

## Make Rights of Women a Top Diplomatic Priority

AUG. 30, 2013



**To the Editor:**

Re "[A Question of How Women's Issues Will Fare, in Washington and Overseas](#)" (news article, Aug. 23):

As an organization dedicated to protecting the rights and dignity of the world's most marginalized people, American Jewish World Service supports Ambassador Catherine M. Russell's efforts to make women's issues a top priority of Secretary of State John Kerry. Women and girls make up 70 percent of the global poor, an alarming statistic compounded by their vulnerability to violence.

Ambassador Russell played a critical role in writing the International Violence Against Women Act and is well placed to prod Congress to pass this critical legislation. She can help ensure that fighting violence against women internationally is not only given importance but also codified as a diplomatic priority in future administrations.

Advancing peace, security and democracy internationally requires putting women and girls at the center of foreign policy. We urge Congress and Secretary Kerry to make sure that the rights of women and girls around the world remain a centerpiece of American diplomacy.

RUTH MESSINGER

Pres., American Jewish World Service  
New York, Aug. 23, 2013

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