

# **The Rise of Females in Terrorist Organizations:**

An Intercultural Conflict in the Muslim and Western  
Worlds

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The insurgence of terrorist organizations has been a prime factor in international conflict. Not only have terrorist organizations reaped havoc in several regions, but they have caused intercultural conflict within the Muslim world, as well as the Western world. More so, an aspect of the culture in the Middle East that deviates from that of their Western counterpart, has been the way in which woman are viewed in the Muslim world. This determines the differentiating aspects of the conflict; at large.

Concentrating on radical extremists, it is essential to provide Hofstede's cultural dimensions that create intercultural conflict among the various perspectives of Islam throughout the world. The affect that terrorism has had upon Muslim women in these portions of the globe has also led to an increase in female terrorists. This has been most significant in recent years. The current research will provide an analysis of female recruitment through the use of social network platforms, "Islamic State" or "Daesh" propaganda; and gender roles in terrorist organizations.

## **DAESH**

Although "Daesh" has desired to be known as the "Islamic State", it has angered various people within the Muslim world; women, men, and children alike. Muslim's predominant argument (which has been consistently stated) has been that Muslims do not consider the terrorist organization's actions as an accurate interpretation or practice of the religion. Also, the name "Islamic State", which the group insists on using, is an insult to those who practice Islam. The name suggests that it is a state, which it is not; expanding through parts of Syria and Iraq (with

an internationally unrecognized capital in Raqqa, Syria). Recently, in an argument by France's foreign prime minister, expressed that, "the name Daesh, according to France24, is a "loose acronym" for Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" (al-Dawla al-Islamiya al-Iraq al-Sham). The name is commonly used by enemies of ISIS, and it also has many negative undertones, as Daesh sounds similar to the Arabic words Daes ("one who crushes something underfoot") and Dahes ("one who sows discord").<sup>1</sup> This suggestion can provide an international response, and further global awareness of the threat of Daesh. It is therefore, in the author of this articles opinion, that for the entirety of the following of this article that the terrorist organization will be referred to as Daesh.

## **NEW PHENOMENA:**

### *SOCIAL MEDIA & THE RECRUITMENT OF FEMALES*

An innovation for communication purposes among individuals, groups, and nations, in the past two decades, has been social media. "Among all US adults, 66 percent use at least one social networking site (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, or Google+), and 48 percent visit these sites as part of their typical day."<sup>2</sup> The expansion of tools that increase communication increase the ability to express views, which also results in an increase of conflict. For example, early research which concentrated on, "computer-mediated communication",<sup>3</sup> illustrated that participators quickly shifted their opinions and decisions through the use of social media sites

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<sup>1</sup> Rollins, S. (2014, September 17). France says the name 'ISIS' is offensive, will call it 'Daesh' instead. Retrieved March 1, 2015, from <http://theweek.com/speedreads/446139/france-says-name-isis-offensive-call-daesh-instead>

<sup>2</sup> Westaby, J. (2014). Social Networks, Social Media, and Conflict Resolution. In *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice* (Third ed., p. 1002). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>3</sup> Westaby, J. (2014). Social Networks, Social Media, and Conflict Resolution. In *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice* (Third ed., p. 1003). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

than in comparison to face-to-face communication. Other studies discovered that online social networks complicated relationships; cyberbullying, and defamation on social media has become a serious concern; online gaming technology violence (similar to violence on TV) can affect aggressive behavior; and “basic e-mail conversations can contribute to the escalation of network conflicts”.<sup>4</sup> Terrorist organizations have utilized these various social media platforms in order to target specific audiences with propaganda; most recently, Muslim females.

Additionally, “persuasion in the digital era is a very interesting concept”<sup>5</sup>; especially in relations to the decline in the public’s trust in institutions. It is a worldwide trend. Certainly, in the United States it is met with a growing rise in people’s trust in people like themselves. At the same time, there is an explosion of networks. Considering these trends, influence is often times best exerted from people who are like each other. This is not a new concept, but when it is applied to a topic (such as foreign policy), it truly underscores the value of finding interlocutors which facilitate the type of conversation that is desired; reasonable, by those who participate. Since conversation is not as direct as it used to be, people can only hope for such an outcome.<sup>6</sup> Much of the information on the internet is misleading, and younger generations are not aware of the bias and inaccuracies on the web.

Moreover, a recent document that began to circulate on January 23<sup>rd</sup> of 2015, uploaded by the all-female Al-Khanssaa Brigade’s media, was designed, “as a means of drawing in women from countries in the region, in particular those in the Gulf, [which] presents something that is

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<sup>4</sup> Westaby, J. (2014). Social Networks, Social Media, and Conflict Resolution. In *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice* (Third ed., p. 1003-1004). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>5</sup> Sandre, A. (2015). The Pillars of Digital Diplomacy. In *Digital Diplomacy: Conversations on Innovation in Foreign Policy* (p. 51). Rowman & Littlefield.

<sup>6</sup> Sandre, A. (2015). The Pillars of Digital Diplomacy. In *Digital Diplomacy: Conversations on Innovation in Foreign Policy* (p. 51). Rowman & Littlefield.

more akin to the realities of living as a female jihadist in IS-held territories.”<sup>7</sup> Quilliam, the world’s first counter-extremism think tank’s Charlie Winter published a translation and analysis pertaining to the semi-official manifesto on women. It also pertains to Western women, issues regarding gender equality, and “allows us to look past that which is banded about on social media by Western supporters of IS, enabling us to get into the mind-set of the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of women who willingly join its ranks.”<sup>8</sup> The overall purpose of the Islamic State’s propaganda is to recruit women to their terrorist organization.

Daesh denounce Western civilization through a series of interminable discussions. In Winter’s synopsis of the manifesto, he includes its’ argument that, “the West’s obsession with studying “the brain cells of crows, grains of sand and fish arteries” is deemed a distraction from the fundamental purpose of humanity – to worship God.”<sup>9</sup> Their opinion is that scientific research is pointless, for the worship of Allah is the only *true* purpose of humanity. “This, the author(s) argued, has sullied humanity’s purity. In the same breath, though, they also insulate themselves from accusations of hypocrisy by claiming that those sciences “that people need, that help facilitate the lives of Muslims and their affairs are permissible”. Such hypocrisy is at the root of all extremist Islamist thinking.”<sup>10</sup> The perspective of Daesh, which is argued throughout the document, is that Western men have not allowed women to be who they are truly entitled to

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<sup>7</sup> Winter, C. (2015, February 1). Women of the Islamic State: A Manifesto on Women by the Al-Khanssaa Brigade. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/women-of-the-islamic-state3.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Winter, C. (2015, February 1). Women of the Islamic State: A Manifesto on Women by the Al-Khanssaa Brigade. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/women-of-the-islamic-state3.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Winter, C. (2015, February 1). Women of the Islamic State: A Manifesto on Women by the Al-Khanssaa Brigade. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/women-of-the-islamic-state3.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Winter, C. (2015, February 1). Women of the Islamic State: A Manifesto on Women by the Al-Khanssaa Brigade. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/women-of-the-islamic-state3.pdf>

be, and because of that, Western men are not real men. It states that males that are part of the terrorist organization are real men who will treat the women accordingly to what the Islamic State perceives as their true purpose; child-rearing and tending to the household.

In addition, the document utilizes religious scripture in order to attempt to provide the interconnection between terrorist actions, and leader's interpretation of the Qur'an; or as Hauk and Mueller explain:

- Religion provides a fascinating case of asymmetric information. It is an element of many religions that the religious leaders provide a special connection to a world of beliefs that cannot be known. Once this belief in leaders is established, the scope for abuse is almost infinite. Holy scripts tend to be guides of conduct approved by some supreme being leading to reward if followed and punishment if violated. Historically, a few people could claim to be able to interpret the scripts, due to illiteracy or being written in a foreign language.<sup>11</sup>

The ability to manipulate a culture through personal preferences, individual interpretations, and political desires has been common place throughout history. In the Al-Khanssaa's document, women are presented as homemakers and mothers, and "For the IS ideologue, women have been appointed the qualities of "sedentariness, stillness and stability" and men, "their opposites: movement and flux". The matters of adventure and excitement, themes most used by female Western recruiters trying to recruit young girls to IS, are the realm of men."<sup>12</sup> Dedicated to build their organization within Syria and Iraq, Daesh members have gone to great lengths to create propaganda alike the document that recently surfaced in January.

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<sup>11</sup> Hauk, E. (2015). Cultural Leaders and the Clash of Civilizations. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 59(3), 377-377.

<sup>12</sup> Winter, C. (2015, February 1). Women of the Islamic State: A Manifesto on Women by the Al-Khanssaa Brigade. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/women-of-the-islamic-state3.pdf>

Yet, this comprehensive publication is the first of its kind that is directed at the recruitment of females with the promise of goodwill, prosperity, and fortune. “The jihadi problem is fueled by low youth employment, corruption, lack of opportunities, identity crisis, and social injustice. Young girls are often revolting against a family in which they are misunderstood or a society in which they don't feel appreciated.”<sup>13</sup> In the translation of “Women of the Islamic State: A Manifesto on Women by the Al-Khanssaa Brigade”, the Islamic State argued that:

- The Islamic society that emerged with the establishment of the Islamic State in the lands of Iraq and Syria is a society formed, first and foremost, to worship the one and only God. Everything that conflicts with this purpose is bound to Hell. This Islamic community, which is only as the beginning of its formation, needs more time and effort until it can return to the first picture [of a Muslim community], the time of the rule of the Prophet and the Rightly Guided Caliphs, when everyone in it fulfilled their Rightly ordained roles. Foremost among the first people that we refer to are Muslim women, members of their Islamic community. In that day, they had a role. Today, too, they have a role, one which is derived from the principles of Islamic law and its teachings.<sup>14</sup>

Although in the dramatic footage on “*The Islamic State*”<sup>15</sup> documentary by VICE News, members of the Islamic State have profusely taunted U.S. citizens with the threat of raping American women in order to degrade Western civilization; among dozens of other distasteful actions. The Al-Khanssaa Brigade ensures to include a brief statement that suggests that what they decree throughout the document is not an official “State” policy, but placed together by supporters; enabling leaders of the terrorist organization to remain unaccountable for the recruitment of young women through manipulation. As with the Islamic State’s justification for all their actions, they express that all of their actions are ordained by God; even the use of

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<sup>13</sup> Ennaji, M. (2015, March 2). Recruitment of North African Girls and Women to Jihad Must Be Stopped. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from [http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped\\_30269](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped_30269)

<sup>14</sup> Winter, C. (2015, February 1). Women of the Islamic State: A Manifesto on Women by the Al-Khanssaa Brigade. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/women-of-the-islamic-state3.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> The Islamic State [Motion picture]. (2014). Vice News.

violence. For example, as Tariq Jalil argued, the term *Jihad* is, “not only one of the words most misunderstood by non-Muslims, but also one of the words most abused by radical extremists. The term translated literally means “struggle”, or “striving”. Its primary meaning is that of an inner struggle, the struggle within oneself: first, to fight the inclination to do wrongful deeds; and second, to establish constancy in achieving righteous actions.”<sup>16</sup> The author also cited scholarly work in his explanation of women’s rights, and wearing veils and headscarves; in which he details that women have a choice to wear such materials if they want, but that Islam does not give any instruction to do so. The inaccuracies of Daesh propaganda are consistently conveyed by religious scholars throughout the world.

Also, Daesh utilizes social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube to attract younger generations of males and females. They prey on children, ranging from as young as four or five to sixteen or seventeen years of age. Josh Halliday wrote an article in the Guardian, stating that, “Girls can marry at the age of nine, should ideally have husbands by 16 or 17 and should not be corrupted by going to work, according to a treatise published by female Islamic State supporters in Iraq and Syria.”<sup>17</sup> Although the terrorist organization also recruits a vast amount of males, in order to train in their military camps; the victimization of females from around the globe has been an increasingly important aspect of Daesh agenda.

In a recent article, published on Great Britain’s Independent online news webpage, Sara Khan explained that, “around 60 women and girls are estimated to have left the UK to join Isis so far. The latest female recruits are three girls from Bethnal Green: Kadiza Sultana, Amira

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<sup>16</sup> Jalil, T. (2014). *Islam Plain and Simple: Women, Terrorism, and Other Controversial Topics* (pp. 70-71). Santa Monica, CA: Quinn Press.

<sup>17</sup> Halliday, J. (2015, February 5). Female jihadis publish guide to life under Islamic State. Retrieved March 14, 2015, from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/05/jihadist-girl-marry-liberation-failed-islamic-state>



Abase and Shamima Begum. <sup>18</sup> Khan argues the significance of this atrocity by arguing that the Islamic State's, "success at recruiting females to their cause cannot be downplayed. Their propaganda is powerful. Using extremist theology and social media, they target young girls with the hope of persuading them to help build their so-called "state." Its media outlet, Al-Zawra, for example, is aimed specifically at females. It romanticises the notion of the jihadi fighter seeking the ultimate goal of martyrdom, and sells the role of a wife to a martyr as the next best thing."<sup>19</sup> The grooming that takes place (through the use of propaganda) gives young women an image of living in a happy marriage with a "hero" of the Islamic cause, but in "*The Islamic State*" documentary, interviewees declare that they have no time for family life. They stated that they have more important roles to fulfill, in the name of Allah; the war against "*infidels*".<sup>20</sup> In a significant amount of videos, documents, and social media, members of the Daesh consistently threaten anyone who does not follow their extreme beliefs in the construction of a caliphate with violence and death. The contradictions among the propaganda and fact course throughout every aspect of the Islamic State. As Moha Ennaji explained how:

- Appeals to women to raise their children as jihadis seem to attract women who suffer from insecurity for three main reasons. First, many of them consider jihad a structured setting, where they can join, doing something that they feel is important. Second, they like to integrate a group that is very influential. Third, they are attracted by the idea of motherhood and being part of women who are struggling together with the company of nice jihadi husbands. It is as if being

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<sup>18</sup> Khan, S. (2015, February 25). The jihadi girls who went to Syria weren't just radicalised by Isis — they were groomed. Retrieved March 23, 2015, from <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/the-jihadi-girls-who-went-to-syria-werent-just-radicalised-by-isis--they-were-groomed-10069109.html>

<sup>19</sup> Khan, S. (2015, February 25). The jihadi girls who went to Syria weren't just radicalised by Isis — they were groomed. Retrieved March 23, 2015, from <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/the-jihadi-girls-who-went-to-syria-werent-just-radicalised-by-isis--they-were-groomed-10069109.html>

<sup>20</sup> The Islamic State [Motion picture]. (2014). Vice News.

subjugated by a patriarchy and losing civil rights were preferable to the anxiety of freedom.<sup>21</sup>

It is not astonishing that the propaganda has manipulated women to such a degree because the target audience consists of young, self-conscious girls and young women. "The recruitment of a minor shows that the terror groups have no respect for its targets' age"<sup>22</sup> Daesh became the avant-garde of recruiting females to a terrorist organization; through the use of social media. Jihadists are well aware that young women in the Western world seek independence; whereas in other regions, they fervor for security and stability. Daesh appeals to these desires in their updates, posts, and comments on websites, such as Twitter; and they use insecurities to exploit women across the globe.

## **TARGET AUDIENCE(S) & CULTURAL DIMENSIONS**

### *WESTERN WORLD*

In more recent news, Daesh has shifted its message to a broader audience; specifically, the Western world. Not only are they promising husbands and homes, but also "worldly items such as fridges, microwaves and milkshake machines, said Mia Bloom, a professor of security studies at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell and author of *Bombshell: Women and Terror*. Bloom likened the exchanges to online grooming by sexual predators. "It's not dissimilar ... in terms of disinhibiting them, creating a rapport, building trust, creating this environment of

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<sup>21</sup> Ennaji, M. (2015, March 2). Recruitment of North African Girls and Women to Jihad Must Be Stopped. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from [http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped\\_30269](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped_30269)

<sup>22</sup> Ennaji, M. (2015, March 2). Recruitment of North African Girls and Women to Jihad Must Be Stopped. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from [http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped\\_30269](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped_30269)

secrecy: ‘You don’t tell your parents, you can trust me,’” she said.”<sup>23</sup> Among the hundreds that have taken the bait, “many are second- or third-generation immigrants who do not have the religious education to question what they are being told about Sharia and practices, experts said. They are drawn to Syria by a sense of religious obligation, concern about the suffering inflicted on Muslim civilians in the country’s civil war, as well as a desire for adventure and purpose (i.e. the romance of marrying a fighter).”<sup>24</sup>

As a rule, these young women are radicalized outside of the home, due to peer group influence, a preacher in a mosque (masjid) or through religious schools (madrasas). The life conditions within the radical groups often contrast the “cheerful” images on the screen. “Daesh is led by men and is rigorously male dominated with recruits separated by gender. Female recruits often find the reality is far different from that ideal.”<sup>25</sup> Groups of women have recently traveled from Europe, Africa, and the United States to join the jihadists within Syria and Iraq. The precise number of girls and women seeking to join the terror groups is unclear, but some analysts estimate that roughly 10 percent of recruits from the West are women, often influenced by social media networks that offer advice, tips, and even logistical support for travel. There are plenty of online marriage markets for young Salafists.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Zavis, A. (2015, February 25). How Daesh Recruits Young Brides for Militants. Retrieved March 27, 2015, from <http://gulfnews.com/news/mena/syria/how-daesh-recruits-young-brides-for-militants-1.1462607>

<sup>24</sup> Zavis, A. (2015, February 25). How Daesh Recruits Young Brides for Militants. Retrieved March 27, 2015, from <http://gulfnews.com/news/mena/syria/how-daesh-recruits-young-brides-for-militants-1.1462607>

<sup>25</sup> Ennaji, M. (2015, March 2). Recruitment of North African Girls and Women to Jihad Must Be Stopped. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from [http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped\\_30269](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped_30269)

<sup>26</sup> Ennaji, M. (2015, March 2). Recruitment of North African Girls and Women to Jihad Must Be Stopped. Retrieved March 4, 2015, from [http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped\\_30269](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/recruitment-of-north-african-girls-and-women-to-jihad-must-be-stopped_30269)

As Hofstede's model suggests, the United States of America is, "one of the most individualistic cultures in the world."<sup>27</sup> "The American premise of "liberty and justice for all", which illustrates the imperative for equality in every aspect of government and society; the convenience of hierarchy within American organizations (i.e. "superiors are accessible and managers rely on individual employees and teams for their expertise."); society is loosely-knit, meaning individuals and families do not rely much on authorities for support; "there is a high degree of geographical mobility" because "Americans are the best joiners in the world", but developing deep friendships is often difficult; and Americans commonly do business and interact with people that they do not know, "are not shy about approaching their prospective counterparts in order to obtain or seek information", are expected to be self-reliant, and "within the exchange-based world of work", hiring, promotion and decisions "are based on merit or evidence of what one has done or can do."<sup>28</sup> The United States' high score of 91 in Individualism, on the Hofstede's Centre's website illustrates how Daesh propaganda appeals to young women in the Western world. Other Western countries scored similar to the United States in this particular dimension, with United Kingdom at 89, France at 71, and Canada at 80.<sup>29</sup>

## *MUSLIM WORLD*

Analyzing the cultural dimensions of Syria and Iraq, it does not come as a surprise; cultures within the two states are easily swayed by Daesh propaganda. These two states have an extremely low level of indulgence, are collective societies, desire an authoritarian, centralized government, are firm in their traditional values, and are more masculine societies than the vast

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<sup>27</sup> What About The USA? (n.d.). Retrieved April 3, 2015, from <http://geert-hofstede.com/united-states.html>

<sup>28</sup> What About The USA? (n.d.). Retrieved April 3, 2015, from <http://geert-hofstede.com/united-states.html>

<sup>29</sup> The Hofstede Centre: Strategy-Culture-Change. (n.d.). Retrieved April 8, 2015, from <http://geert-hofstede.com/>

majority of states.<sup>30</sup> Affiliation makes it plausible for Daesh to recruit Muslims that reside within the region. “The word *affiliation* comes from the Latin verb, *affiliate*, meaning “to adopt or receive into a family.” As a core concern, affiliation describes [the] sense of connectedness with another person or group. It is the emotional space between *us* and *them*, that creates an experience with little emotional distance; because of a feeling of closeness to a particular group.<sup>31</sup> When Daesh took control of the border that divided Syria and Iraq, the similarities, based on religious, cultural, and socio-economic aspects; the interconnectedness was already a part of society.

Although Daesh ideals are radical, Syrians and Iraqis perceive the ability to connect with their neighbors gave them a false sense of belief in Daesh, and their true intentions, or were merely overcome by the fact that they could fulfill dreams of pursuing old relations with families and communities that they were formerly unable to participate in. Stripping the two neighboring states of a national border also furthers Daesh intentions to recruit Muslim women to marry terrorists and carry out terrorist actions.

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<sup>30</sup> Cultural Dimensions Country Comparison: Syria & Iraq. (n.d.). Retrieved March 1, 2015, from <http://geert-hofstede.com/syria.html>

<sup>31</sup> Fisher, R., & Shapiro, D. (2005). Build Affiliation. In *Beyond Reason: Using Emotions As You Negotiate* (pp. 53-54). New York: Viking.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

*“We need a better understanding of what drives women to take part in, and even give their lives for, violent groups that insist on their inferiority. We can't counter radical narratives if we don't understand the motives of the radicalized.” ~ Moha Ennaji (President of the South North Center for Intercultural Dialogue and Migration Studies in Morocco)*

In a letter, which has been released online in both Arabic and English, the scholars outline 24 practices that ISIS has been carrying out that the authors say are forbidden by Islamic scripture, including denying women and children their rights, torturing people and killing “emissaries, ambassadors, and diplomats” including aid workers and journalists. The scholars quote from Islamic scriptures which promise rights to both women and children and lay out the way that ISIS has broken those promises, saying “you treat women like detainees and prisoners...” and by torturing and executing children who “are so young they are not even morally accountable.” The scholars say that ISIS’s practice of enslaving women also breaks a century-long Islamic prohibition on slavery.<sup>32</sup> In the open letter, scholars illustrate twenty-eight crucial points that invalidate the actions of Daesh leaders and its members. Also, the inaccuracy of a legitimate claim to establish a caliphate, under Daesh rule is articulately accurate on [lettertobaghdadi.com](http://lettertobaghdadi.com).<sup>33</sup> Scholarly articles that are available to the public, via the internet, are highly beneficial in providing accurate information. It is also important that young Muslim

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<sup>32</sup> Rosch, A. (2014, September 25). Muslim Scholars To ISIS: You Have Misinterpreted Islam. Retrieved February 12, 2015, from <http://thinkprogress.org/world/2014/09/25/3572061/muslim-scholars-against-isis/>

<sup>33</sup> Open Letter to Baghdadi. (2014, January 1). Retrieved March 2, 2015, from <http://www.lettertobaghdadi.com/>

women are made aware of the differences between the authentic Muslim religion, and radical extremists.

More so, the U.S. Department of State's Global Coalition to Counter ISIL might establish an entity that provides support, assistance, and develops procedures to counter terrorist organizations interests to communicate, as well as recruit females to their ranks. As current involvement on social media networks, such as Twitter, in which the Department of State's account, [@ThinkAgainTurnAway@Twitter.com](https://twitter.com/ThinkAgainTurnAway), counters Daesh tweets by responding with factual statements; development in this area is essential.

Yet, this specific intercultural conflict among radical Islamic groups, such as Daesh and female Muslim in the Western world and other regions of the world will not be resolved until the international system evolves. A feminist perspective is essential to understanding the international system's ability to respond to such an epidemic. As J. Ann Tickner explained, "in an unusual cross-cultural study, which examines the role of values in the choices that states make in selecting development paths, Geert Hofstede uses gender as one of his categories of analysis. In all of the societies examined in the study, women were perceived as caring for people and the quality of life."<sup>34</sup> Men were determined to maximally different. Furthermore, Tickner suggested:

- Given the generally masculine nature of international politics, how could such a change in values be effected? Underscoring the masculinist orientation in the discipline of international relations does nothing to change the masculinist underpinnings of states' behavior in the international system. In the world of statecraft, no fundamental change in the hierarchy of the sexes is likely to take place until women occupy half, or nearly half, the positions at all levels of foreign

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<sup>34</sup> Tickner, J. (1992). *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (pp. 140-141). New York: Columbia University Press.

and military policy-making. No change in the hierarchy of gender will occur until mediators and care givers are as valued as presidents as citizen-warriors currently are. This will not come about until we have a new vision of international relations and until we live in a world in which gender hierarchies no longer contribute to women's oppression.<sup>35</sup>

Considering Tickner's argument, resolving the intercultural conflict that has become an increasingly worrisome aspect of modern day terrorism, it is essential to mention that tensions have arisen from the international community's historical inability to provide equal opportunities, rights, and other liberties to women.

Lastly, Daesh exploit women based on above mentioned inequalities. Providing an example for other powerful states, organizations, and individuals to mimic is the responsibility of the Western world; most notably, the United States of America. The United States of America could establish a pathway towards achieving gender equality in international relations by adopting similar practices and procedures from feminist states, such as Scandinavian states; Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland.

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<sup>35</sup> Tickner, J. (1992). *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (pp. 140-141). New York: Columbia University Press.