



Permanent Mission of Pakistan
to the United Nations



UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM



UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Rehabilitation, and Reintegration of Women Formerly Associated with Terrorist Groups

Side-event on the occasion of the 63rd Commission on the Status of Women

11 March 2019, 1:15 – 2:45 PM

UN Secretariat, Conference Room 7

Co-sponsored by Canada, Pakistan, State of Qatar, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

The event aims to discuss how an effective criminal justice response to terrorism must include a gender perspective, adopt an approach based on gender mainstreaming and human rights, and take into account the multifaceted, distinct ways that women, men and children are involved in, and impacted by, terrorist violence.

PROGRAMME

Opening

- **H.E. Mr. Yousuf Mohamed Al Othman Fakhroo**, Minister of Administrative Development, Labour & Social Affairs of the State of Qatar
- **H.E. Ms. Aisha Abubakar**, Honorable Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development of Nigeria
- **H.E. Ms. Hala Shakir Mustafa Saleem**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq
- **Mr. Vladimir Voronkov**, Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, Executive-Director of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)
- **Ms. Michèle Coninx**, Assistant Secretary-General, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED)
- **H.E. Dr. Maleeha Lodhi**, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations
- **Ms. Simone Monasebian**, Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) New York Office

Expert Panel

- **Ms. Edit Schlaffer**, Founder and Chairperson, Women Without Borders
- **Ms. Rebecca Turkington**, Assistant Director, Women and Foreign Policy, Council on Foreign Relations
- **Ms. Azadeh Moaveni**, Senior Gender Analyst, International Crisis Group
- **Mr. Suliman Fadlelbari**, Senior Program Manager, Silatech Foundation
- **Mr. Ulrich Garms**, Expert on Terrorism and Gender Issues, Terrorism Prevention Branch, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- **Ms. Aleksandra Dier**, Gender Coordinator, UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED)

Moderator

- **Ms. Naureen C. Fink**, Senior Policy Adviser, Strategic Threats, UK Mission to the UN

RSVP by 7 March 2019 at eventspmun@mofa.gov.qa

Background

Both women and men are involved in the commission of terrorism-related offences, but there are key differences in how they become associated with these groups; the operational and support roles they fulfil; and the nature and degree of violence in which they engage.

Consequently, women and girls are increasingly coming into contact with criminal justice systems both as victims and perpetrators of terrorism related offences. However, criminal justice systems which are not gender-sensitive and take a primarily security-centric approach to counter-terrorism can at best struggle to effectively rehabilitate and reintegrate women and girls into society, and at worst, risk aggravating the grievances or ideological impulses that drew them to extremism in the first place.

This calls for not only gender-sensitive approaches in the way the criminal justice systems deal with violent extremism cases, but also for the inclusion of local civil society perspectives, across a range of political and social backgrounds, in crafting rehabilitation.

This includes gender mainstreaming, consulting and involving women in programme design and implementation; addressing the local drivers/factors of recruitment and radicalization to terrorism in different contexts; promoting gender equality – as political inclusion and social and economic empowerment of women raises their status within their families and communities. In certain instances, also calls for a role for female religious scholars or female educators with strong religious learning and credibility to play a role in deradicalization and rehabilitation programmes - female interlocutors capable of challenging ex-militants' religious rationale from a strong base of knowledge.

Education for girls and women, both secular and religious, should also be promoted as education (a basic human rights and access of non-discrimination) enhances women's resilience, reduces their vulnerability to extremist recruitment and grooming, and facilitates rehabilitation and reintegration. Religious education, which in many societies is not offered meaningfully to women, meets a need that many former militants cite as one of the strong pull factors that originally drew toward extremism, and can inoculate against instrumentalization of religion for extremists' political and violent aims.

These short-term practices must be viewed alongside long-term strategies that states' criminal justice systems adapt to national needs, as "there is no one size fits all solution." In this regard, laws and policies should address the security concerns, human rights, integrity and dignity of women and girls. This is especially urgent as women participants in violent extremist groups are returning to their places of origin in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas at a time when there still are few deradicalization, rehabilitation, and reintegration programs specifically designed to address their needs. These programs have historically focused on men and there is a need for efforts to deradicalize and re-integrate to become more focused on women and girls

The Agreed Conclusions of CSW61 on Women's Empowerment and the Link to Sustainable Development, recognized that "conflicts, trafficking in persons, terrorism, violent extremism....disproportionately affect women and girls. It therefore recognizes that it is essential to ensure that women are empowered to effectively and meaningfully participate in leadership and decision-making processes, that their needs and interests are prioritized in strategies and responses and that the human rights of women and girls are promoted and protected in all development efforts."

Given the gendered approach used by violent extremist groups themselves in their recruitment, it is key to include women in decision-making processes, particularly at senior levels, where such strategies are designed and implemented. Encouragingly, consensus is emerging on the need to give a more prominent role to women's organizations to help reintegrate those who have been deradicalized, and promote a vision for peace and moderation. A better understanding of the current state of play and of the various initiatives is a valuable and essential step.