutions and supports.** Our electoral, judicial, educational, health, public safety, and other shared systems should be designed to protect and welcome those most vulnerable, not just those who are most vocal and powerful.
- **Commitment to healing the breach caused by a destructive act.** Whether an act of violence is perpetrated by a person, group, or state, steps need to be taken to ensure that root causes and impacts are addressed to prevent repeated violence and destruction. Restorative approaches to justice have been proven more effective than our current punitive, retributive approaches.
- **Recognition of our shared communities, regions, and planet.** We’re all affected by degradation of our shared environment, infrastructure, and social systems in today’s increasingly interconnected world. We are all in it together, and no one can afford to act for their own interests alone.

Can a “shared security” approach work in the real world?

These principles, when put into action, have achieved demonstrated success across the world for generations. From the successful integration of traditional peacemaking into the Navajo court system to the lasting effects of the Marshall Plan, these concepts are well proven as effective grounds for reducing conflict and ending cycles of violence. Studies on nonviolent movements, reconciliation, criminal justice, and the lasting effects of inequality show the cost of militarized approaches and the long-term value of pursuing shared security.

Militarized thinking—with clear “good guys” triumphing over “bad guys” through decisive violence—runs deep in our society, but the weakness of this model is getting more and more attention. We are in a moment where the human and financial costs of militarized policing; harsh, xenophobic immigration practices; and over a decade of military action against ‘extremists’ are readily apparent.

Change is possible. It’s time to tell a new story about violent conflict, militarized policing, and the world we all belong to. Our shared security depends on it.

To learn more about AFSC’s work, visit afsc.org