

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Security Sector Engagement Unites International Women Leaders at Harvard and Washington, D.C.

Army Lt. Gen. Douglas E. Lute to provide keynote address at Jan. 22 event in Washington, D.C.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – [The Initiative for Inclusive Security](#), a program of Hunt Alternatives Fund, will bring 25 women from Afghanistan, Colombia, Haiti, Israel, Liberia, and Palestine together for the Initiative's ninth annual Colloquium and Policy Forum held in Cambridge and Washington, D.C., Jan. 12-25, 2008. This year's theme: security sector engagement.

In light of men and women's different views of security, ensuring women hold positions in a country's security sector remains critical to achieving a sustainable peace. Yet, few women hold high level posts in the security sector worldwide.

Members of each country delegation include: high-ranking parliamentarians with influence over defense policy and spending, senior ministry officials, government ministers, senior-ranking military and police officers, and heads of development and advocacy organizations. Together, the women will advise policymakers, work to increase women's participation in the security sector within their respective countries and help build an international movement to bring women's voices to security issues.

"This exceptional collection of women leaders comes from the highest levels of government and civil society. Though their voices are rarely heard in the U.S., they are shaping defense and security policy around the world, and leading efforts to ensure safety on the ground," said Carla Koppell, director of the Initiative for Inclusive Security.

At Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, select women leaders will participate in a panel discussion, "Engendering Peace: Security through an Inclusive Lens," today from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The event is co-sponsored by Harvard's [Women and Public Policy Program](#) and is open to the public.

In Washington, D.C., Inclusive Security's Policy Forum will convene more than 400 key policymakers from the U.S. government, military and police organizations, foreign governments, private security contractors, regional security organizations and NGOs. Women leaders will also meet with senior officials at the departments of Defense and State, members of Congress, private security contractors, and others key players in the security sector. Lt. Gen. Lute, assistant to President Bush, and the Deputy National Security Advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan, will provide the keynote address.

The Initiative for Inclusive Security is led by **Ambassador Swanee Hunt**, co-founder and director of the Women and Public Policy Program at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

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Editor's Note: Media are invited to attend any event in the Cambridge or Washington areas. Please call Lisa Marie Hennings to arrange an interview with the experts or to attend the events. Please click [here](#) for a list of participants, and click [here](#) for the schedule of events.

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 800 women experts with over 5,000 policy shapers to collaborate on fresh, workable solutions to long-standing conflicts across the globe. For more information, visit www.InclusiveSecurity.org.