

IN FOCUS

Human Rights Funding and National Security Laws

Draft Reforms Seek to Fix Problems National Security Laws Create for Nonprofits

*Contributed by Dale Needles, Chief Operations Officer, Global Fund for Women
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Grantmakers and NGOs know from experience that short-term responses to national security threats passed under the aegis of the Bush administration in 2001 are resulting in negative long-term consequences for the entire U.S. nonprofit sector. The Treasury's misguided "so-called" Guidelines for international philanthropy have had a chilling impact on social change philanthropy and excessively broad interpretations of "material support" of terrorism are in conflict with long established nondiscrimination standards.



All groups must deal with the threat of being shut down without any meaningful opportunity to appeal. The costs of these measures appear to far outweigh any national security benefits gained.

To address these problems the [Charity and Security Network](#), a grantee of the Global Fund for Women, was launched in November 2008. Its goal is to eliminate unnecessary and counterproductive barriers to advancing the legitimate work of civil society. The network is in the process of creating model standards and procedures for the U.S. government that promote legitimate programs and protect nonprofits from unfair and disproportionate sanctions. These include procedures for the release of the "frozen charitable funds," aligning material support laws with international human rights principles and creating due process for organizations so designated by the Treasury Department.

These proposals seek to address the unique situation that nonprofit organizations active in international and domestic social justice work face in the context of a challenging national security environment. A Discussion Draft of the Network's recommended model rules will be published by the New Year. It will reflect input from nonprofit leaders, civil liberty and rights attorneys, operating nonprofits and other experts.

What Funders Can Do

Provide valuable input by reviewing the Discussion Draft and providing feedback, subscribing to Charity and Security Network newsletter and participating in strategy and advocacy activities. Contact Kay Guinane at kguinane@charityandsecurity.org, 202 729 6791 or Dale Needles, Dale@globalfundforwomen.org, 415 248 4800 for more info.

For More Information

- 1) Visit www.charityandsecurity.org
- 2) Read the updated [Anti-Terrorist Financing Guidelines: Voluntary Best Practices For U.S.-Based Charities](#)