Between 25 May and 5 July 2020, women and men from civil society organizations across 43 countries joined the global digital consultation to reflect on the gendered dimensions of violent extremism and counter-terrorism approaches. They drafted a Public Statement with recommendations on how to change current approaches.

PUBLIC STATEMENT

Some of the issues highlighted by civil society and some of the key recommendations they put forward during the consultation include:

**WOMEN’S RIGHTS**

Women’s human rights are particularly at risk when violent extremism is present. They are caught between violent extremist groups and State actors, often left to protect them.

**LIMITS OF EXISTING APPROACHES**

To address violent extremism, many States adopt “militarized” approaches, which lead to human rights violations, increased gender inequalities and reduced agency for women.

**TERMINOLOGY ISSUE**

“Terrorism” and “extremism” are ambiguous terms that can be abused politically to generate biases against certain communities.

**LOCAL SOLUTIONS**

Violent extremism is often a locally-driven problem and requires local solutions and leaders.

**INTERNATIONAL IMPACT**

Existing or past conflicts are fertile grounds for the emergence of extremism. We must address social injustices, build democratic and accountable institutions and eradicate poverty.

**INVESTING IN PEACE**

Investing in quality education for all, including for women and girls, is key to addressing violent extremism.

**POWER OF EDUCATION**

Women are on the frontlines as peacebuilders and human rights defenders in contexts affected by violent extremism. States must protect their rights and ensure meaningful participation in peace-building processes.

**GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

To address violent extremism and terrorism, we must promote social justice and eliminate gender inequality.

**WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION**

Women are the first responders to humanitarian crises and they need to be included in the design and implementation of peace strategies.

**POWER OF EDUCATION**

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