



**INTERNATIONAL  
OBSERVATORY**  
HUMAN RIGHTS

**Universität  
Rostock**



THE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND INTERCULTURAL  
THEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF ROSTOCK PRESENT:

# WOMEN IN EXTREMISM

**CAUSES, CONCERNS AND CONSEQUENCES**

24 SEPTEMBER 2018 | UNIVERSITY OF ROSTOCK | GERMANY



# ABOUT THIS EVENT

The International Observatory of Human Rights (IOHR) is working in partnership with Dr. Nina Käsehage of the Department of Religious Studies and Intercultural Theology at the University of Rostock to bring together the experts in the field to discuss the causes, concerns and consequences of WOMEN IN EXTREMISM.

This unique event aims to shape decisive policy and practitioner engagement on the pivotal topic of women in extremism. This seminar is the second of a series on counter-extremism as a part of the #NotBornARadical campaign from IHOR.

Extremism is a threat that is a serious concern for Europe and the world. Most recently the wave of far-right extremism is one that is creating shockwaves across Europe.

Germany now lies in the crosshairs of some of the troubles, with the fresh spate of violence in Chemnitz causing grave concern worldwide.

Our host city of Rostock and its people sadly know the terrible impact of violent extremism all too well. Rostock's past demonstrates that the threat of extremism is nothing new, whether it be right-wing, or ISIS inspired.

In 2017 there were a total of 205 foiled, failed and completed terrorist attacks in nine EU states. The role of women in extremist groups and terrorism is evolving quickly. Europol figures show that one in four (26%) of those arrested on terror charges in Europe in 2016 were women. A figure that leads us to crucial questions surrounding the role of women in extremism and hence the focus of this seminar.

Through the research of our distinguished panel, this event aims to lead governments to consider exactly how and why women get involved with extremist groups, the extent to which policy should differ from those of men, and moreover to develop solid recommendations for these governments and their deradicalisation policies and processes.

# PROGRAMME

## 24 SEPTEMBER 2018

9:00 am **REGISTRATION & COFFEE**

10:00 am **WELCOME BY VALERIE PEAY**, Director, International Observatory of Human Rights

10:15 am **KEYNOTE: SIMON CORNWALL**, Fellow, GIRDS  
(German Institute on Radicalization and De-radicalization)

10:30 am **PANEL: BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER RADICALISATION**

The academic perspective:

**DR. NINA KÄSEHAGE**, Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin, Erasmus-Koordinatorin und Auslandsbeauftragte Universität Rostock – Theologische Fakultät:

Decoding the narratives – Young European women's fascination for Jihad

**DR. STEFFI BRÜNING**, Studienleiterin für Demokratiebildung, Evangelische Akademie der Nordkirche – Regionalzentrum für demokratische Kultur, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: Selflessly caring for male activists? Women in right-wing extremism in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

11:10 am **Q&A**

11:30 am **COFFEE BREAK**

11:45 am **PANEL: BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER RADICALISATION**

The practitioner and policy perspective:

**FRANZISKA MADMOUJ**, Social Worker:

A feminist approach of radicalisation of young women on the basis of case studies

**DR. KATHERINE BROWN**, Senior Lecturer in Islamic Studies & Head of Department of Theology and Religion, University of Birmingham:

Gender-mainstreaming in countering violent extremism: Improving policy approaches

**HANIF QADIR**, Chief Executive, Active Change Foundation:

Experiences of a practitioner

12:40 pm **Q&A**

1:00 pm **LUNCH**

2:00 pm **WELCOME BACK**

2:05 pm **IOHR INTERVIEWS: TANIA JOYA**, Ex-wife of the most senior American member of ISIS.

2:30 pm **WORKSHOPS FOR POLICY PAPER RECOMMENDATIONS**

(Closed to public)

Improving and developing women-focused preventative policies and rehabilitation programmes – examining case studies.

4:00 pm **CLOSE**

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# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**DR. NINA KÄSEHAGE**, WISSENSCHAFTLICHE MITARBEITERIN, ERASMUS-KOORDINATORIN UND AUSLANDSBEAUFTRAGTE UNIVERSITÄT ROSTOCK – THEOLOGISCHE FAKULTÄT

Nina has carried out extensive research on the role of women in the Salafi movement. She has been working on a project on female IS returnees at the Department of Religious Studies since March 2017. She conducted 175 interviews of Salafi preachers and followers in 8 different European countries. Out of 38 young people that she interviewed she successfully managed to convince 35 of them not to go and join terrorist groups in the field in Syria. Her PhD entitled: "The current Salafi Scene in Germany – Preachers and Adherents" was published in March 2018 and is the first study of its kind to have been conducted in Germany.



**VALERIE PEAY**, DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Valerie brought her international experience in transformation and TV from the corporate world into the field of human rights to use her business knowledge to drive positive outcomes. Valerie is also a Trustee Director of the Royal Caledonian Educational Trust and a consummate traveller.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**SIMON CORNWALL**, FELLOW, GIRDS (GERMAN INSTITUTE ON RADICALIZATION AND DE-RADICALIZATION STUDIES)

Simon Cornwall is a leading expert on extremism and disengagement work within the Criminal Justice System. He is a very experienced practitioner with a unique skill set, who has designed and delivers training around Counter Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and develops guidance and policy. He has nearly 40 years of Counter Terrorism experience. He is currently working as an International consultant for the United Nations ODC/Terrorism Prevention Branch to implement a 3-year project on supporting Central Asian States to strengthen national and regional frameworks for preventing and countering violent extremism.



**DR. STEFFI BRÜNING**, STUDIENLEITERIN FÜR DEMOKRATIEBILDUNG, EVANGELISCHE AKADEMIE DER NORDKIRCHE – REGIONALZENTRUM FÜR DEMOKRATISCHE KULTUR MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN

Steffi Brüning studied political science and history in Greifswald and Rostock. In 2017, she received the "Johannes Stelling Award" for her commitment against right-wing extremism. In 2018, she gained her PhD with a thesis on women's history in the GDR. She will be joining the panel to offer her expertise on the development of right-wing extremism.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**FRANZISKA MADMOJJ**, SOCIAL WORKER

Franziska is a graduate social worker and currently a student of cultural analysis in Oldenburg. She worked for 2 years from 2015 – 2016 at beRaten e.v, an association for youth and family education counselling in Hanover. There she worked on counselling both the relatives and direct counselling of mainly young girls and women, many of whom had dropped out of extremist groups. Since 2017, she has been leading an EU project on prevention and education for Muslim youth. Franziska has given several lectures on this subject, including at the conference of the prevention network against religious extremism in October 2017 in Berlin.



**DR KATHERINE BROWN**, SENIOR LECTURER IN ISLAMIC STUDIES & HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGION, UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Katherine is the UK's leading female academic looking at women in extremism. Throughout her career she has worked for the UN on gender-mainstreaming in countering violent extremism, has worked with the EU on providing talks on violent extremism and radical beliefs, and has provided academic oversight for think tanks, including RUSI and the Institute for Strategic Dialogue. Katherine has also written research briefs for the UK Ministry of Defence and has participated in Track 1.5 security dialogue talks in Australia with the foreign office. In addition to her prolific academic work she has also done great media work for, BBC Two, Reuters, the Washington Post, and the New York Times.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**HANIF QADIR**, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ACTIVE CHANGE FOUNDATION

Hanif is a former extremist, who once joined Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Deterred by the crimes he saw being committed against civilians, he came back to the UK to launch the Active Change Foundation, a London based organisation dedicated to help safeguard young people in danger of becoming radicalised.

Today, Hanif is recognised as arguably the best violent extremist and de-radicalisation expert in Europe. He is actively involved in advising and assisting senior policy makers in reforming Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) and Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives while working closely with a wide range of governmental institutions, most of the UK's Police Authorities, as well as research academics across the globe.



**TANIA JOYA**, EX-WIFE OF THE MOST SENIOR AMERICAN MEMBER OF ISIS

For over a decade, British-born Tania was married to the most senior American member of the Islamic State; John Georgelas (later known as Yahaya al-Bahrumi and Abu Yahya). Their relationship and John's commitment to the radical beliefs of Al-Qaeda and Islamic State took Tania and her children through conflict zones in Egypt, Turkey, and Syria. She escaped with her American-born children from Syria via a human trafficker in September 2013. She now lives in Texas with their 4 children and works to promote counter-extremism awareness worldwide. Tania will be giving an exclusive interview to IOHR about the processes and changes through which she went in order to become deradicalised in order to prevent other young women from following the path of extremism.

# ABOUT

## #NotBornARadical

### FROM: DECONSTRUCTING POLICIES ON COUNTER-EXTREMISM: A CALL FOR CHANGE

IOHR, in association with academic experts and its partners, is developing a body of work aimed at creating decisive counter-extremism policy change. The culmination of this event and our previous conference International Initiative on the Prevention and Countering of Radicalism and Extremism aim to result in informative policy recommendations.

#### THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE CONCLUSIONS, FORMING A STRATEGIC BRIEF:

One issue consistently discussed by experts are governments' inability to keep up with the rapid evolution of extremism and what is to follow in the short- and long-term future. Almost all the policies, both earlier versions and those currently being applied, are largely framed upon outdated and in some cases assumed hypotheses, based upon past events and experiences, that do not reflect the current and evolving realities on the ground and within communities.

Some of the key questions for future research that can effectuate policy change in Europe:

#### WHAT IS THE CHANGING NATURE OF EXTREMISM?

- i) Can the rising right-wing extremism be tackled within the current framework?
- ii) How serious is the threat of non-state actor CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) attacks?
- iii) What role does technology play in extremism and what can updated policies do to stay one step ahead?
- iv) How effective are current relationships between inter-governmental departments in countering extremism?
- v) What is the impact of extra-governmental partnerships with organisations and agencies?
- vi) What can we learn through greater partnership within the EU and world states with alternative counter-extremism policies?

To take part in the discussion please contact us: [info@observatoryihr.org](mailto:info@observatoryihr.org)

# ABOUT

## IOHR



The International Observatory of Human Rights is a non-profit NGO based in London. Our team of journalists, researchers, human rights practitioners and multi-media professionals aim to prevent and end human rights violations worldwide.

Our primary field research, in depth analysis and unique access represents the foundation for our goal to advocate, assimilate and secure human rights for all.

In this age, the fight against terrorism has been used as an excuse to sideline human rights. We aim to raise awareness by engaging people through IOHR web TV, digital media and forums. Reshaping the dialogue is our way to translate our message on the plight of refugees, unjustly incarcerated prisoners, victims of oppression and radicalism to policy makers, practitioners, academics, journalists, experts, and a wider public.

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