



# Crisis Action

*Helping organisations work together  
to protect civilians from armed conflict*

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2020**

# THE CRISIS ACTION MODEL

*Since 2004, Crisis Action has worked with global organizations, grassroots movements, politicians, faith leaders, celebrities, activists, academics, artists, business people and more to drive action that has helped save lives, punish dictatorships, bring war criminals to justice, expose corruption, and get aid to millions of civilians.*

We have found solutions where we were told there were none and demonstrated the power of different stakeholders working together strategically and creatively, with humility and focus. Our model has won awards and inspired other organizations, including a new not-for-profit - Digital Action - dedicated to strengthening democratic rights in a digital age, and an innovative collaboration to address climate change – both formed in the Crisis Action mold.

Last year, to mark 15 years of Crisis Action, we produced two short films showcasing the work we do and the unique model of collective action. Watch them at:



Driving action that has helped save lives

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# SUMMARY OF IMPACT

*In the past twelve months, Crisis Action coordinated coalitions that drove meaningful change for civilians in conflict.*

## IN SOUTH SUDAN THESE COALITIONS

- Helped bring about an agreement between foes to form a Government of National Unity, thereby implementing a peace agreement and ending years of civil strife.
- Pushed warring parties to the negotiating table via various tactics, including a successful online awards ceremony.
- Influenced the renewal of an arms embargo and targeted sanctions on South Sudan and of the mandate of the United Nations (UN) Mission.

## IN SYRIA THESE COALITIONS

- Helped prevent the likely massacre of thousands of civilians by putting pressure on warring parties in Syria to agree a ceasefire in the northeast province of Idlib.
- Helped increase accountability on war crimes in Syria by supporting the UN to form a Board of Inquiry into Syria's war crimes and publicize its report.
- Reduced support for the war in Syria among Russian civilians, via support for independent media and collaboration with artists and activists.
- Elevated the issue of unjustly detained and missing persons in Syria up the agenda of the UN Security Council, bringing the majority of Members States to raise it at each Syria briefing.
- Contributed to a reduction in civilian casualties by calling for an end to attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure by the Syrian government and its Russian allies.

## IN YEMEN THESE COALITIONS

- Raised the political cost for parties to the conflict, with the result that Saudi Arabia proposed a ceasefire and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) withdrew its troops.
- Put pressure on the warring parties to cease attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, contributing to a significant fall in civilian casualties in 2019.
- Kept up pressure on Western governments over arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE for use in Yemen, resulting in the extension of a German arms embargo to Saudi Arabia and an amendment suspending arms sales to UAE and Saudi Arabia passed by the United States (US) House of Representatives.

## IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 THESE COALITIONS

- Galvanized a civil society campaign in support of a global ceasefire initiative, which helped lead to 24 armed groups backing the appeal in warzones including Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Colombia, Libya, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen, and 110 countries backing the ceasefire.

## IN WEST AFRICA THESE COALITIONS

- Elevated civil society voices from the Sahel region by bringing together 50 West African organizations to form the first ever 'People's Coalition' for the Sahel.
- Helped elicit the first signs that the government response will not solely pursue a military solution.

Promoting a Global Ceasefire in response to Covid-19



## STATEMENT FROM BOARD CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The pandemic has affected everyone on the planet and laid bare intolerable social inequalities and inequities for all to see. Political polarization has grown to alarming levels. It has been a depressing year. Yet, our front cover reminds us that there have been some glimmers of hope. A peace agreement was finally implemented in South Sudan, ending years of civil strife. 24 warring parties in 11 conflict zones heeded the UN Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire in light of the pandemic. Popular mobilization of people in the streets has pressed for extraordinary social progress on issues from climate change to racial justice.

This annual report covers Crisis Action's work from July 2019 to July 2020. We are proud of the creative tactics showcased in this report including various forms of art, music and film that have driven change. Crisis Action has powerfully amplified local voices and women on the frontlines through unusual digital channels, especially during the pandemic. We have responded directly to the pandemic, increasing aid to those that need it most in places like Yemen. We are thrilled that Crisis Action has built a new team to engage China to prioritize protecting civilians in violent conflict with a focus on Africa.

Crisis Action is in a strong financial position with record high levels of revenue last year and prudent reserves that can be used, if need be, to survive the pandemic. We are delighted that Anna has taken over as Crisis Action's board chair and thank Arnold Tsunga for his leadership as previous Board Chair. After almost 11 years of service, Andrew has decided to leave Crisis Action to return home to Australia in March 2021. The board is extremely appreciative of Andrew's strategic and caring leadership. We are delighted that Nicola Reindorp will be Crisis Action's next Chief Executive Officer. Nicola is a visionary leader who will make Crisis Action even more impactful.

Dr. Anna Neistat  
Board Chair

Andrew Hudson  
Executive Director

# SOUTH SUDAN

## 2019

### SEPTEMBER

President Salva Kiir and Opposition leader Riek Machar meet in Juba to discuss implementation of the 2018 peace agreement

### NOVEMBER

Parties fail to meet timeline for establishment of a unity government and agree to a 100-day extension

## 2020

### JANUARY

Peter Biar Ajak, along with other detainees, are released from prison following Presidential directive, fulfilling conditions of the peace agreement

### JANUARY

Report of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan observes the sustained lack of political will on the part of leaders in South Sudan to implement the peace agreement

### FEBRUARY

African Union Peace and Security Council urges partners to consider punitive measures for those who continue to undermine the peace process in South Sudan; Cabinet installed as a first act of establishing the new Government of National Unity

### MAY

UN Mission in South Sudan mandate renewed

### JUNE

UN targeted sanctions and arms embargo renewed

A twitter chat was held with the theme  
 "Stop sexual and gender-based violence in South Sudan"  
 Monday 19 August 2019, 5 pm SAST / 6 pm EAT

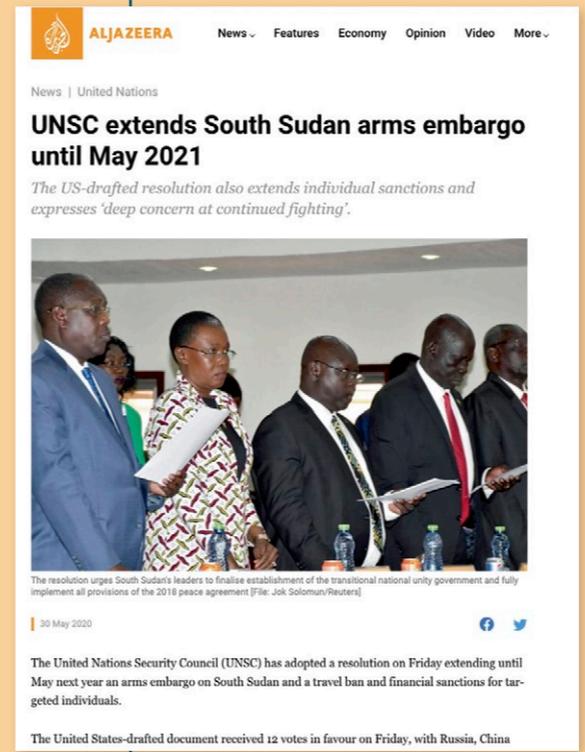


Activists protesting outside the venue of the Oil and Power Conference in South Africa to stop South Sudan from launching its Oil and Gas Licensing Rounds.



*Amongst the numerous achievements of Crisis Action over the past six years in South Sudan, its work amplifying the voices of South Sudanese civil society and survivors of sexual violence has proven critical in addressing both the underlying drivers of the conflict and the gender dimensions.*

Pramila Patten,  
 UN Special Representative  
 of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict



The UN Security Council renewing the arms embargo and targeted sanctions regime on South Sudan.

## CIVIL SOCIETY HELPS ACHIEVE BREAKTHROUGH DEAL

After 7 years of civil conflict, several false dawns, and much unnecessary suffering, the prospects of a brighter future came to South Sudan this year. In February 2020, a new South Sudanese government, comprised of former rivals, was sworn in, implementing the peace agreement signed in September 2018. In his speech at the ceremony, First Vice President Riek Machar thanked civil society for their 'sleepless nights to bring this peace to light' – acknowledging their key role in achieving the breakthrough.

Indeed, the increasing participation and influence of South Sudanese civil society in the peace negotiations has been a particularly positive aspect of the campaigning Crisis Action has been involved in over the past years. It has been an enormous privilege and an enriching learning process to work with South Sudanese groups to demand accountability, insist on inclusion and promote a peaceful future for the world's youngest country.

## WOMEN'S VOICES TO THE FORE

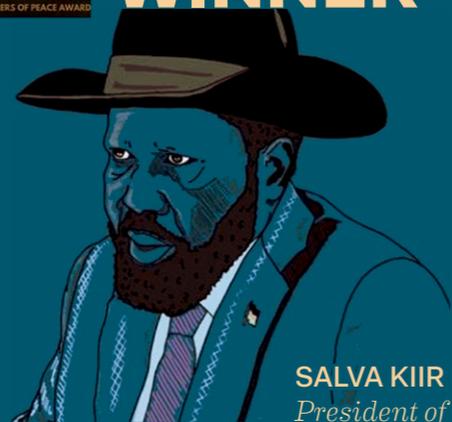
Sexual and gender-based violence has been an awful element of the civil conflict in South Sudan, often ignored or denied by key actors. In August 2019, recognizing the important role South Africa could play with South Sudan's leaders, Crisis Action worked with partners there to draw attention to the need to stop this violence. In collaboration with a community advocacy organization, Amandla Mobi, Crisis Action launched a social media campaign under the hashtag #Mzansi4SouthSudan (Mzansi is an informal name for South Africa).

With high profile participants, including South African activists, lawyers and artists, the campaign trended in Johannesburg and reached over nine million people; a petition urged President Cyril Ramaphosa to increase engagement on the conflict and use his influence with the government of South Sudan to get them to address sexual and gender-based violence. In the months that followed, South Africa co-led a UN Security Council delegation to South Sudan



## #SpoilersOfPeaceAwards

# WINNER



**SALVA KIIR MAYARDIT**  
President of South Sudan

### TOP OVERALL SPOILER OF PEACE AWARD

*In recognition of the South Sudan elite for failing to make peace for their people...*

As President, Kiir played a leading role in causing widespread suffering to the South Sudanese people. Under Kiir's command and control, government-backed armed forces have committed ethnically motivated violence, looted and razed villages, committed systemic and brutal rape, and killed thousands. Kiir has demonstrated an unwillingness to compromise on major elements required to form a transitional government. Kiir and his network, including family and business partners, continue to profit from the instability he has helped fuel, while the people of South Sudan are left to suffer from inept leadership.

*Crisis Action unites civil society like no-one else can. They enable organizations to co-create collective strategies that are both creative and impactful.*

Dismas Nkunda  
Executive Director of Atrocities Watch Africa

*Salva Kiir, President of South Sudan, named the Top Spoiler of Peace in South Sudan in February 2020.*



and also identified South Sudan as one of the two conflicts it would prioritize during its tenure as the 2020 African Union (AU) Chair which it did by playing an active and constructive role in the formation of the new government.

### 'SPOILERS OF PEACE'

In order to press for the formation of the new government, Crisis Action helped coordinate the innovative and influential 'Spoilers of Peace Awards' with our partners Africa Atrocities Watch, Carrot Co., and social media influencer Wanjiku Revolution. Based loosely on the Academy Awards, the aim was to increase public pressure on South Sudan's leaders to implement the peace agreement.

The launch in early January reached an estimated 3.5 million people via traditional and social media, with coverage appearing in influential regional titles including The East African, The Reporter and South Africa's Mail & Guardian, along with op-eds by influential voices. Members of the public were invited to submit nominations for different award categories, and these were vetted by a panel of eminent Pan-African judges.

In parallel, Crisis Action coordinated private and public advocacy to complement the publicity generated by the awards, including meetings for South Sudanese civil society with the AU and diplomats in Juba, a private letter from the awards judges to key policymakers, and a paper for policymakers with recommendations on how governments could enact pressure on key actors to implement the peace agreement.

On February 10, President Salva Kiir was named Top Spoiler of Peace. His spokesperson dismissed the award as 'nonsense', however, just one week later the President announced a major compromise in the negotiations, which paved the way for the formation of the unity government. Senior diplomatic sources told us that the awards made immediate news among diplomats in Juba and were influential with the key players.

*Betty Sunday, a member of the South Sudan Women's Coalition, briefing the UN Security Council alongside David Shearer, Head of the UN Mission in South Sudan.*

### TOTAL ATTACKS IN SOUTH SUDAN



*An infographic showing the decrease of violent events in South Sudan following the signing of the "revitalized" peace agreement in September 2018*

### UN MISSION, ARMS EMBARGO AND SANCTIONS RENEWED

In early March 2020, Crisis Action facilitated a briefing of the UN Security Council by Betty Sunday, a member of the South Sudan Women's Coalition. Betty advised the UN on how to engage with the new government to support peace and security. Following the briefing, the Security Council unanimously renewed the UN Mission in South Sudan for another year. A senior UN Security Council diplomat told Crisis Action, "Betty's briefing had a direct and positive impact on negotiations".

A few months after the new government was formed, Crisis Action facilitated advocacy that resulted in the renewal of the UN arms embargo and targeted sanctions. We organized several joint initiatives ahead of the vote to persuade undecided countries to support renewal. These included South Sudanese civil society engagement with Security Council members, private advocacy by eminent African leaders, and media and social media work by The Elders, regional civil society leaders, and others.

Crisis Action has now ended its campaign on South Sudan as the primary objectives were achieved: namely a peace deal signed, and a new government formed. We are confident that the civil society organizations continuing to work on South Sudan are well-coordinated and have a clear strategy, not least because a Crisis Action-convened session in March for 25 South Sudanese organizations and international NGOs resulted in a blueprint outlining their joint advocacy priorities for the first year of the transitional government.



# SYRIA



## 2019

### OCTOBER

Violence escalates in northeast Syria as a result of President Trump's decision to withdraw troops from the region, which sparked a Turkish invasion

## 2020

### JANUARY

UN resolution on cross border aid partially renewed for 6 months

### MARCH

Russia and Turkey agree to a ceasefire in Idlib, after months of fighting that displaced two million people

### APRIL

UN Board of Inquiry says government of Syria and / or its allies are probably responsible for attacks on schools, hospitals, and refugee camps in northeast Syria

### JUNE

"Caesar" Law comes into force in the US, placing sanctions on Syrian regime individuals and threatening any international government or company supporting Syria reconstruction; Covid-19 cases start to exponentially rise

### JULY

Human Rights Council adopts a breakthrough resolution on Syria, mandating a UN Commission of Inquiry to report on detainees

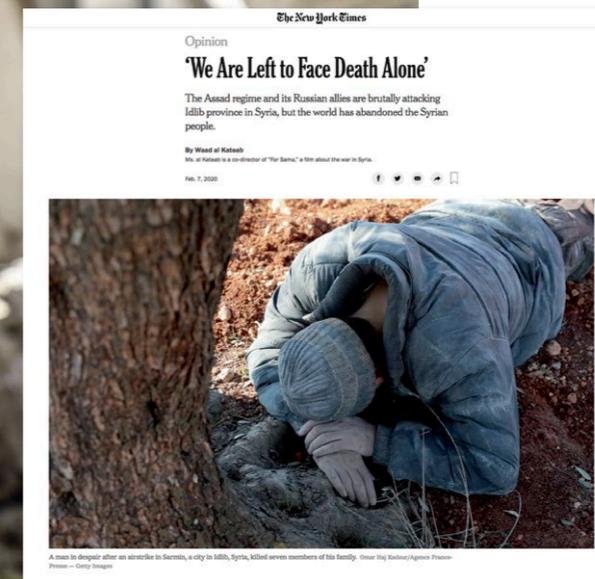


A Syrian child visits an exhibition set up by Syrian artist Rami Abd al-Haq in a damaged house in Idlib, Syria.

Photo by read Feature China/Barcroft Media/ Getty Images

*Crisis Action is not only motivating Russian civil society to explore new and creative means of protecting civilians in Syria, they are enabling collaborations between like-minded activists - from Russia, Turkey, Syria, the EU and beyond - in ways that have rarely been possible in Russia before*

Ekatarina Sokirianskaia  
Director, Conflict Analysis and Prevention Center



An Op-Ed by Waad al-Kateab, co-director of For Sama, calling on Russia and the Syrian government to stop bombing hospitals.

Over the past year, Crisis Action's work on Syria focused on averting a military escalation in Idlib; spurring progress on the release of unjustly detained individuals; and working with independent Russian media and civil society to enhance domestic understanding of the conflict and the role the Russian government has been playing.

## PREVENTING A MASSACRE IN IDLIB

With the Syrian government regaining control of most territory, the north-west province of Idlib has been the focus of much of the fighting for over a year. In late 2019, an escalation of hostilities by Russian and Syrian forces in Idlib, along with fighting between Turkish and Russian troops near the border, intensified the danger for civilians. Schools, hospitals and other medical facilities were frequently bombed, in violation of international law.

Working with NGO partners, Crisis Action coordinated urgent advocacy to stop attacks on civilians and persuade the warring parties to agree to a ceasefire. This included a letter from members of the European Parliament to European and NATO Heads of State urging them to impose sanctions on senior Russian political figures if they failed to end attacks on civilians (the first time elected representatives had made this call), a press conference by prominent Members of the European Parliament in the European Parliament off the back of this letter, and a global twitter campaign.

Crisis Action also supported the makers of the Oscar-shortlisted documentary, For Sama, to speak out about the situation in Idlib. The director Waad al-Kateab wrote an op-ed in The New York Times and other media covered an appeal she made outside the UN for an end to the targeting of hospitals. Crisis Action also supported the first-ever screening of the film in Russia. In March, in a major breakthrough, Turkey and Russia agreed to a ceasefire in Idlib, which still held at the time of writing.

# AMIR 'AL-MUARRI'

## RAPPER FROM IDLIB, SYRIA

*“For all the bombs and violence, one of our biggest fears in Idlib is simply being forgotten. The media are bored of reporting on the daily death and destruction. But without their attention, there will be even less pressure for a solution.”*



Syrian rapper, Amir Al-Mu'arri, pictured in Idlib

The war has been raging since I was 12. I can barely remember peace. I criticized the perpetrators through my music, but I never thought anything would change. Even when I started working with Crisis Action, I didn't expect much. Voices like mine aren't usually heard outside Syria.

But Crisis Action insisted my song, 'On All Fronts', was powerful. They helped me improve the production and make a video with English, Russian, Spanish and Arabic subtitles. Then they let the media know about it. The BBC broadcast the track on one of their biggest radio shows. They said mine was just the kind of authentic voice they needed to humanize the conflict.

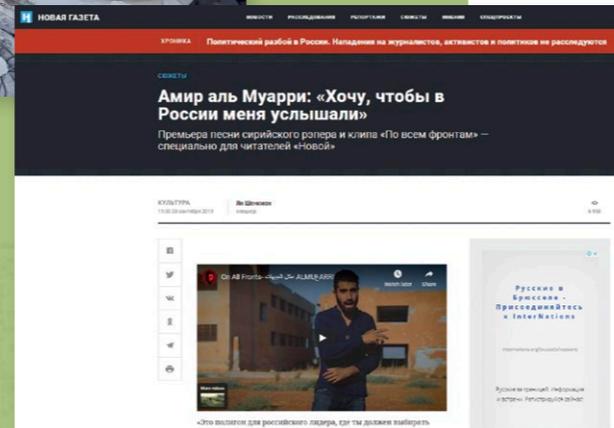
From then, things got crazy. For months, the requests kept coming – TV, radio, print, from France, Germany, Turkey, Italy, Sweden and across the Arab world. A Californian record company put out my song in the US. Millions saw my video, and it was shared by artists, TV presenters, and Hollywood superstars. None of this would have happened without Crisis Action.

Then an amazing Russian rapper, Marisol, heard my track and recorded a response denouncing her government's conduct in Syria. Crisis Action supported her to make a video too and I was interviewed by independent Russian media and addressed an anti-war rally in St Petersburg. I felt happy to show them that Syrians aren't all terrorists, as Putin would have them believe.



Artwork for the limited release cassette with Amir Al-Mu'arri and Marisol's tracks rapper, Amir Al-Mu'arri, pictured in Idlib

Above all, I was heartened to see people in Russia willing to risk their own livelihoods to show solidarity with ordinary Syrians. For the first time in my adult life, I feel a glimmer of hope: that we won't be forgotten, and the change we need will come."



The rap music video "On All Fronts" by Amir Al-Mu'arri covered by the Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta.

### AIRSTRIKES ON SYRIA



An infographic showing reduced airstrikes in Syria after the ceasefire between Russia and Turkey in March 2020

2,745

### RAPPERS UNITE AGAINST DESPOTS

A feature of our work in this period was the use of music and art to create connections across borders and draw wider public attention to Russia's role in the Syrian war. In September 2019, Crisis Action supported the launch of a music video by Idlib-based rapper, Amir Al-Mu'arri (see profile below). The video demanded an end to the targeting of civilians in Idlib. It was covered by major media outlets including Al Hurra, Al-Araby Al Jadeed, BBC, Der Tagesspiegel, and Novaya Gazeta, and has been viewed over 160,000 times on his personal social media channels, enjoying a reach of millions more across websites and social channels of others.

In December, Crisis Action worked with Russian rapper Marisol, who wanted to respond to Amir by launching her own track expressing solidarity with Syrians affected by the conflict and criticizing the role of the Russian armed forces. The video we helped produce has been viewed tens of thousands of times across online and social media and covered by Novaya Gazeta, Al Araby Al Jadeed, Al Modon and others. Many praised the artists' bravery in openly criticizing their governments.

Following the release of Marisol's track, Crisis Action helped organize an 'Anti-war Syria Talk' in St Petersburg, hosted by the Soldiers' Mothers Committee, which was attended by a wide range of Russian activists, including Marisol, and which Syrian rapper Amir contributed via video link. The

event enabled a dialogue between civil society in the two countries and a show of solidarity via art. It was the first meeting of its kind to take place in Russia.

Following this meeting, and coverage of it in the newspaper, Novaya Gazeta, a series of small demonstrations broke out on the streets of St Petersburg, suggesting growing opposition to the official Russian narrative on Syria, in part driven by better-informed reporting by independent Russian journalists, supported by Crisis Action.

### PUSHING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE RELEASE OF INNOCENT DETAINEES

Crisis Action continued to work closely with Syrian human rights groups and international policymakers to push for the release of detained human rights defenders, urgent access to prisons, information on the fate of missing persons, and elevate the issue on the international agenda, including via a briefing of the UN Security Council by Wafa Mustafa from Families for Freedom.

And we also supported work on accountability for human rights violations in Idlib. In August 2019, a UN Board of Inquiry was formed to investigate attacks on schools and hospitals in Idlib, and in April 2020, in direct response to NGO demands, the Board's findings were made public. The report's conclusion that it was 'highly probable' that the government of Syria and / or its allies had carried out illegal airstrikes will help ensure future accountability.

# YEMEN



## 2019

### SEPTEMBER

Houthis announce a unilateral ceasefire on drone and missile attacks into Saudi Arabia; Saudis reciprocate with a pause on airstrikes in four Yemeni governorates

### NOVEMBER

Yemeni government and Southern Transitional Council agree to form a single government, intended to pave the way for political negotiations with Houthis

## 2020

### JANUARY

Renewed fighting between the Yemeni government and Houthis leads to an increase in civilian casualties

### MARCH

The US government unilaterally suspends its funding for humanitarian operations in Houthi-controlled parts of Yemen

### APRIL

Southern Transitional Council declares "self-administration" in governorates under its control, leading to renewed fighting in the south

### JUNE

Humanitarian pledging conference falls over \$1bn short of target; UN warns it will have to reduce or close nearly three quarters of its programming

### JULY

Amendment suspending bomb and missile sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE passed by the US House of Representatives; UK announces it will resume arms sales to Saudi Arabia

A malnourished child holds the finger of his father as he receives treatment at a hospital in Sana'a, Yemen.

Photo by Mohammed Hamoud/Getty Images



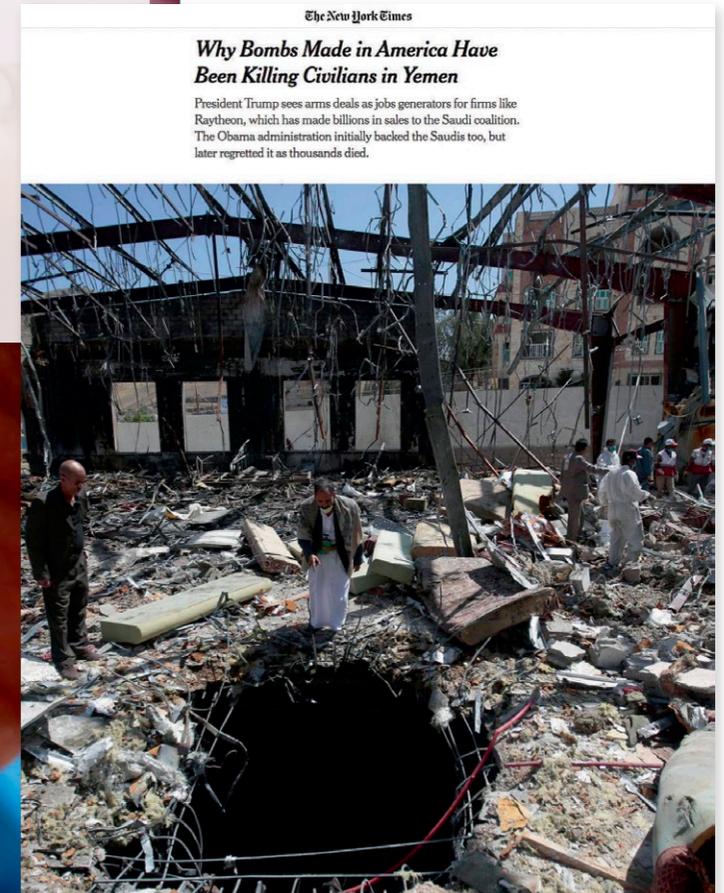
*Through its political insight and strategic counsel, Crisis Action has helped civil society groups like ours to engage international policymakers at the highest levels. Crisis Action's support has amplified our voices and our impact, and kept global attention focused on Yemen.*

Abdulghani Al-Iryani  
Senior Researcher at Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies

## RAISING THE COST OF THE WAR

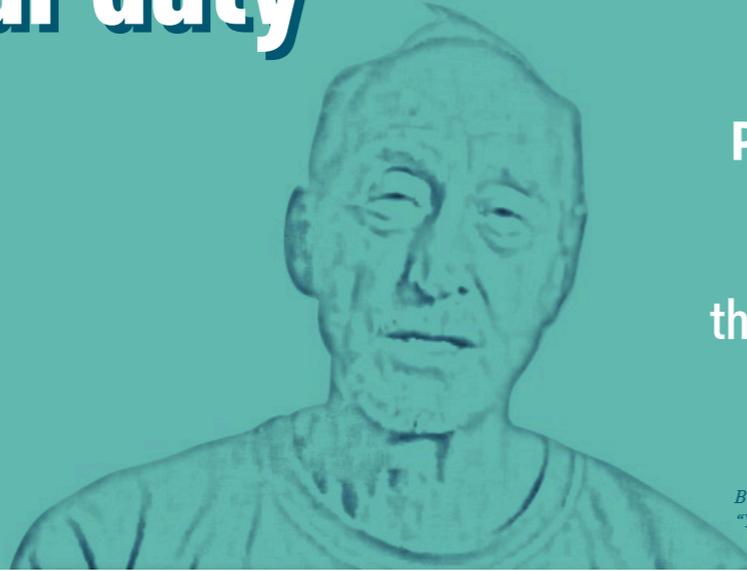
In late 2019 civilian casualties in Yemen were at the lowest level for five years, but military escalation throughout 2020 saw them rise again. Crisis Action focused collective action on seeking a ceasefire and peace talks; ending the sale of arms for use in Yemen; increasing humanitarian aid (especially as Covid-19 saw needs escalate); and promoting accountability for crimes committed.

Over the period there was evidence that reputational and actual costs of the war may be starting to shift the warring parties' calculations. The UAE withdrew its troops in June 2019 and ended its participation in the Saudi-led coalition. Saudi Arabia appeared to be seeking an end to the war and proposed a short-term ceasefire in April 2020. The Houthis took steps towards de-escalation in late 2019 and engaged seriously in ceasefire negotiations.



A The New York's article describing how US made weapons are killing civilians in Yemen

# “Yemen: their story, our duty”



Prime Minister  
Stop fueling  
the war in Yemen

British actor Charles Dance, from the “Yemen: Their Story, Our Duty” video

**Sophia Aram, Annie Lennox et Charles Dance interpellent Macron sur le Yémen**  
Plusieurs ONG demandent aux pays occidentaux de cesser leurs ventes d'armes à l'Arabie saoudite et aux Émirats arabes unis.

YEMEN - Des personnalités dont Annie Lennox (Eurythmics), l'actrice française Catherine Deneuve et l'ex-footballeur international Vikash Dhorasoo, demandent à la France, au Royaume-Uni et aux États-Unis de cesser leurs ventes d'armes à l'Arabie saoudite et aux Émirats arabes unis engagés dans la guerre au Yémen.

L'acteur Charles Dance ("Game of Thrones") et l'humoriste française Sophie Aram participent aussi à un film de sensibilisation sur les conséquences de ce conflit à l'initiative de huit ONG yéménite et internationales dont Action Contre le Faim, la FIDH (Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'Homme) et Médecins du Monde engagés depuis plusieurs années pour protéger la vie des civils au Yémen.

Le film évoque le parcours d'Alanoud, un enfant de 4 ans, dont les parents, les deux frères et un oncle ont été tués en 2017 dans un violent raid aérien sur un village.

## CIVILIAN FATALITIES (CIMP) DUE TO AIR RAIDS IN YEMEN



An infographic showing the decrease of civilian fatalities due to air raids in Yemen



## COVID EXACERBATES THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

From early 2020, the extreme challenges of Covid-19 began adding to an already dire humanitarian situation in Yemen, where 80% of the population is dependent on humanitarian aid, and where access to clean water cannot be taken for granted. In a terribly timed move, the US announced plans to suspend aid for programs in Houthi-controlled territory. Crisis Action worked with partners to raise the alarm and drove quick media attention, including in The Washington Post, that generated a backlash by the US Congress that resulted in a delay to the aid suspension.

As Covid-19 made in-person meetings impossible, Crisis Action also organized virtual briefings on the conflict and humanitarian situation in Yemen for the US House of Representatives' Middle East Subcommittee and the UK's development and foreign offices, helping partners including Mwatana, the Sana'a Center, and International Crisis Group to speak directly to US and UK policymakers.

Crisis Action also organized Yemeni and international partners to address a significant funding shortfall for the humanitarian response in Yemen. In the run up to a donor conference in June, we set up two well-attended telebriefings for Yemeni civil society to speak directly to western policymakers and international journalists, resulting in influential media coverage. Sadly, donors

only gave just over half of what the UN said was needed – resulting in a shortfall of \$1bn largely due to under-funding by Gulf states. In response, Crisis Action worked with CNN on a high-profile story linking Saudi, UAE, and US aid shortfalls to the rising famine risk in Yemen, and within days of the broadcast, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait had announced more than a quarter-billion dollars in new aid contributions.

## SUPPORTING THE PEACE PROCESS AND PROMOTING ACCOUNTABILITY

Crisis Action has built and leveraged productive relationships with key senior UN and government officials working on the Yemen peace process, helping to push warring parties to negotiate. We have offered strategic counsel, supported briefings for officials and the media, and helped place influential op-eds and articles by leading Yemeni and western voices.

Crisis Action has also continued to push for accountability and justice for violations in Yemen. We coordinated a successful campaign by partners in 2019 to secure a renewed and strengthened mandate of the UN Group of Experts on Yemen and facilitated meetings for partners with Group of Experts members and key US and UN officials.

## PRESSURE OVER ARMS SALES

Crisis Action worked with partners to put pressure on western governments to stop selling arms to Saudi Arabia and the UAE for use in Yemen. We supported the production and dissemination of a video featuring United Kingdom (UK) and French celebrities telling the story of a young Yemeni girl whose family was killed in an air strike in 2017. Co-produced with Yemeni filmmaker Khadija Al-Salami, the piece was watched more than 200,000 times on social media and widely covered by mainstream media.

We also worked with partners to support and promote a mural denouncing French arms exports by renowned Yemeni street artist Murad Subay, unveiled in Paris in November 2019. The artwork was accompanied by a 250,000-signature petition, which passers-by were invited to add their name to. The unveiling was widely covered by French and international media, and followed by a meeting between Subay, NGOs and President Macron's advisors. A French official told us that our work had shifted the French perspective on Yemen, although at the time of writing, French arms sales to Saudi

Arabia and the UAE continued.

In the US, Crisis Action coordinated engagement with policymakers by a diverse coalition, including longstanding partners and new allies. We organized a group of 100 Christian faith leaders representing all 50 US states to issue a public call to end US arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. We also worked with CNN on an exposé of US arms being transferred or lost to Yemeni militia that was cited by US lawmakers from both parties. Though they were not enacted into law, in July 2019 and July 2020, the US House of Representatives passed amendments suspending arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, sending a clear message that both countries risked bilateral consequences for continuing the conflict.

In Germany, Crisis Action helped organize a letter signed by 56 NGOs calling on the German government to ban arms exports to all members of the Saudi/UAE-led coalition. Later that month, the government extended its moratorium on the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia.

**Yemeni artist paints arms message for France with war mural**  
The Last Dance of the Dead mural in Paris denounces France's weapons sales to the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen.

Yemen's street artist Murad Subay poses after unveiling a street painting to denounce the bloody conflict [Christian Hartmann/Reuters]

Three dangling bodies painted against a blood-red background shocked passersby in central Paris on Tuesday after a Yemeni artist unveiled a mural to denounce French arms sales to the Saudi-led coalition fighting in his homeland.

The three-metre (10 feet) high mural, titled Last Dance of the Dead, was created by Murad Subay.

**MORE ON ARTS & CULTURE**  
In Pictures: Morocco village rifts on Jimi Hendrix legends, myths today  
Mexico cave shows humans lived in the Americas 30,000 years ago 2 days ago

Murad Subay's mural resonated across languages and continents.

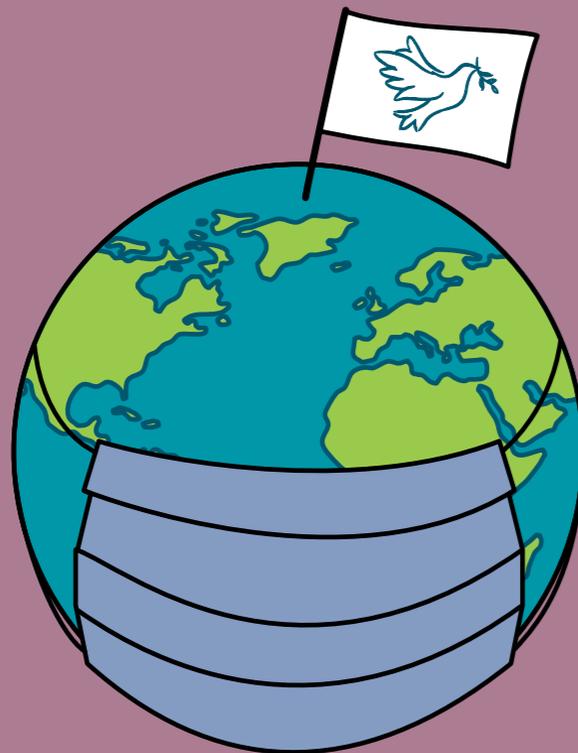


# GLOBAL CEASEFIRE

*The global ceasefire appeal is resonating across the world.*

*To silence the guns, we must raise the voices for peace.*

António Guterres,  
United Nations Secretary-General



**W**hen the Covid-19 pandemic broke out, the UN Secretary General called for a global ceasefire to help respond to the virus; Crisis Action immediately sprang into action to mobilize support.

We organized two videoconferences for over 130 international NGOs; coordinated letters to the Security Council and the African Union, signed by over 200 organizations from 35 countries; and worked with partners to spur timely, powerful statements from Mary Robinson, Ban Ki-moon and a number of foreign ministers in support of a ceasefire.

With the campaign's backing, a petition by Avaaz garnered over 2.2 million signatures and was supported by the Pope and other leading voices, and the hashtags #GlobalCeasefire and #Doves4Peace reached over 8.6 million people worldwide on social media. Crisis Action ensured these initiatives secured global, high-profile media coverage from The New York Times to CNN Arabic.

Within weeks of the initial call, 110 countries had supported the ceasefire and 24 warring parties in 11 conflict zones, including South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, had agreed to put down their arms, resulting in a temporary de-escalation of violence in some of the world's most devastating conflicts. On July 1, after much delay, the Security Council passed a resolution endorsing a global ceasefire.

# THE SAHEL



*In the Sahel, civil society is on the frontline of the crisis and has a unique expertise that too few decision makers take into account. By helping to create the People's Coalition for the Sahel, Crisis Action has elevated West African voices to new audiences globally.*

Niagalé Bagayoko  
Chair, African Security Sector Network

A People's Coalition for the Sahel



*A displaced man holds his baby in the house where he is hosted after fleeing his village in central Mali.*

Photo by Michele Cattani/AFP/ Getty Images

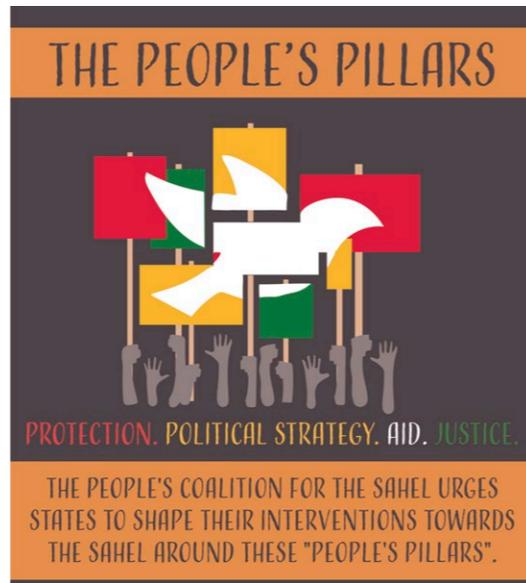
The Sahel region of West Africa faces acute security, governance and health crises, which began to intensify dramatically in 2019. Repeated mass attacks by violent extremist groups around the borders between Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger created a state of panic, forcing hundreds of thousands to flee their homes in what has become one of the world's fastest-growing displacement crisis.

The situation threatened to spill over into other countries, and the advent of Covid-19 increased the threat to civilians and regional stability, as did the August 2020 coup in Mali, and killings of humanitarian workers in Niger in the same month. Sahelian governments and their allies have prioritized military action against violent extremist groups, failed to protect civilians, and invested little in addressing the humanitarian and governance problems underlying the crisis.

### CALLING FOR A CHANGE OF APPROACH: CATALYSING A NEW LOCALLY-LED PEACE INITIATIVE

In March 2020 Crisis Action launched a Sahel emergency response campaign, bringing together a diverse coalition of about 50 African and international partners calling for a change of strategy.

Soon after its formation, we enabled the coalition to brief policymakers from the US, UK, EU and UN who agreed that a broader response was needed that did not just focus on counter-terrorism. In June, Crisis



Logo of the "People's Coalition for the Sahel" depicting the People's Pillars: Protection, Political Strategy; Aid & Justice.

Action helped the coalition organize a media briefing ahead of a key ministerial meeting, with the result that the media coverage reflected the coalition's views.

On 16 July, we formalized the coalition into a compelling locally-led peace initiative: the 'People's Coalition for the Sahel'. It was officially launched during an online event broadcast live by Crisis Action partner International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and viewed by thousands of people around the world, including policymakers and dozens of local and international media outlets, including Le Monde, RFI, Jeune Afrique, the BBC and VOA.

Crisis Action also helped the People's Coalition to launch the 'People's Pillars' setting out four priorities – protection, political strategy, aid and justice – and the Coalition has started to monitor governments' response against these pillars.

There are signs that the message is getting through and influencing a shift of focus among the key players, including France, which has 5,5000 troops on the ground. Public condemnation of violence against civilians has increased, and in June, in her strongest statement to date, the French Defense Minister warned that France could reconsider its military support if armed forces from the region continued to violate international law.

# IRAQ

In October 2019, hundreds of thousands of protesters took to the streets of Iraq to demand an end to endemic corruption. Security forces responded with excessive use of force. Between October 2019 and May 2020, over 2,000 protesters were killed, and 27,000 injured. Crisis Action launched a response to stop the violence.



A protester in the southern city of Basra, part of blockades to denounce the lack of electricity and services.

Photo by Hussein Faleh/AFP/Getty Images

Protecting protesters in Iraq

Prevented from arranging in-person meetings or activities by the pandemic, Crisis Action organized a webinar for Iraqi activists to demand action to halt state security-force brutality. Held in Arabic, in conjunction with the Iraqi Al-Amal Association, the webinar featured Iraqi speakers from five governorates and was attended by over 100 people, including journalists from the Financial Times, AFP, the National, and NPR, and Swedish, Dutch, French and US diplomats.



Launch of the "People's Coalition for the Sahel".

# BOARD



## DR. ANNA NEISTAT (CHAIR)

Legal Director at the Clooney Foundation for Justice. Prior to that, Anna was the Senior Director for Research, Amnesty International. Anna has conducted over 60 investigations in conflict areas around the world, and previously authored or co-authored over 40 Human Rights Watch reports.



## REGAN E. RALPH

President and CEO of the Fund for Global Human Rights. Previously, Vice President for Health and Reproductive Rights at the National Women's Law Center and Director of the Women's Rights division of HRW.



## PAUL FLETCHER (TREASURER)

Chair of Teach for All and LeadersQuest. Board member of Systemiq and GIC. Paul has a wealth of experience in financial services, emerging markets, and the private equity industry.



## KHALED MANSOUR

An independent consultant on communications and human rights. Previously, he was the Executive Director of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights and, UNICEF's Director of Communication.



## ARNOLD TSUNGA

One of Africa's leading human rights lawyers and Zimbabwe Senior Resident Director, National Democratic Institute (NDI). Previously he was Africa Director for the International Commission of Jurists, Executive Director of Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights.



## JACQUELINE MUNA MUSIITWA

An international lawyer and development expert. Formerly: Managing Partner of Hoja Law Group, Special Court for Sierra Leone, the World Trade Organization, and board member of Zambian Central Bank.



## MONA YOUNIS

An independent consultant on organizational development, and human rights and the Middle East. Mona co-founded the Arab Human Rights Fund and Fund for Global Human Rights.



## BRUNO STAGNO UGARTE

Deputy Executive Director for Advocacy at Human Rights Watch. Previously, Bruno served as Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, Ambassador to the United Nation, Chief of Staff of the Foreign Ministry, and Executive Director of Security Council Report.

# DONORS AND PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

*Crisis Action's financial support comes from a range of foundations, governments and private individuals, many of which provide unrestricted multi-year funding. In addition, all of Crisis Action's core partners make an annual financial contribution, with the exception of those located in the Global South. To ensure the organisation's financial viability and safeguard its integrity and independence, we are continuously expanding and diversifying our donor base.*

*Crisis Action applies strict accountability and transparency standards to its funding relationships.*

## FOUNDATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

- Eagle Fund
- Greenbaum Foundation\*
- Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- Kerfuffle Foundation\*
- Lode Star Foundation
- Nduna Foundation\*
- New Venture Fund
- Open Society Foundations
- Pears Foundation\*
- Robert Bosch Stiftung
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Skoll Foundation
- Stanley and Marion Bergman Family Charitable Fund
- Susan Gibson

## GOVERNMENTS

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ireland (Stability Fund)
- European Union and German Federal Foreign Office as part of the Syria Peace Initiative, implemented by the GiZ
- Global Affairs Canada
- Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

*\* Crisis Action is especially grateful to these donors for providing us with unrestricted multi-year support*

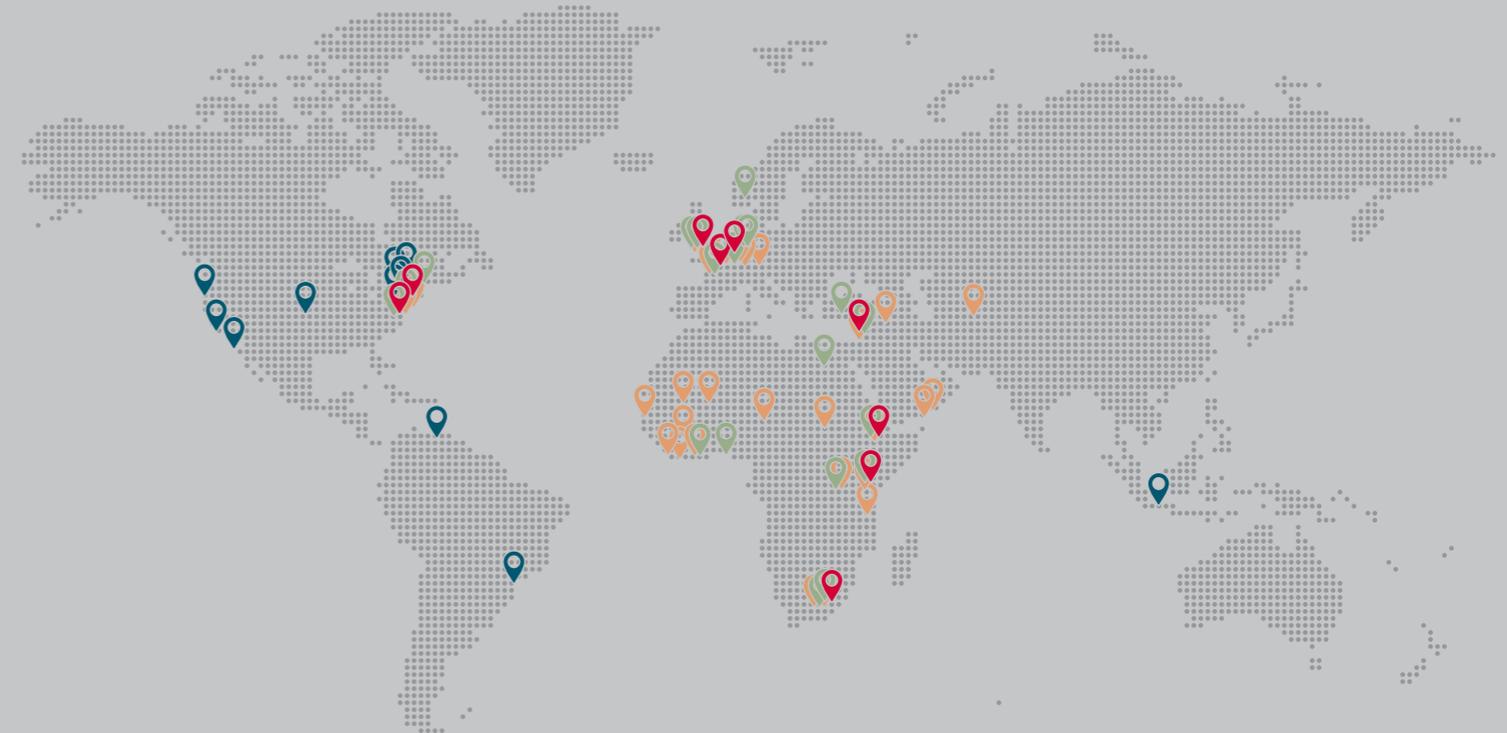
# CORE PARTNERS

- 11.11.11
- Action contre la faim (ACF)
- Aegis Trust UK
- African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS)
- African Research and Resource Forum (ARRF)
- Agency for Cooperation on Research in Development (ACORD)
- Amnesty - UK
- Amnesty International
- Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)
- Atrocities Watch Africa
- Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
- CARE France
- CARE International UK
- Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)
- Centre for Conflict Resolution (CECORE)
- Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD)
- Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVr)
- Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD)
- Christian Aid
- Concern - UK
- Concordis International
- Cordaid
- Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GCR2P)
- Human Rights First
- Human Rights Watch
- Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART)
- Humanity and Inclusion (formerly Handicap International)
- IHH (Insani Yardim Vakfi) (Humanitarian Relief Foundation)
- Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS)
- Institute for Security Studies (ISS)
- International Center for Policy and Conflict (ICPC)
- International Crisis Group (ICG)
- International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
- International Medical Corps UK
- International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI)
- International Rescue Committee
- Islamic Relief - UK
- Islamic Relief Worldwide
- Médecins du Monde
- Mensen met een Missie
- Mercy Corps
- Nobel Women's Initiative
- Nonviolent Peaceforce
- Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
- Oxfam International
- PAX
- Permanent Peace Movement
- Physicians for Human Rights (PHR)
- Refugees International
- Saferworld
- Save the Children - UK
- Stichting Vluchteling
- Support To Life
- Tearfund
- The Elders
- Trócaire
- UNITE
- War Child - Netherlands
- War Child - UK
- West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)
- Women International Peace Centre
- World Vision - UK
- World Vision International

# CAMPAIGN PARTNERS

- Action Des Chrétiens Pour L'Abolition De La Torture (ACAT)
- Action for Sama Campaign
- Action Mopti
- Adopt a Revolution
- Afghanistan Justice Organisation
- Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU)
- African Leadership Centre
- African Security Sector Network (ASSN)
- Africans Rising
- Afrikajom Center
- Alliance Internationale pour la défense des droits et libertés (AIDL)
- ArtLords
- Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA)
- Association des Juristes Maliennes (AJM)
- Association des Blogueurs du Mali
- Association Malienne des Droits de l'Homme (AMDH)
- Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA)
- Association pour la promotion de l'élevage au Sahel (APESS)
- Baytna Syria
- Better World Campaign
- Caesar Families Association
- Carrot Co.
- Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL)
- Centre Afrika Obota
- Centre Diocésain de Communication
- Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- Centre pour la gouvernance démocratique
- Collectif contre l'impunité et la stigmatisation des communautés (CISC)
- Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO)
- "Coordination des Associations des Femmes de l'Azawad"
- Coordination Nigérienne des ONG et Associations Féminines du Niger
- Daughters of Mumbi Global Resource Center
- Dawlaty
- Denis Hurley Peace Institute
- Dialogue and Research Initiative (DRI)
- Disabled Agency for Rehabilitation and Development (DARD)
- End Impunity Organization (EIO)
- Enough Project
- EVE Organization for Women Development
- Families for Freedom
- "Federation of Women Lawyers"
- Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA)
- FEMNET
- Fokus Sahel
- Friends Committee on National Legislation
- Human Rights Documentation Organization (HURIDO)
- Idril Health Directorate
- Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD)
- Institut français des relations internationales (Ifri)
- Institut malien de Recherche Action pour la Paix
- Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR)
- InterAction
- International Commission of Jurists
- International IDEA
- International Medical Corps USA
- International Youth for Africa (IYA)
- Life Peace Institute (LPI)
- Ligue Tchadienne des Droits de l'Homme
- Lutheran World Relief
- Mothers of Abductees Association
- Mouvement Burkinabé des Droits de l'Homme et des Peuples
- Mwatana Organisation for Human Rights
- Najda Now
- National Security Action
- Nonviolent Peaceforce
- Observatoire Kisal
- Observatoire des Armements
- Open Society European Policy Institute (OSEPI)
- Oxfam-Pan African Office
- Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU)
- Peace Coalition for South Sudan (PECOSS)
- People in Need (PIN)
- Plan International
- Première Urgence Internationale
- Réseau de Réflexion Stratégique sur la Sécurité au Sahel
- Réseau des femmes de foi pour la Paix au Burkina Faso (REFFOP)
- Réseau nigérien pour la gestion non violente des conflits
- Réseau Panafricain Pour la Paix, la Démocratie et le Développement (Niger)
- Safety and Risk Mitigation Organization (SRMO)
- Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies
- Sawa Association for Development and Aid
- Search for Common Ground
- "Secours Islamique France"
- Solidarités International
- SOS-Civisme-Niger
- South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA)
- South Sudan Women's Empowerment Network (SSWEN)
- Sudan Focal Point Europe
- Syria Relief
- Syria Relief & Development (SRD)
- Syrian American Medical Society
- Ta'afi Initiative
- The Khost United Youth Association in Afghanistan
- The Sentry
- The Syria Campaign
- The South African Institute of International Affairs
- Thinking Africa
- Timbuktu Institute
- Transparency International
- Union des Organisations de Secours et Soins Médicaux (UOSSM)
- Union fraternelle des croyants
- United States Institute of Peace (USIP)
- Violations Documentation Center in Syria (VDC)
- Wathi
- Win Without War
- Wogood for Human Security
- Women for Afghan Women (WAW)
- Women in Law and Development (Mali)
- Women Now for Development
- Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation
- Yemen Solidarity Network

# OUR NETWORK

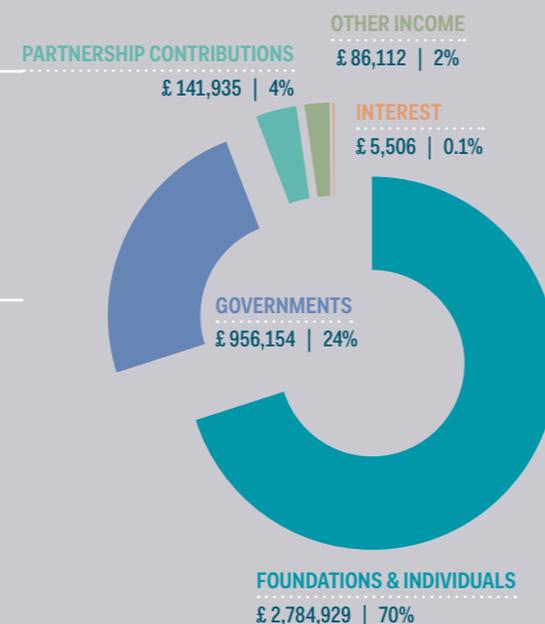


-  CORE PARTNERS
-  CAMPAIGN PARTNERS
-  NETWORK MEMBERS
-  CRISIS ACTION OFFICES LOCATION

# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2020

## FINANCIALS 2019-20

	2020 £	2019 £	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>INCOME</b>				
Foundations & Individuals	2,784,929	2,669,665	3,437,549	3,366,768
Governments	956,154	1,054,488	1,180,219	1,329,836
Partnership Contributions	141,935	129,707	175,197	163,576
Other Income	86,112	40,131	106,291	50,610
Interest	5,506	5,309	6,796	6,695
<b>TOTAL<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>3,974,636</b>	<b>3,899,300</b>	<b>4,906,052</b>	<b>4,917,485</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Salaries & Related Costs	3,003,017	2,600,611	3,706,744	3,279,682
Occupancy	273,114	252,672	337,115	318,650
Travel & Travel Related Costs	248,051	458,587	306,179	578,333
IT, Comms & Office Supplies	156,622	169,877	193,324	214,235
Publications	90,612	78,744	111,847	99,306
Events	9,792	24,135	12,086	30,438
Professional Fees	117,608	99,821	145,168	125,886
Asset write-off	17,784	16,075	21,952	20,272
Finance Charges	44,490	9,343	54,916	11,782
Depreciation	5,531	5,531	6,827	6,975
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,966,621</b>	<b>3,715,396</b>	<b>4,896,159</b>	<b>4,685,560</b>
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus Before Taxation</b>	<b>8,015</b>	<b>183,904</b>	<b>9,893</b>	<b>231,925</b>
<b>Taxation</b>	<b>(1,046)</b>	<b>(1,009)</b>	<b>(1,291)</b>	<b>(1,272)</b>
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus After Taxation</b>	<b>6,968</b>	<b>182,895</b>	<b>8,601</b>	<b>230,653</b>
Exchange Rate at 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2020 (USD)	1.234		1.234	
Exchange Rate at 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2019 (USD)	1.261		1.261	
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,308,243</b>	<b>1,301,274</b>	<b>1,614,816</b>	<b>1,641,063</b>
<b>CAPITAL &amp; RESERVES</b>				
Operating Overhead Reserve <sup>3</sup>	1,671,499	1,576,440	2,063,198	1,988,080
Restricted Funds	19,167	39,388	23,658	49,673
Unrestricted Funds <sup>4</sup>	(382,423)	(314,554)	(472,040)	(396,690)
<b>CAPITAL &amp; RESERVES</b>	<b>1,308,243</b>	<b>1,301,274</b>	<b>1,614,816</b>	<b>1,641,063</b>



1. 2020 income was higher than 2019 income. In USD, it looks like 2020 income was lower than 2019 income. This is because GBP depreciated against USD in 2020.

Fixed Assets	37,968	17,573	46,865	22,162
Debtors <sup>1</sup>	256,203	224,834	316,242	283,543
Cash at Bank	2,365,619	2,103,020	2,919,978	2,652,160
Creditors <sup>2</sup>	(1,351,547)	(1,044,153)	(1,668,268)	(1,316,802)

**NET ASSETS** **1,308,243** **1,301,274** **1,614,816** **1,641,063**

## CAPITAL & RESERVES

Operating Overhead Reserve <sup>3</sup>	1,671,499	1,576,440	2,063,198	1,988,080
Restricted Funds	19,167	39,388	23,658	49,673
Unrestricted Funds <sup>4</sup>	(382,423)	(314,554)	(472,040)	(396,690)

**CAPITAL & RESERVES** **1,308,243** **1,301,274** **1,614,816** **1,641,063**

- £184,090 (\$227,231) of Debtors are grants due in 2019/20 but received in 2020/21.
- £976,075 (\$1,204,809) of Creditors is the amount of deferred income carried forward into 2020-21.
- The opening USD reserves have been revalued using the May 2020 USD/GBP exchange rate.
- Unrestricted funds includes three shares with a nominal value of £1. These shares are owned by the directors and do not earn dividends.

# OUR TEAM

- Aditi Lalbahadur
- Alistair Martin
- Andrew Hudson
- Carolyn Greco
- Christopher Le Mon
- Eleanor Kennedy
- Gareth Sweeney
- Georges Zailah
- Hayley Davidson
- Janah Ncube
- Joe Keyrouz
- Laura Couderc
- Laura Whitby
- Mahad Ghani
- Maya El Ammar
- Nicola Reindorp
- Patricia Nyaundi

- Paul Musiol
- Philip Amaral
- Pranjali Acharya
- Racha Mouawieh
- Rida Nazir
- Robbie Baruch
- Sacha de Wijs
- Sarah Berry
- Sienna Merope
- Sofia Fiammenghi
- Sophie Correia
- Sue Mbaya
- Sulafah Al Shami
- Sylvain Biville
- Vijay Patel
- Vivienne Miliza

# THANK YOU

*We would like to thank the following for their contribution to Crisis Action's work over the past year:*

Adipo Otieno Sidang, Alexis Fessatidis, Amy Barry, Benson Butori, Claire Nurden, Darren George, Davis Makori, Dima Farran, Elinor Sisulu, Elvis Salano, Eric Eikenberry, Helawi Mengistu, John Senior, Judith Khaemba, Karim Khalifeh, Mahault Bernard, Marcy Obonyo, Marianne Tessa, Martine Lekutanoy, Mary King'ori, Morgan Cronin-Webb, Nahom Gebremariam, Olivia Njoroje, Rachel Everette, Robert Schupp, Sami Salloum, Sophie Busson, Tsion Hagos

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Also with a presence in Berlin and consultants in other locations.

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-scope Ateliers

Copywriting and editing by  
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di:ga

FRONT COVER IMAGE: *A Lotuko tribe woman performing a welcome dance, in Central Equatoria, Illeu, South Sudan.*

Photo by Eric Lafforgue/Art in All of Us/Corbis/Getty Images

