

**Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Vienna 28<sup>th</sup> Session 20-24 May 2019**

**Theme: The responsibility of effective, fair, humane and accountable criminal justice systems in preventing and countering crime motivated by intolerance or discrimination of any kind**

**NGO Statement from Soroptimist International CCPCJ- Vienna**

UN Secretary General António Guterres has joined other experts in acknowledging that the threat of terrorism is real, dangerous, and unfortunately here for years to come. (UNSG, SOAS, London, Nov2017) Trends signal that terrorists are specifically targeting and victimizing women and girls throughout the world as, regardless of the religious and philosophical ideology of these groups, one common element of their agendas is a subjugation of women and girls through kidnapping, sexual assault and death; even through use as a human bomb. The UN Secretary General believes that these actions are as devastating as any bullet or bomb and will destroy communities and undermine the chances for reconciliation if left unaddressed. (SG, Zagreb, May 2014).

There is no excuse for terrorism. Governments must relentlessly fight terrorism and uphold the rule of law to protect women and girl's human rights. We call upon Governments, political officials and religious leaders to speak out firmly and promptly at all times against intolerance and violence against women and girls and to implement programs, laws and policies to ensure that all human rights of women and girls are realized.

Moreover, member States, the private sector and civil society must:

Address the many factors that radicalize young people and make terrorism an attractive option for them. Governments must also tackle some of the root causes of terrorism: poverty, inequality, youth, unemployment and the lack of public services, such as health and education. Sustainable and inclusive development will be the best way to tackle the poverty, inequality and lack of opportunity and public services that can make terrorism an attractive option for young people.

Improve the educational prospects which include promoting meaningful skills training and development for at-risk children and youth, especially those likely to result in viable employment and income generation.

Ensure early childhood education, and development of primary school curricula that include health and education programmes which address cultures of violence, gender relations and women's status, masculinity and identity, family violence and gender-based violence. Eliminate cultural norms that support such violence.

Enable women and girls to identify the key security issues themselves as well as participate in programme design and implementation in combating terrorism. Governments and the private sector should also be encouraged to take the lead by establishing strategic partnerships involving women and girls and be accountable for the results.