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Department of Homeland Security Report on Implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Act

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Executive Summary

The WPS Act of 2017 recognizes the benefits derived from creating opportunities for women to serve as agents of peace around the world, through political, economic, and social empowerment. The overall goals of the WPS Act are to ensure that:

- Women are more prepared and increasingly able to participate in efforts that promote stable and lasting peace;
- Women are safer, better protected, and have equal access to government and private assistance programs, including from the United States, international partners, and host nations; and
- The United States and partner governments improve institutionalization and capacity to ensure WPS-related efforts are sustainable and long-lasting.

The Act designates the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of State (DoS), the Department of Defense (DoD), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as implementing agencies. Although the Act focuses on outcomes abroad, these global outcomes have a direct impact on our Nation's security as threats that arise from global conflict and the mass displacement of people make their way to the Homeland.

In June 2019, the White House published the *United States Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security* (Strategy), acknowledging the diverse roles women play as agents of change in preventing and resolving conflict, countering terrorism and violent extremism, and building post-conflict peace and stability. In May 2020, DHS published its agency-specific implementation plan. Consistent with the Strategy, DHS's implementation plan sets forth four lines of effort (LOE): LOE-1, Participation; LOE-2, Protection and Access; LOE-3, Internal U.S. Capabilities; and LOE-4, Partner Support. In June 2021, DHS provided its first annual report documenting progress toward implementing the DHS plan.

This report documents DHS's accomplishments in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021.

Department Highlights

In FY 2021, there were significant accomplishments across the four DHS LOEs. The Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) trained 8,458 women in both basic and advanced law enforcement training programs; Initiative 30x23 was launched to increase the number of women new hires in DHS law enforcement positions by 30 percent no later than 2023; and the U.S. Secret Service celebrated its 50th anniversary of admitting female agents. DHS led a Unified Coordination Group to resettle vulnerable Afghans through a whole-of-government, whole-of-society effort called Operation Allies Welcome (OAW). The United States has swiftly and safely welcomed more than 79,000 Afghans through OAW, providing them with work authorization, immigration benefits, and other support as they begin their new lives in America – including women leaders, human rights activists, humanitarian workers, journalists, and other at-risk individuals (DHS Press Release, *DHS and DOS Announce Exemptions Allowing Eligible Afghans to Qualify for Protection and Immigration Benefits*, June 14, 2022, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2022/06/14/dhs-and-dos-announce-exemptions-allowing-eligible-afghans-qualify-protection-and>). As part of OAW, the Department also promoted the protection of Afghan women and girls through such initiatives as listening sessions with stakeholders on civil and human rights considerations. In addition to Department-wide efforts, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) conducted targeted trainings on the global treatment of women and highlighted key issues such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C).

WPS Lines of Effort

DHS has identified several metrics to monitor the success of WPS initiatives and direct the collection of data. The numbering of the metrics corresponds to the numbering used by all participating agencies. However, metrics alone do not adequately capture the important WPS and other gender-related work that takes place at DHS every day. Beyond the numbers, this report therefore includes highlights of DHS activities, programs, and engagements that support principles in the WPS Act. Accomplishments for each LOE are detailed below.

LOE 1: Participation

DHS supports the preparation for and meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes around the world related to conflict and crisis. Gender equity in the DHS workforce, particularly in law enforcement, is one way in which the Department seeks to improve gender equity, both through hiring and senior leadership engagement.

Metric 1.1

DHS led numerous engagements this year that focused on increasing women's meaningful participation and leadership. These included the following:

OAW Listening Session. On September 21, 2021, the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) hosted a listening session with stakeholders on civil and human rights considerations for newly arrived Afghan women and girls. The CRCL team provided updates about conditions at “safe havens” following visits to these locations and incorporated participant feedback into recommendations for improving OAW operations and facilities. Such recommendations included

strategies for ensuring that Afghan women and girls had access to recreation areas, prayer rooms, and other facilities in which they felt comfortable.

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Senior Leadership Highlighted the Retention and Participation of Women. USCG leadership (including ADM Karl Schultz, Commandant of the Coast Guard; RADM John Mauger, Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy; Michelle Godfrey, Director of Civilian Human Resources, Leadership and Diversity; and Ann Castiglione-Cataldo, Director of International Affairs and Foreign Policy Advisor) spoke at the Sea-Air-Space 2021 Conference. These senior leaders provided specific remarks on the retention of Coast Guard women and the importance of their participation and diversity of leadership within the service.

DHS also launched or built on several initiatives this year to increase the participation of women in the DHS workforce. These included:

DHS 30x23 Initiative. In August 2021, Secretary Mayorkas introduced the DHS 30x23 Initiative, which focuses on increasing women's participation in occupations that perform or supervise law enforcement, inspectional, investigative, or technical support work that ensures compliance with or enforcement of federal law, regulations, or other mandatory guidelines. The primary goal of the 30x23 Initiative is to increase the number of women recruits (new hires) in law enforcement positions to 30 percent by 2023 and improve the environment in which women in law enforcement work. A key goal is to ensure retention, which starts at the point of recruitment (e.g., a recruiting fair). Through the DHS 30x23 Initiative, DHS will build on its culture of diversity. DHS has reached this target in the short term and is working to sustain and expand that goal.

The DHS Women in Law Enforcement Mentoring Program. Beginning in FY 2019, this Departmental-level cross-agency mentoring program has been offered DHS-wide to all women law enforcement officers. The program is now supporting its fourth cohort. Since its inception, 103 women have successfully completed the program, including 79 in FY 2021. The FY 2021 class included 42 mentees and 37 mentors.

U.S. Secret Service (USSS) Celebrates 50 Years of Women Special Agents. On December 15, 2021, USSS recognized the 50th anniversary of the appointment of the first female special agent. Since that turning point in 1971, the Secret Service has made many strides toward complete equality throughout their ranks. Women have held nearly every leadership position. Primary examples include Director, Deputy Director, Assistant Director for the Office of Protective Operations, and many more leadership roles. Today's Secret Service also has female members assigned to the agency's highly specialized operations division teams, previously only held by men, including the Counter Assault and Hazardous Agent Mitigation Medical Response teams. The Secret Service has been working diligently to continue growing the agency's female ranks, currently at 24 percent.

Metric 1.3

FLETC offers basic and advanced law enforcement training programs to federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial officers and agents. In FY 2021, 8,458 women participated in FLETC training programs.

Numerous DHS women personnel also participated in U.S.-funded trainings provided to foreign nationals. FLETC delivered five iterations of the Leadership for Women in Law Enforcement

(LWLE) training program internationally. The LWLE is designed to explore challenges for women in the law enforcement profession. Participation is gender-inclusive, and FLETC encourages all interested persons to participate. This program proactively fosters and supports inclusiveness while facilitating open, candid discussions and activities to develop leadership skills, improve resiliency, and foster understanding about challenges that female law enforcement officers may encounter. Competency areas include understanding and adapting to human behaviors, communication skills, team building, decision-making, gender differences, and emotional intelligence.

LOE 2: Protection and Access

DHS Components and Headquarters Offices provide notice of how to file and access complaint processes to maintain accountability during interactions between DHS officials and the public. For example, CBP provides detained persons in their short-term facilities multiple ways to report sexual abuse, sexual assault, staff neglect, or any other violations of responsibilities that may have contributed to such incidents. DHS has mechanisms in place to ensure accountability and follow-through on these complaints.

Metric 2.1

DHS reviewed, revised, and adopted safeguarding standards for federally funded programs. Several examples are listed below:

The Unified Coordination Group. To address the protection needs of Afghan guests at Safe Havens, the Unified Coordination Group (UCG) created the Gender and Vulnerable Population Protection (GVPP) Advisory Group, which includes co-chairs from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as well as interagency advisors. The Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of State (DOS) also played major roles.

Operation Limelight USA. Operation Limelight USA (OLLUSA) is an effort by ICE HSI to provide a robust education and outreach program aimed at protecting young girls from female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C). This outreach program is conducted at international airports across the U.S. to educate the traveling public about the dangers of FGM/C, the criminal framework prohibiting travel for the purpose of FGM/C, survivor resources, and contact information for reporting a child who may be at risk. In FY 2021, 1,900 individuals were trained across the interagency on FGM/C in an effort to prevent and assist victims of child FGM/C, a severe form of child abuse under federal law.

Identification and Monitoring of Pregnant, Postpartum, or Nursing Individuals. ICE conducted a review of its existing policies to ensure that enforcement actions utilize a victim-centered approach. One such policy is ICE Directive 11032.4, *Identification and Monitoring of Pregnant, Postpartum, or Nursing Individuals*, which was issued on July 1, 2021. This Directive ensures that, absent exceptional circumstances, women who are identified as pregnant, postpartum, or nursing are to be released from ICE custody.

LOE 3: Internal U.S. Capabilities

DHS has worked to strengthen internal capabilities and increase workforce understanding to promote the tenets outlined in the WPS Act.

Metric 3.1

A requirement of the WPS Strategy was to identify a senior leader for the Department's WPS-related efforts. The CRCL Officer has been designated to serve as the senior official for WPS Strategy implementation at DHS.

Metric 3.2

DHS also worked to incorporate WPS priorities into a wide range of DHS trainings, including:

LGBTQI+ Training. Much of the Department's work in this sphere relates to the care of noncitizens in our custody. DHS is in the process of updating the ICE Transgender Care Memorandum to better align with forthcoming policies related to custody, supervision, and alternatives to detention for noncitizens, including for transgender individuals. Additionally, DHS continues to evaluate available LGBTQI+-related training and resources to create new aids to help detention and removal officers appropriately and respectfully communicate with and care for LGBTQI+ populations in custody. Also, recognizing the heightened risks faced by LGBTQI+ detained persons, ICE and CBP are working to refine and/or develop better identification tools to assess detained persons for vulnerability risks earlier in the immigration process.

Training on Immigration Relief. To increase access to T and U visas, Special Immigration Visas, and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) protections, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) trains adjudicators on immigration relief for survivors. These benefits offer critical protection for vulnerable noncitizens, often disproportionately women and girls, who may be survivors of human trafficking or severe domestic abuse. All three benefits are crucial in stabilizing survivors by providing a potential pathway to lawful permanent residence (LPR).

Metric 3.3

DHS established critical internal WPS coordination structures and mechanisms by identifying key points of contact (POCs) or subject matter experts within every component. Since June 2020, the POCs have participated in meetings with CRCL and provided input to this report. Moving forward, the POCs and Component senior leadership will engage within their respective Components to promote WPS-related programs and activities. The DHS Gender Policy Council (GPC) Working Group coordinates gender-related efforts at DHS, including work to advance WPS.

LOE 4: Partner Support

DHS engages with other governments, international organizations, and nongovernmental actors to advance WPS priorities.

FGM/C Collaboration with the United Kingdom (UK). On February 4, 2021, the Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center and the UK's Metropolitan Police Force and Border Force held a virtual training to coincide with International Day of Zero Tolerance of FGM. There were 180 attendees from the ICE Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA), DOJ Human

Rights and Special Prosecutions, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), ICE HSI International Operations, and law enforcement colleagues in the UK, Sweden, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. The training covered FGM, its prevalence around the world, the health complications and medical issues associated with this practice, the impact of COVID-19 on increased rates of FGM, an overview of ICE's and UK's joint work together in combatting FGM, including Operation Limelight USA (OLLUSA), and the legal implications of FGM, specifically highlighting the recent passage of the STOP FGM Act.

The Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center Collaboration with Pakistan. On March 19, 2021, the Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center held a virtual training with the HSI Assistant Attaché in Islamabad, Pakistan, and trained approximately 30 U.S. consular officers and Department of State and ICE HSI staff. The training explained FGM, its prevalence around the world, the health complications and medical issues associated with this practice, the impact of COVID-19 on increased rates of FGM, an overview of ICE's work in combatting FGM, including OLLUSA, and the legal implications of FGM, specifically highlighting the recent passage of the STOP FGM Act.

Women's Law Enforcement Training at the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Gaborone, Botswana. From February 22-25, 2021, ILEA coordinated and hosted the Leadership for Women in Law Enforcement (LWLE) training program. ILEA Partner Nation Delegations representing Angola, Botswana, Brazil, Ghana, Mozambique, and Rwanda were in attendance for the training facilitated by FLETC's Leadership Training Division, Technical Training Operations Directorate. The program featured a panel discussion with regional women leaders and accomplished professionals who served as exemplars and role models. Panelists included the Deputy Director of the Botswana Directorate of Public Prosecution, the USAID Country Director, and the FBI Legal Attaché from Johannesburg, South Africa.

Metric 4.1

FLETC Senior Executives engaged with partner nations to promote collaboration on best law enforcement training practices, especially with respect to the inclusion of women.

Chief Executive of the Singaporean Ministry of Home Affairs' Home Team Academy. FLETC engaged with the Chief Executive of the Singaporean Ministry of Home Affairs' Home Team Academy (HTA) on his recent assignment to that position. FLETC has maintained a close relationship with HTA, a key strategic partner of the U.S. on defense and non-defense cooperation, for over six years. This relationship has led to the continuation of a FLETC/HTA memorandum of understanding (MOU), the co-facilitation of a future global crisis leadership symposium, and the exchange of staff from both academies. This partnership provides training courses that specifically prioritize women participants and continues to be a vehicle for women to participate at the highest levels of law enforcement by providing them the training for success.

Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police. DHS/FLETC engaged with the Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) to reinforce ongoing collaboration with both training institutions. This engagement led to the formalizing of a relationship through the AFP's newly created Chief Learning Officer position by way of an MOU. The MOU provides a vehicle for formal, professional exchanges of information-sharing and benchmarking. FLETC and AFP's collaboration and partnership opens the door for key law enforcement training and

related activities for both nations and for other foreign partners with specific emphasis on the greater inclusion of women in law enforcement.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Australian Federal Police, and the New Zealand Police. On January 20, 2021, DHS/FLETC engaged with executives from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the AFP and the New Zealand Police to discuss virtual training due to the ongoing pandemic. This exchange has facilitated greater alignment in training and benchmarking of opportunities for women of the four nations. It also opened the door for a higher, more inclusive forum with all Five Eye partner nations to exchange ideas and information relevant to training.

Gaps, Challenges, Opportunities, and Next Steps

DHS leveraged last year's initial baseline reporting process to establish internal structures, engage components in WPS-related efforts, and obtain historical performance on the WPS implementation plan metrics. CRCL now has a WPS Manager devoted exclusively to this work. To enhance DHS's WPS efforts, DHS will undertake the following next steps:

Leadership Engagement. Senior leadership engagement is important to successfully advance WPS initiatives. DHS will continue to identify champions in its leadership ranks to promote WPS principles.

Training. To instill WPS principles in the DHS workforce, training in the coming fiscal year will focus on the three G's of "gender parity, gender perspectives, and gender analysis." Gender parity involves those initiatives that increase the opportunity of women to participate in the DHS workforce. Gender perspectives take into consideration the specific security needs of different genders and access to resources to better protect underserved individuals, such as in emergency preparedness and response. For example, gender-based violence (GBV) and gender inequalities impact the ability of women to survive and recover from a crisis. Gender analysis is critical as a systematic process in both the promotion of gender parity efforts and the integration of gender perspectives within DHS activities, programs, and engagement.

Connections. DHS will work to ensure that WPS efforts are connected to and aligned with related initiatives such as the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality, the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally, the pending Gender-based Violence National Action Plan, and the Global Fragility Act (GFA). Integrating these initiatives will allow us to more effectively assess our overall impact and facilitate an understanding of the connection between global and local (domestic) threats.

Collaboration. DHS will work to deepen collaboration with key partners like DoS, USAID, DoD, and the NSC on WPS initiatives. Such collaboration should include coordination with WPS POCs at U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) on the integration of gender perspectives into the prevention of gender-based violence during disasters. USNORTHCOM's civil support mission includes domestic disaster relief operations during fires, hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes.