

## **Mission Statement and Operations of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Caucus:**

**Preamble:** Globally, conflict and disasters disproportionately affect women and girls. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the majority of refugees and displaced persons are women and children. Additionally, a significant number of impacted family households are headed by women. Longstanding societal inequality and pervasive violence against women and girls undermine democratic development and regional stability around the world. The promotion of active, meaningful roles for women in all aspects and levels of their communities advances inclusivity, democracy, and long-term stability within societies. These policy goals enshrined in the Women, Peace and Security Act (Public Law No: 115-68) and the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 are critical to the global peace and prosperity of future generations.

**Mission of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Caucus:** The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Caucus seeks to ensure that the WPS goals stated in the Preamble are considered national security and foreign policy priorities for the United States in our bilateral and multilateral relations, discussions, and agreements. The Caucus will provide a congressional platform to raise awareness on issues related to WPS priorities, educate both Members of Congress and the public on WPS policy initiatives, exercise Congressional oversight of implementation of the WPS National Strategy, and explore WPS issues related to specific conflicts around the world.

**Operations:** The Co-Chairs of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Caucus will direct the Caucus in a bipartisan fashion to engage all Members of Congress interested in the implementation of the WPS framework and the policy goals mentioned above. As directed by the Co-Chairs, the WPS Caucus will hold educational public and private briefings and events to explore two main areas of interest:

- I. **The Operational Implementation of the WPS Agenda by the United States, Foreign Governments, and Multilateral Institutions:** This area of activity will concentrate on the institutional implementation of the WPS Strategy. In particular, this workstream will explore the following questions: 1) How are U.S. governmental, foreign, and multilateral entities coordinating, prioritizing, and implementing the WPS Agenda? 2) How can Congress ensure that the WPS agenda is an integral part of the overall conflict and atrocities prevention strategy of the United States and foreign governments? 3) How can Congress support and strengthen these entities? 4) How can Congress ensure WPS priorities are formally integrated into our national security assessments? 5) How are best practices and 'lessons learned' flowing back into our WPS National Strategy?
- II. **Conflict-specific Implementation:** This area of activity will explore the implementation of WPS strategies in specific conflict areas and regions. In particular, this workstream will explore the following questions: 1) How is the WPS agenda prioritized by the United States and other governments bilaterally and through multilateral entities in the context of a specific conflict? 2) How are women empowered to meaningfully participate in key decision-making processes within national governmental structures, civil society, and humanitarian organizations throughout all stages of a specific conflict? 3) How can women exert influence to counter violent extremism in their specific communities? 4) How are WPS priorities implemented in international Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP) or in any peacekeeping missions? 5) What practical lessons were learned in each instance of WPS implementation?

In doing so, the WPS Caucus will actively seek the input, participation, and attendance of national and international civil society organizations, regional representatives, and policy experts. The Caucus will fully comply with all House Ethics Rules and, to the greatest extent possible, appropriately open its proceedings to the interested public and media. The WPS Caucus is open to all Members and promotes the collaboration on WPS issues among both chambers of Congress.