

“(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed so as to limit or prohibit any authority of the President to modify the military strategy, tactics, and operations of United States Armed Forces as such Armed Forces draw down from Afghanistan.”

**CHAPTER 83—UNITED STATES LEADERSHIP AGAINST HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS, AND MALARIA**

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**§ 7601. Findings**

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) During the last 20 years, HIV/AIDS has assumed pandemic proportions, spreading from the most severely affected regions, sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, to all corners of the world, and leaving an unprecedented path of death and devastation.

(2) According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), more than 65,000,000 individuals worldwide have been infected with HIV since the epidemic began, more than 25,000,000 of these individuals have lost their lives to the disease, and more than 14,000,000 children have been orphaned by the disease. HIV/AIDS is the fourth-highest cause of death in the world.

(3)(A) At the end of 2002, an estimated 42,000,000 individuals were infected with HIV or living with AIDS, of which more than 75 percent live in Africa or the Caribbean. Of these individuals, more than 3,200,000 were children under the age of 15 and more than 19,200,000 were women.

(B) Women are four times more vulnerable to infection than are men and are becoming infected at increasingly high rates, in part because many societies do not provide poor women and young girls with the social, legal, and cultural protections against high risk activities that expose them to HIV/AIDS.

(C) Women and children who are refugees or are internally displaced persons are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation and violence, thereby increasing the possibility of HIV infection.

(4) As the leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa, AIDS has killed more than 19,400,000 individuals (more than 3 times the number of AIDS deaths in the rest of the world) and will claim the lives of one-quarter of the population, mostly adults, in the next decade.

(5) An estimated 2,000,000 individuals in Latin America and the Caribbean and another 7,100,000 individuals in Asia and the Pacific region are infected with HIV or living with AIDS. Infection rates are rising alarmingly in Eastern Europe (especially in the Russian Federation), Central Asia, and China.

(6) HIV/AIDS threatens personal security by affecting the health, lifespan, and productive capacity of the individual and the social cohesion and economic well-being of the family.

(7) HIV/AIDS undermines the economic security of a country and individual businesses in that country by weakening the productivity and longevity of the labor force across a broad array of economic sectors and by reducing the potential for economic growth over the long term.

(8) HIV/AIDS destabilizes communities by striking at the most mobile and educated members of society, many of whom are responsible for security at the local level and governance at the national and subnational levels as well as many teachers, health care personnel, and other community workers vital to community development and the effort to combat HIV/AIDS. In some countries the overwhelming challenges of the HIV/AIDS epidemic are accelerating the outward migration of critically important health care professionals.