

The United States recognizes that sustainable peacebuilding efforts cannot be achieved without the full and meaningful participation of women. We are proud to lead global efforts on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. When President Trump signed the 2017 Women, Peace and Security Act, the United States became the first country in the world to pass comprehensive legislation enshrining this important effort. Even as we endeavor to strengthen our domestic WPS infrastructure and policy framework, we are working with our partners across the globe to support their efforts to advance women's participation in the security sector, in peace-making and peace-keeping.

In this spirit, the United States welcomes the Peacebuilding Commission's (PBC) Gender Strategy. We must acknowledge that the role of women in conflict and peacebuilding is multi-faceted – they can be prevention actors, victims, and perpetrators. That is why it is critical that all efforts to build peace and stability around the world: address the needs and perspectives of women, men, girls, and boys; and be informed by a gender analysis, utilizing sex- and age-disaggregated data where possible. It is also important that we enhance the role of women as first-line defenders to mitigate cycles of terrorism and conflict.

The PBC Gender Strategy's focus on national ownership, inclusivity, and participation reminds us that Member States have the primary responsibility for promoting women's meaningful participation in efforts to build and sustain peace. This includes supporting women peacekeepers and ensuring the protection of women and girls in conflict and crisis. Meaningful, sustained engagements between governments, women leaders, and women's civil society groups, such as those that take place during national action plan processes, inside women's mediator networks, and during peace processes, can help to lower mistrust and socialize different perspectives on war and peace. It is important that we recognize the disproportionate impact that conflict and crises often have on women and girls, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Member States and the PBC can work together to promote women's leadership and meaningful participation in decision-making processes related to COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. These efforts must also take into account the unique needs and perspectives of women and girls, including taking appropriate measures to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. The United States encourages future PBC engagement on WPS to leverage the expertise across regional and sub-regional bodies and the UN system to share peacebuilding experiences, especially the specific roles, experiences, and needs of women and girls. The United States also welcomes more analytical information from the PBC and encourages the PBC to play a stronger role in the development of peacebuilding assessments and plans during the drawdown and transition phase from peacekeeping operations. Transition phases are often critical

times for increasing women's meaningful participation in decision-making processes, including post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization efforts."