

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2018*

## **Statement on International Women's Day**

*March 8, 2018*

On International Women's Day, we celebrate the many incredible contributions made by women of all ages in the United States and around the world. We honor the vital role of women in our communities, businesses, civil society, and government. And we reaffirm our Nation's commitment to ensuring that every person has the opportunity to succeed.

Despite some recent progress around the world, too many women still face tremendous barriers to participation in all aspects of life. This must change. Women are critical to economic growth and global stability. When women are empowered, communities and entire nations thrive.

Over the past year, my administration has championed the creation of international initiatives to promote women's economic empowerment. Through the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi), we are working to improve access to capital for women entrepreneurs in the developing world. With the formation of the Canada-United States Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders, we are engaging with the private sector to reduce barriers to women's participation in business. And through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation's new "2X Women's Initiative," we are mobilizing \$1 billion for investment into projects that support women in emerging markets.

Moreover, I have worked with Congress to enact policies that encourage American women to pursue careers in the international arena. In October, I signed the Women, Peace, and Security Act, which promotes the participation of women in conflict prevention and postconflict peace efforts around the world. Involvement in these efforts will provide women with important opportunities to use their skills and abilities to mediate difficult situations and to keep our country safe.

Today my administration is launching USAID's WomenConnect Challenge. In an increasingly connected world, women are lagging behind in access to the internet. In fact, 1.7 billion women in low- and middle-income countries around the world remain unconnected today. The WomenConnect Challenge will help women in these developing countries gain access to the digital technology that is so foundational for productivity and participation in the global economy.

My administration is also supporting women in the United States by empowering them to continue driving the success of our Nation. In 2017, the Small Business Administration increased capital loans to women-owned businesses by more than \$575 million.

Through these and many other initiatives, we seek to empower women of all backgrounds to achieve their economic potential and shape our world. As we mark International Women's Day, we remain committed to the worthwhile mission of enhancing women's leadership in the world and building a stronger America for all.

*Categories:* Statements by the President : International Women's Day.

*Subjects:* Business and industry : Women business leaders, promotion efforts; Civil rights : Women's rights and gender equality; Foreign policy, U.S. : Peace efforts, expansion; Holidays and special observances : Women's Day, International; Small Business Administration.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD201800149.