

The Root Causes of Violence against Women and Children
Friday, 18 March 2016
Panelist Biographies

**H.E. Mrs Samira Merai-Friaa,
Minister of Women, Family and Childhood**

Mrs Samira Merai-Friaa, Minister of Women, Family and Childhood in Tunisia since February 2015, born on January 10th 1963 in Zarzis, is a politician, former deputy at National Assembly for Constitution- ANC- from 2011 to 2014, MD professor of pulmonology at the medical school of Tunis since 2003.

After a high school degree in Science and Math in 1981, she studied at the medical school of Tunis and became in 1993 a medical Doctor specialist in Pulmonology at Mohamed Mami Hospital. She also obtained a diploma in physiology and sleeping pathology at the University of Lyon in 2008.

Mrs. Merai is very active in many scientific associations such as Tunisian association of Pulmonology, European respiratory society, American association for Bronchitis diseases and French association for the respiratory system.

Mrs. Merai is co-founder of the party "Afek Tounes", and actual member of the political bureau. She was head of list of Medenine at the 2011 ANC elections. As a deputy, she was assistant manager to the president of the assembly, responsible of the legislation and the relations between the government and the presidency of the Republic of Tunisia.

Mrs. Merai was also a member of the parliamentary assembly of the UFM where she held the position of president of women rights commission. She followed several trainings in the political leadership and the parliamentary work in Germany, France and the American congress. She obtained a degree from the political school in Tunis in 2012.

**Dr. Fadila Grine
Director, Family and Social Affairs Department, OIC General Secretariat**

Fadila Grine is the director of family and Social affairs at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation OIC, previously a Director of research unit at the Academy of Islamic studies, the head of the international bureau for consultancy and training in university Malaya and a visiting Associate Professor at university Malaya, Malaysia.

Fadila obtained her Masters from the International Islamic University and her PhD Degree in Islamic culture and civilization from the Academy of Islamic Studies, University Malaya, Malaysia. Fadila has published various papers in her field. she was a mentor of students clubs at the Academy of Islamic studies and few other student

clubs In University Malaya and The international Islamic University, Malaysia. She is a life Coach, a certified family counselor, and a consultant of marriage, Parenting and Muslim family Issues. Fadila is an expert in Islamic though and culture, development and leadership and family.

She has worked as a consultant with the Edmonton Public School Board, Alberta, Canada, conducted variety of workshops and trainings on Marriage, Parenting, education, Quality in research and publications and different issues related to family and parenting.

Dr. Alaa Nasief
King Abdullah Center for National Dialogue

As an expert in the areas of social and cultural development with a focus on the educational realm, Dr. Naseif has been engaged with NGOs and think tanks in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the aim of promoting a knowledge economy as well as social development at a macro level. Specifically, she is the leading project manager for the Knowledge Family Initiative with Al-Aghar Group.

Dr. Naseif spearheaded the establishment of the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) in Vienna, Austria, followed by covering a leading post as Chief of Staff.

Dr. Naseif is also the Founder and CEO of Hadara, a consultancy that aims to promote excellence and positive social change through training, research and empowerment programs.

As well as holding Bachelor, Master's and Doctorate degrees, Dr. Nasief has studied Executive Education at Duke University's prestigious Fuqua School of Business and completed Professional Development Trainer Training for the Institute of International Education in San Francisco.

Ms. Hind Alowais
Senior Advisor, UN Women
Office of the Assistant Secretary-General
Deputy Executive Director for Strategic Partnerships, Coordination & Inter-governmental Support

Ms. Al Owais served as a career diplomat since 2000. During her work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she served as Special Advisor to the Foreign Minister on Multilateral Affairs. Most recently, Ms. Al Owais served as a Counselor and acting Deputy Permanent Representative of the UAE Mission to the United Nations in New York. In this role, she led and managed a number of initiatives, the most recent of which was a series of panel discussions on Women, Peace and Security, as part of the UAE Mission's leading activities at the UN aimed at promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Ms. Al Owais holds a Master of Arts in Public Policy from the New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, and a Master's degree in International Affairs from the Lebanese American University. She is currently pursuing a Doctorate degree at NYU's Steinhart School of Culture Education.

Moderator:

Ambassador Ufuk Gokcen

Ambassador and Permanent Observer of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the United Nations, New York

Ambassador Ufuk Gokcen, born in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1966, is the Permanent Observer of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) (formerly Organization of the Islamic Conference) to the United Nations, since April 2010. He served as a Political Adviser to the OIC Secretary General from 2005 to 2010 at the OIC Headquarters in Jeddah. Previous to that, he was posted at the Turkish Embassies in Riyadh, Muscat and Damascus and at the European and Middle East Departments of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara.

At the OIC General Secretariat, he played an active role in initiatives to increase technical capacity at the Departments of the General Secretariat and to promote engagement with international partners in the fields of mediation, conflict resolution, socio-economic development, human rights and good governance. He was active in the establishment of the partnership of the OIC with the Alliance of Civilizations Secretariat and within the interfaith dialogue activities.

Currently, besides representing the OIC at the UN, he acts as the OIC focal point with the US State Department in the framework of the OIC-US engagement. He is a strong advocate of the promotion of the role of women in governance, development, peace making and science and technology. He promotes the OIC's interactions with the UN agencies and civil society in raising awareness and forging partnerships in areas of religious peacemaking and promotion of tolerance and respect.