

Acknowledgments

FROM THE BEGINNING, THIS BOOK HAS BEEN A COLLABORATIVE effort by scholar-practitioners working in security cooperation or affiliated fields. Each of us found value in applying the logic of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) to our work. For me, I was teaching at the Defense Security Cooperation University (DSCU) where, with a team of scholars, I had been tasked with developing a curriculum to implement the WPS Act of 2017, which required training “relevant personnel” in the Department of Defense. Since I had served a full career as a naval aviator, worked in civil society at the United Nations where the WPS agenda had emerged, and consulted on the WPS Act of 2017 and the first national strategy on WPS, I was versed in its logic, purpose, and scope. Yet it was challenging to show the utility of WPS to fellow military personnel, including those in the field of security cooperation. They wanted more proof and less theory, more understanding and less expert direction. The university gave me permission to convene a two-day workshop for scholars and practitioners to sort through the evidence. The event provided a welcome opportunity for in-person debate after a long Covid-19-induced hiatus. Knowing the need for transparency and scrutiny of this subject, I cast a wide net for contributions to the workshop and this book to ensure that all voices had the opportunity to be heard. I am grateful to those who answered the call and stayed the course throughout the publishing process. The contributors were all working full-time in the United States and overseas, proving their selfless reasons for getting these stories out. It is important to note that the views expressed herein are entirely their own and not the position or policies of the US government.

This book comes at a time when the future of US WPS efforts is uncertain. Yet no matter what the program is called, the work will continue as long as women and girls are affected by armed conflict and crises and there is a need to avert war and negotiate peace. While the book was going into production, I was working at US Northern Command researching domestic military operations, such as response to unrest, civilian resettlement, and disaster response. Today, an America First national strategy takes shape, and the military is fortifying US borders at home in addition to keeping the watch abroad. Capabilities developed by applying WPS to missions such as those in this book can help protect US service men and women and the populations they serve in the years ahead.

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