



## United States Mission to the OSCE

# **U.S. Statement for the Forum for Security Cooperation Security Dialogue: UNSCR 1325**

As prepared for delivery by Ambassador Michael Carpenter  
to the Forum for Security Cooperation, Vienna  
June 21, 2023

This year, 2023, marks the 75th Anniversary of the formal integration of women into the U.S. Armed Forces. While this is still recent history, we are proud that more than three million women have served in uniform, going back to the start of the American Revolutionary War in 1775. It took another nearly 200 years until Anna Mae Hays became the first woman promoted to the rank of Brigadier General in the United States, and it was 2008 when Ann Dunwoody became the first woman to reach the rank of four-star general.

On the diplomatic front, women have served as U.S. diplomats since 1923, when a young suffragette named Lucile Atcherson was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the first woman career foreign service officer. More than a quarter century later, in 1949, President Truman appointed Eugenie Anderson as our first woman U.S. Ambassador. Madeleine Albright was the child of a Czechoslovak diplomat who sought asylum in the United States in 1948 following the communist takeover in Prague. After earning a doctorate in political science from Columbia University and working on political campaigns and on the National Security Council Staff, she was appointed as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and later, in 1997, she became the first woman to serve as U.S. Secretary of State. Now, after 100 years of women in U.S. diplomacy, women comprise over 40 percent of our total U.S. diplomats and ambassadors around the world.

While still a work in progress, the full integration of women into our armed forces and diplomatic corps has made our military and State Department stronger and our nation safer and more secure. The contributions of women in our military and diplomatic services have moved our nation closer to the vision of full equality and representation, reinforced the power of unity around our shared values, and underscored that the United States, as a nation, becomes stronger and more effective when we draw on the diverse talents of those who heed the call to serve.

Despite women's contributions to preventing and resolving security challenges, countering conflicts, and building resilient communities, they still are targets of harassment and violence and are consistently underrepresented in decision-making institutions and processes aimed at preventing conflict, and building peace and security. The U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security, required by the WPS Act, and released in 2019, seeks to close this gap in leadership by mobilizing U.S. diplomacy and programs, engaging partners, investing in women's safety and rights, and amplifying the voices of women leaders and organizations. The U.S. Strategy and National Action Plan (NAP) on WPS will be updated and released this year, and will include integrating gender mainstreaming in arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation for the first time in U.S. history.

Madam Chair,

In our efforts, we are not checking a box or meeting some quota. We are ensuring meaningful participation of women – by which I mean “having both access to and influence over decision-making processes related to conflict, crisis, and security.” Meaningful participation by women leads to better and more sustainable outcomes — not only for women, but for entire communities and countries.

Now, in the context of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, women’s full, equal, and meaningful participation in leadership and decision-making roles is more vital than ever. The world is deeply inspired by Ukrainian women from all walks of life – soldiers and citizens – who are bravely defending their nation against Russia’s unprovoked and brutal war of aggression. Over 57,000 Ukrainian women have joined the military and are fighting on the front line, while others organize supply and logistics operations to provide boots, uniforms, and other supplies fighters need. They are training to locate and de-fuse the hundreds of thousands of explosives that Russia’s soldiers have left behind.

We honor their service and their sacrifices. Earlier this year, Secretary Blinken announced Yuliia “Taira” Paievska as a 2023 recipient of the Secretary of State’s International Women of Courage Award in a White House ceremony hosted by First Lady Jill Biden. She was recognized for her extraordinary moral and physical courage in secretly filming and smuggling out videos documenting the atrocities committed by Russia’s forces in Mariupol. Despite her clear non-combatant status, Russia’s forces detained Paievska on March 16, 2022, as she attempted to evacuate women and children from Mariupol to Zaporizhzhia. For three months, Paievska was imprisoned in a tiny cell with 22 other women, enduring torture and beatings. And yet, as we heard in this Forum on May 10, the Russian delegation cynically and falsely maligned her as a fascist and a war criminal. But Paievska refused to be silenced, and since her release has advocated vociferously for Ukrainian democracy and independence both at home and abroad. Simply put, she is a hero.

Throughout Ukraine’s history, women like Paievska have played a critical role in the fight for freedom and sovereignty, and they continue to do so today. Ukrainian women of all backgrounds are consistently on the front lines of security and military affairs, government action, civil society activism and support to vulnerable and displaced populations. We recognize, respect, and applaud the power of women’s leadership in Ukraine. Because we know when women are meaningful participants in leadership and decision-making spaces, we are all better for it.

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