Youth, Peace, and Security Act (H.R.6174)

The Problem: About 50 percent of the 1.4 billion people in conflict-affected areas are under the age of 20. Despite the large population, youth lack adequate representation at the decision-making level, which undermines the impact of their community-level peacebuilding involvement. Moreover, as Rep. Grace Meng emphasizes, “it will be the young people who bear the burden of sustaining the peace...leading their society from reconciliation to prosperity.”

- As demonstrated in conflict-affected areas such as South Sudan and Somalia, youth participation in community-based peacebuilding has been instrumental in mitigating conflict, mobilizing support for peace agreements and distributing emergency relief within their communities.

- In 2015, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2250 as it was deemed necessary for Member States to implement measures to promote youth participation in decision-making.

The Solution: The bipartisan Youth, Peace, and Security Act will implement measures to increase youth participation in post-conflict decision-making in the following ways:

- Designate an employee of the United State Agency for International Development (USAID) as Youth Coordinator, tasked with managing and overseeing youth-related activities in conflict prevention, resolution and recovery efforts.

- Require the Secretary of State and USAID Administrator to develop and implement a comprehensive U.S. strategy to integrate youth consultation, support youth peace builders and create standards for analyzing age and gender data.

- Ensure that specific implementation plans are included in the strategies of relevant federal agencies (USAID, DoS, DoD). While also encouraging partnered private sector entities and nongovernmental organizations to carry out the strategy.

- Establish the Youth, Peace, and Security Fund which will provide grants, emergency and technical assistance to youth-led civil society organizations and peace building implementers.