ICAN Partners at CSW

Sara Emiline AbuGhazal  
*Regional Coalition of Women Human Rights Defenders - Lebanon*

Sara Emiline AbuGhazal is the Regional Coordinator of the Regional Coalition of Women Human Rights Defenders in the Middle East and North Africa. Ms. AbuGhazal is also co-Director of Knowledge Workshop, a feminist organisation based in Beirut, as well as a co-founder and member of Sawt alniswa, a feminist web space in Lebanon. She is a board member of Frontiers Ruwad El Hokok, an organisation that works with Stateless individuals in Lebanon and on statelessness prevention. Ms. AbuGhazal is a Palestinian refugee. Her work revolves around knowledge production, movement building and WHRDs.

Maryam Al-Khawaja  
*International Service for Human Rights and Urgent Action Fund - Bahrain*

Maryam Al-Khawaja is a Bahraini Human Rights Defender, works as a Special Advisor on Human Rights with NGOs, and is on the Board of the International Service for Human Rights and Urgent Action Fund. She previously served as the Co-Director for the GCHR from 2012-2017 and as the Acting President of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) from 2012-2014. Al-Khawaja played an instrumental role in the democratic protests taking place in Bahrain’s Pearl Roundabout in February 2011, which triggered a government response of widespread extra judicial killings, arrests, and torture. Due to her work, she has been subjected to assault, threats, defamation campaigns, imprisonment and an unfair trial. Over the past several years, Al-Khawaja has emerged as a leading voice for human rights and political reform in Bahrain and the Gulf region. She has been influential in shaping official responses to the atrocities in Bahrain around the world by engaging with prominent European and American policymakers. Al-Khawaja has received numerous awards for her human rights work, including the Rafto Prize. The Al-Khawaja family was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013 by an EU Parliament Member.

Sarah Amurugam  
*Women’s Department of the National Christian Evangelical Alliance - Sri Lanka*

Sarah Amurugam currently serves as Head of the Women’s Department of the National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka. Her experience centres on working with young women on peace building, advocacy, improving their economic status and leadership training, as well as working with women and girls of marginalized communities. Sarah has taken part in numerous trainings and workshops on UNSCR 1325 throughout Sri Lanka. She holds a degree in law, a Postgraduate Diploma in International Relations, and is currently reading for a Master’s in Human Rights.
Khadija Arfaoui
*Freelance feminist researcher and activist - Tunisia*

Khadija Arfaoui is a renowned Tunisian civil society activist with over 30 years of experience as an advocate, researcher, author and lecturer on environmental issues and women’s rights, peace and stability. She has also been involved in addressing issue of terrorism and countering violent extremism and is among the founding members of the Women’s Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL).

Although Ms Arfaoui has been exposed to the horrors of war and conflict through her work, she never thought she would be so personally and cruelly affected by terrorism. On New Year’s Eve 2017 at 1.20 am, her son and his young wife were killed in the tragic shooting that took place at the Reina Club in Istanbul.

Prior to her involvement in civil society, Ms Arfaoui was an English teacher, vice-principal and principal before joining the University of Tunis. Between 1978-80 Ms. Arfaoui taught at George Washington University and in 2005 she was a Fulbright lecturer at Lake Forest College for a program entitled “Direct Access to Islam.” Ms. Arfaoui holds an M.Phil from GWU and has published extensively on issues addressing women’s rights in the Middle East and North Africa. She is fluent in Arabic, English and French.

Visaka Dharmadasa
*Association of War Affected Women - Sri Lanka*

Visaka Dharmadasa is the founder and Chair of Association of War Affected Women and Parents of Servicemen Missing in Action. Struggling to end the civil war in her native country, she brought together women across conflict lines to work for peace. Visaka educates soldiers and community leaders about international standards of conduct of war. She also conducts trainings on UNSCR 1325, calling for the inclusion of women at all levels of peace building and decision making. She was awarded the prestigious Humanitarian award in 2006 by Inter Action of Washington DC, an NGO consortium comprised of 160 non-governmental organizations. In coordination with the “1000 Peace women across the globe” movement, she was nominated for a collective Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. She is a network member of Inclusive Security Women Waging Peace, a member of the global advisory council of Women thrive World Wide, a member of CSAG for UN women South Asia, a member of Global Network of Women Peace builders and governing council of National Peace Council of Sri Lanka.

Şehnaz Kiyymaz
*Women’s Human Rights, New Ways - Turkey*
Şehnaz Kıymaz Bahçeci is a women's human rights activist and a part-time instructor. Kıymaz Bahçeci completed her undergraduate degree, with scholarship and a double major in Biology and Sociology & Anthropology, at Swarthmore College, PA. She then continued for her Master's degree at the Middle East Technical University, Gender and Women's Studies Graduate Programme. Having had a couple of years of experience in the private sector, Kıymaz Bahçeci never lost her ties with civil society and women's human rights activism. She has been volunteering and professionally working on many different levels and projects at Women for Women's Human Rights - New Ways, Istanbul, Turkey since 2004. She is a board member since 2013. She has also been involved, though from a greater distance, with the green movement in Turkey. Kıymaz Bahçeci is a part-time instructor at Istanbul Bilgi University, with a fully online course, which she collaboratively developed the curriculum for, titled "Gender in Everyday Life" since Fall 2014. Kıymaz Bahçeci primarily focuses on international regimes on gender equality, international conventions on women's human rights and violence against women (with a particular focus on CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention of CoE), international and national advocacy mechanisms and more recently, the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

**Nada Nashat**  
*Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance - Egypt*

Nada Nashat is currently the Advocacy Coordinator at the Center for Egyptian Women’s Legal Assistance (CEWLA) based in Cairo, Egypt and the youngest International Advisory Groups (IAG) member of Musawah international movement. She has participated in different international events related to human rights and women's rights such as CSW58, 59, 60, and 61, discussions on post 2015, FfD, African regional meetings on BPFA and CSW, and UPR. She is also responsible for conducting campaigns to promote women and human rights. Nada has lectured students in universities on the women’s rights situation in Egypt at Harvard, Columbia, Northeastern University, and the American University in Cairo (AUC). Previously, Nada was the coordinator of amending the Personal Status Law (PSL) project for the same organization to promote access to justice and eradicate inequalities between genders and the coordinator of a project on engaging women leaders in combating corruption. Nada graduated in 2011 with a bachelor’s degree in physics and is currently studying law.

**Ahlem Nasraoui**  
*Young Leaders Entrepreneurs - Tunisia*

Ahlem Nasraoui is a Tunisian 2016 Top 10 Global Emerging Leaders Awardee by the US state Department and the US First lady Michelle Obama along with a two years membership as an advisor for UNESCO within the Global Education network with a double major Master’s in Business Communication / English Literature and Humanities. Founder of the Young Leaders Entrepreneurs a youth led association
working for engaging grassroots in the decision making through mentorship programs. Proven success in negotiating funds and familiarity with administrative, financial and international funding institution. Designed Hundreds of effective non-profits projects regarding empowering women and youth through combining tech, entrepreneurship and socially driven issues. Travelled to Hundreds of countries to lecture about youth in politics, peace education, conflict resolution, and entrepreneurship. An author of related articles and working on her Book “Women and the Ceiling Glass, Tunisia and the Post-revolution.”

**Amina Rasul**  
*Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy - Philippines*

Amina Rasul is the President of the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy. She is a member of the Board of Regents of the Mindanao State University. She has been Presidential Adviser on Youth Affairs and Chair of the National Youth Commission. She has served on the Board of the Mindanao Development Authority, the Philippine National Oil Corporation, The Development Bank of the Philippines and a Founding Director of the Local Government Guarantee Corporation. She was the first Filipino invited to be a Senior Fellow with the United States Institute for Peace. A columnist with the Business world, she has written and edited several books on the Mindanao conflict, Islam and democracy. She has degrees in Economics (University of the Philippines), Masters in Business Administration (Asian Institute of Management) and Masters in Public Administration (Harvard Kennedy School for Government). Awarded 2016 Most Distinguished Alumna of the University of the Philippines, she is cited as one of the World’s 500 Most Influential Muslims, 2017 by the Jordan Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre. She was awarded Muslim Democrat of 2007.