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1

representatives, especially those from troop contributing countries, in order to identify ways to address the problem.

The Secretary of State has been personally involved – diplomatically and programmatically – in women and conflict prevention. In June 2007, Secretary Rice and the Austrian Foreign Minister, on behalf of a network of women leaders called the Women Leaders' Working Group, wrote to the UN Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General. They urged the UN leaders to establish a mechanism to increase the

USAID has just announced a new \$70 million, five-year program – “Fistula Care” – to prevent and treat obstetric fistula in developing countries. The program will increase access to emergency obstetrical care; help hospitals strengthen their capacity to provide surgical fistula repair; and work with community groups and individuals to increase

understanding about obstetric fistula and its prevention. “Fistula Care” will also conduct research to strengthen the quality of fistula services, and will work toward institutionalizing fistula prevention, repair, and reintegration programs in developing

countries. The U.S. Government has addressed the issue of obstetric fistula in 11

female genital cutting or mutilation, since the mid-1990s. Over the years, we have funded research and supported programs that have helped to reduce the practice

