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WOMEN FIGHTING FOR PEACE: LESSONS FOR TODAY'S CONFLICTS

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WOMEN FIGHTING FOR PEACE: LESSONS FOR TODAY'S CONFLICTS

TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2016

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:52 a.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward Royce (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ROYCE. This hearing will come to order. Our thoughts and prayers are with those in Brussels in the aftermath of this morning's attack.

Let me share with you that in terms of this hearing today, this is the third in our series of hearings to examine challenges facing women worldwide.

This hearing will examine the effect of women's participation on peace negotiations and other efforts to reduce violence and to reduce the extremism. Unfortunately, we learned just this morning that Betty Bigombe will not be able to join us due to her employer's policy on congressional testimony. We are disappointed by this development, but nevertheless honored to be joined today by an excellent panel, including Monica McWilliams. Ms. McWilliams risked much to end conflict in Northern Ireland, blazing a trail for women peacemakers to come.

This is a critically important discussion. From Syria to Afghanistan to Sudan, armed conflicts are becoming increasingly deadly and disruptive. Efforts to negotiate their end are more important than ever.

And simply put, when women are at the negotiating table, success is more likely. Research shows that a peace agreement is more likely to be reached, and is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years when women are involved.

When you consider that historically, over half of all peace agreements fail within the first 5 years—women's involvement becomes imperative. Think about the lives saved. Think about the economies maintained by a 35 percent decrease in repeated conflicts.

Moreover, the way in which peace agreements are negotiated is changing. Instead of a traditional ceasefire and division of territory, talks now lay the groundwork for future governance structures and social institutions.

Not surprisingly, when women are excluded from these essential discussions, their rights and their interests are overlooked—and are often undermined. Out of nearly 600 peace agreements signed

between 1990 and 2009, only 1 percent referenced violence against women.

This has major implications, not just for a country's women and girls, but also for its broader governance and stability. In societies where violence against women goes unpunished, we see more violence, crime, and conflict on the whole. Men who abuse women to get what they want tend to take the same violent, uncompromising approach toward others too. What follows is a lack of law and order—an absence of stability.

Nations also benefit from women's participation in law enforcement, in security institutions, realizing better crime reporting and higher levels of trust within the communities they serve.

And women are essential to confronting one of the greatest national security threats of our time, the spread of what the 9/11 Commission called violent Islamic extremism. Extremist groups are obsessed with suppressing and controlling women. No one understands this better than women themselves.

Yes, some women embrace extremist ideologies, but the vast majority vehemently oppose such severe limitations on their education, on their work, on their movement, and on their public life. Yet in places where we are most concerned about the spread of extremism—such as Pakistan—women are largely absent from the tables of power. This seriously limits access to, and information from, what is arguably the most motivated half of the population: A nation's women. They are a huge bulwark against extremism if they are empowered.

U.S. foreign policy has recognized the benefits of women's inclusion in working toward sustainable peace. While Iraq and Afghanistan have been challenging, our efforts to push for women's participation have been helpful, and current work by the State Department and USAID to train and assist women's groups should be supported.

Of course, the struggle for women's participation is certainly not just a foreign concept, and we as a nation are still making progress. One of the important things that men can do is stand with and be deserving partners of women in their fight for representation and equality around the globe.

And of course listen. Women on my staff made the point that we need to do a better job of recruiting female experts for our hearing panels. And I look forward to the day when we have more women serving on this committee, Ambassador Wagner.

Because as I hope today's hearings will demonstrate, the benefits of women's participation and the risks of their exclusion in all aspects of governance and peacemaking are too great to ignore.

Let me turn if I could to our ranking member, Mr. Sherman from Los Angeles, for his opening statement.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this important hearing. And as you point out, one in a series of three hearings focusing on women and foreign affairs, our others being on women living under ISIS, and women in technology. In general, in 20 years on this committee I have learned that when a country educates its women, when a country allows women to participate in all aspects of the society and economy, that country grows both

economically, socially, and in its ability to maintain communal peace.

I want to join you in condemning the terrorist attacks in Brussels and expressing the sympathy of all of us for the victims and for their family members. I look forward to learning why the World Bank will not allow its officials to testify before us, and without objection, I would like to enter Jan Schakowsky's statement into the record, a fine Member of Congress who does not serve on our committee.

Chairman ROYCE. So ordered.

Mr. SHERMAN. Before I touch on the importance of women in the peace process, I want to point out the United States has made, under President Obama, progress in opening the door to involving women in our national security process. We have of course a woman as national security advisor, we have had women as secretary of state, and now just last week, President Obama named General Lori Robinson to head the U.S. Northern Command, making her our nation's first combatant commander.

It is not only important though that we ensure that women are included not just in the military and national security, but in the peace process and in society at large. In negotiations it is important to involve people who have a stake in those negotiations and women make up over 50 percent of the world of course. Research indicates that when you include women in negotiations their inclusion helps produce a more durable peace, according to CRS.

One comprehensive review of over 80 peace agreements found that formal or informal inclusion of noncombatant civil society actors in peace negotiations decreased the odds of return to conflict by 64 percent. Conflict disproportionately affects women and children. We have all seen the pictures, conflict after conflict, of noncombatants and injuries they have suffered. For this reason it is essential that women be equal partners in the conflict prevention, in conflict resolution process. The review of the research provides abundant evidence that inclusion of women is vital when it comes to preventing and resolving conflicts.

For example, women and—well, this of course comes from our witnesses' statements, but I think these few sentences deserve being heard in this room twice. Women are also the first to resist violent fundamentalism which restricts their rights and leads to increases in domestic violence before the conflict ensues. I think the chairman has spoke eloquently of this factor.

Increasing the number of female officers improves responses to domestic and sexual violence as victims are more likely to report gender based violence to female officers. And finally, in negotiations, belligerents often perceive women as honest brokers. Women can bridge divides and reach out to communities where men might find it more difficult.

The chairman pointed to Pakistan as one example of a place where we should work for women's inclusion. I will point out that Pakistan has had a woman as head of state, and I know that everyone in this room looks forward anxiously to the day when we have a woman President. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. This morning we are pleased to be joined by distinguished panel. Her Excellency Monica McWilliams, Ms.

McWilliams is a professor in the Transitional Justice Institute at Ulster University in Northern Ireland. During the Northern Ireland peace process, Ms. McWilliams held a variety of leadership positions, including being elected to serve in the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly. Ms. McWilliams received the John F. Kennedy leadership and courage award for her role in the peace negotiations in Northern Ireland.

Dr. Abbas is a professor of International Security Studies, and he is chair of the Department of Regional and Analytical Studies at the National Defense University. Prior to this position, Dr. Abbas held positions at Harvard University and Columbia University, among others.

Ms. Jacqueline O'Neill is the director of the Institute for Inclusive Security, a DC-based organization that promotes the inclusion of women in peace and security. Ms. O'Neill oversees all the Institute's initiatives in Afghanistan, Burma, Pakistan, Sudan, and Syria, while also training and advising military and police serving in NATO and serving in the U.N. and the U.S. military, among others.

And without objection, the witnesses' full prepared statements will be made part of the record, and members here will have 5 calendar days to submit any statements or any questions that you have for the witnesses or any extraneous material for the record.

So Ms. McWilliams, if you would please summarize your remarks. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF HER EXCELLENCY MONICA MCWILLIAMS, PROFESSOR OF WOMEN'S STUDIES, TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE INSTITUTE, ULSTER UNIVERSITY

Ms. MCWILLIAMS. Good morning and thank you, Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, Congressmen Sherman, and members of the committee. On behalf of the panel, I too would like to express my sympathy to the injured and my condolences to the families of the bereaved in Brussels where my own husband is currently working and living.

My testimony today is informed by my experience as a negotiator and a signatory to the 1998 Belfast Good Friday Agreement. I am currently tasked by the Northern Ireland Government to develop a strategy for the disbandment of all paramilitary groups. I am the first woman to be appointed to such a high level monitoring panel in the post-conflict phase.

Northern Ireland's experience exemplifies the importance of having women involved at all stages of the peace process. At the commencement of our own peace talks, we women in civil society were very concerned by the scant attention that would be paid to the role that we had played during the previous 25 years of the conflict. Women in Northern Ireland, like women everywhere, had been credited with holding the line between the different factions and had created hundreds of active local groups which every day crossed the political/sectarian divide.

But following the ceasefires in the mid-'90s, we became aware that the government parties, ex-combatants, and constitutional parties were being invited to participate in the formal peace talks.

Women would be largely excluded because they had been previously underrepresented in these parties.

And realizing that the process was in danger of excluding us, we in civic society came together and decided to form a women's coalition that included women from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds, from Unionist and Nationalist backgrounds. In order to enter the peace talks, all groups had to form themselves into official political parties. The Women's Coalition had 6 weeks to do so, and we became an official elected party.

We went around the country convincing the electorate that women deserved to have a seat, and we earned enough votes to become one of the ten parties. And on the day that I entered the room, I looked around and realized that we were the only women delegates present. And at that time, we joined 3 percent of women across the world that became signatories of a peace agreement. Because we challenged the process at the pre-negotiation stage, the peace talks opened up to allow us as outsiders to become official insiders.

And that is the first lesson that we learned. Peace negotiations need to be designed to create an effective, inclusive process so that women's voices from civil society have an opportunity to be heard. Recently I have been involved in workshops from Syria who are participating currently in the talks in Geneva. After tremendous advocacy led by women in Syria in civil society, and by the commitment of the U.N. Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura, these talks have been opened up which is a sign of progress.

The precedent has now been set at the Syrian talks for a civil society forum and a women's advisory board to be present throughout these talks. They will sit in a parallel forum to the main delegations of which there are several women from each side, and they will act as advisors throughout the process in Geneva. Drawing on my own experience with the Women's Coalition in Northern Ireland, I now prepare these Syrian women for the pushback that often accompanies women when they do come forward.

In Northern Ireland, for instance, we had prepared ourselves for the various negotiation positions, but we were not prepared for the open hostility that we experienced from the other parties at the table which veered at times from downright misogyny to sectarianism. We attracted a great deal of media attention as a result, and slowly, slowly, the bad behavior and the male posturing began to change.

So finding ways to create an inclusive process is key. We knew that once the ex-combatants agreed to abide by the principles of nonviolence for the talks, they too would be part of a different future. The Women's Coalition established back-channels, we found ways to measure those who remain nervous about the process, and we kept the process moving. When violence is the norm, peace is the mystery, and the progress of the talks at times depended very much on our back-channeling.

The second issue is the substance, what you can put on the table. Had women been absent, issues relating to victims, children, young people, mixed housing, integrated education, community development, and the civic forum would all have not made their way into the final agreement. And these issues are issues for sustainable

peace. There is also gender-specific issues because conflict does have a differential impact on men and women's lives, and those issues need to be put on the table.

The final and third issue is how to implement and enforce what has been promised. Too often, what is agreed at the table is not delivered. For example, in Northern Ireland we had a quota of 50 percent for Catholics to be recruited to the new police service. That quota did not exist for gender because it was argued that it was going to be discriminatory.

So the lesson that was learned was that aspirational proposals need to become institutional guarantees. They need to be accompanied by benchmarks and timetables. And when there is an absence of a critical mass of women in the legislature and in the bureaucracy, we need to have champions.

So here I want to commend the role of the U.S. Government at that time and right up to the present, which has ensured us that those champions have been available from both the Democrats and Republicans. Female U.S. Consul staff, high-ranking U.S. women, became involved in our peace process and they acted as role models in what was and still is a predominantly male culture. And they showed us that vital voices of women's voices are crucial to all peace processes.

Precarious progress has now been made and we move forward to a situation where gender perspectives have to be taken seriously and where policymakers see the inclusion of women as beneficial to the reforms that come with peace. Peace agreements are important because they address the past and they articulate the priorities for the future. Women need to be a central part of that and when they are mountains will move. My written testimony today includes several policy recommendations which I am happy to answer questions on. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. McWilliams follows:]

Monica McWilliams
Professor Transitional Justice Institute, Ulster University, N Ireland
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
March 22, 2016 Women Fighting For Peace: Lessons for Today's Conflicts

Good Morning Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, and Members of the Committee. I thank you for the invitation to address this distinguished Committee.

My testimony today is informed by my experience as a negotiator and signatory to the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement; as the cofounder and leader of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, a political party that was elected to participate in the peace talks; and as a former member of the Legislative Assembly in Northern Ireland. I also served as Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from 2005 until 2011, drafting the advice on a bill of rights for Northern Ireland. I am currently tasked by the Northern Ireland government to develop a strategy for the disbandment of paramilitary groups by May 2016, the first woman to be appointed to a high-level monitoring panel in the post-conflict phase.

Northern Ireland's experience exemplifies the importance of having women involved at all stages of a peace process. At the commencement of the peace talks in 1996, women in civil society were concerned that scant attention would be paid to the role that women had played during the previous 25 years of the conflict. Women in Northern Ireland had been credited with holding the line between warring factions and had created hundreds of active local groups as part of a bottom up women's social movement, which crossed the political/sectarian divide. At times of crisis, it was women on either side of the peace walls who introduced a system of cell phones and opened up communication lines to break down the lies and rumours that often led to riots. They worked as early warning systems and ascertained the facts of who was doing what so that the trouble could be nipped in the bud at an early stage.

Following the ceasefires in the mid-1990's, we became aware that government parties, ex-combatants, and constitutional parties were being invited to participate in formal peace talks. Despite the tremendous role women had played throughout the conflict in pushing for the parties to make peace, women were largely excluded from the previous negotiations because they were underrepresented in these parties. Realizing that the 1996 process would otherwise exclude us, a group of civic activists—including myself—decided to form a Women's Coalition that would include Catholic and Protestant, Unionist and Nationalist women, as well as women who did not wish to be categorised using these binary identities. In order to enter the peace talks, declared by the British and Irish governments in April 1996, groups had to form themselves into political parties. The Women's Coalition became an official party, and had six weeks to get elected to the negotiations. We went around the country to all of our pre-existing networks, convincing the electorate that women deserved to have a seat at the table. We earned enough votes to become one of the ten parties at the peace table. On the day we entered the room, I looked around at the delegates present and realised we were the only women. We joined the three percent of women globally who have negotiated and signed a peace agreement.

To become part of the formal peace talks, the Women's Coalition adopted the UN Beijing Platform for Action, using its principles of inclusion, equality, and human rights to ground our work. We wanted to close the gap between community-based organizations and the more formal, official negotiation parties. Because we challenged the process at the pre-negotiations stage, the peace talks opened up to allow "outsiders," such as the Women's Coalition, to become official "insiders."

And that is the first lesson that we learned. Peace negotiations need to be designed to create an effective, inclusive process so that women's voices from civil society have an opportunity to be heard. Recently, I have been involved in capacity-building workshops with women from Syria who are participating in the talks in Geneva. After tremendous advocacy led by women in civil society and commitment from the UN Special Envoy, Staffan de Mistura, these talks have been opened up, which is a sign of progress. The precedent has now been set at the Syrian talks for a civil society forum and a women's advisory group to be present. They will sit in a parallel forum to the main delegations, of which there are several women on each side, and will act as advisors throughout the process in Geneva. Drawing on my experience with the Women's Coalition, I now prepare these Syrian women for the "pushback" that often accompanies women coming forward in this way.

In Northern Ireland, for instance, we had prepared for the various negotiating positions, but were less prepared for the open hostility from other parties at the table, veering at different times between misogyny and sectarianism. We had to find new tools to deal with this initial hostility, using "name and shame" notice boards outside our offices to expose those who insisted on insulting us. We also used our good humor when they told us to go home and stand by our men or that the only women who should be at the table should be there to polish it. We attracted a great deal of media attention as a result, and slowly the bad behaviour and male posturing began to change. In his book on the peace process, former US Senator George Mitchell, who chaired the talks, recognized the Women's Coalition as effective negotiators and among the most credible actors at the table. Senator Mitchell frequently relied on us to bring accurate information on what was happening outside the room, and drew on our ability to disseminate a solution-focused approach at every stage of the negotiation—which helped to keep the media as well as the wider community on board.

Finding ways to create an inclusive process is key. Bringing groups such as ex- combatants into the process is not an easy task, especially when they have not disarmed, but the Women's Coalition recognized at an early stage that we should reach out to them. We knew that, once the ex-combatants agreed to abide by the principles of non-violence set for the talks, they too could be part of a different future. As a party to the problem, they needed to become a party to the solution. President Nelson Mandela had told us when he brought us to South Africa: "There is not much point in negotiating with your friends, you need to talk to your enemies." The Women's Coalition established back channels and found ways to reassure those who remained nervous about the process that it could and would work. When violence is the norm and peace is the mystery, the progress of the talks depended on efforts of women inspiring and sustaining all of the actors.

The second issue that I want to focus on is the substance of peace talks—what gets put on the table and what is agreed. If the process is to become genuinely transformative and democratic, women also have interests that need to be recognized. Having women at the peace table in Northern Ireland contributed to an improved negotiating process and a more comprehensive agreement. We believed that there should be "nothing about us, without us" in the final agreement, and we worked hard to make this happen. In prioritizing the interests of the warring factions, conflicting parties may fail to address the wider concerns of civic society. As a member of the Women's Coalition, and its principal negotiator, I was aware of the importance of creating a more comprehensive agreement. Not only did we negotiate demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration of former combatants; we also ensured that integrated education, the needs of victims, and reconciliation would be included. Many of the proposals that we inserted into the agreement changed how we viewed the sustainability of the peace process in the longer term. Had women negotiators been absent, issues related to victims, children, and young people; mixed housing; integrated education and community development; and the establishment of a civic forum would not have been included, making long-term sustainability of the

agreement less likely. These issues are part of the "normalisation" process and, in my experience, where they are not delivered, the potential for a return to conflict remains high.

There are also gender-specific issues that need to be addressed, and which women are more likely to raise during peace negotiations. Proposals for peace must take into account the differential impact of conflict on men and women. From my own work on domestic violence, I am aware of how this can escalate during periods of conflict, and how in peacetime the police, for example, need to be reoriented to dealing with this as a serious criminal issue. The "domestic" terrorism that law enforcement focused on did not include the kind of terror that women faced from men known to them. So the criminal justice system also needs reforms within peace agreements and in their implementation to take account of such issues. As women, we also drew attention to domestic violence in advocating for the decommissioning of weapons that was also part of the peace agreement, knowing that if less guns were available then fewer women would be murdered through the use of these weapons in the future. The Women's Coalition also succeeded in having clauses inserted into the agreement on women's political participation. In making these proposals, we knew that more women would vote for the agreement if they could see themselves in the substance of what was being agreed.

The third issue is how to implement or enforce what has been promised. Too often, what gets agreed at the table is not delivered, which places the entire process in jeopardy. It is during the aftermath of a peace agreement that women become disadvantaged, particularly if they have no role in the governance arrangements. Although the Women's Coalition inserted specific clauses on the role of women into the Good Friday Agreement, these were ignored. Women were told that their interests were not sufficiently serious to be prioritized and could wait to be resolved at a later stage. For example, while institutional reforms in the post-Agreement period addressed imbalances in religious representation, none were made to ensure gender parity. A quota was introduced to allow for 50 percent recruitment of Catholics to the new police service, but it was not extended to women on the grounds that such positive action for women in the new institutions would be discriminatory. Peace agreements mean new ways of doing things, a new prism for seeing things, so when it comes to elevating women in positions of decision-making and leadership, parties should not be allowed to revert to what they are most comfortable with.

Governments need to take a more active role in elevating women in the post-conflict period. The sole focus should not lie with getting an agreement on power-sharing between conflicting parties. The government officials within the Northern Ireland peace process could have exerted pressure to ensure that special temporary measures for women were put in place to bring more parity in all areas of society. Political life has suffered from having a lack of female representatives. In the process of establishing monitoring bodies on the peace process, for decommissioning, for policing reforms, for paramilitary activity, the key positions were all allocated to men. I am the first woman to be appointed to a panel to develop a strategy for the disbanding of paramilitary groups, and that is almost 20 years after the agreement. The diminution of women's contribution to peacebuilding has meant a loss of the plurality and creativity that was so beneficial to the peace negotiations in the first place.

The Women's Coalition paid a good deal of attention to the role of civil society and as such, it inserted a clause into the peace agreement that allowed for the establishment of a civic forum. Women recognize the importance of participatory, consultative, and deliberative forums in contested policy arenas. It is unfortunate that, in the aftermath of the agreement, the Civic Forum was abolished by the parties responsible for establishing the new governance structures. The lesson for us was that aspirational proposals in a peace agreement are not good enough. They need to be

accompanied by benchmarks and timetables, alongside champions tasked to ensure these are enforced. In the absence of a critical mass of women in the bureaucracy or legislature, finding champions to deliver what has been agreed becomes crucial. I wish to commend here the role of the US government at that time, which ensured those champions were available to us. Female US Consul staff and high-ranking US women who became involved in the Northern Ireland peace process acted as role models in the predominantly male culture at that time.

Precarious progress has been made, but we need to move more rapidly to a situation where gender perspectives are taken seriously and where policymakers see the inclusion of women as beneficial to their institutional reforms and political decision-making. Peace agreements are important because they address the past and articulate the priorities for the future. Women need to be a central part of that process.
In conclusion, my testimony reflects the following recommendations:

- From the outset of peace negotiations, mechanisms should be established to include civil society actors, particularly women, and to maintain their involvement at every stage of peace negotiations.

- Mediators should mandate that parties involved in peace negotiations should aim to have at least 30% female delegates as this figure is regarded as the 'critical mass' for women's presence within the process.

- A clear reporting and monitoring mechanism should be established at the implementation stage of a peace agreement, with clear lines of responsibility allocated to specific individuals, to ensure provisions for women's inclusion in decision making and public life become institutional guarantees.

- Parity actions and special temporary measures should be introduced to ensure increased representation of women in elected and consultative forums to the legislature at the post agreement stage. US policymakers should ensure specific champions within its missions are identified to assist women inside the conflict region with this process.

- Specific indicators, benchmarks, and targets should be established to ensure that proposals relating to women in the peace agreement are implemented.

- The US and other international actors should invest in programs that build the capacity of women and other civil society actors to address gender-specific and more human security oriented needs throughout the entire lifecycle of the peace talks and implementation.

- A civic forum should be established as a formalized part of negotiations, particularly where institutional and governance arrangements will lean towards the male-dominated status quo.

- Increasing attention should be drawn to the international human rights standards to address the needs of women in peace agreements and increasing use should be made of the UN security council resolutions aimed at advancing women's inclusion in building peace and security.

My experience and that of other women negotiators demonstrates the impact that women can have in building sustainable peace. We need to prioritize women's inclusion when a conflict breaks out as well as when the violence ends. Should this happen, mountains can move.

STATEMENT OF HASSAN ABBAS, PH.D., PROFESSOR AND CHAIR, REGIONAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT, NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

Mr. ABBAS. Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, Congressman Sherman, and other respected members of this committee, it is a great privilege and honor to be here and to testify and to contribute to this process.

Up front I would argue and give my principle belief on the subject of why, very similar to the comments by my colleague, why more women in law enforcement and the broader criminal justice system play a key role. It is often interpreted as an issue of inclusivity, about gender balance or gender equality. It is not merely that. It is much more powerful.

It is, in my view as an academic and as a former police official in Pakistan with my 15 years of academic work in the United States and my free studies mostly in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq: What I have learned is that it is an absolute necessity as a core element of the broader criminal justice system in policing to have more women, because it is directly linked to effective policing. More women are needed not because of inclusivity, they are needed because that is directly linked to effective and good policing.

Now what is the evidence I have to suggest that? Because it sounds very good, and at times politically correct in certain context, in the West especially. I have two sets of evidence. One is very brief profiles that I will share with you of five women whose work at one level inspired me, but with whom I have worked firsthand. I saw their enthusiasm, I saw their clarity of mind, I saw their empathy, and I saw their contributions as security professionals both in terms of scholars and experts, and as police officers. And then I have a few items based on pure empirical academic research. The five profiles: And I am a proud American, but I am also, I love Pakistan. I have worked with, as a Pakistani, worked with Benazir Bhutto, the deceased Prime Minister. I just have two or three things. The first woman ever to become head of Muslims, any Muslim State. The clerics in Pakistan, the religious extremists had issued a fatwa, an edict saying a woman cannot be head of the State. The people of Pakistan voted against that and elected her.

Then she was just cornered by the Pakistani military establishment, who thought she is a security threat. That was the headline, that she is a security threat. She cannot even go close to the nuclear installations. What she did in her first 6 months, she invited the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi; and signed, negotiated a deal saying both countries will commit not to attack each other's nuclear installations—a huge deal.

Finally, I will jump to her final days. And I remember I met her here. When she went back, and I am personal witness to this, she was very clear that she was walking into a death knell. She thought she would stand up to extremists, and she lost her life. She gave her life. The message, from my point of view, is that she showed, more than any man in South Asia or the Middle East, she showed that standing up to extremism matters.

My second example, my mentor Jessica Stern, who I remember sitting in her class, actually, on the eve of 9/11. Those were my first few days in the U.S. She was the professor of security studies

and terrorism. And what I have seen in her work, she went to Pakistan among other countries, interviewed religious extremists. The head of Lashkar-e-Taiba at that time, Hafiz Saeed, she mentions his story in her book, "Why Religious Militants Kill." By her work she created a new precedent as a security expert, scholar, and that contributed significantly for both men and women.

My third example is a Pakistani police officer, Maria Taimur, who opted—she was a police officer in Pakistan—she opted not to go for a desk job; she will go and take up a job as an operational commander.

My fourth example, a very important one, I am proud to mention one of my students, a U.S. Army colonel, Colonel Martha Foss. She served as an advisor and as a trainer for Afghan women judges. I asked her 2 or 3 years ago in my class amongst many students, what are your hopes and expectations when, as a U.S. "AFPAK Hand" at my College of International Security Affairs, when you go back after the master's degree, what are your hopes and expectations? She said something which is still entrenched in my mind. She said, sir, I am going back because I saw hope in the eyes of the women judges that I trained. I am going back for them.

My final example, Jane Townsley, a British police officer who as president of the International Association of Women Police created new partnerships, empowered women to come together from all over the world, and created new precedents.

So these five stories I will share because, one, I knew all of these five and worked with them, greatly learned from them and then, now, secondly, builds to my just five sentences on what the empirical studies tell me. These may be my personal ideas.

Five things empirical studies tell us: Number one, whenever there are more women in police they de-escalate violent situations. Whenever there are more women in police, and these are experiences from actual studies from the United States, that there are less complaints. When there are more women, there are less complaints about excessive use of force by police. Then, crime: This is from European Union countries, whenever there are more women in police, there are increased cases of crime reporting, especially about women.

Last but not least, CVE, countering violent extremism and counterterrorism. And if I may quote from one of the major studies, it says clearly that wherever there are more women, the designing and the mechanisms by which we approach extremism, these designs and mechanisms improve.

So I will conclude with this. Thank you for—I am a little over time, but my final sentence is, what can we do based on these two sets of things? I would say, number one, first and foremost, we should think about involving more women in advisory positions. Whenever we have these missions across in fundings, there have to be more women involved. Secondly, there has to be more funding to look at how the academic and the policy worlds, investment in them to see how more women in police has a direct impact on better policing. And last but not the least, better recognition of the works done by female leaders such as Benazir, such as the President of Kosovo who was a police officer, and like my colleague here,

who have done tremendous things for the rule of law, for empowering women, but most importantly for justice. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Abbas follows:]

THE COLLEGE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS
NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

March 22, 2016

Prepared Statement by

Dr. Hassan Abbas

Professor of International Security Studies & Chair of the Department of Regional & Analytical Studies, College of International Security Affairs,
National Defense University, Washington DC USA

Before the
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States House of Representatives

Hearing: Women Fighting for Peace: Lessons for Today's Conflicts

Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for inviting me to testify about the role of women in resolving conflict and securing peace. It is truly an honor and a privilege for me to contribute to this process.

Let me begin with my principle belief: Expanding the role of women in civilian law enforcement as well as the broader criminal justice system is not a matter of inclusivity or gender equality alone. My research and experience - both as an academic and a police practitioner - in the United States and Southwest Asia convinces me that it is the key necessary element to open the doors of peace and harmony around the globe. It is especially so in conflict zones and regions facing socioeconomic turbulence and instability. Simply put, a broader and enlarged role of women in policing and countering extremism in South Asia, the Middle East, and beyond is a critical need of the hour. The US capacity building programs in developing states must further invest in creating awareness about this valuable enabling factor. Promoting and facilitating higher rate of recruitment of female police officers will have a direct impact on stability as well as counterterrorism capacity of partner nations in turn creating a more secure world for us all.

Tragically, in many cases, the role men could play in promoting women's inclusion in the security sector remains hampered by ignorance, gender biases, religious bigotry *and* efforts to shield their incompetence.

Today, I will build my arguments around the stories of five professional women who inspired me greatly by their nuanced perspectives, amazing capacity to empathize and courage to lead. I had the privilege of witnessing their contributions to their societies first hand, working with them and learning from their successes. These women are important role models and in each case the impact of their work highlights the fundamental themes of my arguments:

1. **Benazir Bhutto** – the now deceased and former Prime Minister of Pakistan: Elected as the first ever female Muslim head of state in 1988, her instrumental role in encouraging women to join police forces as well as the broader security sector in Pakistan deserves appreciation.[1] Her example inspired women across the Muslim majority states. Interestingly, a leading Pakistani cleric had issued a *Fatwa* (religious edict) before her electoral success declaring that a woman cannot become a head of state in a Muslim country. Luckily the people of Pakistan rejected such obscurantism through democracy. Having served in her administration in 1994-95, I observed from close quarters how a powerful military establishment obstructed her and tried to keep her out of the loop on security matters. In such challenging circumstances, she took a very brave initiative and negotiated a treaty with India in December 1988 where both states committed to no first attack (or to assist any foreign power to attack) on each other's nuclear installations and facilities.[2] She was ousted from office before the expiry of her 5-year term in a controversial move but she valiantly staged a comeback and was again elected to office in 1993. Unfortunately, she was not allowed to complete her second term in office as well. For many years she lived in exile challenging autocratic politics and military dictatorship in Pakistan. She returned to Pakistan in 2007 to rejoin active politics and challenge the rampant religious extremism knowing pretty well that Al-Qaeda and Pakistani Taliban would target her. A massive terrorist attack on December 27, 2007 ended her life. Her message was loud and clear: challenge and confront terrorism whatever it costs.

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[1] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto established the first Women Police Station (WPS) in Rawalpindi in

[2] For details see, Benazir Bhutto, *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West* (Harper, New York, 2008). Also see, "India Pakistan Non-Attack Agreement", Nuclear Threat Initiative, http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/india-pakistan-non-attack-agreement/

2. **Dr. Jessica Stern** – Research Professor at Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University:[3] A leading American expert of terrorism studies, Dr. Stern has shown through her writings and field research how critical the role of women is as practitioners and academics in unearthing the nuances of de-radicalization and counterterrorism. As my mentor and teacher at the Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, & Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, she greatly helped my understanding of the menace of terrorism in a global context. Her research work in Pakistan based on interviews with many extremists including some notorious leaders of militant & terrorist groups was pioneering in creating a valuable precedent for South Asian scholars – both men and women. She has been ahead of the curve when it comes to the US counterterrorism policy making as well. In her 2003 *Washington Post* opinion piece "When Women are Bombers", she informed her readers that under a new program introduced in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks, only visa applications of males between the ages of 16 and 45 were subject to scrutiny while women, even those from countries known for harboring terrorists, were not subjected to this program! She aptly concluded: "With such a protean enemy, to rely on standard operating procedures such as race- and gender-based profiling is to put the safety of the American people at risk."[4] The San Bernardino terrorist attack in December 2015 makes obvious the nature of the challenge we are faced with. Dr. Stern's books *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* and *ISIS: The State of Terror* are amongst the most important globally recognized studies on terrorism.

3. **Colonel Martha Foss** (US Army): I am proud to refer to one of my very talented former students at the College of International Security Affairs (CISA) at the National Defense University (NDU). She served in Afghanistan twice as a member of the "Afghanistan-Pakistan (AFPAK) Hands" program training women judges and performing her role as a security advisor.[5] While she was a Master's student at CISA in 2012 between her two deployments, she inspired me by her response to my question about her expectations and concerns about the future of Afghanistan. She stated that she was returning to Kabul motivated by the hope she had seen in the eyes of the Afghan women judges that she trained. She proudly told me that about 10 percent of Afghan judges were women (at the

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[3] For her bio visit: http://www.bu.edu/pardeeschool/profile/jessica-stern/

[4] Jessica Stern, "When Women are Bombers," *The Washington Post*, December 18, 2003; available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/2003/12/18/when-bombers-are-women/77a104d5-c542-4e2a-9e2f-5b0be53b0ce8/

[5] For details, see: http://www.army.mil/article/115523/The_Afghanistan_Pakistan_Hands_Program/; also see: http://smallwarsjournal.com/printpdf/23669

time) and in a 2012 training program for new judges, women grabbed 13 of the top 15 positions. International state building efforts need to feature and build on such examples to underscore the importance and value of women participation in all sectors of the criminal justice system. Presence of female judges in courts especially improves access to justice for disadvantaged female litigants.[6] Judicial reform is a critical pillar in this context and COL. Foss exhibits the great importance of integration of a gender perspective in such endeavors.

4. **Maria Taimur**, Superintendent of Police, Pakistan: In a country where women make up less than 1 percent of police and law enforcement institutions nationally, Maria Taimur leads by example. As a member of the police service of Pakistan (a service with which I was also associated before I moved to the US in 2001), she preferred operational responsibilities to undemanding desk jobs – not an easy undertaking in a country facing rising crime trends and a serious counterterrorism challenge. I had an opportunity to discuss policing practices in Pakistan with her recently on a panel. I was struck by her clarity, candor and enthusiastic desire to change the status quo. In a March 2016 opinion piece, she bravely critiqued a new legislation focusing on protecting women's rights in the country. She lamented that procedural lacunas and weak legislation in Pakistan made it difficult for the criminal justice system to penalize those who committed violent crimes against women. She argued in favor of a streamlined policing system that could connect the dots and ensure that female complainants received the services they deserved.[7] To deliver such services efficiently and effectively, Pakistan needs far more women in the police force. Unfortunately, some detractors still do not believe these women have what it takes to serve as police officers. Research shows that Pakistani female officers lack basic equipment and are discriminated against in nominations for training courses.[8] I am reminded here of a comment from recent Oscar winning Pakistani documentary maker Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, who while celebrating the courage of Shahzadi Gillani and Rizwana Zafar - two female police officers from Khyber Pakhunkhwa (KP) province of Pakistan - aptly stated that, these women, "defy

[6] For instance, see: Arksal Salim, "Gendering the Islamic Judiciary: Female Judges in the Religious Courts of Indonesia," *Al-Jamiah*, Vol 51, No. 2, 2013, 250.
[7] Maria Taimur, "Protecting Women", *Dawn*, March 3, 2016; available at: http://www.dawn.com/news/1243159/protecting-women
[8] Allison Peters and Human Chughtai, "Why Pakistan Needs a Few More Good Women," *Foreign Policy*, June 29, 2014; available at http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/07/29/why-pakistan-needs-a-few-more-good-women/

every preconceived notion anyone may have about the capability of Pakistani women."[9]

5. **Jane Townsley** – Chief Inspector, British Transport Police & former President of International Association of Women Police (IAWP):[10] A tribute is in order to Jane Townsley's for her dynamic leadership of the IWAP. Through various efforts and initiatives of the organization, she demonstrated how significant the contribution of women police officers is for effective policing around the globe. She argues: "Policing is not about muscle, but it is about reason, restraint and intelligence."[11] In my various interactions with her, I learned about the impact this organization has made and it was an eye opener for me and will be for anyone who is keen to learn about why police organizations will immensely benefit from a higher percentage of women representation in police forces. When some women's own nations would not support their careers in policing, the IAWP stepped in to fill the void. One of the most essential aspects of counterterrorism is partnership building, and the IWAP has successfully created a network of female law enforcement officials who could draw on each other's expertise at a moment's notice. Jane takes great pride in expanding the network. One of the officers she sponsored for IAWP membership in 2004 was a Kosovar police officer Atifete Jahjaga. Jahjaga became the first President of Kosovo in 2011 after serving as deputy director general of Kosovo police for many years.

As I reflect on the motivations of these leaders, I am also thinking about our female graduates at CISA, NDU who are making a difference in securing their nations around the world. As a quick introduction, CISA is the newest of the 5 colleges at the U.S. National Defense University. Our mission is to educate and prepare civilian and military national professionals for the contemporary security environment and build partnership capacity in combating terrorism at the strategic level. We have educated roughly 1000 students from 90 countries in the previous 13 years.[12] Ms. Biola Shotunda, a member of the Nigerian police force who was one of our 2015 graduates, when asked if she had any recommendations for policy makers and

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[9] Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, "*K-P's women police officers: Leading from the front*", Dawn, September 16, 2014; available at http://www.dawn.com/news/1131517

[10] Her bio is available at: http://www.iawp.org/forms/history/bio-janetownsley.htm

[11] A statement by Chief Constable Peter Fahy, UK as quoted by Jane Townsley in her speech at IAWP conference in 2014:
http://iawp.org/campaigns/VAW/PresidentTownsleypresentation_GenderResponPolicing_Oct2014.pdf

[12] For details, see http://cisa.ndu.edu/

leaders worldwide, aptly recommended hopefully that the subject of women in peacekeeping and security becomes a more public debate.[13]

THEORY & GLOBAL TRENDS: MORE WOMEN IN POLICING ROLES LEADS TO BETTER POLICING & MORE EFFECTIVE CVE

Various research based studies show that female officers tend to be better than their male counterparts at de-escalating violent situations and are less likely to be involved in police brutality. The initial research on women in policing within the US started at a time when the ratio of female police officers started increasing and various police departments feared that women would fail during patrols. These apprehensions turned out to be totally unfounded. According to the 1991 Independent Christopher Commission Report, "Female officers utilize a style of policing that minimizes the use of excessive force. Data examined by the Commission indicate that LAPD female officers are involved in use of excessive force at rates substantially below those of male officers."[14] The report also concluded that pervasive gender bias contributed substantially to excessive-force problems of the LAPD.[15] Similarly, another study by Kim Lonsway in 2002 found that although women comprise 12 percent of officers in big city police agencies, they only incur 5 percent of the complaints for excessive force (and 2 percent of the citizen complaints for excessive force that are sustained).[16] This was further substantiated by research conducted by Amie Schuck, who based on a 2007 study of large sample of male and female officers in six different departments, concluded that female officers were less likely to use physical force in police encounters.[17] As a result of such trends, an increasing number of police agencies in the US today are actively recruiting, employing, and promoting more women.

Similar trends are reported in the crime-fighting sphere. For instance, Miller and Segal analyzed data on violent crime reporting and domestic violence escalation

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[13] Alyssa Lodge & Simone Bak, "The Role of Female Personnel in National Security and Peacekeeping: Alumni Share Their Perspective", International Student Management Office, NDU, August 25, 2015; available at: http://ismo.ndu.edu/News/tabid/8824/Article/614630/the-role-of-female-personnel-in-national-security-and-peacekeeping-alumni-share.aspx

[14] Quoted in Peter Horne, "Policewomen: Their First Century and the New Era," *The Police Chief* 73, no. 9, September 2006. Available at: http://www.policechiefmagazine.org/magazine/index.cfm?article_id=1000&fuseaction=display#22

[15] Ibid.

[16] Kim Lonsway, "Men, Women, and Police Excessive Force: A Tale of Two Genders," *National Center for Women & Policing*, April 2002; available at: http://www.womenandpolicing.org/PDF/2002_Excessive_Force.pdf.

[17] Amie Schuck, "The Use of Force by and Against Female Police Officers," *Women and Criminal Justice*, Volume 16, Issue no. 4, 2007.

between the late 1970s and early 1990s in the US. They found that as women became more integrated into US policing, female victims were more likely to report violent crimes and thus female officer involvement helped prevent the escalation of domestic violence.[18] Such research findings further convinced police organizations about the importance of role of women in policing.

Within the context of broader security sector reform as well, there is a growing consensus that a strong women presence in police organizations is the best way to ensure that the "security needs of diverse populations are properly understood and incorporated into the structure and operations of the police."[19] Female police officers positively influence the social dynamic and their mere presence often soothes tensions, besides encouraging women victims to come forward. According to statistics gleaned from 39 countries, when women police officers are present, there are significantly higher rates of reporting.[20]

Recent research about transformation in Ukraine's police conducted by Dr. Erica Marat, my colleague at NDU, is also insightful. A police reform effort has been underway in Ukraine for the last few years to tackle inefficiency and corruption. Around 30 percent of a new patrol police division operating now in Ukraine's major cities are women, one of the world's highest rates. Her research shows advantages in having female officers on the streets as they often prove to be better able to deescalate situations than their male colleagues.[21] Dr. Marat also argues that increased female participation in the policing sector has led to better policing practices in terms of accountability as well as public trust.

Ann Marie Orler, a former United Nations Police Adviser, further substantiates this growing realization while maintaining that there is a critical need for more female

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[18] Amalia Miller and Segal Carmit, "Do Female Officers Improve Law Enforcement Quality? Effects on Crime Reporting and Domestic Violence Escalation," Working Paper, September 16, 2014; available at: http://www.ire.eco.usi.ch/paper-carmit-segal-262272.pdf

[19] For details see, Gender and SSR Toolkit, https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/pluginfile.php/72/mod_data/content/60/Gender and SSR Toolkit - English.pdf

[20] Quoted in Testimony by Jacqueline O'Neill for hearing on "Combating Violence and Discrimination Against Women: A Global Call to Action", US Senate Subcommittee on International Operations and Organizations, Human Rights, Democracy, and Global Women's Issues, June 24, 2014. For further details about the reference, see *Progress of the World's Women 2011-2012: In Pursuit of Justice.* (NY: UN Women), 59; available at: http://www.unwomen.org/~/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2011/progressoftheworldswomen-2011-en.pdf

[21] Interview with Dr. Erica Marat, March 11, 2016; also see Erica Marat, "Ukraine's New Police Are an Expression of a "Civil" State," *Atlantic Council*, October 12, 2015. Also see, Annalisa Merelli, "Photos: The Women who Transformed Ukraine's Police", *Quartz*, November 19, 2015; available at http://qz.com/553448/photos-the-women-who-transformed-ukraines-police-force/

officers in peacekeeping operations as a precondition for the UN Police to become a modern, professional police organization.[22]

Last but not the least is the realm of countering violence extremism (CVE) and counter terrorism. Experts maintain that: "Including women and girls and gender mainstreaming improves the design, implementation, and evaluation of CVE efforts."[23] Such inclusion expands the reach of CVE programs including over other women and youth at risk of radicalization and recruitment by terrorist organizations. In societies and cultures challenged by tribalism and patriarchal norms, women's presence in policing and law enforcement structures open up critical channels of communication and information flow between the government and people. Women are more likely to spot any signs of radicalization and influence changes in their children's behavior before anyone else, but may lack confidence in or access to local law enforcement authorities to share such concerns.[24] Women police officers can bridge that gap and help the outreach of police for CVE purposes in very significant ways in such scenarios.

Similar factors are at play in the counterterrorism sphere. Many terrorist organizations including ISIS are actively pursuing women recruits for mobilization, expanding their support network and especially to escape scrutiny of security forces in some cases. The role of women in the security sector, especially in countries like Iraq, Jordan and Turkey becomes more vital in this context. Infact the need for women's role in various components of security sector is wider for cultural and religious reasons in some cases as well. For instance, as an excellent study by Allison Peters focusing on the role of women in Pakistan police, show: "Due to prohibitive norms, only women in the police can serve as first responders to care for female victims of terrorist attacks."[25]

Though Pakistan police and law enforcement infrastructure continues to be in dire need of reform, some early signs of progress are discernible. Besides an indigenous

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[22] Quoted in Bojana Balon, "Women in the police means a better response to community needs," *UNDP*, April 18, 2013; available at http://europeandcis.undp.org/blog/2013/04/18/women-in-the-police-means-a-better-response-to-community-needs/

[23] See, "Good Practices on Women and Countering Violent Extremism", *Global Counterterrorism Forum*, 2015.

[24] "Women and Preventing Violent Extremism: The U.S. and U.K Experience," *The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (CHRGJ) Briefing*, New York University School of Law, 2012, 5; available at: http://chrgj.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Women-and-Violent-Extremism-The-US-and-UK-Experiences.pdf

[25] Allison Peters, "Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Pakistan: Why Policewomen Must Have a Role," *The Institute for Inclusive Security*, March 31, 2014; available at: https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/IIS-Pakistan-Memo-v5c-web.pdf

effort directed by the enthusiasm of young police officers, there is an increased public realization about the need for urgency in this direction.[26] Inclusion of more women in various police organizations across Pakistan – including as commandos in the Anti Terrorist Squad (ATC) - is a new and limited but certainly commendable trend. A comment by one of the lead instructors of the training program, Mr. Akram Jappa, is worth quoting here: "They are mothers, sisters and daughters but we need them to be commandos too. They bring a different temperament to the ATS and are very effective and committed to combating terrorism in our country."[27]

Ensuring that women participate equally in law enforcement institutions is the best bet to guarantee that these institutions are more responsive to the diverse needs of the community. For law enforcement to fulfill a counterterrorism role, besides resources for relevant training and equipment, it has to be representative of the population it is tasked to protect. As maintained by Centre for Global Counterterrorism Cooperation (CGCC): "Female law enforcement personnel are particularly important because they understand gender sensitivities and maybe better suited to elicit intelligence and achieve information-driven results."[28]

I am thankful to Ellie Bird, a distinguished former Chief Superintendent of police in UK, for advising me that some of the language we use when we refer to the role of women in policing is critical. In her words:

a) "Equipping is to raise their awareness of the natural skills and abilities they have and to guide them in developing new skills.

b) Empowering them is to create a safe environment where they can explore their natural ability, to ask questions and to seek guidance. To mentor, coach and guide.

c) Enabling is the critical aspect that often remains within the influence, direction and authority of men."[29]

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[26] For a detailed perspective on the subject see Hassan Abbas, editor, "Stabilizing Pakistan Through Police Reform," *A Report by the Asia Society Independent Commission on Police Reforms in Pakistan*, 2012: available at http://asiasociety.org/files/pdf/as_pakistan_police_reform.pdf

[27] Quoted in Saadia Khan, "Pakistan's Female Commandos: On The Frontline," *The Express Tribune*, January 18, 2015; available at: http://tribune.com.pk/story/822720/pakistans-female-commandos-on-the-front-line/; For more resources about Women Police in Pakistan see: "Women Police in Pakistan": http://individualland.com/women-police/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Women-Police-in-Pakistan.pdf; and various publications at: http://www.wpnpakistan.org/publication

[28] Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Rafia Barakat and Liat Shetret, "The Roles of Women in Terrorism, Conflict, and Violent Extremism: Lessons for the United Nations and International Actors," *Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation*, April 2013, 7; also available at: http://globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/13Apr11_Women-and-Terrorism-Prevention_Final.pdf

[29] E-mail communication with Ellie Bird, March 2016.

We often inaccurately assume that these above elements are within the control of the girl or woman but they may not be, and so we must also accordingly define the role for men also to ensure that they are enabled to take on these roles.

All these issues require global attention, which appears to be largely missing at the moment. An insightful survey, conducted by Professor Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, of 139 UN Security Council Resolutions, broadly addressing terrorism and counter-terrorism (from January 2013 to May 2015) "demonstrate a dearth of gender awareness and no systematic attempt to address the interface of gender and terrorism."[30] Lastly, it is important to recognize that obstacles for women in policing roles know no boundaries. A study of police officers in Norway revealed that, "women police officers continue to face career barriers in the form of discrimination, negative stereotyping and sexual harassment."[31]

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

I think that women's presence has made a revolution in policing, especially considering the modern times we live in. First of all, I think women have brought the most important thing – a different image for policing. They have broken the image of the police as a strong hand and brought policing closer to the people we serve.

President Atifete Jahjaga[32]

An enhanced and expanded role for women in police and law enforcement organizations across the world is an issue that has direct implications for the US national security. Effective policing in a rule of law setting is the first line of defense against extremism and terrorism. There is sufficient data available – some of it shown in this statement – to establish that there can be no effective policing without women's full and meaningful involvement in all aspects of law enforcement. It also has a direct impact on public perception of power, force, and legitimacy – issues that are inextricably linked to good governance and peaceful coexistence. Men have to

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[30] Fionnuala Ní Aoláin "Counter-Terrorism Committee: Addressing the Role of Women in Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism," Just Security, September 17, 2015; available at: https://www.justsecurity.org/25983/counter-terrorism-committee-addressing-role-women-countering-terrorism-violent-extremism/

[31] Ronald J. Burke and Aslaug Mikkelsen, "Gender Issues in Policing: Do They Matter," *Women in Management Review*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 2005, 141.

[32] Quoted in: http://iawp.org/campaigns/VAW/PresidentTownsleypresentation_GenderResponPolicing_Oct2014.pdf

play an extremely important role in this sphere because of the political will required to provide space for such a transformation at a global scale.

The US has a tremendous opportunity to make a difference by further enabling international partners to empower women in the civilian security sector. During interactions with allies and partner nations, the US officials and leaders must emphasize the importance of recruitment, promotion, and professionalization of policewomen under the counterterrorism cooperation platforms. Counterterrorism training provided by the US to security personnel of partner nations is an important tool for such collaborations.

To help institutionalize women empowerment in the civilian security sector globally, a broader set of agendas has to be pursued:

1. More women in advisory roles for state building missions;[33]
2. Promoting mandatory gender training in police academies;[34]
3. More funding for academic and policy studies investigating the role and impact of women in police and law enforcement sphere;
4. More support for women in foreign countries that are trail blazers as national security professionals;
5. Greater recognition of the work that female leaders such as late Benazir Bhutto and Atifete Jahjaga have done to promote justice, equality, and rule of law in developing nations.

[33] For a good study on various aspects of advisory role, see Nadia Gerspacher, "Preparing Advisors for Capacity Building Missions," USIP, August 2012, available at: http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR312.pdf ; also see Nadia Gerspacher, *Strategic Advising in Foreign Missions: A Practical Guide* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, CO, April 2016).
[34] Betsy Brantner Smith, "How gender-based training can make us all better cops," PoliceOne.com, September 19, 2013; available at https://www.policeone.com/writers/columnists/Betsy-Brantner-Smith/

Chairman ROYCE. Ms. O'Neill, if you would hit that red button. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF MS. JACQUELINE O'NEILL, DIRECTOR, THE INSTITUTE FOR INCLUSIVE SECURITY

Ms. O'NEILL. Chairman Royce, you have put a crucial topic squarely on the agenda of one of the prominent committees in Congress. Thanks to you, Ranking Member Engel, Mr. Sherman, and all members. For more than 15 years at the Institute for Inclusive Security, led by Ambassador Swanee Hunt, and thousands of members of our global Women Waging Peace Network, we have increased the inclusion of women in peace and security processes.

We know very well that today's hearing topic has always been rich with anecdotes. We hear about centuries-long traditions of women mediating between warring clans in Afghanistan and Somalia. We listen to pioneers like Monica, and Betty Bigombe from Uganda, whose testimony is available online and who literally walked into the jungle amidst a brutal civil war to sit down face to face with Joseph Kony and convinced the LRA to sit down around the table with the Ugandan Government for the first time ever.

Just a few months ago, we even heard a story from Afghan women describing watching the very subtle recruitment of young men into violent extremist groups at weddings. When they went to report this to a government minister, he laughed at them condescendingly and said, the militants we deal with are far too sophisticated to recruit at weddings. A month later, those same young men killed 32 men and women on a bus. There are thousands of stories just like these. Yet, for decades as we have asserted that women play vital roles in ending war and building peace, we have been told, prove it. Now we can. There is a robust body of data to make the case.

So let's review three things we know. One, we know that woman get warring parties to the negotiations and they help them reach agreements that endure. A new study looked at 40 peace processes in 35 countries and found that when women's groups had influence, an agreement was reached 98 percent of the time. Another study showed that a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in its creation. Why is that?

Studies document that women expand the conversation beyond where borders are drawn or who gets to control which ministry. They introduce priorities that lay a foundation for a stronger state, like abuses of police power or political exclusion.

Two, we know that the ways that war is waged and peace is built are changing fast and that women are addressing challenges posed by non-state actors like terrorist groups. They are mediating conflicts at local levels, for example. It may sound hard to believe, but women in ISIS-controlled areas in Syria have been negotiating to reopen schools and keep them running. Women are also on the front lines of violent extremism, not only as mothers as we so often hear, but also as fighters, as community leaders, and as members of security forces.

Three, we know that engaging women in decision making is not something that we do for women. We do it for all of us. States that

respect and engage women are less likely to traffic in drugs, weapons, and people, to create or harbor terrorists, to enable criminal networks, to generate refugees. Ultimately, they are also less likely to need U.S. boots on the ground.

It is clear that women's inclusion is both a rights agenda and a national security imperative. In short, it is about making the money we spend abroad more effective and ultimately needing to spend less of it. Yet, perplexingly, despite knowing all of this, the practice of meaningfully including women is wildly inconsistent.

So what can Congress do? My written testimony proposes five actions, but I will highlight just a few. First, pass the bipartisan Women, Peace, and Security Act to codify the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security. The plan is a strategy to integrate women's inclusion in all aspects of defense, diplomacy, and development. More work remains, but it has prompted meaningful change. Codifying the plan into law will help ensure that women's inclusion is a focus no matter who sits in the White House. It will enable Congress to exercise its oversight role and send a clear signal that this is a foreign policy priority.

Second, Congress can make small investments that pay big dividends. For example, last year for the first time, Congress ensured dedicated funding for the recruitment, retention, and professionalization of women in the Pakistani police force. Women constitute about 1 percent of those police forces and their absence has a tremendous negative impact on the ability to stabilize communities and counter violent extremism.

This year we hope Congress will maintain its support and dedicate at least $5 million more for these efforts as was specified in the Senate spending bill last year. To put this in perspective, this is a tiny, minuscule fraction of overall U.S. spending on terrorism, with significant and disproportionate results.

Third, ask targeted questions at every hearing, particularly of nominees. Imagine if a potential appointee was asked how the principles of the U.S. National Action Plan are reflected in his or her priorities. Even the fear of simply being caught without an answer would prompt meaningful reflection.

And fourth, as the chairman and his staff apparently referred to earlier, when holding hearings related to international crises, peace, stability, and security assistance, be sure to invite a significant number of female experts. Brookings did a study last year looking at the 45 congressional hearings on the Iran deal over 1 year. Out of 140 named witnesses, only six were female. And as one creative pundit pointed out, that demographic breakdown is strikingly similar to that of Iran's own Parliament.

The evidence could not be clearer. When women are included societies are more stable. We can't afford for this to be an afterthought. As a member of our network from Afghanistan recently said, the world talks about including women; the extremists are already doing it. By convening this hearing, Congress sent a powerful signal of bipartisan support to the millions of the women around the world who are seeking a voice and a role. The legislative action that I hope will follow would be a meaningful declaration that their work is valued and that the U.S. Congress stands behind them. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. O'Neill follows:]

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs

HEARING:
"Women Fighting for Peace: Lessons for Today's Conflicts"
Tuesday, March 22, 2016

Testimony submitted by
Jacqueline O'Neill
Director, The Institute for Inclusive Security

Chairman Royce, you've put a crucial topic squarely on the agenda of one of the most prominent committees in Congress. Thanks to you, Ranking Member Engel, and all committee members for your commitment.

For more than 15 years, the Institute for Inclusive Security, led by Ambassador Swanee Hunt, has increased the inclusion of women in peace and security processes around the world. All that we do is driven by the thousands of members of our global Women Waging Peace Network. Together, we work on current conflicts, in countries affected by war, and with policymakers in the US, other governments, NATO, the UN, and beyond.

Vivid Realities
"Women Fighting for Peace." This topic has always been rich with anecdotes.

We hear about centuries-long traditions of women mediating between warring clans in Somalia and Afghanistan.

We listen to pioneers like Betty Bigombe of Uganda, Monica McWilliams of Northern Ireland, and so many others, who fought resistance at every step of their path to the peace tables where decisions affecting *their* lives were made.

We're told tales of Liberian women physically blocking the doors until the negotiating parties agreed to stop the violence, and stories of Arab women mobilizing hundreds of thousands to rise up against repressive regimes, only to be told that it's just not their place to reshape the country afterward.

A few months ago, Afghan women witnessed the subtle recruitment of young men into violent extremist groups *at weddings*. When they reported it to a government minister, he laughed condescendingly, saying, "The militants we're fighting are much too sophisticated to recruit at a wedding!" A month later, those same young men killed 32 civilians on a bus.

The Evidence
There are thousands of stories just like these—yet, for decades, as we've asserted that women play vital roles in ending war and building peace, we've been told, "Prove it." Now we can.

There's a compelling, robust body of quantitative data to make the case. Here are a few things we now know.

The Institute for Inclusive Security

1. **Women get warring parties to negotiations, help reach agreements, and contribute to sustainability of those agreements.**
   A new study by the renowned Graduate Institute of Geneva looked at 40 processes in 35 countries and found that when women's groups were able to influence a peace process, an agreement was reached almost 98% of the time. The same research shows that more often than any other participating group, women urged parties to sign peace deals.[1]

   Analysis of an even larger data set showed that a peace agreement is 35% more likely to last at least 15 years if women participate in its creation.[2]

   Why is that? The data tells us.

   Women expand the conversation beyond a narrow discussion of where borders are drawn and who gets to control minerals and oil. They introduce priorities that lay a foundation for a stronger state in the long term—for instance, addressing the abuse of police power or political exclusion. Ensuring food security. Reintegrating those who took up arms and now need jobs. Forgiving neighbors who killed neighbors.

   Women are also uniquely connected to their communities. A round of peace talks for Darfur once ground to a halt because the parties (many of whose leaders were living in exile) couldn't agree about who would control a certain river. Then women, who were serving as technical advisers, walked in and said, "That river? That river dried up years ago!"

   Women are also key to gaining public support for negotiated settlements. Agreements are typically reached by the very parties that drove the conflict in the first place and, as such, they're often rejected by the people. Data shows that women's meaningful inclusion increases the perception of legitimacy of the process and improves the likelihood that otherwise disaffected communities will accept the agreement.[3]

   One of the few women who participated in the negotiations that led to Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 told me, "Our leaders knew they needed us [women] to sell the agreements back at home. We took it to villages and explained what self-determination meant and how eventually we would be able to vote on whether or not to separate. Women later made up the majority of voters (52%) in the referendum."[4]

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[1] Based on the multi-year research initiative led by Dr. Thania Paffenholz, "Broadening Participation in Political Negotiations and Implementation" conducted at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies' Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding. See also "Beyond the Normative: Can Women's Inclusion Really Make for Better Peace Processes?" by Dr. Paffenholz, April 2015.
[2] Statistical analysis by Laurel Stone, as featured by Marie O'Reilly, Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, and Thania Paffenholz in "Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes," International Peace Institute, 2015.
[3] Theresa de Langis, "Across Conflict Lines: Women Mediating for Peace; 12th Annual Colloquium Findings," Washington, DC: The Institute for Inclusive Security, 2010.
[4] Statements by Dr. Priscilla Nyanyang Joseph Kuch, Deputy Minister of Gender, Child and Social Welfare for South Sudan, interviewed by Jacqueline O'Neill, April 19, 2013, Washington, DC. Voter turnout data by the European Union Election Observation Mission to the South Sudan Referendum, released January 17, 2011.

The Institute for Inclusive Security

2. **The ways war is waged and peace is built are changing fast.**
   In many ways the peace table itself is disappearing. With the rise of non-state actors, splintered opposition movements, and terrorist groups, getting parties to the negotiating table is ever more challenging. Fortunately, women are already improving security in innovative ways that don't rely on formal processes.

   They're urging party leaders to talk to each other. Colombian women are largely credited with laying the foundation that led to the country's current, and so far largely successful, peace talks.

   They're mediating conflicts at local levels. It may sound hard to believe, but some women in ISIS-controlled territories in Syria have negotiated to re-open schools.

   They're also on the front lines of violent extremism. This is an area where, often, we hear only about women's roles as mothers and their ability to identify early signs of radicalization in their sons.

   The reality is that women play a complex range of roles—from fighters who join groups, to community leaders who provide alternatives to extremist propaganda, to women in security forces who put their lives on the line to reduce corruption, rebuild deep-seated mistrust, and develop genuine relationships between police and communities.

   Beyond impacts on violent extremism, research tells us that women's inclusion in the security sector, particularly in law enforcement, plays a major role in the stabilization of communities and reduction of human rights abuses committed by security forces.[5]

3. **Engaging women in decision making is not something we do for them, but for all of us.**
   Harvard researchers found that the single biggest predictor of whether or not a country would go to war with itself or its neighbors is not its GDP, its level of democratization, or its ethnic or religious affiliation—it's how well its women are treated.[6]

   A former U.S. ambassador and senior administration official points out that states that respect and engage women are less likely to traffic in drugs, weapons, and people. To create or harbor terrorists. To enable criminal networks. To generate refugees. Even to suffer pandemics. Ultimately, these countries are also less likely to need U.S. boots on the ground.[7]

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[5] Lonsway et al., "A Tale of Two Genders: A Content Analysis of Civil Liability Cases, Sustained Allegations and Citizen Complaints," The National Center for Women and Policing, April, 2002.
[6] Valerie Hudson, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Mary Caprioli, and Chad F. Emmett, *Sex and World Peace* , New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
[7] "Building on Success: A New Agenda on Women, Peace, and Security," presentation by Donald Steinberg, President, World Learning, at the Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M, September 11, 2015.

The Institute for Inclusive Security

Smart Policy, Inconsistent Practice
It's clear that women's inclusion is both a rights agenda *and* a national security imperative.

The U.S. devotes tremendous resources—precious lives and limited treasure—to ending war, promoting democracy, and countering terrorism. The impact of those investments can be enhanced by focusing them on women's inclusion in peace and security processes.

In short, it's about making the money we spend abroad more effective, and ultimately needing to spend less of it to achieve our goals.

Perplexingly, we also know that despite all of this evidence, the practice of meaningfully including women in decision making related to peace and security is wildly inconsistent. It's still far too dependent on the will of individuals.

Presidents, high-level officials, lead negotiators, and others can largely choose to ignore the imperative, or frighteningly, even take steps backward. What's more, they face absolutely no negative consequences for doing so.

I heard a story last week that illustrates this point precisely. U.S. Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power recalled a briefing at the Security Council. The UN's then newly-appointed Special Envoy to Yemen was describing the objectives for his first deployment, and indicated the meetings he planned, including some with civil society and women's groups. Ambassador Power recounts that one Council member said: "Meeting with women? But you have so little time. Maybe if there weren't a war on…." At home and around the world, there's still a prevailing perception that women's inclusion is a "nice to have," not a "need to have."

Only four percent of people who have signed peace agreements since 1992 have been women.[8] The numbers are even worse when it comes to women in security forces. In the Middle East and North Africa, women make up two percent of police forces.[9] In some places, they're less than one percent. Even in the United States, women make up only about 12 percent of law enforcement.[10]

Consider every foreign delegation trip by members of this committee. You've no doubt met with national security directorates, ministries of defense, cabinets, and foreign affairs specialists. How many were women in leadership roles?

A False Choice
There's more rhetoric on this topic than meaningful change. Well-meaning people explain that they believe it's important, but simply can't make it one of their top priorities when a war is raging.

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[8] UN Women, "Facts and Figures: Peace and Security," March 2016. http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures#notes
[9] "Gender Sensitive Police Reform in Post-Conflict Societies", Policy brief by UN Women, revised October 2012.
[10] Kevin Johnson, "Women move into law enforcement's highest ranks," *USA Today*, December 2, 2015. http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/08/13/women-law-enforcement-police-dea-secret-service/2635407/

That's a fundamental misunderstanding – and a false choice. Engaging women is essential to achieving each of the top priorities, and to ensuring long-term progress, not just short-term gains.

At the U.S. Institute of Peace, Vice President Carla Koppell uses a business analogy, saying that it's time to take this concept from "retail" to "wholesale," making it part and parcel of the way we do business.

How can Congress make that so?

First, pass the bipartisan Women, Peace, and Security Act to codify the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security.

The National Action Plan is a whole-of-government strategy to integrate women's inclusion in all aspects of U.S. diplomacy, defense, and development.

It sets out "the course the U.S. Government will take to accelerate, institutionalize, and better coordinate our efforts to advance women's inclusion in peace negotiations, peacebuilding activities, and conflict prevention; to protect women from sexual and gender-based violence; and to ensure equal access to relief and recovery assistance, in areas of conflict and insecurity."[11]

While there remains much to be done, since the plan was created in 2011, we've seen positive impacts.

The National Action Plan has provided guidance for diplomats around the world, changes in reporting obligations for foreign assistance programs, and improved coordination of funding for women, peace, and security efforts and operations in many parts of State, USAID, and DoD.

There have even been unexpected positive impacts on the ground. In Sierra Leone, the State Department supported for a local women's leadership network. When Ebola broke out, women used the network to gather community leaders and health care workers. They made vital recommendations that became standard operating procedures, such as increasing women's roles in burial management (a common form of transmission); empowering local community members to trace contacts and provide psychosocial services; and elevating community leaders to bridge deadly communication gaps between districts and the national government.[12]

Codifying the Plan into law will help ensure that women's inclusion will be a focus no matter who sits in the White House.

[11] United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, December 2011.
[12] U.S. Department of State, "Implementation of the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security," FY2014.

It will enable Congress to have more information to exercise its oversight role. Last year's Omnibus Appropriations Bill included a new requirement that the Administration report to Congress on the implementation of the National Action Plan. These reports shouldn't be a one-off. The Women, Peace, and Security Act includes a provision for regular reporting, which would enable Congress to hold agencies accountable for the actions they committed to undertake, and to see early signs of deviation.

And, it would be a clear statement from Congress that women's inclusion is a foreign policy imperative.

Second, appropriate funding.

Many of the needed changes won't cost money, but some require more. In several cases, we're talking about more responsibly spending the money we're already dedicating. For example, last year, for the first time, Congress appropriated dedicated funding for the recruitment, retention, and professionalization of women in the Pakistani police forces.

Women constitute about one percent of those forces, and their absence has a tremendous negative impact on the ability to stabilize communities and counter violent extremism. It's important that support continue and that more specificity is provided in funding language to ensure at least $5 million to support training programs, recruitment campaigns, infrastructure projects, promotion reforms, and more.

Our team has had the opportunity to work Pakistani women leaders for the past six years, including most recently with uniformed police officers. These tiny investments are badly needed to increase the numbers, rank, and overall impact of women police. This $5 million represents approximately 10% of the total budget request for law enforcement and narcotics programs in Pakistan this year, and is part of the funding we are already spending there. And, an even tinier—actually miniscule—fraction of overall U.S. spending on counterterrorism.

From support for women's inclusion in the Syria negotiations to the recruitment of women in the Afghan National Security Forces, Congress should ensure its appropriations bills provide needed financial support in places where women's inclusion is severely lacking. This is about smart spending and big dividends.

Third, insist that members of every congressional delegation trip meet with female community and government leaders.

Members will gain valuable insights as well as signal women's importance to national and U.S. governments alike. In the same vein, members should prioritize meeting with the many delegations of women who, each year, travel from conflict-affected countries to Washington, DC, to share insights and recommendations.

Fourth, when holding hearings related to international crises, peace, stability, and security assistance, be sure to invite female experts.

They will contribute unique knowledge and expertise, yet are now grossly represented. A recent study by Brookings looked at 45 congressional hearings on the Iran deal over the past year. Out of 140 named witnesses, only six were female. As one analyst noted, this demographic breakdown is strikingly similar to that of Iran's parliament.[13]

Organizations like ours stand ready to assist Congress in identifying leaders at home and abroad. There's simply no substitute for hearing directly from women living in areas affected by conflict, yet their voices are seldom sought.

Fifth, ask targeted questions at hearings, particularly of nominees.

Imagine if every potential appointee to a position of influence in diplomacy, defense, or development was asked at a confirmation hearing how the principles of the National Action Plan are reflected in his or her priorities. Even the fear simply of being caught without an answer would prompt meaningful reflection and preparation by candidates and agencies that support them.

Opportunities Ahead

The evidence could not be clearer: when women are included, peace lasts and societies are more stable. Particularly as the nature of war continues to change, we can't afford to think of women's meaningful inclusion as an afterthought. As a member of our Network from Afghanistan said recently: "The world talks about including women; extremists are already doing it."[14]

By convening this hearing, Congress sent a signal of bipartisan support to the millions of women around the world seeking a voice and a role. The legislative action that I hope will follow would be a meaningful declaration that their work is valued, and that the United States Congress stands behind them.

[13] Suzanne Maloney, "Talking about Tehran on Capitol Hill should not be a boys' club," Brookings Institution, *Markaz* blog, January 29, 2016. http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/markaz/posts/2016/01/29-iran-hill-testimony-women-maloney?cid=00900015020089101US0001-01301

[14] Remarks by Wazhma Frogh at "Collaborative Approaches to Global Security", Washington, DC, October 15, 2015.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Ms. O'Neill. The first question I would ask, in our first hearing in this series we learned about ISIS' horrific use of sexual violence to devastate families, to devastate communities, but the Assad regime's, the prisons, are notorious also for the unbelievable level of rape and torture. We had Caesar, the military photographer who documented some of this, testify here. So you have thousands and thousands of Syrian women who have been imprisoned in those jails, in Assad's jails, many simply for organizing aid deliveries or rescue operations that defied Assad's blockades.

So Ms. McWilliams, you have been helping to train Syrian women who are now participating in this latest round of the U.N. brokered talks. In a traditional society like Syria where even the suspicion of rape can break families apart, can you speak a little about the importance of women's inclusion to address the long term effects of widespread sexual violence in conflict?

Ms. MCWILLIAMS. Thank you very much, Chairman. And let me give you a picture of what it was like last month when I was with the women and word came from Riyadh that there may be some detainees going to be released as a confidence building measure in order to get the talks started.

And so we asked the women to sit down and consider which women would be on a list if they were to be released, and therein lay the first problem. There was a documented list and a non-documented list. And the women started to argue about whether they could switch some of the women who were undocumented because their parents had come to the women and said to them, we do not want anyone to know that our daughters are inside Assad's prisons because when they get out this will be an issue of their honor.

And so the women had to carefully negotiate that night which women would go on the list and be sent back as a confidence building measure before the talks would start that a number of them would be released, both women and children. And that for me coming from a different culture was a real lesson.

And so the issue of sexual violence is horrendous. There were women in the room who had experienced sexual assaults and who had been raped in all male prisons, and who couldn't speak. And they also said other women and got up and expressed their solidarity toward them and apologized to them and said, we are so sorry that you were left alone, but again we and the community were told not to single you out in case this word came out that you were there.

So you can see the difficulties, Chairman. And this is what I meant when I was giving my testimony about the differential impact of conflict on men and women's lives.

The other issues that we are facing are in the refugee camps. The women were telling us that in some of these camps ISIS were trying to take the camps over. They were incredibly courageous, incredibly resilient, and they were refusing to let that happen. There were some concerns about the Sharia courts being used to make judgments on very young girls who they knew to be raped and so that was also an issue.

But what they are doing, and I think it is incredibly important, and what we did too, was they are documenting all of this so that

these human rights violations will be on the record. There should be no impunity for such incredible sexual violations and they are making sure that one day if transitional justice comes about that these issues will get the priority, which in the past, as you know in the Second World War they did not.

Chairman ROYCE. Yes. Ms. O'Neill, although Ms. Bigombe was not able to join us today, I know you are familiar with her very successful work with Ugandan women to encourage a large number of defections from the Lord's Resistance Army where Joseph Kony had captured children, the girls were concubines, the boys were child soldiers for him and his lieutenants.

I find this kind of community outreach very compelling and potentially very relevant to other conflicts in which it is very clear that we need to be smarter about countering this kind of extremist recruitment, for example, al Qaeda or ISIS in particular, or Daesh. Can you speak a little more about what these kinds of initiatives mean in terms of the untapped potential for women in many places where we are trying to counteract this terrorist recruitment that is underway?

And I would afterwards ask Mr. Abbas for any insights, any comments he might have as well.

Ms. O'NEILL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. You referenced Betty Bigombe's work. Briefly to describe, for example, one of the things that she did, she organized groups of women to write letters to LRA combatants, to LRA soldiers, explaining what would happen to them, what services would be available to them, what programs they could access were they to voluntarily demobilize, come out of the bush and rejoin their communities. They handwrote these letters and they had their female members, wives, friends deliver them directly.

So Betty organized a group of other women to do this. They did so in a way that appeared non-threatening, non-political, no one assumed that they were doing anything scary because they were a group of women organizing. They created these letters, delivered them, and as a result, 2,000 members of the LRA voluntarily demobilized. Can you imagine the cost savings and the savings in human lives from that not being a military action or a forced demobilization? And that is exactly the type of creative solution that women around the world are using.

Women that we speak with and work with around the world talk about the importance of having women in all aspects of decision making regarding government and other programs aimed at countering violent extremism so that women are not viewed solely as victims who need protection or the provision of services from the state, but who are also providers of services and who have agency in their own, noting to us that one of the ways that some women are actually attracted to these violent extremist movements by false promises of agency, of being a lioness in some senses, of being targeted for the opportunity to make a change or a difference, and so the importance of providing an alternative narrative for hope for a role in determining their country's future, et cetera.

And the more women you have engaged in the upstream program design and upstream thinking, including in security forces, the

more women you will have are going to be affected and actually, authentically, reached by these outreach efforts. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. Mr. Abbas.

Mr. ABBAS. Sir, as reference to both the points, I would substantiate that with some examples, especially from the case of Pakistan and also from Iraq. But in the case of Pakistan, for instance, we know that when in one case Swat, Swat where the militants had taken what, around 2009, if you remember, we knew that they were about 100 miles, one hard drive from Islamabad.

And that whole episode of the rise of extremism and militancy was studied, and we came to know that some of the militants in that area, Fazlullah, who is now head of the Tehrik-I-Taliban Pakistan, or Pakistani Taliban, he was specifically targeting women because he was using his radio transmissions during the daytime when he knew full well that men are mostly out in the farms or in the field and that he would inspire somehow women who were at home who were listening to the radio. It took, I mean, the research came out 3 years later because no one was—and there was a group of women who were actually involved in finding that out.

So that substantiates the point that even when it, in these cases where extremists and terrorists and radicals try to use all channels available, somehow in the case of South Asia, if it is women whether they were human rights activists or whether they were from the law enforcement or security agencies—security agencies when I am saying, I am thinking again because there are so few, but those who are in the civil society.

Civil society in Pakistan and Iraq has played an important role also. An example, recently we had a young woman from Iraq, actually, who came to the College of International Security Affairs at NDU and spoke about how her father was a Shia and mother was a Sunni, and how she was working in Iraq now to bring both the sectarian groups together.

So there is a lot of evidence. It is an issue of empowering them. And if I make this quote in brief, one of my colleagues, a British police officer who I have quoted in statement in length, she had said we often forget that we talk about equipping them and we talk about empowering them, but it is also about at the end of the day enabling them. And that enabling role is mostly in the hands of men, whether it is about toward the extremism or the other side. So we have to focus on the enabling part. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Well, and girls like Malala. Thank you, Dr. Abbas. We go now to Mr. Sherman, the ranking member.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you. Ms. O'Neill, what role have women played in the current Colombia negotiations and what difference does it make?

Ms. O'NEILL. Thank you. So women have played roles on all sides of the conflict in Colombia for decades. One of the least known aspects of the current round of negotiations is that women were very instrumental in getting the parties to the talks. So in the pre-talks phases we pay a lot of attention to the talks that are largely deemed right now as successful, we hope there will be a ceasefire announced soon, women, to use an unfortunate metaphor, set the table, for those talks to get parties there and have kept them there for some time. So women have been members of both

negotiating delegations, as well as women in civil society have played a broad range of very important roles surrounding the talks.

So, women in civil society advocated for those present at the talks, all of the negotiators, to hear directly from victims of the conflict. And to our knowledge this is the first time that any round of negotiations has heard testimony where both sides of the talks heard directly from those most affected by the war about their experiences and about their hopes. It was women in civil society who are instrumental in providing and ensuring the voices of victims were directly spoken and heard by the negotiators.

They also formed what is called the Gender Subcommission, again the first commission of its type at any negotiation to take all of the topics on the table and address and examine whether or not there is a different impact for men and women. And that is important for all of the reasons that Betty and Hassan mentioned, and also for an additional reason which is that the FARC in Colombia is composed of about 40 percent women.

So the Colombian military, for example, has about 1 percent, the FARC has about 40 percent women. So when we are talking about the next stage of demobilizing paramilitaries and bringing them back into communities, typical programs of reintegration we see time and again around the world discount the fact that there are women present and they do things like train them to be hairdressers or seamstresses. And we are talking about women that have commanded platoons and battalions, fought in the jungle and carried weapons.

And so women around those tables, women designing those programs directly are going to know exactly what it is going to take to get women out of the FARC and back into communities in a meaningful way. So in conclusion, their response and their impact has been substantial.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you. Dr. Abbas, I have been trying to understand Pakistan for 20 years. You describe a Pakistan that one time elected Benazir Bhutto and ignored or discounted the fatwa against her gender, and of course there are a lot of people who voted against her for reasons that had nothing to do with her gender.

Now I see a Pakistan in which girls are attacked for going to school, those who try to punish their attackers are attacked, and those who attack are glorified. Has Pakistan changed or have these very different views on the role of women been there and had substantial support for decades?

Mr. ABBAS. Thank you very much for that question. I will be candid. I saw Pakistan drifting toward extremism in a very step by step fashion, from the Afghan jihad years onwards, and I will not go into that history. You know that better than me.

But that changed Pakistani dynamics. When militants from 30, actually 40 different countries, exactly the way it is happening with ISIS today, when those militants from all across the world came in, Pakistan housed them. And thinking they would use them in the Afghan jihad, when the U.S. was on board, Saudi Arabia was funding, everyone, and but they forgot the Pakistani security establishment, especially that those people who were performing those roles had an internal agenda as well, which was a radical, extremist,

non-democratic, non-pluralist Pakistan. And those forces, who for instance all the religious parties together could never win more than 8 or 9 percent of the vote ever, but then there was one stage on which they became very powerful.

I would argue one of the reasons why that happened, and this is honestly and frankly not very much discussed in, I would say, U.S. policy circles, the idea of authoritarianism and military dictatorships, which, if I may take liberty, Musharraf, General Musharraf, I worked with him, great man. His heart was in the right place. But the damage that his authoritarianism did to Pakistan was also irreparable.

So it is Pakistan's involvement in conflicts, Pakistan's entrenched rivalry with India, in which they think anyone who is fighting in India is doing a freedom fight. And how all those people have radicalized Pakistan. And then, last but not least, these authoritarianism issues and no investment in education. And when I say "no," it is less than 1 percent investment.

So with all the carryover bill, and carryover Burman bill contributions, which I think was one of the best things we did, the trend toward extremism in Pakistan has been growing faster than what we were from outside investing or what the Pakistani progressive elements were doing. The progressive elements were sidelined because Pakistan was derailed from democracy. I think these are the three very critical factors. With the continuation of democracy, people like Benazir will become powerful.

Mr. SHERMAN. I will try to sneak in one more question. We have Voice of America, we have Public Diplomacy, is there anything we should do to more effectively reach women? I will ask Ms. McWilliams and Ms. O'Neill.

Ms. MCWILLIAMS. Well, you have just heard from the panel about disarmament and demobilization. The third piece of that is reintegration. And I am now specifically involved in trying to reintegrate ex-paramilitaries, ex-combatants as partners to our peace process.

But too often, and you have just asked earlier about Uganda, what I saw in Gulu in front of me was that when the combatants and the child soldiers came back, they were the ones who got the reparations and the women got nothing. And they were the mothers of the children who had been taken away as concubines. And it was shocking for me to watch this.

And I learned a lesson that these women are survivors and not just victims. They are in my own process agents of change. But too often they are bypassed. After peace agreements are reached, the reintegration focuses entirely on the man and not on the women.

So if the Voice of America and Diplomacy and the United States was to continue to focus on transition from conflict to peace, it would be to put resources and investment and intention on the women in those post-conflict processes and not to exclude them and leave them out in the cold.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. Mr. DeSantis.

Mr. DESANTIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. O'Neill, in some of these societies where women haven't been afforded opportunities to serve in high positions of government, how do you convince some of the negotiation organizers that they have something to offer?

Are there alternative qualifications that can be stressed and how do we make sure that those voices can be heard?

Ms. O'NEILL. Thank you. First thing is that I try not to convince them, I let the women themselves convince them. And there is never a shortage of women who will speak up for their own interests and their own desire to have a decision or a say in the decisions that affect their own lives. So the most important resource that we all have available is the women within countries affected by war who are at the front lines already calling for their change, and our objective is to amplify their voices.

You asked about alternative qualifications and that is an interesting question because, first of all, many women themselves don't recognize the qualifications that they have to be part of those conversations. So they are connected to their communities. They have a unique ability to bridge divides between warring groups and disparate parties. They have an ability to reach compromise and consensus. They are constantly negotiating and seeking middle ground.

These are the skills and the talents and the qualifications that we need most around negotiating tables, whereas we have a system right now that tends to reward those only who took up arms, so those who did the very challenging work during a war and will do the challenging work of rebuilding it afterwards are perceived as not having the right qualifications. So what can we do to get them there is, number one, recognize that and ask the women in every country in which we are working how we can best support them.

And also to Mr. Sherman's earlier question, what can we do, what voice, how can we use this voice? Many people look to what the United States says diplomatically for guidance of what is important or what are priorities, and when the U.S. is speaking about it, when it adopts a national action plan, when it codifies it into law, the U.S. is making a clear statement that women's inclusion is not an add-on or an afterthought, but that we see it as core to actually achieving all of the rest of our foreign policy objectives and that it is not something that can be culturally discarded or left in the hands of only a few people, but it is something that matters to us.

So in all of our strategic dialogues, Pakistan-U.S. strategic dialogue, pre-negotiations with the Taliban in Afghanistan, anywhere else we have significant high-level negotiations or contact, our most senior diplomats, and not just women but men too, should be raising this issue and emphasizing to all of our partners the importance of women's voice for the exact purpose of their being able to enhance the sustainability of any agreement that is reached.

Mr. DESANTIS. Thank you. Ms. McWilliams, can you tell us a little about your experience in Northern Ireland, was what you were doing effectively implemented after the Good Friday Agreement was reached?

Ms. MCWILLIAMS. Well, the women were credited in Northern Ireland at the immediate stage post the agreement being signed of going to the people in a referendum. And my recollection in memory is it was the women who took to the streets. We had got these buses and we put our kids on the buses, and we went around the

country to every village and we knocked on doors and we begged people to say yes for the future.

And when I looked around I wondered, where are all the political parties who should be out doing the same job as what we are doing? And of course the political parties were back in their offices getting ready for the election, and it was women who were out on the streets and villages every day for 6 weeks. And we did get to yes.

And so that is always the role that people expect of women is to be the people behind the scenes doing the work on the streets and in the villages. But I was disappointed after our agreement. I am still one of those who think our process worked, and thank God it has all these years later, but it was the women who went backwards.

Conflict does an amazing thing to me as a woman. I was an ordinary woman who fell into extraordinary times and was asked to do extraordinary things that I never thought in my life I would be asked to do, and we did it. And after the agreement was over, like women everywhere in the world we were told, okay, now we have settled the government arrangements, we have got all of these, you can go back to what you were doing before. And we lost out.

And that is why in answer to Congressman Sherman's earlier question about diplomacy. That is where we needed the United States and the champions from the United States to continue to say these clauses were also in the agreement about the role of women in political participation. Where is the timetable for that? You were able to release all of the political prisoners 2 years after the agreement was signed, how come you couldn't increase the role of women in political life? A much easier thing to do you would think than releasing people from jail. It has still not been implemented.

So that is where for me the U.S. diplomats came in and we had U.S. special envoys. From the Republican side we had Paula Dobriansky, and earlier the first lady came and pushed all the time, as did the first Ambassador under President Obama, Melanne Verveer as the Ambassador for Global Affairs. And these roles are incredibly important.

And the last thing I would say on this is I learned so much from my experience that I am now giving this experience to others who are in the same process as the women in Colombia and the women in Syria and anywhere else, because this also was something America did for us. NGOs enabled us to go and speak to women in other transitions, and the people who know best about those experiences are the women who have been through it themselves, like me.

And so again, the United States was incredibly important because we didn't have the resources, we didn't have the finances, and that is where that role was important and still remains important where we can exchange our lessons from our own conflicts with women all over the world.

Mr. DESANTIS. Well, thank you for coming. I really appreciated your testimony, and I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. Mr. Connolly.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the panel for a fascinating set of conversations. It is interesting to note,

Ms. McWilliams, on your last point that the last three Presidents, including the current President, have each chosen a woman to be secretary of state, our number one diplomat, who have traveled all over the world and at the U.N. in conflict situations, in negotiating in diplomatic situations.

It would be interesting to think back on that at some point, did that serve as a change agent? What changed, if anything, by having a female face, an American female face in front of lots of different cultures that would find that difficult to accept in their own cultural milieu?

Ms. MCWILLIAMS. Well, let me tell you how important it was, and I have met all three secretaries of state. All three of them at different stages, actually, have been in Northern Ireland. For such a small country we attracted a great deal of attention——

Mr. CONNOLLY. I have been there myself.

Ms. MCWILLIAMS [continuing]. Good—and for which we are very grateful. But it did make a difference. When we went to the peace table, Congressman, we were told the only women that should be at that table are the women who are going to polish the table. We were told to go home and breed for the country. We were insulted. We started an insult of the week notice board and we hung it outside our office, and we put the person who was making the insults' name on the door or on the board, and the insult, and eventually it stopped.

But it definitely stopped when women from the United States in these high-ranking positions came into the country and said this behavior is not acceptable. They didn't, in diplomacy, actually call it that, but they told us that they would encourage us to challenge it, they are behind us, they would stand in solidarity with us.

And I now hear from some of those high-ranking women that they have saved women's lives in the countries that they have been in. When we get a photograph standing next to them, suddenly we are elevated into a position that we never were before, and that is so important.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Well, good god, Ms. McWilliams, imagine if we actually elected one a President. But that is a different thought.

Dr. Abbas and Ms. O'Neill, I am really struck by your testimony because—I wonder if you would address this. I am struck with the fact that the cultural barriers in some places are so enormous to the point where a figure we would point to, a feminist, a self-confident, accomplished professional woman here, is actually seen as in very disparaging terms through a cultural filter in some other places, and all kinds of Western stereotypes imagined about who this person is and as a justification for, frankly, putting her or women in that cultural milieu in their place.

And here is my question to you both. How do we overcome that without ethnocentrism on our own part? We make value judgments about what we consider subjugation, the non-empowerment, but in a different cultural setting that is the proper role. And how do we address this to further the empowerment of women and to finally take advantage of the productivity of half of humanity?

Ms. O'NEILL. Thank you. First, we have to be extremely careful who we allow to define culture. So do we let the Taliban in the year 2000 define culture? Do we let the Afghan women who have fought

so very hard on their own merit for the last 16 years to define culture? We have to look inside the culture at the various forces within it. And I think one of the most dangerous things that we can do is take a surface look at culture, believe we understand it, and then end up supporting really those who have a vested interest in preserving the culture or more realistically preserving power.

Then what we have to do is ask women within those communities and that has to be an authentic conversation, it can't be a 45-minute meeting one time only, but to ask them how to support them. So in my perspective, culture informs tactics, it doesn't inform our fundamental values. So if we believe that it is a value, equal treatment is a value, an opportunity that women have a right to do that and that women's presence is actually an investment on our part, then it is upon us to ask how we can do that; how we can work with those women in a way that makes the most sense.

And to keep in mind that the entire, this whole issue is not something that originated in the West. Even at the United Nations, the topic was first brought up by countries from the global south, from Rwanda, from Bosnia, women who had lived in the war, who had these vital experiences of being on the front lines of stopping the conflict, of building communities, putting them back together, et cetera, and then they are the very ones who sometimes hear, often from Western policymakers that it is against your culture for you to be around this table.

So we have to listen to the women saying allow us to define our own culture, our own changing culture, to recognize that war changes culture, and to allow us to assume the role that we want to play for ourselves. I don't want to diminish the importance of doing this carefully and with great respect, but to simply say that it is culturally inappropriate or it is culturally fine for certain practices to happen in some place versus another, when in fact it is against what we fundamentally stand for and value and that we know is to be efficient, isn't an effective argument.

Mr. ABBAS. Congressman, I would mention three things that first come to my mind, and the examples are in one case beginning from Pakistan. For instance, there is in many—when I say Pakistan, I mean it to be South Asian states and many Middle Eastern states. It is the common feature of their cultural notions that women are not seen in roles of national security or as police officers or as even intelligence officers, or who are coming out defending their nations, defending their societies.

And that role, two or three examples tell us, can change very quickly. Indonesia: In Indonesia what they did very smartly was they started appointing women as judges of what they call Islamic courts, and that had a huge impact. More women started coming out, the scene started to change. Turkey did the same thing in their policing sector.

In the case of Pakistan, before Benazir Bhutto, I think there were hardly any women who you could mention who were playing any important role, but now whether it was an Ambassador from Pakistan, Sherry Rahman, who is Ambassador to U.S., Maleeha Lodhi, who is currently Pakistani Ambassador to the U.N., and so many experts from the human rights side. On security, security ex-

pertise has been developed because that one agent of change inspired and motivated so many others. And so anything we can do to support that. For instance, my question is one, when the counterterrorism money was given to Pakistan and other countries that was somehow always tilted toward the very, very military side of things. We never talked that law enforcement; but the criminal justice system can actually help defeat extremism or militancy. Then when we started thinking about it and started giving money to the law enforcement forces, women's issues or their representation was never the priority it is now becoming, thanks to all of you.

But one more point very briefly I want to touch upon and that is, I say it as a proud Muslim, but in Middle East and South Asia, many Muslim countries, something has gone terribly wrong with the religious education spectrum. And even though in Muslim history I can mention so many women, there is one, just one I will mention, because I think and I heard from Benazir Bhutto that she was inspired by that Muslim figure. Although if I today do a survey and ask in the Middle East—with all the due respect, I have great friends there, I go there all the time—if I ask them about any historical Muslim figure who had done or played a prominent role, probably they will come up with very few names.

One name, Zaynab. Zaynab was a granddaughter of the prophet, but she had taken a stand against Yazid. Yazid was a caliph, a Muslim caliph of 7th century. She challenged him against his oppression, singlehandedly her whole family, this is related to Karbala, where Husayn was killed and buried. That is why all the people go to those shrines.

But the message of Karbala Husayn or that biggest tragedy was not propagated through men, it was done through a woman named Zaynab. And if I ask today most Muslims about it, the tragedy is, yes, the Sufis would know, the Shias would know, most Muslims would not be able to tell me this prime example of leadership. So something has gone wrong in those cultural religious issues as well.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I must thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. The gentleman's time has expired. Without objection, would please to recognize Congresswoman Ann Wagner.

Ms. WAGNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the committee, also, for their focus on women fighting for peace, including the ranking member. It is good to be with you, Mr. Sherman, also.

I thank the chairman for his kind invitation. I had the great privilege of being a woman diplomat as a former United States Ambassador. I am committee-crashing from the Foreign Services Committee at the moment, but I have done that on several occasions with the Committee on Foreign Affairs. And I want to thank all of you for being here today to discuss what is proving to be a very difficult process, I believe, in Syria, and I would like to delve into that a little bit more.

In preparing for today's hearing, I was struck by the research and how it demonstrates that the inclusion of these noncombatant civil society actors in peace negotiations—specifically today we are speaking about women—how it decreases the odds of a return to conflict by I believe the number that was quoted was 64 percent.

I have to say as a former woman diplomat, it is an imperative that we be at the table on, I believe, all issues of the foreign policy peace process. It is imperative in terms of the success of the negotiations, but perhaps even more important and duly noted here today as a pre-talk process that we play, but most importantly selling the policy and the peace back at home. That I think is a very important thing for us to do.

And Ms. O'Neill, in your testimony you talked about some of the indicators, some of the reasons why women are so successful in these kinds of negotiations. And I would submit here for the record that we are successful because we do it because we don't care who gets the credit at the end of the day. We are doers who just want to get the job done. And one of the most specific takeaways is that the extremists are doing it already. So we must catch up.

And then Dr. Abbas, I have to say that I have had the privilege and continue to come back and work in leadership roles as a woman in business, as a party chair in politics for a number of years, as a former United States Ambassador, and now as a Member of Congress because I too see, to quote your words, "the hope in the eyes of other women," in America's daughters. But perhaps more importantly, I see the increased level of respect and understanding in the eyes of America's sons. I have two sons myself and a daughter, and they will talk about my being a role model to my daughter, when, frankly, I think I am a more important role model to my two sons.

Speaking as such, I am also, speaking of one of those sons, a proud mother of a United States Army captain who has served in combat in the Middle East, and I am very interested and, frankly, very invested that a peaceful solution to the Syrian civil war be found, not only for what this means for the Syrian people and their struggle, frankly their genocide in many ways, but also for what it means for the American people too.

So Ms. McWilliams, can you talk a little bit about your efforts to create the linkage between the formal peace process and the women civil society advocates on the ground in Syria?

Ms. MCWILLIAMS. Thank you very much for that question. The interesting process that is going on in Geneva at the moment not only has a civic society parallel forum, it also has a women's advisory board parallel forum. And then inside the opposition coalition there are three woman delegates amongst the 15, and amongst the regime there are three woman delegates. And the opposition coalition formed an advisory committee of 15 women.

So for me it is definitely setting a precedent of the acknowledgment that women have in that process from civic society, but also women being able to be participants inside the United Nations process that is currently being run at some of the talks.

And one of the things that I concentrated on was some of the issues that you raised earlier around culture; that the women need to prepare themselves for a new constitution and they should not allow forced marriage to return at the age of 13. And they are stateless if their husbands die, and many of them are now widows and they can't pass on statehood to their children because it is not allowed as women.

And if those women were not at the table, if they weren't inside the process, those issues would, I suspect, not be prioritized in the agenda and perhaps forgotten about once the agreement was signed. Statelessness for you and me would be incredible and to not be able to pass that on to our children, and given that so many men have lost their lives this is a very real issue. And there are many other issues like that which we already touched on.

So these are political issues, there is no doubt in my mind. We used to say in our process that the women were expected to put the small p on the table, but this is the big p, and these are big p political issues that need to sit alongside what always gets concentrated on if only the ex-combatants are at the table, which is release of prisoners, which is security sector reform of the army and the police, criminal justice reforms. All of those are exceptionally important, but for sustainability of peace, which is what you have just——

Ms. WAGNER. Right.

Ms. MCWILLIAMS [continuing]. Referred to, that is where the women become crucial.

Ms. WAGNER. And that, Ms. McWilliams, is what you talked about in terms of the reintegration effort that must be a part of keeping the peace; and that women, if they are at the table, must be a part of that reintegration process. And I do hope that to the extent that the West is involved and certainly the U.S. that we can serve in a greater capacity in elevating that in terms of the sustainability.

Chairman ROYCE. The gentlewoman's time has expired. The chair will now recognize Mr. Bera.

Mr. BERA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for this hearing, and I certainly want to thank the witnesses.

Here in the United States this is Women's History Month, and when we look at great women throughout our history whether it is Eleanor Roosevelt, Rosa Parks, or Harriet Beecher Stowe who President Lincoln credits with very much ending slavery in the United States, we still have a long ways to go in our own country to elevate the role of women. If we think about it, women are over 50 percent of the population in America, over 60 percent of the undergraduates, over 60 percent of the masters degrees, yet less than 15 percent of the CEOs in the United States are women, less than 5 percent of CEOs at Fortune 500 companies are women. Here in our own politics in Congress, less than 20 percent of the congressional membership are women and only 10 percent of the governors around the country are women. So we have a long ways to go.

Without getting political, can I ask the witnesses what their opinion would be of the public perception if the United States of America was to elect the first female President of the United States? How would the world perceive this?

Mr. ABBAS. I think that would be fabulous, number one. I think that will have a huge impact. In terms of and irrespective of the politics, I mean, the mere fact that a woman—and this is often asked. Bangladesh has the leader of the House who is the President, the Prime Minister, the leader of opposition who becomes Prime Minister, both of them women. India, Indira Gandhi, Pakistan of course, Kosovo, there are so many other countries, Israel.

There are many other countries who have produced amazing women as heads of state. Why not the United States? That is, we often hear discussion.

I think, yes, it is recognized that women's empowerment—that the way it is happening in United States—is unparalleled also. I mean that is recognized. I think what was mentioned was so true. It is an issue of respect that women get as equals, and that there is no doubt that the U.S. is recognized for that. But political positions, I think they also have an impact. The message will be very strong in itself if that happens.

Mr. BERA. And just to play on that, within the Muslim world you touched on, Dr. Abbas, the fact that women are not often given a seat at the table, et cetera, if just the symbolic nature of the leader of the free world being a female in negotiations and so forth, do you think that elevates the role of women and empowers women?

Mr. ABBAS. I think most certainly. I would say when Secretary Clinton at the time she had visited Pakistan, she was the first outside leader who walked into Pakistan into a shrine which was of a very famous saint. Those pictures, if you Google U.S.-Pakistan relations, that picture still come up, very right up front.

So this impacts. I think most of the countries, I am thinking more of the more recent states, they will have to cease to think about it. Probably they will have to appoint a few senior people, so this will have a cascading impact, I think.

Mr. BERA. Right. Ms. O'Neill.

Ms. O'NEILL. So certainly I think the number one qualification has to be someone being qualified. They have to be able to fulfill their role. Fortunately there are 3.5 billion women in the world that I am quite certain that at least one would be qualified to assume the leadership of any major country or organization.

And I do think the symbolism matters tremendously, symbolism that is not token symbolism, but symbolism that is a signal of what the country values. And people outside of this country are extremely smart. They see, they understand when something is token or when something is sort of a patch to hide something else versus when something is a signal that there is authentic change in a country and that there is a pipeline of women coming up at all levels and all ranks and in all fields who are not just one top leadership, woman in top leadership, but a pipeline of women who are going to be positioned to serve in a whole range of areas. So it does send a powerful signal, yes, and it is noted.

Mr. BERA. Ms. McWilliams.

Ms. MCWILLIAMS. Most certainly, because I know the former first lady and secretary of state personally, and believe it or not we again are such a small country that she has come back time and time and time again and to make sure that our peace process kept going. And the whole country, whether or not they agree ideologically with the politics of the Democrats, absolutely agreed that this was a tremendous thing that Hillary Clinton did. And should she become President, again I think it would speak volumes.

But again I agree with the panel that it is not just the face and the tokenism, it has to be the politics. The person has to walk the talk alongside women who have struggled. Otherwise they don't speak the same language and they are simply there as an oppor-

tunistic position, and I don't believe that in her stature that she has done that. She has walked the talk and she doesn't just make it out that it is for political reasons or for votes, although that may also be part of it. And I think it would be a tremendous symbol to the world to have someone like her become President.

Mr. BERA. Great.

Chairman ROYCE. The gentleman's time has expired. Without objection, I recognize Congresswoman McSally.

Ms. MCSALLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for holding this hearing today on this really important issue, and thanks to the panelists for your expertise.

For my background, I was in the military 26 years. I was a fighter pilot in the first group of women to do that and first to fly in command in combat. I have long advocated in the U.S. that women need to be fully included into our security structure. I have long advocated that we need to be picking the best men for the job, even if it is a woman, across the board.

My last military assignment was at Africa Command, and in addition to my responsibilities in operations I was asked to help Botswana integrate women into their military for the first time, and did some other engagements in Swaziland, Lesotho, and in fact my last week in active duty was in Sierra Leone addressing some of these issues. I had never heard about a U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 in my military career.

I was a professor after that at the Marshall Center, and as we started addressing some of these issues with our colleagues and our partners in other countries is when I started to understand like, oh, we have got this thing out there that I have been living and advocating for, but I didn't realize that the U.S. really was paying little attention to it.

I was excited to see that we were finally coming up with our national action plan, and quite frankly, when we finally rolled it out I was shocked to discover that our focus was arrogantly on how we are helping other countries without looking internally and realizing at that time we didn't even allow women in all positions in our military, for crying out loud. That we were talking about how we are going to help other people, while we still had a long way to go both in our military, our security forces, in Congress—I mean, give me a break. We need to set a better example across the board.

So I ended up lecturing on this. I went to OSCE meetings. One of the frustrations is that it seems like only women were interested. And unless we can get men to realize that this is not a women's issue, this is a security issue, and women must be at the table, which you all know well, then we are speaking in an echo chamber. So this hearing helps certainly to raise awareness.

The second issue is you all know there is good examples that we have seen where lasting peace and security have been a result of women's full engagement, and we have bad examples, like Angola comes to mind, where it wasn't. In the military we often talk about lessons learned, I say they are lessons identified. They are not lessons learned until they are actually learned.

And so I really have two questions. One is, what can we be doing more as the United States to be not just providing lip service to this issue? I mean, again we have our own internal issues, but as

we are dealing like the current negotiations right now, the ones that come to mind are Syria and Afghanistan you have talked about, what more should we doing as the United States to demand that women must be at the table?

I am leading a codel of all women to Afghanistan in May, second year in a row. What else should we be doing in demanding that women be at the table because it is a security and lasting peace? And number two, where have we actually learned the lessons? Where have they been lessons learned versus lessons identified in our current contemporary negotiations? I would just go down the panel, starting with Ms. O'Neill.

Ms. O'NEILL. What more you can do. First, within Congress, give the National Action Plan legislative authority, so pass the bipartisan Women, Peace, and Security Act to ensure that that National Action Plan cannot be set aside by any future political leader.

Secondly, you talk very specifically about how some of this guidance or these directives aren't actually part of the DNA of our security institutions yet. That is often very much a reflection that the value of women's contributions is not understood as an issue of operational effectiveness, as you said of national security.

So speaking in those terms, raising those issues, raising that vocabulary and having, as you also said, senior male military leaders speak about the value and the importance of having women at all levels and at all ranks in the U.S. armed services is essential. It cannot be an issue of only women speaking to other women about doing this for women. It has to be senior men and women talking about the value to the mission of having women fully integrated.

What can you do about negotiations? Be vocal. There is absolutely no reason in the United States, that any negotiation in which it participates, cannot say we will not have a meeting, we will not sit down unless there are 50 percent females present.

There will be challenges along the way, but negotiations are a very sticky, very difficult thing. And the U.S. perhaps more than any other body actually has the moral authority or sort of the actual authority to do so. So making it a clear priority and raising it at every single interaction that we have.

I will let Monica speak to some of the lessons learned. I think she will probably address some of the Syria case. But there are instances slowly, slowly where we are applying some of these lessons, but we are also, I think, identifying some lessons from conflicts in Afghanistan and also where we are operating in exceptionally conservative societies and then applying those lessons, unfortunately, in other contacts where they may not even deserve to be applied, so we have to be careful in both ways.

Ms. MCSALLY. Great. And unfortunately my time has expired, so I do, I look forward to following up with all of you on some of the other questions on how we can be more helpful as specifically related to my trip to Afghanistan as well, so thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Congresswoman McSally. I want to thank our excellent panel today. I thank you for your significant contributions on this important subject, and also I just wanted to convey that the committee looks forward to working with you on

a path forward to address many of these issues. And so at this point the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:17 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Record

FULL COMMITTEE BRIEFING & HEARING NOTICE
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Edward R. Royce (R-CA), Chairman

March 22, 2016

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN briefing and hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov):

DATE: Tuesday, March 22, 2016

TIME: 10:45 a.m.

SUBJECT: Women Fighting for Peace: Lessons for Today's Conflicts

WITNESSES: Her Excellency Monica McWilliams
Professor of Women's Studies
Transitional Justice Institute
Ulster University

Hassan Abbas, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Regional and Analytical Studies Department
National Defense University

Ms. Jacqueline O'Neill
Director
The Institute for Inclusive Security

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day *Tuesday* Date *3/22/2016* Room *2172*

Starting Time *10:52* Ending Time *12:17*

Recesses [*0*] (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Edward R. Royce, Rep. Salmon

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session [✓]
Executive (closed) Session [ ]
Televised [✓]
Electronically Recorded (taped) [✓]
Stenographic Record [✓]

TITLE OF HEARING:

Women Fighting for Peace: Lesson's for Today's Conflicts

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

See attached.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Wagner, Rep. McSally

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes [✓] **No** [ ]
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

IFR - Chairman Edward Royce
IFR - Rep. Eliot Engel

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *12:17*

Jean Marter, Director of Committee Operations

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

PRESENT	*MEMBER*
X	Edward R. Royce, CA
	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL
	Dana Rohrabacher, CA
X	Steve Chabot, OH
	Joe Wilson, SC
	Michael T. McCaul, TX
	Ted Poe, TX
X	Matt Salmon, AZ
	Darrell Issa, CA
X	Tom Marino, PA
	Jeff Duncan, SC
	Mo Brooks, AL
	Paul Cook, CA
	Randy Weber, TX
	Scott Perry, PA
X	Ron DeSantis, FL
X	Mark Meadows, NC
	Ted Yoho, FL
X	Curt Clawson, FL
	Scott DesJarlais, TN
	Reid Ribble, WI
	Dave Trott, MI
X	Lee Zeldin, NY
X	Dan Donovan, NY
X	Ann Wagner, MO (non-committee member)
X	Martha McSally, AR (non-committee member)

PRESENT	*MEMBER*
	Eliot L. Engel, NY
X	Brad Sherman, CA
	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
	Brian Higgins, NY
	Karen Bass, CA
	William Keating, MA
	David Cicilline, RI
	Alan Grayson, FL
X	Ami Bera, CA
	Alan S. Lowenthal, CA
	Grace Meng, NY
	Lois Frankel, FL
	Tulsi Gabbard, HI
	Joaquin Castro, TX
	Robin Kelly, IL
	Brendan Boyle, PA

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE EDWARD R. ROYCE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

March 22, 2016

The Honorable Ed Royce
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Chairman
2170 Rayburn
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eliot Engel
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Ranking Member
B360 Rayburn
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel:

As a woman with twenty-five years of hands-on experience in conflict resolution, who has participated in a number of peace talks and mediated one of the world's most brutal and longstanding conflicts, I write today to tell you with certainty that the inclusion of women in conflict prevention, resolution, mediation, negotiation and peacebuilding processes is an essential element to achieving sustainable and lasting peace.

The conflict in northern Uganda lasted 23 years. During the brutal Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency, civilians were murdered in mass, millions were displaced, and children were recruited as soldiers. Like many other violent conflicts, this war had its origin in the colonial history of Uganda: tribalism, disparity in development, and marginalization (inequality in distribution of social infrastructures). I was therefore asked by the government to go to live in the conflict region, (one third of the country was affected by the conflict), and try to persuade parents and families of the combatants to lay down their weapons. I was not to negotiate. But on realization that the war was causing lots of deaths, destructions and untold suffering and the end was not anywhere in sight, I decided to persuade both the government and the Lord's Resistance Army to agree to a negotiated settlement. It is also out of my conviction that negotiated settlements bring sustainable peace because it gives opportunity to address the underlying causes of the conflict.

In my capacity as a government official and then later as a chief mediator, I was intimately involved in the efforts to bring peace to my country. It was not an easy task, but I was resolved to secure a solution. In 2004, despite the fact that prospects were bleak, I organized the first ever face-to-face meeting between Ugandan government representatives and the LRA, along with traditional leaders, women, and youth. This initiative, which later became known as the "Bigombe 2 Initiative," paved the way for the peace talks that took place in Juba and eventually resulted in the peace agreement which still holds my country together today.

Based on this experience, I would like to highlight some key lessons learned for the inclusion of women in peace and security efforts. I have found that women are often very pragmatic when it comes to getting their sons, brothers, and husbands to lay down arms. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, I had the honor of meeting and working with a number of courageous and resourceful women in the internally displaced people's camps in northern Uganda. These women carried out the footwork for another initiative I had

developed to strategically target rebel combatants and provide them with incentives to defect from the LRA. The plan was clear: I drafted letters assuring them of physical security and the provision of resettlement kits, which were then delivered by the women to their loved ones involved in the fighting. Within the span of two short months, through persuasion and sheer perseverance, our letter-writing initiative resulted in approximately 2,000 rebels defecting and returning to the camps. It was an incredibly simple, yet effective, plan—and one which reduced the size and capacity of the LRA without any military showdowns or bloodshed.

In the late 1980s, when few other Ugandans dared to speak out, countless women joined together in peaceful demonstrations against the war. During the peace talks, a coalition of Ugandan women trekked for five days to Juba, carrying a "women's peace torch" and calling for inclusive negotiations. I deliberately encouraged women to speak out to be heard, looked for facilitation so that they could participate. We have now seen women mobilize in similar ways in Liberia, South Sudan, and beyond.

The message of these dedicated women, is clear: Our involvement in peace processes is pivotal. In fact, within the context of negotiation, being a woman can actually bring about an entirely different type of communication dynamic. When talking to the leader of the LRA, Joseph Kony, and other commanders, for example, I was granted the special status of 'Mother,' which, in the African cultural context meant that I had earned a certain respect. This enabled me to assume an almost parental tone of authority with them—one which was both reprimanding and hard-lined, and yet not perceived as threatening. As a result, I could be bold and condemn the atrocities they were committing. This proved very strategically useful. This approach, if taken by a man, may well have been interpreted as aggressive or combative, and might not have been as effective.

Women's perspectives broaden the scope of the peace process to a more forward-looking approach focused on the security and needs of communities. In my experience, a woman's vision of peace is far more comprehensive and expansive than simply the cessation of violence. Ending hostilities is obviously crucial, but to succeed in the post-conflict transition to a peaceful, stable, and prosperous society, basic issues such as education, health, social service provision, justice, and community reconciliation must be taken into account. For example, the people of northern Uganda were lagging behind in education and looked at soldiering as the job they could do and consequently it was very easy to lure them to fight a war they did not understand. That is why women must be included from the start of negotiations, and throughout the critical implementation phase.

Belligerents often use negotiations as a way to discuss and exact demands, seeking to guarantee their own interests in the final agreement. When women are included, they tend to bring broader community needs to the table. In Uganda, for example, it is the women who tirelessly and successfully lobbied to create a victims' compensation fund. It is women who spearheaded the movement to ensure that the definition of 'ceasefire' included halting gender-based violence by combatants. Overall, it is a people-centered approach that women tend to advocate, with a focus on rebuilding the fundamentals of society that are key to achieving a sustainable peace.

Addressing needs, particularly survivors of sexually-based violence, is one of the most compelling reasons why women's voices in peace talks are so critical. From South Sudan to the conflict in Syria, horrendous sexual violence continues to be disproportionally committed against women as a tool of war. And violence against women does not stop in times of stability. In fact, the World Health Organization estimates that about "1 in 3 women worldwide has experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime."[1] As the majority of the impacted population, women must be involved in devising gender-appropriate responses to these issues during peace negotiations and in the institutions established by the agreement in order to create effective strategies to prevent and address these atrocities.

This also includes considering the needs of female ex-combatants, who are often the most invisible victims in these types of conflicts. In Uganda, countless young women—many of them merely girls—were abducted by the LRA and forced to serve as sex slaves (the common term here is "bush wives") and domestic slaves, cooking and cleaning for rebel commanders. They were also expected to perpetrate violence. Commanders sent young girls to their own communities to kill or loot—even victimizing their own family members in some cases—thereby foreclosing the possibility of return. We have seen this happen in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Sudan, and we are seeing the same being done by extremist groups like Boko Haram today.

As a result, when the conflict begins to wind down, women end up facing dual rejection—first by their so-called "bush husbands" and then by their own families and communities. The public health and security consequences of this are far greater than may be readily apparent. These women are often forced to turn to prostitution, for example, where they risk increased exposure to HIV/AIDS.

Female ex-combatants are likewise neglected within the context of post-conflict disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs. Many of these girls have become child mothers as the result of rape and sexual slavery. The psycho-social rehabilitation required—not only to restore the girls' dignity or to reintegrate them into a society where they face stigma and ostracism, but to transform them into productive members of society—is enormous and complex. While the UN Security Council has affirmed that "the different needs of female and male ex-combatants…and the needs of their dependents" should be taken into account during post-conflict planning, much remains to be done in order to make this a concrete reality.[2]

In October 2000, the then-UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said: "When society collapses, women play a critical role in ensuring that life goes on. When ethnic tensions cause or exacerbate conflict, women tend to build bridges rather than walls." Increasing women's participation in building peace and security, often called the women, peace, and security agenda, is rooted in the premise that women's inclusion—their presence,

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[1] http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/
[2] https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement

participation, and perspectives—is both a basic human right *and* an important contributor to sustainable peace.

We've made much progress on this agenda but much more needs to be done. Despite US and international stated commitments, women continue to be marginalized in conflict prevention, resolution, negotiation, mediation, and peacemaking processes. Yet in many places around the globe even when they are systematically excluded from formal processes, they are risking their lives to create peace in their communities, including serving as powerful forces in the fight to countering violent extremism. My experience and the experience of other women in peace processes demonstrate why women's inclusion must be top of the US foreign policy and security agenda.

In many ways the United States has acted as a leader in helping move the women, peace, and security agenda beyond rhetoric. Your government's invaluable assistance through multilateral partners and non-governmental organizations, as well as through the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Endowment for Democracy, has demonstrated a commitment to increasing women's political participation, economic opportunities, education, and their role in civil society, in many regions of the world. These measures represent a good beginning but we can and should be doing more to elevate women into decision-making around peace and security. We should ensure that more women are given prominent roles in peace making processes; empower grassroots women to support their communities.

I conclude by emphasizing that pressure for more effective implementation of the women, peace, and security agenda must be kept up. Time is of the essence. The public health and security implications of the failure to deal with these issues in a meaningful fashion are real, present, and urgent. There are many obstacles yet to overcome, but I believe a clear, firm, consistent, and timely effort from the United States will make a considerable impact on increasing the substantive participation of women in the prevention of conflict and in peacemaking processes, thereby contributing to the achievement of sustainable solutions to serious and complex conflicts.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Betty Bigome
Mediator and Former Ugandan Minister for Water

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE BRAD SHERMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, FOR THE HONORABLE ELIOT L. ENGEL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

House Foreign Affairs Committee
Hearing on Women Fighting for Peace: Lessons for Today's Conflicts
March 22, 2016
Statement for the Record Submitted by Rep. Eliot Engel
On the Behalf of Rep. Jan Schakowsky

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member for allowing me to provide a statement for this hearing.

The United States is currently working to end conflicts all over the world, including the effort to end the current crisis in Syria. However, in recent history, peace agreements and peace processes have fallen apart at an astounding rate. Part of the reason for these failures is the failure to include a broad range of stakeholders, particularly women, at the negotiating table. In the Democratic Republic of Congo and in South Sudan, ongoing violations of human rights, particularly affecting women, undermine all efforts to bring about a lasting peace.

We also know the opposite is true. I am thrilled that Ms. Bigome and Ms. McWilliams can speak to the successes that they have seen in with the inclusion of women in the peace processes in Uganda and Northern Ireland.

Women and girls are disproportionate victims of war and violence. As we move forward with efforts to prevent violent conflict, it is crucial to ensure that women are also equal partners as decision makers. We know that the more women are able to have a voice in the political process, the more we are able to counter the spread of violent extremism and work against the propaganda forces of groups like ISIS.

In 2011, the President announced the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. The National Action Plan makes clear that the meaningful inclusion of women in peace and security processes is imperative for our national and global security. Research and experience has shown that when women and girls are equal partners in all aspects of decisionmaking – whether it be at the peace table or in government – countries are more likely to experience peace and prosperity. The National Action Plan also provides the foundation for trainings conducted by Foreign Service Officers as well as conflict and violence prevention efforts.

However, the actions from the Administration are not enough. I plan to introduce legislation to further support the meaningful inclusion of women in political and peace processes, and I hope to gain the support of many members of this committee. My bill will enable Congress to exercise oversight over full implementation of the National Action Plan, including requiring the Administration to report annually to Congress on efforts to encourage women to take roles as mediators and negotiators.

I thank the Committee again for bringing attention to this important subject, and I look forward to working with you to advance the meaningful inclusion of women in efforts to create peace and security.

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