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International Crisis Group 2019–2020

PREVENTING WAR. SHAPING PEACE.
Preventing and Resolving Deadly Conflict

War is forcing more people from their homes than at any time since World War II. Conflict is directly causing humanitarian catastrophes, threats of famine and outbreaks of once-eradicated disease. Chemical weapons use, ethnic cleansing and the failure to distinguish between combatants and civilians are eroding norms governing the conduct of war.

Meanwhile, the U.S. no longer leads multilateral peace efforts. Europe is mired in internal crisis. In both centres of Western power, nativism and nationalism are growing, with conflicts largely viewed through the narrow prisms of migration and counter-terrorism. Regional powers are moving into the vacuum, at times engaging in proxy wars to protect or advance their interests.

These challenges make Crisis Group’s mandate – and work – more essential than ever. No other organisation matches our combination of independent field research in conflict zones, sharp analysis, practical policy recommendations and global advocacy reach. Our work sheds light on what is really happening on the ground and what motivates conflict actors. It breaks taboos. It inspires new, more realistic approaches to ending or preventing conflict, both immediate and long-term. We shape the debate, challenge conventional wisdom regarding conflicts that are in the headlines and put the spotlight on forgotten ones.

Our impact can be striking. Over a decade of advocacy helped achieve the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, and, after the 2018 U.S. withdrawal from the agreement, to keep it alive. Fifteen years of Crisis Group engagement – and readiness to champion difficult compromises – helped seal the 2016 Colombia peace accord. In countless other conflicts, our proposals have shaped mindsets and informed practical solutions.

Nothing gives me greater satisfaction as I criss-cross the globe than to hear officials praise our analysts as among the most knowledgeable, and stress that Crisis Group reports top their reading lists as the gold standard for impartial advice on conflicts. Or to hear peers and donors tell us how invaluable our briefings are to distil the essentials from the noise. All this, we do with a staff of just over 100 people.

Even as conflict appears to be on the rise, global spending on peacemaking is shrinking in favour of shorter-term security measures and counter-terrorism operations. Crisis Group research and advocacy for peace cannot happen without the support of our friends, allies and donors. Your investment in Crisis Group will help us help those who need it most: the actual and potential victims of war.

Robert Malley, President and CEO
In the early 1990s, the international community failed to either anticipate or respond to the tragedies unfolding in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia. Frustrated statesmen and women rallied to create an independent, field-centred organisation that could raise the alarm about crises in a way that would be heard by governments and others in a position to take early action to prevent the outbreak of violence. Our founders were led by Morton Abramowitz, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a former U.S. ambassador.

In 1995, International Crisis Group was officially established with generous support from financier and philanthropist George Soros, Nordic countries and others. The new Crisis Group helped raise $10 million for election support in Sierra Leone and began a broad engagement with Bosnia that defined its early years.

In 2000, former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans took over and led a decade of rapid expansion as Crisis Group became the world’s leading independent conflict prevention organisation.

In 2009, Canada’s Louise Arbour took the helm. As a former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and prosecutor for the international tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, she brought a focus on justice and accountability, especially in the aftermath of the Sri Lanka war.

In 2014, France’s Jean-Marie Guéhenno, former head of UN peacekeeping, became President. He brought emphasis on global security, multilateralism and transnational themes arising from Crisis Group’s deep expertise on the local politics of war, like jihad in modern conflict.

In 2018, Robert Malley, Crisis Group’s Chief of Policy and also the founder and former director of its Middle East and North Africa Program, became President & CEO. He was a Special Assistant to former U.S. President Barack Obama as well as Senior Adviser to the President for the Counter-ISIL Campaign, and White House Coordinator for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf region. Previously, he served as President Bill Clinton’s Special Assistant for Israeli-Palestinian Affairs.
Our Vision and Mission

Our vision is a world in which deadly conflict is better understood, prevented, mitigated and resolved. We analyse wars and peace processes at the global, regional and local levels. Our ultimate aim is that affected populations experience greater, more sustainable peace, security and development.

The pillars of lasting peace, Crisis Group believes, include broad engagement, dialogue and negotiation; more inclusive politics; the better provision of basic public goods and services; and, at the heart of this, better governance, representative and accountable institutions that uphold human rights and the rule of law.

Our mission is to prevent, resolve and mitigate deadly conflict around the world by informing and influencing the perceptions and actions of policymakers and other key conflict actors. Whether we are sounding the alarm or proposing intelligent new policies, our central goal is saving lives. To this end, Crisis Group endeavours to talk to all sides, conduct independent field-centred research, and supply expert analysis and advice.

“Our strategic framework is clear on our core principles: meticulous research; inclusivity; bold, principled, practical policies; independence; impartiality; timeliness; transparency; collaborative actions with partners; long-term engagement; and, not least, bucking orthodoxy when required.”

ROBERT MALLEY
President & CEO, International Crisis Group

A road sign in Diffa, Niger, where Crisis Group was conducting field research in October 2016, proclaims “There is no development without security.”
Our Methodology

1. **Field research**
   Crisis Group’s credibility is founded on field-centred research. Drawn from diplomacy, media, civil society and academia, our analysts work in or near trouble spots where conflict may break out, escalate or recur. Their main task is to find out what is happening and why. They identify the political, social and economic factors driving conflict. They meet the people who matter on all sides and discover what or who influences them. They integrate gender perspectives, draw on our presence in major capitals and engage expert partners. And they consider the actual and potential role for other countries and inter-governmental bodies like the UN, European Union and African Union.

2. **Sharp-edged analysis**
   Crisis Group’s task is not merely to understand conflict but to prevent, contain and resolve it. Analysis from the field identifies levers that can be pulled and those who can pull them, whether political, legal, financial or, ultimately, military actors. It also shapes practical recommendations for action by local actors, governments, distant powers, international organisations, the business community or civil society. Some will be within the current marketplace of ideas, while others will be unorthodox and innovative, requiring a change in paradigm. These policy prescriptions, along with our field-centred research and analysis, are presented in succinct, timely and readable reports.

3. **Targeted advocacy**
   Identifying the problem and the right response is only part of the story. All too often the missing ingredient is the political will to act. Crisis Group’s task is not to lament its absence, but to work out how to mobilise it through winning over a critical mass of policy actors, from officials to the media, and from civil society activists to front-line commanders. That in turn means having good arguments – moral, political, legal and financial; taking into account the interests of governments and actors involved; and engaging people with the right credibility and capacity. Together with our analysts, project and program directors, Crisis Group’s Board of Trustees helps us gain high-level access.
Our Outreach

Reports | The expertise of Crisis Group’s analysts is founded on the deep field research and advocacy embedded in our long-form reports and briefings. In 2018, we published 72 such detailed, indispensable reference texts on conflicts.

CrisisWatch | Our monthly global conflict tracker is an early-warning online tool that provides a succinct, regular update on the most significant conflicts and crises around the world. It alerts readers to forthcoming risks and potential opportunities for conflict resolution.

Watch Lists | Four times a year, Crisis Group publishes an early-warning Watch List for the European Union that identifies five to ten conflicts or crises in which prompt action by the EU and its member states would generate stronger prospects for peace.

Op-eds and commentaries | In 2018, we published over 190 commentaries, Q&As andstatements. Of these, almost half were op-eds in prominent media outlets, one third of them in languages other than English.

Our Journeys | In these personal commentaries, our analysts describe their travels and field research. Recent entries include following in the tracks of Boko Haram in Cameroon’s Far North, and reporting from war-torn Yemen’s beleaguered capital.

Media impact | Our work was quoted over 56,800 times in all media in 2018, averaging 1,070 citations per week in major outlets like AFP, Al Jazeera, AP, Bloomberg, BBC, CNN, Die Zeit, the Economist, Financial Times, Foreign Policy, Jeune Afrique, Le Monde, the New York Times, the Nikkei Asian Review, Reuters, the Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post.

Videos, photography and graphics | In 2018 we produced 40 videos and hundreds of photos and graphics to promote our reports and fieldwork. We are ramping up the production of all visual outputs to drive home our message about the vital role of conflict prevention in heading off humanitarian catastrophes.

Social media | With more than 150,000 followers on Twitter and 144,000 supporters on Facebook – and with almost double that number following our staffers individually – Crisis Group reaches well beyond its home niche of policymakers on international conflict.

Events | Crisis Group experts are sought-after speakers at foreign policy panels and roundtables. We convene joint policy seminars and report launches with leading organisations. Our partners range from Chatham House in London to Al Sharq Forum in Istanbul and OSIWA in Dakar.

Meetings | Our analysts conduct thousands of face-to-face meetings each year to learn, exchange ideas and shape the debate. Our President Robert Malley also travels extensively, meeting with heads of government and other high-level political leaders, as well as representatives of non-governmental organisations, civil society and the private sector.

Crisis Calls | Our President, program directors and analysts lead exclusive telephone briefings to give key supporters real-time insights into emerging crises and discuss problems of pressing international concern.

Translations | With 30 nationalities represented among our 120 staff, and myriad languages spoken in the countries we cover, we are committed to making our reports accessible through translations of the highest quality. We also publish original reports in French and Spanish.

Sign up for more | Thanks to our donors, Crisis Group outputs are freely available as a public good. Sign up via www.crisisgroup.org/subscribe to receive emails when we publish reports or schedule events.
Our Impact

Crisis Group’s field research and advocacy have a unique and direct impact on alleviating crises across the world. Sometimes our urgent advocacy influences policymakers and policy quickly, as in 2018 when we helped formulate more realistic goals for a French peace initiative for Libya that risked exacerbating rather than reducing tensions. At other times, we shift dominant ways of thinking. In Myanmar, for instance, Crisis Group was the first to warn of the risk of a Rohingya insurrection. Six months later, militant attacks triggered violent operations by the Burmese military that forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya to flee in what became one of the fastest exoduses of modern times.

Image: Crisis Group Turkey Project Director Nigar Göksel (left) and Turkey Analyst Berkay Mandıracı research refugee integration in Istanbul in October 2016.
● The struggle for an Iran nuclear deal
Crisis Group was a lone voice in 2003 when it began advocating that Iran could continue to enrich uranium, but under strict limits and international monitoring. We persisted until the idea became mainstream. Crisis Group’s 40-step proposal in 2014 presaged the negotiators’ 2015 breakthrough. Iranian team members commended our role, and a senior U.S. official wrote: “I am sure you recognise your language in the final text”.

● Shaping Colombia’s Peace Process
Fifteen years of Bogotá-based research and advocacy helped foster the flexible, initially controversial approach to transitional justice that became a cornerstone of Colombia’s 2016 peace accord – a spectacular breakthrough after five decades of war. Government negotiator Oscar Naranjo called Crisis Group reports “most detailed and realistic”, and his FARC rebel counterpart said our work was “useful and objective”.

● An Inside Player in Yemen Peace Efforts
Crisis Group shaped public discourse and engaged behind the scenes with all front-line actors of the Yemen war. One success in 2018 was in advocating against a Saudi-led coalition offensive on the port of Hodeida, vital for humanitarian supplies. All sides saw our 2017-2018 reports as setting a basis for reviving talks. Our Yemen expert was seconded for six months in June 2018 to UN Envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths, who said “the careful and rigorous reports of Crisis Group … give me a better chance of getting my job done”.

● Reconceptualising Israel-Palestine
Crisis Group was far ahead of the curve when it published a detailed Israel-Palestine peace plan in 2002. The reports defined an endgame, not an Oslo-style incremental approach. It was “a solid basis for … a fair solution”, said Amr Moussa, then Secretary-General of the Arab League. In 2006, Crisis Group mobilised 135 global leaders behind our call for urgent action on putting the “endgame first”, the model for most peace plans since then.

● A Peaceful Transfer of Power in Nigeria
Crisis Group helped avert a bloody confrontation around the 2015 elections in Nigeria. We raised awareness of the risks among international leaders and encouraged them to dissuade the competing politicians from resorting to violence. The teams of U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and former UN Secretary-General and Crisis Group trustee Kofi Annan consulted our experts before those statesmen visited the country. On election night, the losing incumbent rejected pressure from party hardliners to dig in. A senior State Department official told us the U.S. “benefited enormously” from their briefing and that our reporting helped “orient efforts”.

● Sounding the Alarm in Cameroon
In August 2017, seven years after warning of impending instability, Crisis Group was among the first to alert the outside world to the growing insurrection in Cameroon’s Anglophone regions. In April, responding to requests from officials, civil society, religious leaders and diplomats for fresh ideas, we called on the Catholic Church to mediate. Diplomats used our report as a starting point in encouraging Church leaders’ subsequent push for a conference among Anglophone groups as a first stage in national negotiations.

Our Impact Notes, available on our website, provide more examples of how Crisis Group plays a significant role in shaping peace around the globe.
Global Operations

Our headquarters is in Brussels, Belgium, where we manage global research and publications, media and digital platforms, government fundraising and administration. Field research and advocacy on some 55 conflicts or crises are run by six regional Programs covering Africa; Asia; Latin America & the Caribbean; Europe & Central Asia; the Middle East & North Africa; and the United States. The programs’ policy advocacy and outreach is supported from our offices in Brussels, Washington, New York and London, while the last two offices also conduct our private-sector fundraising.

Latin America & Caribbean Program
- Mexico's Drug Cartels and Corruption
- Colombia's Dilemmas of Sustainable Peace
- Venezuela's Crippling Crisis
- Central America’s Violent Northern Triangle

Africa Program
- Cameroon’s Anglophone Crisis
- DR Congo’s Chronic Instability
- Burundi's Authoritarianism and Civil Strife
- Central African Republic’s Fragile State
- Challenges in Somalia and the Horn of Africa
- Sudan's Crises
- South Sudan’s Conflicts
- Lake Chad Basin’s Boko Haram Insurgency
- Overlapping Threats in the Greater Sahel
- Nigeria’s Deadly Conflicts

Crisis Group also has a presence in a number of other countries, the details of which are not disclosed primarily for reasons of field-based staff security.
Our Regional Programs

The **Africa Program**’s priorities are to forge responses to the threat of violent jihadism, particularly in the greater Sahel and Lake Chad basin area, and to help prevent political unrest and build peace in the troubled states of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Nigeria, and South Sudan. Leading the Program’s work since 2011 is **Comfort Ero**, formerly Africa Program deputy director at the International Centre for Transitional Justice, and a member of the board of several journals including International Peacekeeping.

The **Asia Program** focuses on strategies to prevent and resolve conflict, particularly regarding North Korea and Afghanistan, and to reduce violent extremism and transnational militancy. The Program also explores China’s growing global role and the narrowing democratic space in many Asian countries. It has been led since January 2019 by **Laurel Miller**. Previously the U.S. Acting Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, her career has spanned diplomacy, law, and policy research with the RAND Corporation.

The **Europe & Central Asia Program** acts to contain conflict risks in the EU’s and Russia’s shared neighbourhood, particularly in Ukraine and Nagorno-Karabakh, and threats to regional states’ stability, particularly Turkey. The Program’s work is headed since January 2019 by **Olga Oliker**, who holds a doctorate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and writes widely on Eurasian security. She was previously Director of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington DC.

The **Latin America & Caribbean Program**’s main goal is to reduce the risks of political violence and civil war, particularly in Venezuela and Colombia; and to inform regional policies to address migration, corruption and criminality in Mexico and in Central America more broadly. The Program has been led since 2016 by **Ivan Briscoe**, who has worked on the region since 1996 as a senior research fellow at the Clingendael Institute of the Netherlands and Spain’s FRIDE, and as a journalist in Argentina and Spain, including for *El País*.

The **Middle East & North Africa Program**’s principal aims are to urge warring parties to reach peace settlements in the region’s most violent conflicts, especially in Syria, Yemen and Libya; to sustain the 2015 Iran nuclear deal in the face of dangerous headwinds; and to avert direct or indirect confrontation between Iran and Israel and/or between Iran and its Gulf neighbours. The Program has been led since 2015 by **Joost Hiltermann**, a frequent contributor to the New York Review of Books and author of *A Poisonous Affair*.

The newly established **U.S. Program** develops and promotes strategies for addressing crises that could draw the United States into major conflict, such as on the Korean peninsula, as well as for mitigating the impact of U.S. counterterrorism operations on civilians and for encouraging U.S. support to programs and mechanisms that furnish assistance to victims of conflict. The Program is led by **Stephen Pomper**, who served as Special Assistant to President Obama and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights on the U.S. National Security Council.
“It’s not just the number, it’s the quality of the reports that makes the work of Crisis Group so valuable for researchers and policymakers. My ministry has supported Crisis Group for many years and we intend to do so in the years to come.”

CAROLA VAN RIJNSOEVER
Netherlands Ambassador to the European Union’s Political and Security Committee, March 2016
Our Funding

The International Crisis Group is financially supported by a diverse base of funders, the most up-to-date list of whom is at www.crisisgroup.org/supporters. We receive approximately half of our income from governments, one quarter from foundations, and one quarter from corporations and philanthropists. More than half of all contributions to Crisis Group are unrestricted, guaranteeing our impartiality, long-term engagement and independence.

Crisis Group enjoys close relationships with government and foundation donors, whose multi-year funding is crucial to maintaining our global presence and our field-centred methodology. We engage substantively with institutional funders through private policy briefings, roundtables, and quick access to field experts and senior staff. Crisis Group fills a vital niche as officials’ access to the unvarnished views of all conflict actors is being increasingly hindered by security concerns and political obstacles. Senior officials tell Crisis Group that our reports are often the first they turn to in a crisis, partly because, unlike diplomats on short tours of duty, our analysts have usually engaged in their field specialisations for a decade or more.

For FY17.18, annual operating and management expenditure was $19.1m and is budgeted to rise to $19.7m in FY18.19. The most recent audited financial statements are accessible at www.crisisgroup.org.

In June 2010, the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development added Crisis Group to its Development Assistance Committee list, recognising that our actions to prevent or resolve conflict help poorer countries’ development performance. All contributions to Crisis Group can therefore be reported as Official Development Assistance (ODA), thus helping donor governments meet their ODA target.

“By integrating a consciousness about gender throughout our work – including field research, report-writing and face-to-face advocacy – we seek to enrich our understanding of conflict dynamics, challenge stereotypes about women’s roles and offer better-informed solutions for lasting peace.”

ISABELLE ARRADON
Director of Research and Special Adviser on Gender
“[Crisis Group’s] reports are compelling, innovative and provocative, spelling out things not said by others ... based on information and data obtained from primary sources.”

YAŞAR YAKIŞ
Former foreign minister of Turkey, 2014

2018 Program expenditures in U.S. dollars

Ethnic Armenian soldiers in the Gandzasar cathedral in Nagorno-Karabakh, photographed during May 2017 Crisis Group research into rising tensions in this territory seized from Azerbaijan’s control in the early 1990s.
Invest in Peacemaking

Our partners in the private sector join an influential global network that provides essential funding for Crisis Group’s mission to reverse the devastating spread of war. Crisis Group recognises these supporters through our tiered Council program. Members enjoy benefits tailored to the needs of corporations and individuals, including private briefings with our experts and exclusive access to Council events. Executives find our geopolitical analysis directly relevant to their business and philanthropic interests. Supporters tell us that Crisis Group’s independent analysis helps them to check internal assumptions, gain valuable insights and develop strategies to mitigate political risks. Our twice-yearly Board Meetings are also attended by Crisis Group’s leading private sector supporters. Young leaders are welcomed in our Ambassador Council, a network of talented professionals from diverse fields.

For more details, visit www.crisisgroup.org/philanthropy or contact philanthropy@crisisgroup.org

“\textit{To know what’s really happening on the ground, I go to Crisis Group. Their work tackles the core causes of conflict and helps prevent wars before they start.}”

\textbf{HELIMA CROFT}

Head of Commodity Strategy, RBC Capital Markets (New York)
Our Board of Trustees

The 47 members of International Crisis Group’s Board of Trustees hail from 31 countries and have served at the highest levels of government, business and inter-governmental institutions. Their expertise, influence and global reach lends weight to Crisis Group’s efforts to prevent, manage and resolve deadly conflict. The Board’s regional working groups act as sounding boards as they review each Crisis Group Report before publication. Our Board Meetings, held twice a year in rotating capitals, are intimate, intense, two-day-long opportunities for our Trustees to discuss and debate Crisis Group’s policies related to our conflict prevention work across the globe. We pride ourselves on having Board members who can engage our analysts in a challenging debate about the sources of conflict and effective ways to advance the cause of peace.

“International Crisis Group is independent of any national interest. It answers to no single donor. Like our policy analysts, each member of the Board is committed to upholding Crisis Group’s impartiality, and taking its advocacy on behalf of the actual and potential victims of conflict to the highest corridors of power.”

LORD (MARK) MALLOCH-BROWN
Co-Chair of the Board and former UN Deputy Secretary-General
“Crisis Group’s work is precious, not just for journalists, but for all those seeking to understand the world.”

PHILIPPE DESCAMPS
Editor-in-Chief of Le Monde diplomatique – June 2017

“Whenever a new analysis from Crisis Group is issued or presented to my colleagues, it is always integrated in the EEAS work. Even when the EU and Crisis Group disagree in some cases, your criticism always comes as a constructive suggestion.”

FEDERICA MOGHERINI
EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy – November 2018

“In Darfur, for example, International Crisis Group was ringing the alarm bell .... They gave us insight. We didn’t always agree with them. It’s not their role to come into agreement with us. It’s their role to reflect ground truth.”

GENERAL COLIN POWELL
65th U.S. Secretary of State – 2011

“I read all of your reports and kept your recommendations in mind all the time. You cannot know how valuable those reports have been.”

CATHERINE SAMBA-PANZA
Former President of the Central African Republic – February 2016

“Your 2014 report was timely and one of the most objective published. If the sides had adopted the suggestions in your reports, we’d be in a much better position now.”

SELAHATTIN DEMIRTAŞ
Co-Chair of Turkey’s leading pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Democratic Party, Turkey – February 2016

“For a complex mediation like the one required in the Syrian conflict, if we did not have ICG we would probably suggest that it be created.”

STAFFAN DE MISTURA
Former UN Envoy for Syria – September 2018


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Crisis Group Senior Colombia analyst Kyle Johnson talking to members of the community in Guapi, Cauca (Colombia), May 2016.

Above: Crisis Group Senior Libya Analyst, Claudia Gazzini (right) in conversation with two Tuareg activists during a field trip to southern Libya, Sebha, April 2017.

Front cover: A Fulani community leader from Burkina Faso during a report launch with then Crisis Group Burkina Faso analyst Cynthia Ohayon and West Africa Project Director Rinaldo Delagne, Ouagadougou, October 2017.

Crisis Group Senior Colombia analyst Kyle Johnson talking to members of the community in Guapi, Cauca (Colombia), May 2016.