



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK



**Side Event organized by the**  
**Permanent Mission of Pakistan and Co-sponsored by the Permanent**  
**Missions of Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey**

**Breaking Stereotypes:**  
**Muslim Women as Agents of Change**

Friday, 15 March 2019  
4:45 pm to 6 pm  
Conference Room 8, United Nations

**Concept Note**

*The side-event will take place during CSW63, and will provide an opportunity for Member States, UN entities and civil society to discuss the efforts of Muslim women who have challenged the traditional stereotypes about them. Making their mark in numerous fields on a daily basis and around the world, Muslim women are not only proving that women should have an equal role in Muslim society, but they are also holding up 'half the sky'.*

Women have always played a vital role in human development, a role that has largely been unsung and underacknowledged. In very few cultures, until relatively recently, have women been recognized to have an equal role with men, and equal rights to participate in all social spheres. Social structures and misinterpretation of religious edicts have had a constraining effect but women have still sought to overcome the challenges.

There is a common misperception that Islam hinders the progress and role of Muslim women. Such stereotypes are constructed due to unequal power relations, and are both the cause and effect of marginalization.

Contrary to common misperceptions, Islam provides the key to women's emancipation and liberation. Islam does not forbid women from seeking an education or from engaging in gainful

employment. On the contrary, Islam encourages women to get education, work, own property and engage in business. It elevates the status of women to be an equal in society.

Muslim women have proven themselves to be resourceful, creative, and dedicated. Today, they are actively participating in all fields of life and making their mark on societies. They are breaking the glass ceiling in education, culture, medicine, business and as managers by holding key positions. These extraordinary women have achieved some of the highest positions. The Muslim women have served as Prime Ministers, Speaker of Parliaments, Governors of Central Banks, Judges, Educationists, Diplomats, positions for which women in the West are still struggling.

Muslim Women have challenged myth constructed by social taboos spun by the traditions of a patriarchal society. This side event aims to explore through discussions:

- 1) How an increased role and representation of Muslim women is shaping contemporary socio-political thought.
- 2) How Muslim women are acting as role models to inspire the next generations of women leaders to be more active citizens in their communities and workplaces.
- 3) Showcase positive examples of Muslim women to encourage Muslim and non-Muslim communities to invest time, energy and resources in women emancipation.

The event will have speakers from different countries working in development sector and demonstrate how Muslim women are breaking stereotypes by participating in following dimensions of public and private interventions:

- Economic empowerment (employment, financial inclusion)
- Women's leadership/political participation
- Gender-based violence
- Land and natural resource governance
- Access to Justice
- Science & Technology

### **Tentative Programme**

- **Minister / High Level Representative, Ministry of Human Rights, Pakistan**
- **High Level Representative of Islamic Republic of Iran**
- **High Level Representative of Indonesia**
- **H.E. Feridun Hadi Sinirlioğlu, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations**
- **Moderator for the event will be Ms. Ameena Zia, a PhD Candidate of Political Science at the University of Missouri**