

# Women and Terrorist Radicalization Final Report

OSCE Secretariat – OSCE ODIHR Expert Roundtables

Preventing Women Terrorist Radicalization  
*Vienna, 12 December 2011*

The Role and Empowerment of Women in  
Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization  
that Lead to Terrorism  
*Vienna, 12 and 13 March 2012*

This report should neither be interpreted as official OSCE recommendations based on a consensus decision, nor as the official position of the OSCE Secretariat, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, or of any particular OSCE participating State; it reflects opinions expressed individually by participants in the expert roundtables.

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## Executive Overview

The Transnational Threats Department/Action against Terrorism Unit (TNTD/ATU) and Gender Section in the OSCE Secretariat, together with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), organized two expert roundtables on women and terrorist radicalization, held in Vienna respectively on 12 December 2011 and 12-13 March 2012.

The purpose of the meetings was to enhance understanding of women terrorist radicalization and women's roles in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT). They resulted in the formulation of recommendations for actions to be taken by OSCE participating States and civil society as well as suggestions for possible follow-up activities by OSCE executive structures, within their respective mandate.

The first roundtable discussed the dynamics behind women terrorist radicalization and ways to prevent it in a gender-sensitive and human rights-compliant manner. The second event focused on good practices and lessons learnt from women's initiatives to prevent VERLT, highlighting the potential human rights and gender concerns that may arise in this context.

The two roundtables brought together over 190 participants from civil society, academia, state authorities and intergovernmental organizations, with expertise in security, gender and human rights.

This report presents the key findings and recommendations brought forward during these events.

### **Background**

The threat of VERLT is of serious concern to OSCE participating States. Both national authorities and international organizations have increasingly recognized that a better understanding of the dynamics of VERLT is central to formulating and implementing effective strategies to prevent and combat terrorism.

However, when exploring the concept of VERLT, participating States should remain aware that 'radicalization' and 'extremism' should not be an object for law enforcement counter-terrorism measures if they are not associated with violence or another unlawful act, as legally defined in compliance with international human rights law (i.e., extremist groups which do not resort to, incite or condone criminal activity and/or violence). Holding views or beliefs that are considered radical or extreme, as well as their peaceful expression, should not be considered crimes *per se*.

Radicalization processes follow different and non-linear paths and the conditions conducive to it vary from one individual to another. Understanding a given instance of radicalization requires taking into account the specific contextual and personal factors at play, including historical, political, socio-economic and psychological considerations. Governments, civil society and international organizations should re-assert and be guided by the principle that terrorism should not be associated with any particular religion, culture, race or ethnicity. Governments should also respond in a balanced and proportionate manner to terrorist threats inspired by various ideologies to avoid focusing disproportionately on certain groups.

While VERLT transcends socio-political, national, cultural, geographical and age boundaries, it also transcends gender. For decades, terrorist organizations have targeted women for recruitment. The potential for women radicalization and involvement in violent extremist groups has long existed but continues to be relatively underestimated as the misconception that violent extremism and terrorism exclusively concern men still prevails. However, recent attacks perpetrated by women as well as intelligence on continued terrorist efforts to recruit women

warrant taking the threat of their terrorist radicalization seriously and considering how to design effective gender-sensitive and human rights-compliant preventive actions.

Furthermore, women can have special potential in countering VERLT. The involvement of women as policy shapers, educators, community members and activists is essential to address the conditions conducive to terrorism and effectively prevent terrorism. Women can provide crucial feedback on the current counter-terrorism efforts of the international community and can point out when preventive policies and practices are having counterproductive impacts on their communities. Removing the factors that hamper women's active participation in countering terrorism is necessary to facilitate the involvement of women's organizations in identifying and addressing specific political, social, economic, cultural, or educational concerns that may lead to violent extremism and terrorist radicalization. Women are effective undertakers of initiatives and shapers of narratives to counter violent extremist and terrorist propaganda and may carry special weight with women audiences.

In this regard, the expert roundtables intended to:

- Achieve a better understanding of the specifics and dynamics involved in terrorist radicalization in order to reflect on whether and how existing measures to counter VERLT should be corrected or tailored to become gender-sensitive, human rights-compliant and therefore more effective;
- Explore the potential role of women in countering VERLT, within society at large, communities and families, and specifically how to empower women activists and non-governmental organizations to stand up against it;
- Identify a suitable focus and modalities for potential follow-up activities on the above issues by OSCE executive structures, within their respective mandate, as well as suggest a way forward through the formulation of concrete recommendations to various stakeholders.

## Understanding Women Terrorist Radicalization

1. As violent extremism and terrorist radicalization are still often considered a male issue, the question of women terrorist radicalization is characterized by bias and misconceptions. In situations of conflict and violence, women are often seen as passive, victims, helpless, subordinate and maternal. Such assumptions reinforce gender stereotypes. As a result, women are neither considered to be potential terrorists, nor perceived to be as dangerous as their male counterparts if they were to be involved in terrorism. However, a woman should not be assumed to be more or less dangerous, nor more prone to peace, dialogue, non-violence and co-operation than a man. In fact, the very image of the peaceful woman has been used by terrorist groups to recruit women and to claim an innocent and non-violent character by highlighting the involvement of women in their organizations.
2. It is fundamental to increase awareness of the existence of and potential for women terrorist radicalization, as well as of violent extremist propaganda and recruitment strategies directed at women and girls. Sensitizing parents, teachers, social workers, frontline police officers, journalists and judges on this issue is key. In this spirit, it is important that the media abstains from disseminating stereotypical preconceptions of women's roles and behavior.
3. Further scientific research on VERLT is required. In addressing this gap, researchers however need to better question the possible assumptions behind their work and the methodologies they use to collect data, as well as be cognizant of the cultural context(s) of their research. It is also necessary that they adopt a gender-sensitive perspective, reflect on their sources of information and evaluate critically how questions on women terrorist radicalization are framed and discussed.
4. More research should be done to understand what possible specific conditions are conducive to women terrorist radicalization. Identifying common patterns of women's involvement may help in this regard. However, as women may follow varying radicalization paths, it is crucial to take into account the specific historical, social, political and personal contexts of each case to ensure that the underlying factors are accurately understood and addressed.
5. Many conditions conducive to terrorism impact both on the potential violent radicalization of men and women. It is however critical to understand how these factors may be experienced differently along gender lines. Gender-based discrimination may indeed possibly overlap with and exacerbate discrimination and violations of rights on other grounds, such as race, ethnicity or belief. Moreover, specific conditions conducive to the terrorist radicalization of women may include gender-based inequality and discrimination, violence against women, lack of educational and economic opportunities and lack of opportunities for women to exercise their civil and political rights and engage in the political process with lawful and non-violent means.
6. Violations of human rights – including when caused by counter-terrorism measures – such as rights to life and physical integrity, right to liberty and security, freedom of expression, freedom of association and the right of peaceful assembly, freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, right to the protection of private and family life, can deepen alienation, isolation and exclusion and lead women on the path to violent radicalization. These violations are often used by terrorist groups to establish a victimization discourse, justify their acts and recruit new members, including women.
7. When examining women terrorist radicalization, researchers and the media tend to confine themselves to cases of women suicide bombers, excluding both the leadership, operational/logistical and/or ideological roles that women can play. They often disregard the way terrorist groups, their respective environment, ideology and motivations may have

changed over time and how this interplays and impacts on women's involvement in each group.

8. Academic research and policy are too often disconnected. Governments and researchers need to interact more to ensure that policy-making is informed by research. Researchers, civil society and ordinary men and women from different backgrounds could for instance be involved through consultative activities to exchange views and information with governments on women terrorist radicalization and women's potential to counter VERLT, and identify common interests.
9. A better understanding of and reflection upon terrorist radicalization would also benefit from enhanced interaction of law enforcement and intelligence agencies with public authorities in other fields, such as education services, health and social services, at the national and local levels. This could be facilitated through the establishment of inter-agency fora, with a view to cross-fertilize expertise, strengthen information-exchange, and raise awareness and knowledge of both gender and security among all stakeholders.



## Adopting Gender-Sensitive and Human Rights-Compliant Approaches

10. The misconception that women are not involved in violent extremism or terrorist radicalization has often shaped counter-terrorism strategies, exacerbating women's exclusion from decision making processes and their significant underrepresentation among law enforcement officers and security personnel.
11. And yet gender is an important aspect of security. Since men and women relate differently to security, conflict, terrorism and counter-terrorism, women bring complementary perspectives to the discussion which should not be overlooked. Women are frequently victims of both terrorist attacks and counter-terrorism measures, and as such they can point out when preventive practices are counterproductive and cause backlash in their communities. This type of information can be decisive to avoid creating or sustaining conditions conducive to terrorism.
12. However, gender equality and women's empowerment should not be valued only to the extent that it helps national security and counter-terrorism. Gender equality should be promoted in its own right and women should be empowered to participate fully in society, not be instrumentalized to "spy" on their communities. Similarly, women's rights must not be bargained for security gains. States should not intentionally or negligently disregard gender equality when negotiating with terrorist groups. Indeed, women's rights are human rights, as confirmed by in the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and States have the duty to respect, protect and fulfill them.
13. The promotion of women's rights and role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building is a good example of women's involvement in the security sector. UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security stressed the importance of women's role, equal participation and full involvement in this area and urged States to increase women's representation at all levels of the decision-making process for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. As such, the resolution and the practical lessons learnt from its implementation provide a source of inspiration to advocate for and shape new initiatives on women's roles in counter-terrorism efforts.
14. While such initiatives can inspire women's engagement against terrorism and VERT, it is essential to emphasize that conflict and terrorism are two different legal concepts. UNSCR 1325 and subsequent related resolutions refer to situations of conflict, as legally defined in international humanitarian law, whereas "terrorism" is not defined in international law but related criminal offenses are addressed in multiple conventions.
15. Counter-terrorism policies and practices should be designed to respect human rights and the rule of law at all times in order to be successful. Policies and practices that are contemplated or in force should be compared to potential alternatives, monitored in their implementation and evaluated carefully. It is indeed fundamental that they be tested for their effectiveness, positive and negative impacts. Gender benchmarks should be included in the monitoring and evaluation of these policies and practices, which can only be effective if they involve women in all phases of development, implementation and evaluation.
16. In order to facilitate gender mainstreaming in counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization strategies, women's presence among counter-terrorism professionals, including in the military, must be increased. These structures need to strengthen their efforts to recruit and retain women, including in operational roles, and to ensure that obstacles to their career advancement are removed.

17. Along with government monitoring, monitoring by civil society of women terrorist radicalization, counter-terrorism strategies and women's inclusion in counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization policies should also be encouraged.

## Understanding Women's Role in Countering VERLT

18. Women can counter VERLT in a large range of capacities, within the framework of initiatives tailored to the specificities of each context.
19. The risk of terrorist radicalization must be addressed within family as well as by society, which is why both men and women, as parents, need to be able to answer their children's questions about their religious, political and cultural identity. Such ability is essential since most processes of terrorist radicalization take place between the ages of 12 and 20, when personalities and values are shaped. In this context, inability to openly discuss and address critical questions could leave a vacuum that risks being filled with violent extremist narratives.
20. Women's roles in countering VERLT should not be confined to the private sphere. Women bring a new perspective to the discussions in this area and should therefore be involved in the full range of activities available to men, including in community life, politics, law enforcement and other state agencies.
21. It is essential that law enforcement personnel involved in counter-terrorism related measures, such as check point, prison and airport security personnel, benefit from specific gender training and include women. These two requirements can help improve the efficiency of security measures, as well as avoid human rights violations that could fuel radicalization and cause a backlash to security objectives.
22. Women's dynamic contributions in their communities also need to be recognized and encouraged. Police experience has for instance shown that the engagement of women's groups and informal networks in preventing VERLT can have a deeper and more genuine effect on communities. Women can play an important role as mediators as well as authors and disseminators of counter-narratives challenging violent extremism and terrorism within their communities. By becoming role models, they can influence their personal and social surroundings in a positive manner.

## Engaging and Working with Women to Counter VERLT

23. In order to effectively engage with women in their communities, governments should strive to better interact with small women's organizations at grassroots level rather than partner with often self-proclaimed community leaders or large, well-established organizations only. Grassroots movements have better access to vulnerable individuals. Also, community leaders that governments usually engage with tend to be men and to provide fairly homogeneous and conciliatory advice. Their viewpoint does not always represent the entire community and they may prioritize good relations with the police over bringing up serious concerns.
24. Public authorities could identify key women activists and organizations, with their capabilities and needs, to reach out to various groups and diversify their interaction with communities. It is essential that they critically assess which state agency – police, social services, education services – is best placed to engage with women in a specific situation and that they engage with women from all backgrounds. Transparency on why and how they co-operate with specific organizations or individuals is also key for the credibility of their engagement in the eyes of the broader communities and public.
25. Obstacles to this increased co-operation need however to be considered and overcome. Disproportionally restrictive anti-terrorism financing laws might for instance impede funding of these small grassroots women's organizations. In addition, governmental counter-terrorism funding may have a negative connotation, which can dissuade civil society organizations to engage with authorities and apply for grants labeled as such.
26. Participating States should also refrain from implementing discriminatory counter-terrorism measures such as resorting to profiling based on stereotypical assumptions about e.g., race, ethnicity, religion and/or gender. Such measures are likely to constitute practical obstacles to women's engagement against VERLT and to undermine women's interest in and willingness to contribute to the prevention of terrorism.
27. When reaching out to women's organizations, state authorities should identify and put forward common goals as points of engagement. Women's organizations rarely count VERLT among their priority concerns. They are rather concerned with intolerance, racism, discrimination, street crime and organized crime, and lack of access to social services – some of which may constitute drivers of radicalization. Governments would therefore benefit from a better understanding of communities' concerns and should strive to address these concerns rather than merely respond to their own terrorism prevention objectives with surveillance.
28. Engaging with community members, including with women, should not be primarily aimed at gathering intelligence. Terrorism prevention will benefit most as a by-product of engagement with women on broader community concerns. On the basis of such an engagement and the development of trusted relationships, community interlocutors may be more willing to share information with public authorities, information that incidentally may prove valuable from a terrorism prevention perspective.

## Empowering Women to Counter VERLT

29. The support of both state authorities and non-governmental organizations is fundamental to empower women to challenge violent extremist narratives within their communities. Women's organizations and women advocates need to be inspired to take action and provided with the technical skills and capacity to effectively tailor their messages to specific audiences, both in terms of content, form and delivery. Women should be encouraged to develop and share their own resources on women empowerment stories, women in history and women role models, including through community information centers and Internet databases.
30. It is essential that women be provided with platforms and safe spaces, at the international, national and local levels, allowing them to express their views, share concerns and exchange about their experiences in facing and dealing with VERLT.
31. Examples from around the OSCE region illustrate that contexts of violent conflict can provide important lessons to be learned for women's engagement against VERLT. By deconstructing patriarchal interpretations of gender roles, trainings can show participants how patriarchal views fuel gender-based violence during conflict and how they can be challenged in everyday life. This type of initiatives sets the premise for a greater understanding of gender and can pave the way for new counter-VERLT initiatives in various communities.
32. Similarly, the organization of activities and trainings designed to facilitate women's access to cultural, religious and political education might enable them to better challenge violent extremist narratives. Such narratives often rely on disputable interpretations of facts and religious tenets which, if left uncontested, might appear as the only "truth". These activities and trainings should be organized around the ideas of tolerance and pluralism. They should not be designed to impose one narrative as the only "truth", but rather to provide women with a market of ideas from which to formulate and choose the narratives they believe in. An atmosphere has to be fostered in which different opinions and critical views can be expressed and alternative narratives put forward, challenging terrorist and violent extremist ideologies from different angles.
33. Raising women's awareness and understanding of VERLT is necessary for them to be able to stand up against it. However, defining early warning signs of this process is difficult practically. As there is no single pathway to radicalization and no single terrorist profile, there can be no set of easy-to-identify, specific and definitive benchmarks. Radicalization is mostly an internal process and potentially valid indicators are not easily detectable. Moreover, none would be a necessary and sufficient proof of violent radicalization. Apparent visible changes, such as clothing, should not alone be considered indications of terrorist radicalization. Other behavioral changes such as watching violent extremist videos or the use of rhetoric that advocates violence could become of concern to the authorities.
34. Defining early warning signs of terrorist radicalization is also problematic from a human rights perspective. The right to hold any ideology or belief – even if they are considered to be radical or extreme – as well as to peacefully express them, is a democratic requirement protected under international law and enshrined in OSCE commitments. Holding radical or extreme views should not be considered a crime per se if they are not associated with violence or another unlawful act, as legally defined in compliance with international human rights law (i.e., extremist groups which do not resort to, incite or condone criminal activity and/or violence). Any restriction to freedom of expression has to be based on law, justified, necessary, proportionate and non-discriminatory.

35. Specific trainings could also be designed and delivered to facilitate women's participation in the public sphere and increase their interaction with public authorities. Although such activities may lift a barrier to women's engagement, there also needs to be a change in authorities' perception of women and willingness to cooperate with them. Such change is essential so that women can play an active role as first responders to VERLT in their community.
36. Empowering women to share their stories in the public sphere might encourage them to provide personal testimonies that other community members will relate to more easily. Testimonies from victims of terrorism can for instance serve as effective counter-narratives, by challenging the dehumanization of victims in terrorist propaganda and insisting on the criminal nature of the acts committed by terrorists. A victim's personal testimony might, in that sense, have a greater impact on the audience than counter-narratives produced by authorities.
37. Similarly, a gender dimension should be included in efforts to promote inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogues. This would facilitate women's engagement in promoting tolerance and living together and preventing conflicts across ethnic, cultural and religious lines, thus also helping to prevent and mitigate tensions that can potentially lead to violent extremism. Women may be able to engage more effectively and constructively in dialogue, and dialogue among women may be possible where it has otherwise failed.
38. Effective counter-narratives can also be provided through the testimonies of former violent extremists, including women, who can help understand how violent extremist narratives are constructed and why they appeal to certain individuals. De-radicalized individuals have concrete experiences that might increase their credibility and ability to reach out to groups vulnerable to violent extremist and terrorist recruitment. Their testimonies about why they decided and/or how they managed to leave terrorism or violent extremism behind can be an important pull-back message for individuals on the path to violent radicalization.
39. However, governments need to take further action to enable deradicalized women to share their stories. In the first place, ensuring better access of violent extremist women to rehabilitation programmes is critical. Programmes run both by governments and civil society need to adopt gender-specific approaches and women that leave terrorist or violent extremist environment should be granted support and adequate protection so that they can reintegrate into society without being at risk of retribution or recidivism because of a lack of alternatives.
40. Terrorist and violent extremist narratives are various, pervasive and in constant development. Likewise, counter-narratives need to be powerful, dynamic and delivered with creative methods in order to have a greater reach and impact. It is important that women's organizations engaged in countering VERLT be better equipped and trained on how to shape their message effectively, how to reach a greater audience and/or specific target audiences, and how to develop new ways to reach out. Counter-narratives should be expressed in a language and using imagery adapted to intended audiences, as well as disseminated through traditional channels and/or social media, blogging, cartoons or animations, as appropriate.

## Recommendations

Throughout the two roundtables, participants made recommendations for human rights-compliant actions to be taken by governments and civil society, suggesting a way forward to improve measures to prevent women terrorist radicalization and facilitate women's engagement as forces countering VERLT. Suitable focus and modalities for possible follow-up activities by OSCE executive structures, within their respective mandate, were also identified.

This list of recommendations is non-exhaustive and represents opinions expressed by different participants during the two roundtables. The recommendations are not based on consensus and do not express the official position of the OSCE.

### Recommendations for OSCE participating States

- A1. Reaffirm that the protection and promotion of human rights is at the core of any effective counter-terrorism policies.
- A2. Promote freedom of expression and refrain from criminalizing or otherwise repressing the peaceful expression of non-violent radical or extremist views.
- A3. Refrain from resorting to discriminatory counter-terrorism measures such as predictive profiling based on race, ethnicity, religion and/or gender.
- A4. Promote gender equality in its own right and refrain from intentionally or negligently disregard gender equality and women's rights in the context of countering-terrorism.
- A5. Avoid instrumentalizing engagement with women and women's organization for political or intelligence-gathering purposes. Terrorism prevention will benefit most as a by-product of transparent engagement with women on broader community safety issues.
- A6. Increase awareness of women terrorist radicalization and women involvement in terrorism, encouraging the sensitization of parents, teachers, social workers, frontline police officers, journalists and judges to dispel stereotypes and misconceptions.
- A7. Allow and support research into women terrorist radicalization, especially factors conducive to it, and women's logistical and ideological roles in terrorist groups.
- A8. Increase interaction and exchange of information with researchers on women terrorist radicalization to facilitate the information of policy-making through research findings.
- A9. Effectively involve and engage women in all stages of development, implementation and evaluation of counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization strategies, policies and measures.
- A10. Monitor and regularly evaluate, including on the basis of specific gender benchmarks, the effectiveness, positive and negative impacts of counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization policies and practices.
- A11. Enhance co-operation among government agencies and establish fora for inter-agency co-operation to strengthen awareness of both gender and security among all stakeholders.
- A12. Increase the presence of women among counter-terrorism professionals, from decision-makers to law enforcement agencies and the military, at all levels and in all functions, and remove obstacles to their retention and career advancement.
- A13. Institute mandatory gender training for all – including military – public and private sector personnel performing security checks and body searches, in particular those working in airports, prisons or other check-points.

- A14. Draw experience from women's involvement in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building to increase women's participation at all levels of the decision-making process in the prevention of and fight against terrorism.
- A15. Engage in a genuine partnership with grassroots women's organizations, putting forward the idea of co-operation towards common goals, striving to address the communities' primary concerns (e.g., intolerance, racism, discrimination, street crime, organized crime and lack of access to social services) and being transparent about terrorism prevention concerns.
- A16. Identify key women activists and organizations, with their capabilities and needs, in order to diversify partnerships and thereby involve and reach out to various groups.
- A17. Prioritize engagement with small women's organizations at grassroots level, rather than with self-proclaimed community leaders or only with large and well-established organizations.
- A18. Address language and labeling issues to avoid negative connotations. For instance, consider referring to "safeguarding" communities from terrorism and violent extremism rather than "preventing" terrorism; make funding available under other labels than counter-terrorism.
- A19. Consider reviewing and amending anti-terrorism financing laws and regulations to facilitate access to funding for smaller and less established women's and human rights organizations.
- A20. Support civil society initiatives to educate women on their cultural, religious and political history in order to enable them to formulate and discuss different normative messages challenging extremist narratives.
- A21. Organize or support the organization of trainings to facilitate women's participation in the public sphere, and increase engagement with them. It is essential so that women can play an active role as first responders to terrorist radicalization in their community.
- A22. Ensure better access of women to gender-sensitive disengagement and rehabilitation programmes, granting them adequate protection and support.
- A23. Support the provision of platforms and safe spaces for women to share resources, experiences and concerns in facing violent radicalization, including skills and tools to respond most effectively.

### Recommendations for OSCE Executive Structures

- B1. Engage more closely and regularly with participating States and civil society on the issue of women terrorist radicalization and women's roles in countering VERLT.
- B2. Provide a forum to facilitate discussion among state authorities, civil society and researchers on the issue of women terrorist radicalization, ways to prevent and counter it, as well as women's roles in countering VERLT.
- B3. Facilitate regional networking and exchanges among women and women's organizations engaged in countering VERLT.
- B4. Explore the role of community policing in countering VERLT and gender aspects in this context.
- B5. Assist participating States, upon request, to mainstream gender in their counter-terrorism policies and practices, including by conducting a gender and human rights impact assessment, as well as supporting consultative and partnership initiatives.



## Recommendations for Civil Society

- C1. Consistently monitor acts of violent extremism or terrorism committed by women and further research the issue of women terrorist radicalization, especially factors conducive to it and women's roles in terrorist groups.
- C2. Increase statistical and monitoring work and engage with governments in an open and facts-based dialogue about the effectiveness and impacts of counter-terrorism measures on women.
- C3. Consistently monitor and advocate women's presence among counter-terrorism professionals and promote their involvement in all stages of development, implementation and evaluation of counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization strategies, policies and measures.
- C4. Increase awareness of women terrorist radicalization and women involvement in terrorism, and sensitize parents, teachers, social workers, frontline police officers, journalists and judges to dispel stereotypes and misconceptions.
- C5. Organize activities and trainings to facilitate women's access to cultural, religious and political education in order to enable them to formulate and discuss different normative messages challenging extremist narratives.
- C6. Organize trainings to raise women's confidence to intervene in the public sphere and encourage them to play an active role as first responders to terrorist radicalization in their communities.
- C7. Ensure better access of women to gender-sensitive disengagement and rehabilitation programmes, granting them adequate protection and support.
- C8. Provide women with platforms and safe spaces to share resources, experiences and concerns in facing violent radicalization, including skills and tools to respond most effectively.
- C9. Draw experience from civil society initiatives in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building to further develop women's roles and women's led activities to counter VERLT.

## Annex 1: OSCE Mandate and Commitments

The organization of the two expert roundtables was specifically built on the following OSCE commitments:

- **Ministerial Statement MC.DOC/3/07 on Supporting the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy**, which states that: "the OSCE will continue its activities in countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. Intolerance and discrimination must be addressed and countered by the OSCE's participating States and OSCE's executive structures within their respective mandates."
- **Ministerial Council Decision 10/08 on Further Promoting the OSCE's Action in Countering Terrorism**, which "calls upon the OSCE participating States to make use of the OSCE executive structures in countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism in their respective countries. To this end, participating States are encouraged to continue to exchange ideas and national best practices about their strategies and measures to counter violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism as well as to enhance their co-operation with media, the business community, industry and civil society."
- **Ministerial Council Decision 5/07 on Public Private Partnerships in Countering Terrorism**, which "tasks the Secretary General and OSCE institutions to continue to promote the involvement of the private sector (civil society and the business community) in their counter-terrorist activities, where relevant and appropriate."
- **Ministerial Council Decision 14/05 on Women in Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation**, which calls "on participating States and OSCE structures, as appropriate, to support and encourage training and educational programmes focusing on women and girls, as well as projects aimed at women's participation in building sustainable peace; to empower women's organizations; to support women's peace initiatives through the media and workshops on human rights and gender equality; and to raise awareness among women concerning the importance of their involvement in political processes." It also calls "on participating States and OSCE structures, as appropriate, to develop specific policies to encourage the full and equal participation of women and women's organizations in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation, as well as to encourage and support the sharing of experiences and best practices and, further, to engage with women's peace initiatives."
- **Ministerial Council Decision 14/04 on the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality**, which "tasks the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) to take action, upon request, on the issue of the exploitation of women by terrorists to serve their own ends and propagate extremist ideologies."

## Annex 2: Agenda of the Joint OSCE Secretariat – ODIHR Expert Roundtable on “Preventing women terrorist radicalization”, 12 December 2011, Vienna

### 08:30-09:00 Registration

### 09:00-09:30 Welcoming remarks

- Mr Raphael Perl, Head, OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit
- Ms Snježana Bokulić, Head, Human Rights Department, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
- Ms Hanna Sands, Gender Officer, OSCE Secretariat’s Gender Section

### 09:30-10:30 Introductory keynote presentation

The introductory keynote presentation will discuss the need to mainstream gender in counter-terrorism efforts and to develop human rights compliant measures for effectively countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. The presentation will be followed by a discussion with reactions, comments and questions from the floor.

- Ms Jayne Huckerby, Research Director, CHRGI and Global Justice Clinic, NYU School of Law, United States of America

Moderator: Dr Miriam Estrada-Castillo, Legal Officer and Gender Focal Point, United Nations Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (UNCTED) - TBC

### 10:30-11:00 Coffee break

### 11:00-13:00 Morning panel and discussion: Understanding women terrorist radicalization

This session aims to capture a better understanding of the possible specifics and dynamics involved in women terrorist radicalization. Participants will discuss possible commonalities and differences in women radicalization/recruitment for violent extremism and terrorism as shaped by different ideologies. Participants will examine issues such as the factors making women vulnerable to radicalization, the messages formulated and directed towards women, and the media used to reach out to women. Particular attention will be paid to discussing human rights violations against women and the negative impact of counter-terrorism policies on women as possible factors conducive to violent radicalization.

- Dr Carrie Hamilton, Reader in History, Roehampton University, United Kingdom
- Ms Lisa Bjurwald, Investigative Journalist, Editor at Medievarlden, Sweden
- Dr Anne Speckhard, Adjunct Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Georgetown University Medical School, United States

Moderator: Dr Mia Bloom, Associate Professor, Pennsylvania State University, United States of America

Rapporteur: Mr Richard L. Prosen, Foreign Affairs Officer, U.S. State Department

### 13:00-14:00 Lunch break

### 14:00-16:00 Afternoon Panel: Preventing women terrorist radicalization

Building on the more nuanced understanding achieved in the morning about women terrorist radicalization, this session aims to reflect on whether and how existing measures to counter violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism should be corrected or tailored to gain in effectiveness in preventing women terrorist radicalization in different contexts. In particular, participants will examine ways in which existing efforts could become more gender sensitive and human rights compliant. Attention will be paid to both policies and measures by state authorities and (the need for) initiatives and activities by civil society. The panelists and the participants will be asked to formulate recommendations which identify concrete and practical actions by governments and civil society organizations.

- Dr Nazila Ghanea, Lecturer in International Human Rights Law, University of Oxford, United Kingdom
- Dr Heike Radvan, Head of Department for Gender Sensitive Right-wing Extremism Prevention, Amadeu Antonio Foundation, Germany

Moderator: Dr Karla J. Cunningham, Full Political Scientist, RAND Corporation

Rapporteur: Mr Ivan Calabuig-Williams, Senior Advisor, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)

### **16:00-16:30 Coffee break**

### **16:30-17:30 Summarizing Findings and Recommendations**

The rapporteurs will summarize in a comprehensive manner the main issues discussed and conclusions of their respective panels. Particular attention will be paid to the recommendations formulated by participants for governments, civil society and the OSCE. Their reports will be followed by a tour de table for participants to comment and make additional suggestions.

- Mr Richard L. Prosen, Rapporteur from the Morning Panel
- Mr Ivan Calabuig-Williams, Rapporteur from the Afternoon Panel
- Tour de table

Moderators: OSCE Secretariat - ODIHR

### **17:30-18:00 Closing remarks**

- Mr Raphael Perl, Head, OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit
- Ms Snježana Bokulić, Head, Human Rights Department, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
- Ms Hanna Sands, Gender Officer, OSCE Secretariat's Gender Section

## Annex 3: Agenda of the Joint OSCE Secretariat –ODIHR Expert Roundtable on the “Role and Empowerment of Women in Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism”, 12-13 March 2012, Vienna

### 09:00-09:30 Welcoming remarks

- Mr Patrick O'Reilly, Head of Section, Security Committee and CSBMs, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the OSCE
- Ms Assia Ivantcheva, Acting Head, Human Rights Department, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)
- Mr Thomas Wuchte, Head on Anti-Terrorism Issues, Transnational Threats Department, Action against Terrorism Unit (TNT/ATU), OSCE Secretariat
- Ms Amb. Miroslava Beham, Senior Gender Adviser, Gender Section, Office of the Secretary General, OSCE Secretariat

### 09:30-10:30 Introductory keynote presentation: Understanding women's roles in effectively countering VERLT

The introductory keynote presentation will identify key concepts and address how “women's roles” and “empowerment” can be understood in the context of effectively countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT). The presentation and the ensuing discussion will highlight the specificities of women's engagement in countering VERLT and discuss possible parallels with women's participation in combating others forms of violence. Particular attention will be paid to identifying gender and human rights considerations that may arise in this context.

- Keynote Speaker: Ms Khizra Dhindsa, Detective Inspector, Association of Chief Police Officers, United Kingdom

Introducer: Ms Maj Britt Theorin, Chairperson, Operation 1325, Sweden

### 10:30-11:00 Coffee break

### 11:00-13:00 Panel discussion: Women as counter-radicalization forces: good practices and lessons learnt

The panel will discuss what is known about women's engagements in countering VERLT, present an overview of available research in the area and provide examples of women as forces of empowerment to effectively countering VERLT. The discussion aims at identifying good practices and lessons learnt from different contexts, providing participants with a better understanding of what motivates women to stand up against VERLT. Furthermore, possible key concerns from a gender and human rights perspective will be addressed, as well as the obstacles women face in countering VERLT. Issues to be addressed include: women's special potential to counter VERLT (women as policy makers, activists, human rights defenders, educators, advocates, conflict mediators); examples of good practices and lessons learnt: (when, where and how have women played a role in countering VERLT); what conditions have been necessary for such initiatives to be effective?

- Ms Elaine Hargrove, Program Director, Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) / Women without Borders
- Ms Jane Mosbacher, Counter-Terrorism Advisor, Office of the Coordinator for Counter-terrorism, Department of State, United States of America

- Ms Catherine Cooke, Foyle Women's Information Network, United Kingdom
- Dr Jayne Huckerby, Consultant, Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, NYU School of Law, United States of America

Moderator: Ms Anne-Marie Faradji, Gender Equality Officer, Council of Europe

Rapporteur: Mr Timothy Jones, Principal Adviser to the European Union Counter-Terrorism Co-ordinator

### **13:00-14:00 Lunch break**

### **14:00-17:00 Working group sessions: Empowering women to counter VERLT**

Building on the morning panel discussion, the working group sessions will seek to identify gender and human rights compliant measures to strengthen the role of women and facilitate their empowerment in effectively countering VERLT. Each working group will formulate recommendations for concrete, practical and human rights compliant actions by governments, civil society and international organizations on how to move forward, drawing on inputs from diverse perspectives, experiences and practices.

#### **Working group 1 – Reaching out to target audiences to counter VERLT**

Questions to address include: How to empower women to play a preventive role and reach out to target audiences? How to raise women's awareness and understanding of the early signs of terrorist radicalization in order to address them effectively? How can women reach out to target audiences? Which target audiences are women better placed to influence?

Introducer: Ms Elin Wedebrand, EXIT, Sweden

Moderator: Mr Ivan Calabuig-Williams, Senior Adviser, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)

Rapporteur: Ms Shaista Gohir, Women's rights activist, United Kingdom

#### **Working group 2 – Shaping the normative message to counter VERLT**

Questions to address include: How to empower women to develop counter-narratives to VERLT? What is specific about women's contribution to the development of counter-narratives – their content, packaging and dissemination? How specifically can women communicate on themes such as tolerance, peace, dialogue, human rights and non-violence? How can women effectively interact with other stakeholders in this process, including governments, the media and religious organizations?

Introducer: Ms Ana Velasco Vidal-Abarca, *Asociación Víctimas del Terrorismo*, Spain

Moderator: Ms Vidhya Ramalingam, Coordinator, European Muslim Women of Influence initiative, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, United Kingdom

Rapporteur: Dr Vlasta Jalušič, Researcher, Peace Institute, Slovenia

#### **Working group 3 – Conveying the message through actions to counter VERLT**

Questions to address include: How to empower women to undertake counter-VERLT initiatives? What are the practical tools and skills needed to strengthen women's roles in successfully countering VERLT? How can women specifically take action to influence and empower target audiences? What are the good practices and lessons learnt transferable from the roles of women in tackling other forms of violence?

Introducer: Ms Tahmina Saleem, Executive Manager, Inspire, United Kingdom

Moderator: Ms Miriam Estrada-Castillo, Legal Officer and Gender Focal Point, United Nations Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (UNCTED)

Rapporteur: Ms Julia Pfinder, Project Manager and Facilitator, Cultures Interactive, Germany

## Day 2

### 09:00-10:30 Concluding session: ways forward

The rapporteurs will summarize, analyze and wrap up the discussions and recommendations from the panel and the working groups as well as suggest the way forward in strengthening and facilitating women's engagement as forces countering VERLT. The session also provides a forum for all participants of the roundtable to react to the recommendations formulated by each working group and to raise questions and concerns.

Moderator: Ms Jane Mosbacher, Counter-Terrorism Advisor, Office of the Coordinator for Counter-terrorism, Department of State, United States of America

- Rapporteur from the panel discussion: Mr Timothy Jones, Principal Adviser to the European Union Counter-Terrorism Co-ordinator
- Rapporteur from working group 1: Ms Shaista Gohir, Women's rights activist, United Kingdom

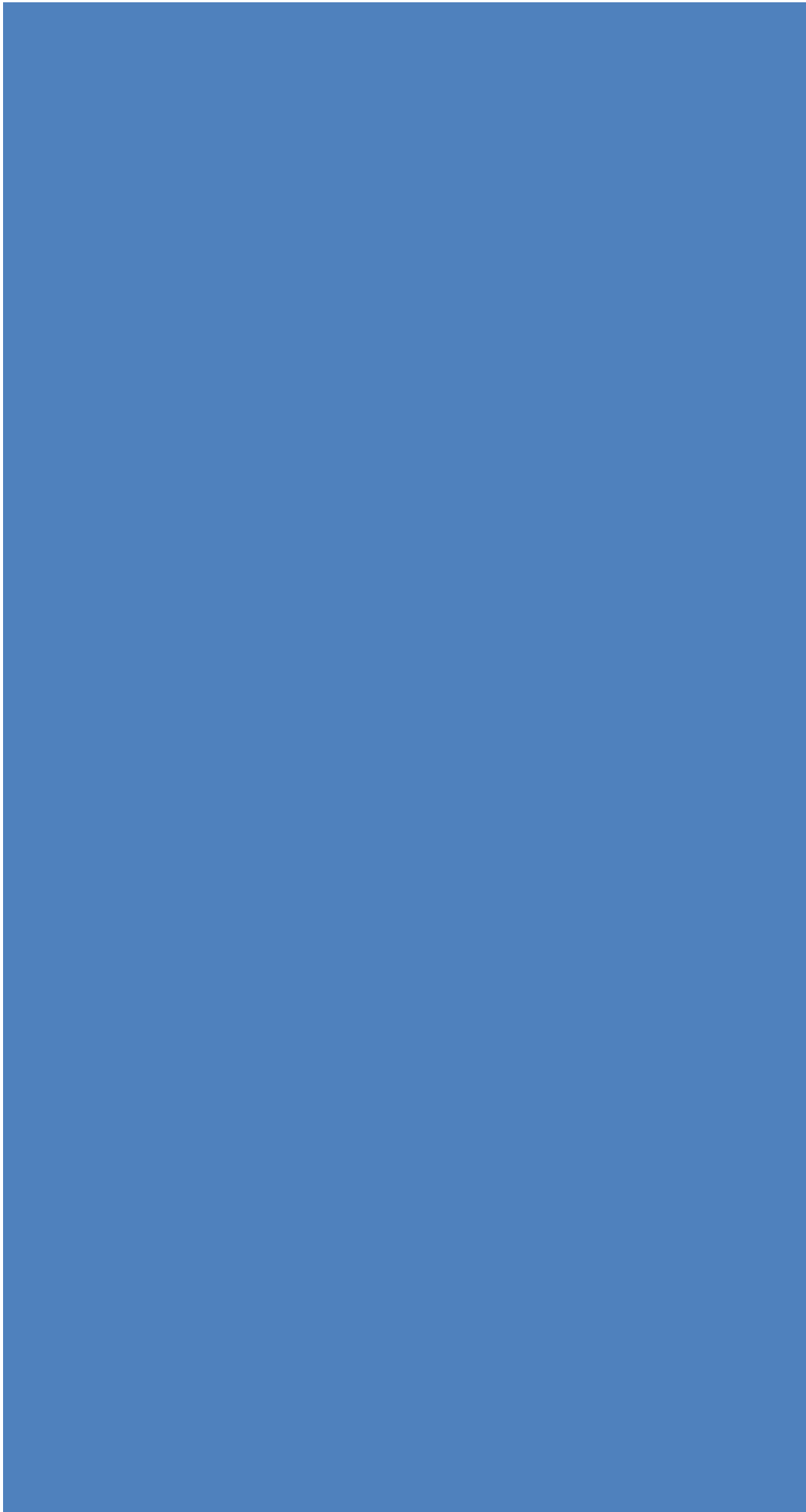
### 10:30-11:00 Coffee break

### 11:00-12:30 Concluding session: ways forward

- Rapporteur from working group 2: Dr Vlasta Jalušič, Researcher, Peace Institute, Slovenia
- Rapporteur from working group 3: Ms Julia Pfinder, Project Manager and Facilitator, Cultures Interactive, Germany

### 12:30-13:00 Closing remarks

- Mr Thomas Wuchte, Head on Anti-Terrorism Issues, Transnational Threats Department, Action against Terrorism Unit (TNT/ATU), OSCE Secretariat
- Ms Amb. Miroslava Beham, Senior Gender Adviser, Gender Section, Office of the Secretary General, OSCE Secretariat
- Ms Assia Ivantcheva, Acting Head, Human Rights Department, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)
- Mr Patrick O'Reilly, Head of Section, Security Committee and CSBMs, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the OSCE



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