

Announcing the formation of a Global Alliance of Women Countering Extremism and Promoting Peace, Rights & Pluralism

Founding Members and Current Supporters

Asia

Afghanistan

Ms. Guissou Jahangiri
Executive Director, *Armanshahr/OPEN ASIA*

India

Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan

Malaysia

All Women's Action Society Society (AWAM)

Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women

Sisters in Islam

Myanmar

Women Peace Network - Arakan

Pakistan

Ms. Mossarat Qadeem
Executive Director, *PAIMAN Alumni Trust*
Ms. Bushra Qadim Hyder
Executive Director, *Qadim's Lumiere School*
Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre

Philippines

Ms. Amina Rasul
President, *Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy*

Sri Lanka

Ms. Visaka Dharmadasa
Chair, *Association for War Affected Women (AWAW)*

Tajikistan

Ms. Malika Jurakulova
League of Women Lawyers (LWL) of the Republic of Tajikistan

Middle East/ North Africa

Iraq

Ms. Fatima Al-Bahadly
Director, *Iraqi Al-Firdaws Society*
Ms. Ala Ali
Board Member, *Iraqi Al-Amal Association*

Syria

Ms. Dana Abdeen
Ms. Abir Haj Ibrahim
Founder, *Mobaderoon Active Citizens in Syria*
Ms. Ghada Rifai
Founder, *Mobaderoon Active Citizens in Syria*

Tunisia

Ms. Amel Grami
Gender and Extremism Expert, *Center for Strategic Studies*

We, the undersigned, are gathering to form an independent alliance of women-led civil society actors and organizations working to prevent and counter all forms of extremism. Our purpose is to bring synergy and greater coherence to our existing collective efforts, to advance gendered understandings of and responses to extremism, and to collaborate strategically in providing clear alternatives that bring a just peace for all.

On September 29 U.S. President Barack Obama will host the world leaders' summit on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) at the United Nations General Assembly. Leaders will emphasize the need to balance military solutions for CVE with changes in socio-economic policies. They will note the important role of civil society in resisting extremism. They will highlight the need for gendered analyses and the role of women in promoting and preventing radicalization. We welcome their attention, but these insights are not new to us.

Collectively, our outreach extends to international, national, and grassroots women-led organizations that for close to thirty years have worked on the frontlines and warned against the rising tide of extremism cloaked in religious and ethno-nationalistic politics. From Asia and Africa to the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East, *women's rights activists are the longest-standing socially-rooted, transnational groups mobilizing for peace, countering rising extremism, and providing an alternative vision for the future.*

For years we have witnessed the complicity of some state and non-state actors in spreading extremist ideologies, weapons, and wars that are killing more civilians. We have insisted that extremism and state militarism are two sides of the same destructive coin, each fueling the other. We have heard the lip service that some governments pay to women's welfare while they stand by in the face of rising oppression. Through experience, we know that these problems are also exacerbated by decades of economic austerity programs that have shredded welfare programs for the majority while benefitting a small minority.

Women have led the struggle because regardless of region or identity they are usually the first to feel the direct impact of growing intolerance. Women who courageously work for peace, rights, and pluralism are often in the crosshairs of violence. Extremists often target them for recruitment or seek to them. State forces detain and harass them for leading communities in demanding justice, accountability, or simple basic services. Women are on the kill-lists of militias and gangs for daring to speak out against violence. They are threatened for questioning violence and discriminatory religious interpretations and practices, and they are targeted for providing youth with peaceful ways to express their faith and dignity.

Despite these threats, we will not let violence determine our lives and collective future.

West Africa

Mali

Ms. Djingarey Maiga
Présidente, *Femmes et Droits Humains*

Nigeria

Ms. Hamsatu Allamin
Gender Activist

Europe

Norway

Ms. Deeyah Khan
Founder and CEO, *Fuuse*

United Kingdom

Dr. Ziba Mir-Hosseini
Professorial Research Associate, *University of London &*
Founding Member, *Musawah Global Movement for Equality and Justice in the Muslim Family*

Ms. Sajda Mughal OBE
Director, *JAN Trust*

North America

Canada

The Honourable Mobina Jaffer, Q.C.
Senate of Canada &
Chair, Board of Directors, *International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)*

Ms. Shareen Gokal
Manager, Challenging Religious
Fundamentalisms, *Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)*

Mr. Firdaus Kharas
Founder, *Chocolate Moose Media*

United States

The Carter Center

Ms. Jamie Dobie
Executive Director, *Peace is Loud*

Ms. Roza Eftekhari
Program Director, *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*

Ms. Melinda Holmes
Project Consultant, Mobilizing Action for
Women and Girls, *The Carter Center*

Ms. Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini
Co-founder and Executive Director,
International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)

Ms. Karin Ryan
Senior Advisor for Human Rights, *The Carter Center*

Ms. Sussan Tahmasebi
Co-founder and MENA Director, *International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)*

Latin America

Mexico

Mr. Rodolfo Domínguez
Justice, Human Rights, and Gender Civil Association

Today, extremists, occupation forces, authoritarian regimes, corrupt powers, and organized crime groups hold the rest of humanity hostage. Existing international policies are inadequate for preventing extremism. Economic sanctions and weapons sales exacerbate the suffering of many while often benefiting those promoting extremism. Governments spend billions on bombs and drones, knowing that military solutions alone provide no solution. Yet when citizens seek funds for schools, economic development, or humanitarian aid, leaders claim they cannot afford it.

What is truly unaffordable is the status quo. It is driving humanity toward perpetual war. This must stop.

Our alliance will extend and strengthen existing networks led by women and help to realize a progressive vision of the world eschewing violence and rooted in universal rights, dignity, and equality. It will respect our diversity while uniting us across our shared humanity, hopes, and aspirations.

The challenges are enormous and require the talent, commitment, and expertise of many. The alliance will provide a platform for collaboration across sectors—civil society, private industry, media and the arts, academia, government, religious, and multilateral institutions—working to harness peaceful and positive forces everywhere.

We will work proactively to inform public opinion and influence policymaking. We will echo and build on each other's strengths and remain committed to bringing a gendered lens to humanize and inform solutions. We aim to be present, vocal, and active where and when state and non-state actors make decisions and implement policies related to extremism and militarism. We will critique and challenge ineffective policies and instead foster peaceful solutions and prevent the spread of violence.

We invite the international community to walk alongside us. One thing is guaranteed: Our vision for a future of peace, justice, dignity, rights, pluralism, and prosperity for all is possible. Join us.

For more information about the alliance and forthcoming activities please contact info@icanpeacework.org