

The Initiative for Inclusive Security

A Program of Hunt Alternatives Fund

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The Initiative for Inclusive Security Announces Addition of New Women Waging Peace Network Members from Uganda

WASHINGTON, DC – **The Initiative for Inclusive Security** today announced the addition of two Ugandan women as new members of the Women Waging Peace Network, which connects women peacemakers from conflict areas around the world. **Betty Bigombe** is the chief mediator in peace negotiations between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the government of Uganda. **Miria Matembe** spent the past 16 years as a member of the Ugandan parliament.

"The Women Waging Peace Network prides itself on connecting leading women peace builders around the world and we are privileged to have Betty and Miria as new members," said **Carla Koppell, director of The Initiative for Inclusive Security**, which houses the Network. "Their extensive knowledge and experience will add value to the discussions and exchanges between the more than 400 impressive women working to stabilize our world."

Since March 2004, **Betty Bigombe** has served as the chief mediator between the LRA and the government of Uganda in an effort to end the conflict that has raged there for more than two decades. Bigombe's work began in the late eighties, when she was tasked by the Ugandan president to seek a peaceful means to end the war. Following the failure of numerous military interventions, she initiated contact on her own accord with rebel leader Joseph Kony in May 1992. This led to the most promising diplomatic efforts attempted during the first 18 years of the insurgency. In 1994 she was named "Uganda's Woman of the Year" for her efforts to end the violence. Ms. Bigombe has a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. She joined the World Bank in 1997 as a senior social scientist at the newly created Post-conflict Unit and also worked with the Social Protection and Human Development Units.

A well-known figure in Ugandan politics, **Miria Matembe** served as a member of Parliament from 1989 until earlier this year. She is also a former member of the Pan-African Parliament and previously served as Uganda's minister of ethics and integrity. Miria also served as a member of the committee that created the Ugandan constitution. She has been a fearless and commanding advocate for women's rights in Uganda and is the cofounder and former chairperson of Action for Development, Uganda's leading women's advocacy organization. A lawyer by profession, Ms. Matembe is also the author of several articles and a book entitled *Miria Matembe: Gender, Politics, and Constitution Making in Uganda*.

The **Women Waging Peace Network** was launched in 1999 to connect women peacemakers with each other and with policy shapers. Members of the Waging network, all demonstrated leaders among women peace builders, are elected and appointed government officials, directors of non-governmental organizations and movements in civil society, scholars and educators, businesspeople, representatives of multilateral organizations, and journalists. With varied backgrounds, perspectives, and skills, they bring a vast array of expertise to the peacemaking process.

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 400 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.HuntAlternatives.org.