



News Release

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Sasakawa USA Announces 2023 SEED Delegation

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA (Sasakawa USA) is pleased to announce the 2023 Sasakawa USA Emerging Experts Delegation (SEED) on the theme of Women, Peace and Security (WPS) within a U.S.-Japan context. This will be the ninth iteration of the SEED program, the purpose of which is to engage U.S. policy experts and opinion leaders to improve their understanding of Japan and U.S.-Japan relations within the area of their expertise.

This year's SEED program will explore the historical, societal, cultural, and political challenges and opportunities for the development of Women, Peace and Security within the U.S.-Japan alliance. As a policymaking framework, WPS presents a golden opportunity for the United States and Japan to reinforce their shared commitment to democratic values while striving toward greater alignment on their national security strategies—a task of vital importance to maintaining peace and stability in the greater Indo-Pacific region. Last October, former **U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke at the Sasakawa Peace Foundation in Tokyo** to underscore the importance of including women in peacemaking and conflict prevention, mediation, and resolution processes. Since her visit, Japan has established its own parliamentary caucus focused on advancing the country's engagement on WPS. WPS also has been mentioned in key strategic documents like Japan's updated **Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) plan** introduced in March 2023, and the **G7 Japan 2023 Foreign Ministers' Communiqué**.

Ambassador Melanne Vermeer, former U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues and Sasakawa USA Advisory Committee Member, says of the 2023 SEED trip, "Now is a critical time for the United States and Japan to collaborate on advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda in our respective societies. The 2023 SEED Program is poised to generate timely dialogue between experts and leaders from both countries, thereby paving the way for expanded and deepened alliance coordination on issues of gender, peacebuilding, and national security."

With this context in mind, Sasakawa USA will bring an eight-member delegation of American WPS experts involved in WPS policymaking and implementation—representing the key federal government agencies, as well as the U.S. military and civil society—to engage with Japanese politicians, government officials, academics, civil society leaders, and media to exchange insights on how the United States and Japan can work together to mutually advance WPS in the alliance.

Delegates:

- **CDR Andre Agraviador**; Senior Military Advisor; The Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues; Department of State
- **Ms. Erin Cooper**; Acting Director for International Humanitarian Policy; Department of Defense
- **Ms. Sahana Dharmapuri**; Director; Our Secure Future (a program of the One Earth Future Foundation)
- **Dr. Jennifer Hawkins**; Senior WPS Advisor and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force Lead; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- **Ms. Monica Herrera**; WPS Curriculum Developer; U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM)
- **Ms. Kayla McGill**; WPS Policy Advisor and Lead on WPS Centers of Excellence; The Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues; Department of State
- **Dr. Jessica Smith**; Director of Research; Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security
- **Dr. Carolyn Washington**; WPS Manager; U.S. Department of Homeland Security (invited)

For further information, please contact Associate Program Officer Isabelle Burke at iburke@spfusa.org.

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About Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA

Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA (Sasakawa USA) is a non-partisan 501 (c)(3) organization dedicated to deepening the understanding of and strengthening the relationship between the U.S. and Japan for the benefit of a free and open international community. Its activities mainly focus on security and diplomacy, through exchanges, dialogue, analysis, publications, and networking. Follow us on Twitter @SasakawaUSA and visit our website at [Sasakawa USA](http://SasakawaUSA).