



**14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
Kyoto, Japan**

**Special Event on Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice
Responses to Terrorism**

16:30 – 18:00 (Japan Standard Time), Monday, 8 March 2021

Context:

In recent years, there has been a discernible shift at the international level towards recognizing the distinct ways in which women, men, girls and boys are involved in, and affected by, terrorism. Globally, men and women are involved in the activities of terrorist groups and in the commission of terrorism-related offences. However, in many cases, the circumstances of their association with these groups and the roles that they fulfil differ. Further, while women and men are among the victims of general acts of terrorism, women and girls are specifically targeted through acts of sexual and gender-based violence to achieve tactical and ideological aims. In some contexts, women disproportionately experience internal displacement due to terrorist threats, and may also face gender-specific difficulties accessing justice and seeking remedies as victims of terrorism.

Despite these different impacts and associations, traditional analysis has often placed women on the periphery of terrorism and counter-terrorism discourses, either viewing them solely as victims or as unwilling or incidental associates of the primary terrorist actors. Recently, there has been growing recognition at the international level that women are associated with and affected by terrorism in complex ways. This calls for gender perspectives to be considered through the spectrum of State responses to terrorism, ranging from measures to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism, and in criminal justice responses to terrorism.

UNODC's work in this regard is based on the understanding that criminal justice responses which do not differentiate between the impact of terrorism and counter-terrorism measures on women and men may in fact reflect largely male priorities, since men typically dominate decision-making at the household, community, and state levels.

General Assembly resolutions A/RES/72/194, from 2019, and A/RES/72/194, from 2017, encourages UNODC "to assist Member States, upon request, in mainstreaming gender perspectives into criminal justice responses to terrorism, in full compliance with human rights law, in order to prevent the recruitment of women and girls as terrorists and promote the full protection of women and girls from any form of exploitation or violence perpetrated by terrorists". The General Assembly also welcomed the publication of the *UNODC Handbook on Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism*.¹ These requests to UNODC complement numerous other General Assembly and Security Council resolutions,

¹ Available here: https://www.unodc.org/documents/terrorism/Publications/17-08887_HB_Gender_Criminal_Justice_E_ebook.pdf

Secretary-General reports, and other documents from the UN and others (e.g. GCTF), calling on Member States and UN entities to pay more attention to gender dimensions and women's rights in counter-terrorism and P/CVE, and to address sexual and gender-based violence used as a tactic of terrorism.²

UNODC includes capacity building on gender dimensions into its technical assistance cooperation with countries in Africa³, the Middle East, Central, South and South-East Asia. The *UNODC Handbook on Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism*, launched in 2019, further guides UNODC's work on this issue. This assistance has focused on:

1. Raising awareness and promoting policies that take into account the different ways in which men and women are affected by terrorism and by government responses;
2. Increasing women's role in counter-terrorism and criminal justice agencies;
3. Training for gender-sensitive interviewing and witness protection; and
4. Promoting accountability for victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) by terrorist groups.

Objective:

- Discuss trends regarding women's participation in terrorist groups and efforts to bring to justice terrorists who commit sexual and gender-based violence
- Promote the importance of increasing the role of women in efforts to prevent violent extremism and prevent terrorism, including through greater roles in counter-terrorism and criminal justice agencies
- Explore Member States' practices to adopt gender-sensitive measures to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism;
- Discuss the links and synergies between SDGs 5 and 16, the UN's Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and UNODC's technical assistance regarding gender dimensions of criminal justice responses to terrorism;

² GA resolution 68/178 (2014), 2018 Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review resolution, Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, Security Council resolutions 2242 (2015) and 2331 (2016).

³ See eg <https://www.unodc.org/nigeria/en/unodc-launches-nigeria-training-module-on-gender-dimensions-of-criminal-justice-responses-to-terrorism.html>