

# The Initiative for Inclusive Security

A Program of Hunt Alternatives Fund

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## **Inclusive Security Joins Gov't Officials in Rwanda for Int'l Women's Conference** *Leads Consultation with Portion of Liberian and Ugandan Delegations*

**KIGALI, RWANDA** – February 20, 2007 – Rwanda, one of the smallest countries in Africa, leads the world in women's representation in government. On February 22 and 23, the Forum of Rwandan Women Parliamentarians (FFRP) will celebrate its 10th anniversary by hosting an international conference to provide women leaders from around the world with the opportunity to share strategies on expanding the roles of women in government.

A longtime partner of the FFRP, [The Initiative for Inclusive Security](#), chaired by Ambassador Swanee Hunt, has provided direct support to this unprecedented conference. Inclusive Security is also sponsoring the participation of five Ugandan women parliamentarians, and four Liberian women parliamentarians who are part of a larger official delegation led by Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. On Thursday, February 22, Ambassador Hunt will speak as a panelist about the impact of women's representation in parliaments during a discussion on gender, nation building, and the role of parliaments. Following the conference, Inclusive Security will convene Liberian, Ugandan, and Rwandan delegates for a consultation on creating multi-party women's caucuses and strategies to raise the voice of women parliamentarians in Africa.

“Rwanda is at the forefront of a worldwide trend to ensure fair representation of women in political decision making,” **said Ambassador Swanee Hunt**. “The Forum of Women Parliamentarians has demonstrated that when women reach a critical mass in government they can influence decision making. I feel honored to join with so many distinguished world leaders to not only celebrate their success, but find ways to replicate it on a global scale.”

Today women constitute 48.8 percent of Rwanda's lower chamber of parliament and 34 percent of the cabinet. The FFRP has provided a platform for women from all political parties and from both chambers of parliament to speak with a unified voice, allowing them to initiate or substantially influence legislative measures.

From its field office in Rwanda's capital, Inclusive Security leads the [Rwanda Project](#), a program designed to demonstrate how women's leadership in a post-conflict country can be pivotal for the development and stabilization of society. The Project was created at the request of Rwandan women leaders in 2005 and strives to conduct research and document the Rwandan experience of women's leadership. The Project also supports leadership training for women at all levels and connects Rwandan women with the [Women Waging Peace Network](#) so that women in other war-affected countries can learn from their experiences and achievements. Inclusive Security has worked with Rwandan women for the past six years, including providing a partnership grant to the FFRP.

Furthermore, Liberian women, including President Johnson Sirleaf, have been part of Inclusive Security's Women Waging Peace Network since its creation in 1999. In 2006, Inclusive Security led two consultations in Monrovia where they convened diverse groups of leaders to analyze the role of women in reconstruction and formulate an agenda to enhance women's participation in stabilizing Liberia. Just last week, Inclusive Security partnered with UNIFEM and the World Bank to hold a Gender Symposium in Washington, DC with 18 Liberian women government and civil society leaders who crafted recommendations on ways women can help consolidate peace and lead reconstruction.

Ambassador Swanee Hunt is available to discuss Inclusive Security's support of and collaboration with the FFRP, The Initiative for Inclusive Security's Rwanda Project, and its work convening women world leaders from Liberia and other post-conflict regions during her stay in Kigali from February 17–24, 2007.

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**The Initiative for Inclusive Security**, a program of Hunt Alternatives Fund, advocates for the full participation of all stakeholders, especially women, in peace processes. Creating sustainable peace is achieved best by a diverse, citizen-driven approach. Of the many sectors of society currently excluded from peace processes, none is larger—or more critical to success—than women. Since 1999, Inclusive Security has connected more than 450 women experts with over 3,000 policy shapers to collaborate on fresh, workable solutions to long-standing conflicts across the globe. For more information visit [www.InclusiveSecurity.org](http://www.InclusiveSecurity.org).