

Committee: Young Delegates Forum

Issue: The role of women in preventing violent extremism

Student Officer: Magdalini Tsocha

Position: Deputy President

INTRODUCTION

1. Welcoming Message

Dear esteemed all delegates,

We are truly pleased to welcome you to the Young Delegates Forum as simulated in this year's Arsakeia-Tositseia Schools Model United Nations (ATSMUN 2019). It is a sincere honor and delight of ours to be serving as your board and we are bound to work to the best of our abilities in order to ensure this conference's experience is unforgettable for you. While we firmly believe your participation in this simulation and this committee is tied with eagerness and enthusiasm, it is vital to stress that your preparation for the topics' discussion is a matter of personal devotion and effort.

In an attempt to make this process less complicated and difficult for you, we have prepared this guide, which could be very useful for your research. This Study Guide shall provide you with all the necessary information as to completely comprehend the subject. However, it cannot merely support your own investigation to the matter, so we urge all of you to focus on the characteristics of your delegation and read, very closely and carefully, the rules of procedure.

As your Students Officers, we have certain expectations from you, such as punctuality, enthusiasm, diligence and persistency. From this point on and until the end of the conference, we remain at your disposal and are committed to assist you by any means possible for the finest results.

We cannot express how excited we are to meet each and every one of you in this year's ATSMUN in Patras! Until then,

Best regards from your Deputy Presidents,

Diamantenia Panagiotopoulou

Konstantia Mexa

Magdalini(Magda) Tsocha

2. Introduction to the Third Topic

While there is no internationally acknowledged or accepted interpretation of the term of “violent extremism”, a definition which could be universally developed would be the actions or views of people who reinforce or use violence which derives from ideological purposes to successfully reach reformed political or religious views, in a wide variety of issues, such as politics, religions or even gender relations. It is very common that religious beliefs, ethnic differences and political ideologies are distorted or abused by violent extremists’ groups not only to justify their actions but to gain and retain more followers as well. It is utterly apparent that preventing violent extremism and its disastrous consequences is more than essential in our world, yet as far as this topic is concerned it is crucial to examine the role of women in preventing these hideous acts.

Bearing in mind the dramatic rise of terrorism in the past few years, including in South and South-East Asia, the [2016 Global Terrorism Index](#) ranks South Asia as the second most affected region in the world. Women and girls are affected by rising extremism in a different way than men and boys. They are more than often the first victims of violent attacks. Their rights and mobility, as well as their economic capacities are compromised at an even greater extent than their male counterparts. But they also take part in encountering the spread of extremist ideology and activity. As community leaders and as mothers, wives, sisters and daughters in family settings and professionals, they shape the values of community members. (1) *

In an attempt to build peaceful communities in South and Southeast Asia, women activists, civil society representatives, experts and governments came together in Bangkok, Thailand, from 25-29 September 2016 in a forum hosted by UN Women and the Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), with the support of the Government of Japan. (1)*

The Forum, titled “Engaging communities in approaches to countering violent extremism and incitement”, drew upon partnerships and experiences from UN Women’s new regional program on preventing violent extremism in Asia, which is being implemented this year in Bangladesh and Indonesia. Funded by the Government of Japan, this innovative program

prioritizes women's leadership and participation within local communities, in order to reverse the growing threat of extremism through improved social cohesion and economic empowerment. (1) *



*Participants at the closing of the “Engaging communities in approaches to countering violent extremism and incitement,” Forum in Bangkok. Photo: UN Women/Pairach Homtong (1) **

From the aforementioned, it is apparent that preventing violent extremism requires that women's roles and that gender perspectives are taken into account. It is in this regard that our topic adopts a gender- based approach and women's perceptions and/ or experiences on extremist ideologies and violence are being focused on.



"In relation to violent extremism, there are many roles of women. Women are educators, campaigners, financers, brides, logistic arrangers—with each group of women, we have a different approach. For the women that become agents of the radicalization of their husbands, we have to strengthen these women so that they have the courage to say no to their husband."

*—Siti Darojatul Aliah – Dete, Managing Director, Yayasan Prasati Pedamaian (Institute for International Peacebuilding) Indonesia (1) **

Important note from the chairs' team

In order for the chairs to fully understand the dynamics of the committee, discovering any misunderstanding prior to the debate and for the better preparation of the delegates you

are asked to proceed as indicated below;

- 1) Conduct your chairs via email and informing them about your mun experience so that they can know what exactly to expect of you.*

2) Prepare and send your chairs by 11:59 of the 6th of November one position papers for each of the topics you are going to discuss during the conference. You can conduct the expert chair, of each topic for further information concerning your country's policy if needed, and for general guidance when it comes to your position papers (word limit structure etc). You are going to receive general comments during the lobbying for your position papers as well as personal feedback and grades for your papers. The points you will receive will add up to your general score which is one of the factors that determine the best delegate award. If you for any reason fail to send your papers before the final deadline you will not be eligible for any award.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

s

1. United Nations' involvement, Resolutions and Events

In 2015, the United Nations celebrated the 15th anniversary of Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. Regardless of the tremendous advancement, civil society also pointed out some concerns referring to women's rights being used "in a wrong way", i.e. as a tool of international political agendas. (6)*

Resolution 2242, which calls for integration of the gender perspective in the prevention of violent extremism, was adopted in the course of the 2015 celebrations. (6)*

In this Resolution, women are depicted as vigilant mothers and neighborhood experts who can detect persons undergoing radicalization at an early stage, be it their own children or those of their neighbors. They are expected to assume an important role in prevention strategies through early recognition of dangers in their environment, and provide information about radicalization of persons. (6)*

A question which arises from all the above is; doesn't this sort of integration of the gender perspective in the prevention of violent extremism lead to women being reduced to these roles and feeling under pressure to monitor their environment? Doesn't it reinforce stereotypes that are being fought against? (6)*

In a much more gender perspective a security could be provided with the following measures: Upgrading districts, jobs for young women and men, community work, and good local healthcare services. In this solution reaching way, women would finally actually realize their essential function in society. Without investment in the social infrastructure, the role assigned to women in the policy of preventing violent extremism is nothing but token equality, a use of certain women as tools at the expense of real equality. (6) *

In the SCN Global Summit in Melbourne (July 2018) research questions were made, such as why is there a gender- based approach to P/CVE needed, what are the differences between the two genders on perceptions and experiences regarding violence and extremist ideologies and what are the impacts of women's empowerment on women's perceptions and participations in P/CVE. (4) *

Examining the violence and extremism acts in everyday lives of people whereas analyzing the family structures, intimate relations, regarding and the public realm, and also the hidden structures and forms of power, the results were a surprise.



Everyday warning signs (4) *

*Gender-specific warning signs were observed in everyday life and were critical early indicators of fundamentalism and extremist behavior and violence. (4) **

One of the results was that women who took part in the fourth program sites in Bangladesh and Indonesia had much more awareness on the topic of violent extremism and their role both in the family and the community could contribute to P/CVE than women who did/ had not participated. (4) *

As for the empowerment of the individuals, not only women, participants in the program were much more confident in joining P/CVE initiatives, not only speaking up and actively reporting cases of violent extremism but also having the knowledge to react in the right way and prevent violent extremism in general. Another interesting point was that supporters of P/CVE had more trust in various institutions, such as the police, the government, the media and even the courts of law in encountering disagreement for the use of violence. (4) *

In addition, both genders acknowledged the importance of women having economic empowerment and independence, as this factor works effectively for the families and the community too, decreasing tensions and therefore contributing to general peace, resilience and stability. (4) *

'After the training from Wahid Foundation we realized the importance of women is not only near a well, a bed and a kitchen. Women must also have a good education' (Sumenep, Indonesia)

Last but not least, the significance of healthy family institutions was underlined, stressing the role of mother and father of the family in the frontline of P/CVE, as increased awareness within the family and community of violent extremism and how it is to be prevented is the recipe for success. (4) *

'We were unaware before, now we are aware. We didn't know what to do, we were backdated and our husbands didn't allow us to go out of our house and forbid us to do many things. In the meetings, now we can discuss many things and exchange ideas. Now we think if others from the other villages can do something then we can also do it. We are women but we can do it. We are becoming aware.' (Dinajpur, Bangladesh)



Women's agency in preventing and countering extremism (4) *

"If you want to know what the security situation is, what the indicators of safety are, don't ask the military, don't ask the government, ask the women." (4) *

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and Countering Violent Extremism: Using a Gender Perspective to Enhance Operational Effectiveness

Violent extremist groups follow a very specific pattern which actually enhances the perpetuation of inequality between men and women. Violent extremists often target women as victims and recruit them as perpetrators of violence this forms part of a larger political project. Increased violent activity by women and girls has been noticed and noted, drawing international attention on the role of women in extremist violence and how women can join the fight against extremist violence.

In October 2015, the Security Council focused in a more direct way on the intersectionality between the women, peace and security agenda and counterterrorism and CVE, noting "changing global context of peace and security... relating to rising violent extremism" and reiterated the "intention to increase attention to women, peace and security" as it relates to terrorism. The resultant resolution, UNSCR 2242, called for closer integration of efforts to implement Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and CT resolutions—specifically encouraging the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) to collaborate with UN Women to

gather data on the drivers of radicalization for women, and the impacts of CT strategies on women. (5)*

Since October 2015, the Council adopted resolutions that highlighted in particular the importance of including women and youth in CVE strategies. The Council's resolution 2242 (2015) urges Member States and the United Nations system "to ensure the participation and leadership of women and women's organizations in developing strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremism." Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) urges States "to consider ways to increase inclusive representation of youth in decision-making at all levels in local, national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict, including institutions and mechanisms to counter violent extremism". (7)*

In January 2016, the United Nations Secretary-General presented to the General Assembly a Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE), which adopts a comprehensive approach to the challenge of violent extremism, encompassing not only ongoing and essential security-based counter-terrorism measures, but furthermore systematic preventive measures that effectively and directly address the drivers of violent extremism at the local, national, regional and global levels. In July 2016, the Assembly adopted a resolution referencing the Secretary-General's Plan of Action and invited Member States, regional and subregional organizations to consider developing national and regional plans of action to prevent violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism. The Committee and CTED are committed to ensuring coordination of their efforts with those being made in support of the PVE Plan of Action, including through CTED's participation in the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF). (7)*

On March 1st 2019, UN- Secretary General António Guterres delivered a speech to the Group of Friends on Preventing Violent Extremism, in New York, emphasizing the importance of strengthening women's rights in order to win the war against violent extremism. He noted that the Group has served as a useful forum for exploring lessons learned and best practices and now focuses on how to defend women's rights and place their voices in such a way that they can all work together to limit the spread of violent extremism."I was pleased to meet recently in Addis Ababa with members of FemWise, one of the networks and groups of mediators that are making invaluable contributions in advancing women's role in peace processes and negotiations." were his exact words (8)*

The United Nations work in Asia and Africa has shown that women have bigger chances than men to work on prevention on violent extremism. It is also apparent that recruiting more women to serve in law enforcement can result in earlier access to important information, more advanced policing styles and reduced escalations of violence. The efforts that are made must also address structural challenges that prevent women from gaining equally from economic opportunities, social services, access to justice and dialogue on national policies. These barriers perpetuate the inequality and gender dynamics that can be exploited by violent extremist groups. Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions are our guide. (8)*

*“We must also promote access to education, as well as the core values of equality, tolerance, justice and peace. And we must offer a viable alternative vision to what is promoted by violent extremist groups. Building critical thinking within communities can make them more resilient and less vulnerable to hate speech, which has fuelled many atrocities.” – António Guterres on his speech about empowering women’s rights, presentation in law enforcement to the Group of Friends on Preventing Violent Extremism in New York (8)**

Many United Nations entities are integrating gender dynamics into their responses. In Nigeria, the United Nations has helped establish a gender desk as part of national counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism efforts, which recruited additional female investigators. In North Africa, the United Nations is supporting national institutions to research the gender-specific dimensions of violent extremism. And in the next few months, the United Nations will launch a handbook on the Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism, to help countries develop gender-sensitive security measures. (8)*

Co-hosted by the Government of Switzerland and the United Nations, the [Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism – The Way Forward](#) took place on [7 and 8 April 2016](#) at the United Nations Office at Geneva. Building upon the February formal debate of the General Assembly, the Geneva Conference provided an opportunity for the international community to share experiences in addressing the drivers of violent extremism and to build support for the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action. The first day of the conference day was dedicated to a meeting of senior experts. The second day was the high-level segment of the Conference including interventions at the ministerial level. Heads of international and regional organizations and heads of UN agencies also participated in the discussions on action at the national, regional and global level. (9)*

On [1 July 2016](#), the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus, resolution ([A/RES/70/291](#)) on the Fifth Review of Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy reinforcing global consensus in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. The General Assembly recognized the importance of preventing violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism and, recommended that Member States consider the implementation of relevant recommendations of the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, as applicable to the national context. (9)*

2. Timeline of Events

22 nd of December 2015, Letter from the	The Plan of Action recommends a focus on seven priority areas: 1. Dialogue and
--	--

Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly about a Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674), expressing	conflict prevention 2. Strengthening good governance, human rights and the rule of law 3. Engaging communities 4. Empowering youth
Seventieth Session 9 th of February 2016, Draft Resolution Submitted by the President of General Assembly	Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism- 1. Welcomes the initiative by the Secretary-General, and takes note of his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism; 1 2. Decides to give further consideration to the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism beginning in the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review in June 2016 as well as in other relevant forums.
Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism – The Way Forward on 7 th and 8 th of April 2016	In the General Assembly resolution on the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism(A/RES/70/254) , adopted by consensus on 12 February 2016 , Member States welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General and stressed that it is essential to address the threat posed by violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism
1st of July 2016, the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus, resolution (A/RES/70/291) on the Fifth Review of Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy reinforcing global consensus in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.	The General Assembly recognized the importance of preventing violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism and, recommended that Member States consider the implementation of relevant recommendations of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, as applicable to the national context.

(9)*, (10)*, (11)*, (12)*

3. Previous attempts to solve the issue

Over the past year, the international community commemorated the fifteenth anniversary of the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security. This resolution recognized the disproportionate and unique impact of violent conflict on women and girls, and affirmed the participation and representation of women in building peace. UNSCR 1325 for the first time codified the role of women in building and sustaining peace in the international legal framework. In preparation for the 2015 High-Level Review on UNSCR 1325 (2000), the Security Council invited the Secretary-General to commission a Global Study on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (Global Study), highlighting best practices, implementation gaps and challenges, emerging trends, and priorities for action. (5)*

The passage of UNSCR 1325, in October 2000, was a victory for women and women's organizations. Their advocacy for a role of women in international actions dealing with peace and security challenges had finally been recognized. UNSCR 1325 held the promise of a new way of looking at conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution. Unfortunately, attention to the WPS agenda as embodied in UNSCR 1325, was quickly eclipsed by the military responses to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The ensuing changed security environment, including the rise and transformations of terrorist and violent extremist threats since then, the renewed concerns about nuclear proliferation, and the resurgence of balance of power politics at both regional and global levels have further sidelined the WPS agenda.

In October 2015, during the High Level Review of the implementation of UNSCR 1325 the UN Security Council recognized the need to regain the political momentum of the WPS agenda and deepen understanding about gender equality as a prerequisite for peaceful, inclusive and just societies.³⁴ In UNSCR 2242, celebrating the 15th anniversary of 1325, Council members reiterated that women must have the power to participate equally in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security, not only because it is their right but also because it is the only way to provide sustainable and lasting peace.

In addition, UNSCR 2242 explicitly highlighted the role of women in countering violent extremism and called on states to integrate their WPS agendas with counter terrorism and countering violent extremist policies.³⁵ The UN Secretary General in his plan to further international efforts to counter violent extremism also put considerable emphasis on finding synergies between the counter-terrorism and the WPS agenda.³⁶ While this new emphasis on synergies is to be applauded it becomes even more important that the search for such synergies comes with serious gender sensitive analyses of the problems at hand. It is not enough to bemoan women as victims of terrorist groups.

The Global Study on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325, released in October 2015 at the occasion of the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, recognized that the empowerment of women “as a bulwark against extremism is become part of a military counter-terrorism strategy, but instead remain “part of the civilian assistance to the development and human rights programs in the country. (5)*

It is apparent, as stated above, that the greatest efforts have been made not only for the increase of the attention of the international community of the role of women but for the effective way to deal with violent extremism, through the role of them. Women need dignity, respect, a voice that can be heard and recognized and the first step is to put any kind of gender's inequality issue aside.

4. Possible Solutions on Countering Violent Extremism

This study guide provides you with all the necessary information for research but simultaneously functions as a paper which will warrant you with serious consideration about upcoming/possible solutions on this complicated but understandable subject. Methods and strategies on countering violent extremism in a successful way demand strategies related to security that need to be based on the comprehension of various aspects of violent extremism- such as how and why are women affected by it.

From all the previous, some aspects which need to be reexamined are the ways with which ideologies and media, or even messages indoctrinate, affect, inform or marginalize, the personal, usually underlying and secret motivations of each individual (revenge, fame, hatred, emotional instability) who lead them to join a group of extremists and last but not least the capabilities or motives or limits of organizations that are possible- to- become extremist/ terrorist groups. (13)*

Most common and reasonable solutions for countering are education of populations, delegitimation effectively in exploiting weaknesses and vulnerabilities and careful studying of all previous cases. Equipping youth with values, attitudes, knowledge and skills such as promoting exchange, communication and cooperation from all over the world in order to get over linguistic, cultural or superstitious boundaries and barriers.

Finally, human rights and intercultural understanding have a crucial part of it, so exchanged between schools from different countries shoul be encouraged by government fundings. Young women and men and possibly become key actors in preventing and countering violent extremism

Preventing violent extremism through formal, non-formal and informal education, and the education sector and other relevant/related sectors of society contribute fully to national strategies to prevent violent extremism. In addition, safeguarding and protecting cultural heritage and promotion of cultural diversity to mainstream a culture of citizenship and human rights in communities, and their roles as global citizens and contributors to a sustained peace. (14)*

*“We young people are only called up when it’s time to wave flags or put up posters. When we want to share proposals they don’t take us into account and when we voice criticism we are sidelined.” (Central America) (14)**



Prevention of Violent Extremism through Youth Empowerment in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia (14)*

5. Points to be addressed

- 1) How can the mainstream media affect and indoctrinate ideologies, beliefs and mislead people to spiritual radicalization easily and effectively?
- 2) How can the youngsters walk away from the brain-washing process through education and obtain knowledge and skills with all around the globe?
- 3) Why do youngsters, and especially, women have a vital role in preventing violent extremism?
- 4) What are the basic rights that women are not entitled to in underdeveloped countries and how is that linked to the raising of violent extremism?
- 5) Why do the United Nations consider women to be extremely important in the process of fighting violent extremism?
- 6) What are the motives behind people who get involved in such groups with violent ideas that are implemented?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- (1)**Women's role vital in countering violent extremism*, UN Women Copyright- Available at
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/10/feature-womens-role-vital-in-countering-violent-extremism>
- (2)**Australian Government measures to counter violent extremism: a quick guide*- Available at
https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1415/Quick_Guides/Extremism
- (3)* *Action plan against Radicalization and Violent Extremism*- Available at
<https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/Action-plan-against-Radicalisation-and-Violent-Extremism/id762413/>
- (4)* *Preventing Violent Extremism: Women's role and Gender Perspectives*- Available at
<https://strongcitiesnetwork.org/fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2018/08/Jacqui-True-Presentation.pdf>
- (5)* *A man's world? Exploring the Roles of Women in Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism*- Available at
https://wiisglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/AMansWorld_FULL.pdf
- (6)* *Women as a tool for preventing violent extremism?*-Available at
<https://www.swisspeace.ch/apropos/women-tool-preventing-violent-extremism/>

(7)* *Countering Violent Extremism-* Available at <https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/focus-areas/counteracting-violent-extremism/>

(8)* *Strengthening Women's Rights, Representation in Law Enforcement Key to Success, Secretary-General Tells Group of Friends on Preventing Violent Extremism-* Available at <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sqsm19481.doc.htm>

(9)* *United Nations, Office of Counter- Terrorism – Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism – Available at <https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/plan-action-prevent-violent-extremism>*

(10)* *Letter dated 22 December 2015 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly – Available at https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/675*

(11)* *Draft Resolution Submitted by the President of the General Assembly- Available at https://www.un.org/qa/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/L.41*

(12)* *Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism – Available at https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism.ctitf/files/plan_action.pdf*

(13)* *Methods and Strategies to Counter Violent Extremism- Available at <https://nsiteam.com/scientific-methods-strategies-to-counter-violent-extremism/>*

(14)* *Prevention of Violent Extremism through Youth Empowerment in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia- Available at <https://en.unesco.org/preventing-violent-extremism/youth/project/about>*