



**United States Mission to the OSCE**  
**U.S. Statement for the**  
**Forum for Security Cooperation**  
**Agenda Item 1: Women, Peace, and Security**

As delivered by U.S. Assistant Secretary Mallory Stewart  
September 28, 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

My name is Mallory Stewart, and I am the Assistant Secretary for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance (AVC) at the U.S. Department of State.

The United States would like to thank the Belgian Chairpersonship for their leadership and for organizing this Security Dialogue and demonstrating the FSC's ongoing commitment to the topic of Women, Peace, and Security. I am honored to be here to provide these comments.

The equal participation of women and men at all levels of the security sector, the integration of diverse gender perspectives, and the empowerment of women in the fields of arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation are of particular relevance right now and for all the issues that we have been discussing on this distinguished panel. While it is critical to continue to work on these issues due to the limited level of representation that women have traditionally had in these fields, an increased focus on engaging perspectives of women in the security sector is particularly important now while our global security is increasingly challenged. So what is the United States doing on this important topic? The United States was the first country in the world to have a comprehensive law on WPS, the WPS Act of 2017. We published the U.S. Strategy on WPS in 2019, which was subsequently followed by implementation plans from the Departments of State, Homeland Security, Defense and USAID in 2020.

Our U.S. Strategy on WPS reinforces U.S. commitments to promoting the safety of women and girls in conflict and crisis and the meaningful participation of women in efforts to prevent conflict, deescalate tensions, and promote strategic stability and peace. The WPS Strategy (2019) and Implementation Plans describe the way forward on integration across the U.S. government, engagement with partners around the world, ways to promote the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women at all levels of national and global security, and ways to

measure the impact of these efforts. Most recently, in July 2022, Congress released its second report on WPS. This report highlighted the government-wide accomplishments, but most importantly, it identified the gaps in our progress and outlined the opportunities to address those while we continue our WPS efforts.

Among the accomplishments listed in this year's report are:

- The United States Joint Staff and Combatant Commands conducted a total of eight Operationalizing WPS training programs this year, training approximately four hundred personnel to serve as Gender Focal Points (GFPs), and 30 personnel qualified to serve as Gender Advisors (GENADs). These gender advisory personnel are responsible for advancing the implementation of WPS across the Department of Defense.

- The Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military Implementation Roadmap provides guidance for WPS-specific initiatives to strengthen collaboration within the Department of Defense and to identify resource requirements for full-time equivalent Gender Advisor billets. These efforts represent unprecedented attention to the importance of alignment between our commitments to promote women's meaningful participation in our own force and with partner nations.

- The Joint Staff adapted the Department of Defense gender analysis framework to align with the Department of State and USAID gender analysis frameworks, enhancing coordination across the United States Government in support of WPS. There is progress to be proud of, but much more remains to be accomplished.

The United States supports WPS policies and National Action Plans globally through partnerships, training, and technical assistance on Plan development, including with international organizations based in Europe, such as NATO, OECD, and the OSCE.

Mr. Chairperson and distinguished colleagues,

Unfortunately, today's discussion has become particularly relevant due to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Subject to the brutality of Russia's invading forces, the women and children of Ukraine have seen precious little of stability or security over the last seven months. Russia's large-scale violence has

wrought death and destruction to the civilian population. Evidence is mounting of Russia's forces committing horrific acts of conflict-related sexual violence against women, girls, and men and boys. Ninety percent of the seven million refugees fleeing Russia's violence against Ukraine are women and children.

At the same time, as we have heard from this distinguished panel, Ukrainian women also serve heroically on the frontlines of this conflict, support communities under siege, and are helping turn the tide of Russia's war of aggression. Women comprise around 15 percent of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and substantially contribute to the Territorial Defense Forces defending their homeland.

As we know, women and girls have diverse roles when it comes to serving as agents of change in preventing escalation and resolving conflict and building post-conflict peace and stability. And this is an extraordinarily complicated topic, as we have heard from our panelist. But evidence shows that when people with diverse backgrounds and experiences spanning across gender, race, and socioeconomic status are included in the decision-making process, efforts to promote peace and security are longer lasting and more stable. In the future, women of all backgrounds in Ukraine will be sorely needed as integral parts of the solution to assist in their country's recovering from this unprecedented humanitarian crisis. But for this to happen, Russia must end its unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against the women, men, and children of Ukraine.

Thank you.