

Statement Supporting Reform of Security Laws that Hinder Charity

We come together in support of American security by seeking elimination of counterproductive barriers to legitimate charitable work found in outdated U.S. counterterrorism measures. These laws and policies have hindered the transformative power of the American charitable community's work in conflict zones and trench on precious First Amendment freedoms of speech and association, and Fifth Amendment guarantees of due process.

Laws governing “material support” to designated terrorist organizations sweep too broadly, criminalizing life saving humanitarian aid to civilians, efforts at peacebuilding and speech advocating only lawful, nonviolent activity, even where it furthers no terrorist acts whatsoever. In addition, the laws give the executive branch broad discretion to place groups on terrorist lists without affording them adequate notice and a meaningful opportunity to defend themselves.

It is imperative that constitutional and human rights principles guide the U.S. government's approach to national security rules and policies. We oppose terrorism and are committed to upholding our values. We call on the U.S. government to work with us to update U.S. law by:

1. Reforming the prohibition on material support to respect charitable access in order to provide basic humanitarian aid to civilians, and to protect free speech, association and peacebuilding.
2. Reforming the process for placing groups and individuals on terrorist lists to ensure that they have sufficient notice and a meaningful opportunity to respond to the charges against them, and to ensure that the system includes sufficient checks and balances on executive discretion.



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Organizations who have endorsed the **Statement Supporting Reform of Security Laws that Hinder Charity (June 21, 2011)**:

3D Security Initiative	The Constitution Project	International Justice Network
ACLU- DC	Defending Dissent Foundation	Islamic Relief USA
Alliance for Peacebuilding	DownsizeDC.org	KinderUSA
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee	Electronic Frontier Foundation Fourth Freedom Forum	Life for Relief & Development
American Friends Service Committee	Freedom and Justice Foundation	Mennonite Central Committee
American Association of University Professors	Fund for Constitutional Government	Muslim Public Affairs Council
Appleton Foundation	The Fund for Global Human Rights	Muslim Legal Fund of America
Asian Law Caucus	Grantmakers Without Borders	National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
Bill of Rights Defense Committee	Grassroots International	The Rutherford Institute
Center for Constitutional Rights	International Center for Not for Profit Law	Tikva Grassroots Empowerment Fund
Center for International Policy	International Center for Religion & Diplomacy	

To find out more about why these groups have signed on the Statement Supporting Reform of Security Laws that Hinder Charity or to learn how the Administration or Congress can implement these reforms, please contact:

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