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FACT SHEET: The United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security

“The goal is as simple as it is profound: to empower half the world’s population as equal partners in preventing conflict and building peace in countries threatened and affected by war, violence and insecurity. Achieving this goal is critical to our national and global security.”

--The U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security

Since taking office, President Obama and this Administration have been guided by the knowledge that countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women are accorded full and equal rights and opportunity.

Building on this recognition and the ongoing work of America’s diplomats, development experts, and military, today President Obama released the first-ever *U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security*, and signed an Executive Order directing the Plan be implemented. Together, the Executive Order and *National Action Plan* chart a roadmap for how the United States will accelerate and institutionalize efforts across the government to advance women’s participation in preventing conflict and keeping peace. The documents represent a fundamental change in how the U.S. will approach its diplomatic, military, and development-based support to women in areas of conflict, by ensuring that their perspectives and considerations of gender are woven into the fabric of how the United States approaches peace processes, conflict prevention, the protection of civilians, and humanitarian assistance.

The *National Action Plan* contains commitments by the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, Treasury, and Homeland Security, and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Office of the United States Trade Representative targeted at meeting the following national objectives:

- **National Integration and Institutionalization:** Through interagency coordination, policy development, enhanced professional training and education, and evaluation, the United States Government will institutionalize a gender-responsive approach to its diplomatic, development, and defense-related work in conflict-affected environments.

- **Participation in Peace Processes and Decision-making:** The United States Government will improve the prospects for inclusive, just, and sustainable peace by promoting and strengthening women's rights and effective leadership and substantive participation in peace processes, conflict prevention, peacebuilding, transitional processes, and decision-making institutions in conflict-affected environments.
- **Protection from Violence:** The United States Government will strengthen its efforts to prevent – and protect women and children from – harm, exploitation, discrimination, and abuse, including sexual and gender-based violence and trafficking in persons, and to hold perpetrators accountable in conflict-affected environments.
- **Conflict Prevention:** The United States Government will promote women's roles in conflict prevention, improve conflict early-warning and response systems through the integration of gender perspectives, and invest in women and girls' health, education, and economic opportunity to create conditions for stable societies and lasting peace.
- **Access to Relief and Recovery:** The United States Government will respond to the distinct needs of women and children in conflict-affected disasters and crises, including by providing safe, equitable access to humanitarian assistance.

In line with these objectives, agencies will:

- Establish and improve policy and training on Women, Peace, and Security;
- Advocate for the integration of women and gender perspectives in negotiations concerning conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and political transitions, including through U.S. delegations serving as a model;
- Build women's capacity for roles in local and national government, the security sector, and civil society in conflict-affected environments, while supporting NGOs that advocate on behalf of women's participation in decision-making;
- Work with partner nations to develop laws and policies that promote and strengthen women's rights and women's participation in security-related decision-making bodies;
- Improve the capacity of the UN system, peacekeepers, partner militaries and law enforcement, and implementing contractors and aid workers to better prevent and respond to conflict-related violence against women, including sexual and gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and trafficking in persons;

- Ensure conflict early-warning systems include gender-specific data and are responsive to sexual and gender-based violence, while investing in women and girls as a means to reduce the long-term drivers of conflict; and
- Promote women's equal access to aid distribution mechanisms and services, support access to reproductive health in emergencies, and ensure that U.S. government crisis response and recovery teams have access to gender expertise.

To ensure comprehensive follow-through, agencies will be held accountable for their commitments under the *National Action Plan*. As directed by the Executive Order, the Departments of State and Defense, and USAID will designate officers to ensure implementation, and will submit to the National Security Advisor agency-specific plans establishing time-bound, measurable, resourced actions. These plans will be coordinated by a standing interagency committee chaired by the White House National Security Staff. This committee will:

- Monitor and evaluate actions taken in support of national objectives through the creation of specific indicators;
- Integrate the concepts behind Women, Peace, and Security into relevant national-level policies and strategies;
- Establish a mechanism for regular consultation with civil society representatives;
- Report annually to the National Security Council Deputies Committee on progress made toward achieving commitments, in order to inform a report to the President; and
- In 2015, conduct a comprehensive review of, and update to, the *National Action Plan*, which will be informed by consultation with international partners and relevant civil society organizations.

The *U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security* embodies and sets forth the United States' commitment to ensuring that women around the world play an equal role in promoting peace and achieving just and enduring security. Today and in the years to come, the Obama Administration dedicates itself to bringing the ideas behind the *National Action Plan* to life in pursuit of this essential goal.

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