

United States Institute of Peace

The United States Institute of Peace was an initiative begun during the Carter administration. It was established outside the executive branch by legislation and unenthusiastically signed into law by President Reagan in 1984. Addressing the first meeting of its board of directors, Reagan made clear that “in the real world,” peace comes from strength. Those that represent the Institute might assert that strength comes from peace.

The Institute comprises several centers and the Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding. With an annual budget around \$40 million and a staff of 400, the Institute is “a catalyst for empowering others to prevent, manage and resolve international conflict without resorting to violence.” Much of that is accomplished through the education and training of practitioners, and a significant portion of the budget goes to grants administered by the centers. It is also directly involved in conflict zones.

The Institute also has convening power. It convened the Task Force on United Nations Reform, Iraq Study Group, Genocide Prevention Task Force, and Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States.

But USIP does not enter into the public debate by putting forward policy options that might contest a militaristic foreign policy. It neither advocates its own policies nor expresses dissent from policies resting on military force. Its budget and survival are dependent on congressional support. It appeared to be facing foreclosure in 2011.