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**Contact:**

Trevor Fitzgibbon, FITZGIBBON / Media LLC  
202-503-6141

Jayne Huckerby, Research Director, CHR&GJ  
huckerby@exchange.law.nyu.edu/212-203-6410

Lama Fakih, Gender, Human Rights, and Counter-Terrorism Fellow, CHR&GJ  
fakihl@exchange.law.nyu.edu/248-321-2208

**CHR&GJ: Women and Sexual Minorities are Invisible Victims of U.S. Counter-Terrorism**

*Report Calls on Obama Administration to Reverse Trend; Protect Women and Sexual Minorities from Terrorism*

**(New York, July 18, 2011)**—The U.S. government must take steps to stop women and sexual minorities around the world from becoming invisible victims of its counter-terrorism policies, said the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (CHR&GJ) at NYU School of Law today, as it released a groundbreaking report on the issue. The 163 page report—*A Decade Lost: Locating Gender in U.S. Counter-Terrorism*—is the first account of how U.S. counter-terrorism efforts have undermined the rights of women and sexual minorities. These policies have also failed to protect women and sexual minorities from terrorism, despite the Obama Administration’s position that women’s inequality threatens national security.

“Far from making good on its promise to the world’s women, the U.S. government has bartered away women’s rights for short-term security gains,” said Jayne Huckerby, CHR&GJ’s Research Director. “From anti-terror cuts in aid to Somalia, to negotiating with the Taliban in Afghanistan, it is women and sexual minorities who suffer first.”

Based on several years of research, including extensive interviews with U.S. and foreign government officials and regional consultations in the United States, Asia, Africa and the Middle East and North Africa, *A Decade Lost* uncovers how the six pillars of U.S. counter-terrorism—development, defense, anti-terrorism financing, intelligence, border security, and strategic communications—include and impact women and sexual minorities. Comprehensive in its scope, *A Decade Lost* presents numerous examples of where the U.S. government’s failure to consider gender undermines both security and equality objectives.

Among its key findings, *A Decade Lost* finds that development assistance that channels money into making young men less prone to extremism is leaving women and girls behind; that anti-terrorist finance laws stop critical resources from reaching women and LGBTI organizations; that immigration bars are re-victimizing victims of trafficking, terrorism and anti-gay violence in Iraq; and that the securitization of the government’s relationship with Muslim communities in the United States—which is only set to rise with the imminent

release of a new U.S. policy on community engagement and preventing extremism—is making women in those communities unsafe. For the first time, *A Decade Lost* also looks at U.S. efforts to stop the pull of violent ideologies, such as in overseas “de-radicalization” programs and its strategic communication campaign in the United States and abroad.

“The U.S. government is working at cross purposes in its counter-terrorism strategy,” said Ms. Huckerby. “On the one hand, it says that ensuring women’s equality is a matter of national security, while on the other it de-prioritizes development assistance for women and girls and cuts off funding to women’s rights organizations that are on the front lines against violent extremism in their communities. When the U.S. squeezes women between terror and counter-terror, no-one is safer.”

The Report also exposes serious collateral impacts of actions—such as targeted killings, deportation, and detention—that target men, some of which, have now persisted for nearly a decade.

“When families and communities in the United States are torn apart by detention and deportation, women are left to pick up the pieces, living in fear that if they report crimes, the government will deport them or family members,” said Lama Fakih, CHRJ’s Gender, Human Rights, and Counter-Terrorism Fellow. “New efforts to engage Muslims do not deal with these concerns, but rather continue to locate the problem of terrorism in Muslim communities with scant regard for the consequences.”

Among the report’s recommendations, CHRJ calls on the Obama Administration to make public its first-ever policy on the role of development in countering violent extremism and release its new policy on engaging with communities in the United States to prevent extremism.

To read the report, click [HERE](#).

To learn more about CHRJ’s work on the United States, Gender, National Security and Counter-Terrorism, click [HERE](#).

## **About CHRJ**

CHRJ brings together and expands the rich array of teaching, research, clinical, internship, and publishing activities undertaken within New York University (NYU) School of Law on international human rights issues. Philip Alston and Ryan Goodman are the Center’s Faculty co-Chairs; Smita Narula and Margaret Satterthwaite are Faculty Directors; Jayne Huckerby is Research Director; and Veerle Opgenhaffen is Senior Program Director.

The Global Justice Clinic (GJC) at NYU School of Law (a program of the Center) provides high quality, professional human rights lawyering services to individual clients and nongovernmental and intergovernmental human rights organizations, partnering with groups based in the United States and abroad. Working as legal advisers, counsel, co-counsel, or advocacy partners, Clinic students work side-by-side with human rights activists from around the world. The Clinic is directed by Professor Margaret Satterthwaite and in Fall 2010 to Spring 2011 was co-taught with Adjunct Assistant Professor Jayne Huckerby; Diana Limongi is Clinic Administrator.