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(Original Signature of Member)

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R.

To ensure that the United States promotes the meaningful participation of women in mediation and negotiation processes seeking to prevent, mitigate, or resolve violent conflict.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. NOEM introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To ensure that the United States promotes the meaningful participation of women in mediation and negotiation processes seeking to prevent, mitigate, or resolve violent conflict.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Women, Peace, and
5 Security Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) Around the world, women remain under-
2 represented in conflict prevention, conflict resolution,
3 and post-conflict peace building efforts.

4 (2) Women in conflict-affected regions have
5 achieved significant success in—

6 (A) moderating violent extremism;

7 (B) countering terrorism;

8 (C) resolving disputes through nonviolent
9 mediation and negotiation; and

10 (D) stabilizing societies by enhancing the
11 effectiveness of security services, peacekeeping
12 efforts, institutions, and decision-making proc-
13 esses.

14 (3) Research suggests that peace negotiations
15 are more likely to succeed and to result in durable
16 peace agreements when women participate in the
17 peace process.

18 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

19 It is the sense of Congress that—

20 (1) the meaningful participation of women in
21 conflict prevention and conflict resolution processes
22 helps to promote more inclusive and democratic soci-
23 eties and is critical to the long-term stability of
24 countries and regions;

1 (2) the political participation, and leadership of
2 women in fragile environments, particularly during
3 democratic transitions, is critical to sustaining last-
4 ing democratic institutions; and

5 (3) the United States should be a global leader
6 in promoting the meaningful participation of women
7 in conflict prevention, management, and resolution,
8 and post-conflict relief and recovery efforts.

9 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

10 It shall be the policy of the United States to promote
11 the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of
12 overseas conflict prevention, management, and resolution,
13 and post-conflict relief and recovery efforts, reinforced
14 through diplomatic efforts and programs that—

15 (1) integrate the perspectives and interests of
16 affected women into conflict-prevention activities and
17 strategies;

18 (2) encourage partner governments to adopt
19 plans to improve the meaningful participation of
20 women in peace and security processes and decision-
21 making institutions;

22 (3) promote the physical safety, economic secu-
23 rity, and dignity of women and girls;

24 (4) support the equal access of women to aid
25 distribution mechanisms and services;

1 (5) collect and analyze gender data for the pur-
2 pose of developing and enhancing early warning sys-
3 tems of conflict and violence;

4 (6) adjust policies and programs to improve
5 outcomes in gender equality and the empowerment
6 of women; and

7 (7) monitor, analyze, and evaluate the efforts
8 related to each strategy submitted under section 5
9 and the impact of such efforts.

10 **SEC. 5. UNITED STATES STRATEGY TO PROMOTE THE PAR-**
11 **TICIPATION OF WOMEN IN CONFLICT PRE-**
12 **VENTION AND PEACE BUILDING.**

13 (a) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than one year after
14 the date of the enactment of this Act, and again four years
15 thereafter, the President, in consultation with the heads
16 of the relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall
17 submit to the appropriate congressional committees and
18 make publicly available a single government-wide strategy,
19 to be known as the Women, Peace, and Security Strategy,
20 that provides a detailed description of how the United
21 States intends to fulfill the policy objectives in section 4.
22 The strategy shall—

23 (1) support and be aligned with plans developed
24 by other countries to improve the meaningful partici-
25 pation of women in peace and security processes,

1 conflict prevention, peace building, transitional proc-
2 esses, and decision-making institutions; and

3 (2) include specific and measurable goals,
4 benchmarks, performance metrics, timetables, and
5 monitoring and evaluation plans to ensure the ac-
6 countability and effectiveness of all policies and ini-
7 tiatives carried out under the strategy.

8 (b) SPECIFIC PLANS FOR DEPARTMENTS AND AGEN-
9 CIES.—Each strategy under subsection (a) shall include
10 a specific implementation plan from each of the relevant
11 Federal departments and agencies that describes—

12 (1) the anticipated contributions of the depart-
13 ment or agency, including technical, financial, and
14 in-kind contributions, to implement the strategy; and

15 (2) the efforts of the department or agency to
16 ensure that the policies and initiatives carried out
17 pursuant to the strategy are designed to achieve
18 maximum impact and long-term sustainability.

19 (c) COORDINATION.—The President should promote
20 the meaningful participation of women in conflict preven-
21 tion, in coordination and consultation with international
22 partners, including, as appropriate, multilateral organiza-
23 tions, stakeholders, and other relevant international orga-
24 nizations, particularly in situations in which the direct en-

1 gagement of the United States Government is not appro-
2 priate or advisable.

3 (d) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
4 gress that the President, in implementing each strategy
5 submitted under subsection (a), should—

6 (1) provide technical assistance, training, and
7 logistical support to female negotiators, mediators,
8 peace builders, and stakeholders;

9 (2) address security-related barriers to the
10 meaningful participation of women;

11 (3) encourage increased participation of women
12 in existing programs funded by the United States
13 Government that provide training to foreign nation-
14 als regarding law enforcement, the rule of law, or
15 professional military education;

16 (4) support appropriate local organizations, es-
17 pecially women’s peace building organizations;

18 (5) support the training, education, and mobili-
19 zation of men and boys as partners in support of the
20 meaningful participation of women;

21 (6) encourage the development of transitional
22 justice and accountability mechanisms that are in-
23 clusive of the experiences and perspectives of women
24 and girls;

1 (7) expand and apply gender analysis, as appro-
2 priate, to improve program design and targeting;
3 and

4 (8) conduct assessments that include the per-
5 spectives of women regarding new initiatives in sup-
6 port of peace negotiations, transitional justice and
7 accountability, efforts to counter violent extremism,
8 or security sector reform.

9 **SEC. 6. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PAR-**
10 **TICIPATION OF WOMEN IN CONFLICT PRE-**
11 **VENTION AND PEACE BUILDING.**

12 (a) FOREIGN SERVICE.—The Secretary of State, in
13 conjunction with the Administrator of the United States
14 Agency for International Development, shall ensure that
15 all appropriate personnel (including special envoys, mem-
16 bers of mediation or negotiation teams, relevant members
17 of the civil service or Foreign Service, and contractors)
18 responsible for or deploying to countries or regions consid-
19 ered to be at risk of, undergoing, or emerging from violent
20 conflict obtain training, as appropriate, in the following
21 areas, each of which shall include a focus on women and
22 ensuring meaningful participation by women:

23 (1) Conflict prevention, mitigation, and resolu-
24 tion.

1 (2) Protecting civilians from violence, exploi-
2 tation, and trafficking in persons.

3 (3) International human rights law and inter-
4 national humanitarian law.

5 (b) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—The Secretary of
6 Defense shall ensure that relevant personnel receive train-
7 ing, as appropriate, in the following areas:

8 (1) Training in conflict prevention, peace proc-
9 esses, mitigation, resolution, and security initiatives
10 that specifically addresses the importance of mean-
11 ingful participation by women.

12 (2) Gender considerations and meaningful par-
13 ticipation by women, including training regarding—

14 (A) international human rights law and
15 international humanitarian law, as relevant;
16 and

17 (B) protecting civilians from violence, ex-
18 ploitation, and trafficking in persons.

19 (3) Effective strategies and best practices for
20 ensuring meaningful participation by women.

21 **SEC. 7. CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the
23 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
24 national Development may establish guidelines or take
25 other steps to ensure overseas United States personnel of

1 the Department of State or the United States Agency for
2 International Development, as the case may be, consult
3 with appropriate stakeholders, including local women,
4 youth, ethnic and religious minorities, and other politically
5 under-represented or marginalized populations, regarding
6 United States efforts to—

7 (1) prevent, mitigate, or resolve violent conflict;

8 and

9 (2) enhance the success of mediation and nego-
10 tiation processes by ensuring the meaningful partici-
11 pation of women.

12 (b) COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION.—The Sec-
13 retary of State should work with international, regional,
14 national, and local organizations to increase the meaning-
15 ful participation of women in international peacekeeping
16 operations, and should promote training that provides
17 international peacekeeping personnel with the substantive
18 knowledge and skills needed to ensure effective physical
19 security and meaningful participation of women in conflict
20 prevention and peace building.

21 **SEC. 8. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**

22 (a) BRIEFING.—Not later than 1 year after the date
23 of the first submission of a strategy required under section
24 5, the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the Adminis-
25 trator of the United States Agency for International De-

1 velopment and the Secretary of Defense, shall brief the
2 appropriate congressional committees on existing, en-
3 hanced, or newly established training carried out pursuant
4 to section 6.

5 (b) REPORT ON WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY
6 STRATEGY.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the
7 submission of each strategy required under section 5, the
8 President shall submit to the appropriate congressional
9 committees a report that—

10 (1) summarizes and evaluates the implementa-
11 tion of such strategy and the impact of United
12 States diplomatic efforts and foreign assistance pro-
13 grams, projects, and activities to promote the mean-
14 ingful participation of women;

15 (2) describes the nature and extent of the co-
16 ordination among the relevant Federal departments
17 and agencies on the implementation of such strat-
18 egy;

19 (3) outlines the monitoring and evaluation
20 tools, mechanisms, and common indicators to assess
21 progress made on the policy objectives set forth in
22 section 4; and

23 (4) describes the existing, enhanced, or newly
24 established training carried out pursuant to section
25 6.

1 **SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
4 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
5 mittees” means—

6 (A) the Committee on Appropriations, the
7 Committee on Armed Services, and the Com-
8 mittee on Foreign Relations of the Senate; and

9 (B) the Committee on Appropriations, the
10 Committee on Armed Services, and the Com-
11 mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Rep-
12 resentatives.

13 (2) RELEVANT FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND
14 AGENCIES.—The term “relevant Federal depart-
15 ments and agencies” means—

16 (A) the United States Agency for Inter-
17 national Development;

18 (B) the Department of State;

19 (C) the Department of Defense;

20 (D) the Department of Homeland Security;

21 and

22 (E) any other department or agency speci-
23 fied by the President for purposes of this Act.

24 (3) STAKEHOLDERS.—The term “stakeholders”
25 means non-governmental and private sector entities
26 engaged in or affected by conflict prevention and

- 1 stabilization, peace building, protection, security,
- 2 transition initiatives, humanitarian response, or re-
- 3 lated efforts.