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Peacebuilding**

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

U.S. Election Violence Is Not Inevitable: How to Prevent It Before, During, and After November 3rd

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Washington, D.C., USA. – The United States is not exceptional, and violent conflict does not happen only in faraway places. There is a real risk that violent conflict will increase and become more widespread in the United States in the days, weeks, and months to come. No matter who wins the Presidential election on November 3rd,



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U.S. conflict dynamics will not magically disappear after the elections, and a significant portion of the population will be aggrieved.

A recent [USA Today/Suffolk poll](#) found 3 out of 4 prospective U.S. voters expressed concern about the possibility of violence on Election Day, while only 1 of 4 were "very confident" that the nation could have a peaceful transfer of power. The [Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#) warns of rising U.S. political polarization, violent hate crimes, and widespread social mobilization.

Unfortunately, these polls and data track with [international and U.S. conflict experts](#) who have sounded the alarm and urged Americans to take increasing conflict dynamics in the United States seriously. For the first time ever, [the International Crisis Group](#), reported that the U.S. election "presents risks not seen in recent history. It is conceivable that violence could erupt during voting or protracted voter counts."

While there is a real risk of violence in the United States, violence is not inevitable. We can and must prevent it. **Americans must, now more than ever, work together to prevent violence and address the accelerating conflict dynamics at the community, city, state, and national levels before, during, and, especially, after U.S. elections to build sustainable peace.**

Together Americans are taking up this challenge. National and community peacebuilders and mediators, with decades of international and domestic experience, recently formed [The Trust Network](#) with a goal to prevent and mitigate violent conflict before, during, and after the electoral process. This Network is led by Mediators Beyond Borders International along with the National Association of Community Mediation and the Election Integrity Report USA, along with more than 21 U.S. peacebuilding and conflict prevention organizations, as well as national faith-based organizations and police associations. This Network is growing every day, and the Alliance for Peacebuilding strongly encourages civil society and individuals to join by signing up [here](#).

The [#ShineOnTheVote](#) campaign is also bringing together a coalition of peacebuilders, artist, activists, and experts to support a fair and transparent election process. The campaign asks all of us to shine a light on the election process and call on political, civic, and community leaders and the media to refrain from



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inciting violence, and on government officials to prevent the use of state violence on peaceful protests. We encourage you to learn more about partnering with this campaign and using their just-released [Narrative & Cultural Peacebuilding Activation Guidebook](#).

The [Stanley Center and Impact:Peace](#) are connecting government, civil society, and concerned citizens tools to prevent violence and reinforce resilience mechanisms that uphold democratic norms. They are facilitating the rapid flow of information by providing community groups tools on non-violent resistance; mayors and local governments urgent guidance on language to calm rising tensions; and advocates resources for seeking legal redress to armed groups patrolling streets or staging counter-protests.

No matter what happens in the days and weeks ahead, peacebuilding and conflict prevention work must continue long after November 3. AfP will continue to work to build a strong coalition across the United States in the months and years ahead to address accelerating U.S. conflict dynamics through educational curriculum and justice reforms to reduce political polarization and structural racism. This work will take sustained resources and commitment. We call on private donors and foundations, policymakers and lawmakers and corporations to recognize that critical programs are needed that go far beyond promoting civil discourse; to prevent violence, we need to address the causes of conflict and build resilience.

With over 130 member organizations, AfP brings together the largest development organizations, most innovative academic institutions, and influential humanitarian and faith-based groups to harness collective action for peace. We build coalitions in key areas of strategy and policy to elevate the entire peacebuilding field, tackling issues too large for any one organization to address alone.