Brown-Bag Luncheon
July 1, 2013
Washington, DC

Mossarat Qadeem
Executive Director PAIMAN Alumni Trust

Moderating Extremism in Pakistan:
Working with Women and Youth to Prevent and Resolve Conflict

Jacqueline O'Neill: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Jacqui O'Neill, I am the director of the Institute for Inclusive Security, and we are proudly cohosting this event with the Women's Foreign Policy Group. I'll turn right away to our guest of honor, Mossarat Qadeem, founder of PAIMAN Alumni Trust, who is going to be interviewed and facilitated in a conversation with Pat Ellis—who, I think, all of you know as a well-respected journalist and foreign-policy and foreign-affairs reporter. I am delighted to say that I just learned something new about Pat: I knew about her long history with the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*, but just recently discovered she was also a DC-based producer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which is very exciting for me because I am Canadian and it's Canada Day today—as I'm sure you are all very well aware—so I appreciate you taking this national holiday and coming to be with us regardless. [*Laughter.*] But, Pat, it was great to learn that connection. Before we begin I want to thank the teams at Women's Foreign Policy Group and at the Institute for Inclusive Security for organizing our event today. We had a great response—I think we actually even had a waitlist due to the popularity of this. I wanted to ask you if you could turn off the ringers on your cell phone. I'm very deliberately not saying, "Turn off your cell phones"; in case any of you want to tweet about this event, you are more than welcome to do so. Inclusive Security has a Twitter handle—we are @InclusvSecurity, and Women's Foreign Policy Group is @WFPG. So please feel free to tweet about our event, and also I note that Women's Foreign Policy group has circulated this card here in case you want to sign up for membership or other advantages, and Inclusive Security also has a mailing list that you can sign up for on our website, which is inclusivesecurity.org, so please feel free to sign up for that in addition to filling out this card.

So, very briefly, this event is a collaboration between our two organizations—I think one of the first official or formal ones that we've had, which is somewhat surprising since we have been working together and have been fans of Pat's and Women's Foreign Policy Group for more than a decade. And I think perhaps the best sign of how close we feel to you is that we actually followed you to move into this building itself, so Inclusive Security is here, as is Women's Foreign Policy Group, and I think there is probably no better signal of friendship than becoming your immediate neighbors. Women's Foreign Policy Group, as I think all of you know, highlights women leaders from around the world, [and] really focuses as well on the next generation of women leaders and profiling their voices here in DC and around the world. We are delighted to be so close to you, so we can come to the events that you have so regularly, profiling great women leaders. We've come to great events on the future of the UN, women's leadership in North Africa and the Middle East, a whole range of other topics that are really always the most pressing of the day and through which Women's Foreign Policy Group brings a unique angle. And you also are real leaders, as we try to be as well, on broadening the constituency for international affairs and bringing together people across disciplines and across groups, and that's very much also what Inclusive Security seeks to do. Our mission is to increase the inclusion of women in peace processes around the world—not just because we think, you know, women are 50% of the population and therefore it's their right to be included, but that, fundamentally, it is good policy, it's good foreign policy, and it makes for smart and lasting outcomes to negotiated peace agreements. So we

work through our Women Waging Peace Network, of which Mossarat is a member; we do advocacy, training, research; and we support coalitions of women in countries around the world, including Sudan, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Liberia, Colombia, and many other places, including Pakistan, which we are about to hear more about.

We first met this remarkable woman, Mossarat Qadeem, in about 2009, or maybe 2010, when Inclusive Security was hosting an event, our annual colloquium, on women moderating extremism. We asked around, contacts all around the world, and said, "Who are the leaders in this field?" and time and time again we were referred to Mossarat. People talked about how she was both a scholar, an academic, as well as a practitioner and a leader in the field, and they said, "This is just someone you have to meet and get to know," and they were right. She introduced us to her organization, PAIMAN Alumni Trust. *Paiman* means *promise*—meaning their goal is to work with young people to steer them into jobs and away from the false promises of radicals in the Taliban and other groups. With PAIMAN under Mossarat's leadership and with support from the US Institute of Peace we helped co-facilitate a group called—or a coalition of women in Pakistan called—Aman-o-Nisa, which is a coalition of women working to reduce violent extremism and promote understanding. I must say that Madame Qadeem recently became Minister Qadeem when she was named the caretaker Minister for Information, Culture, and Education—and I believe, Mossarat, you were the only woman in-cabinet at the time—and has really earned a remarkable balance of both trust from the government that appointed her into this position, as well as civil society, which continues to work with her there. She is one of the most prominent members of our Women Waging Peace Network and is frequently speaking both in the US and around the world, and I've had the great pleasure of being with her at a number of meetings and events where she's spoken to people, including in the US military, on Capitol Hill, last spring [she] met with Secretary Clinton and various others at the State Department. Every time I see a sort of processing in people's faces: you know, talk about promise in this landscape of drones, of billions of dollars spent on war that's gone on a decade-plus, a very complex foreign policy, thousands of lives lost. You can just see people thinking, How do I clone this woman? How do I get more Mossarat Qadeems being the future of our foreign policy? Just, finally, before I close, we were together in Oslo last week or the week before that at an event called the Oslo Forum on Mediation, which is a gathering of some of the world's top mediators, diplomats, etc. It was quite striking because part of the discussion—as you would imagine—focused on the opening of the Taliban office in Qatar, and what does this mean for negotiations, what does this mean for women in Afghanistan, etc., and how will we begin negotiating with the Taliban now that talks have started? And to my great delight, in the closing plenary, this woman next to me [*motions to Qadeem*] got up and said, "Just so you all know, I've been negotiating with the Taliban for years now, and let me tell you exactly what it's like." So she did, and she is here today to do more. So please join me in giving a very warm welcome to Mossarat Qadeem. [*Applause.*]

Patricia Ellis: So before we turn the program over to our esteemed speaker, I just wanted to thank Jacqui so much for the very kind introduction of me, and of the Women's Foreign Policy Group. We are so pleased to see such a wonderful turnout—particularly on a really rainy day—so thank you all so much for coming, and [*to Qadeem*] it shows the interest in you and in the issues that you will be speaking about. The Women's Foreign Policy Group and Inclusive Security go way back. As I mentioned to Jacqui earlier today, I attended the first conference that the chair of Inclusive Security put together in Europe and it was really fantastic, and we have collaborated over the years with groups of Bosnian women and others, and we look forward to many more coincidences—many more collaborations. I was going to say—in the area of coincidences—our speaker and I discovered that we both attended the same institute in The Hague, the Institute of Social Studies. We were there at different times and we also had attended a conference in 1998 in Bangalore together, which was very, very exciting. Before I turn it over, though, I just wanted to welcome a few special guests here. I know that we have Ambassador Bob Pearson, one of our close partners, who is with IREX, and we work very closely together with him. I want to recognize the wife of the Indonesian Ambassador, Rosa Djalal. And I know we have a representative here from the Pakistani Embassy. I am sure many other important

people, but I will just stop there. I also just wanted to mention two upcoming events that we have. One will be on July 18th with Barbara Slavin of the Atlantic Council, and she will be talking about Iran and its new leader. Then we have one our Embassy Series events at the residence of the Swiss Ambassador on July 23rd. So we hope as many of you as possible who are around will be able to join us. And so it is now it is my great pleasure to turn things over to Mossarat Qadeem, and thank you so much again for joining us.

Mossarat Qadeem: *Salaam aleikum* and a really good afternoon. It's always a pleasure to be with Inclusive Security and, of course, to have interaction with people from around DC. I don't know where to start from, but I think I'll just start where—the first time people from the Federally Administered Tribal Area got displaced because of the incidence of violence in that area, and that was September 2008. We had been working—PAIMAN had been working in Pakistan over different issues, around social, political, economic empowerment of women, governance, democracy, but that was the first time that Mossarat, as an individual, realized that since I had been working across Pakistan, across the border with my Indian friends on peacebuilding between the two countries, and now when this conflict had really hit hard my own area, why shouldn't I be rising to the occasion? Why shouldn't I be actually extending this sort of support to the people who are victimized, who are being displaced, and who are being marginalized because there is this indoctrination of the people in the name of religion or misuse of religion? This is September 2008, when I just started interacting with the displaced people from the violence-hit area of Bajaur, one of the agencies of FATA—that is, Federally Administrated Tribal Area, an area which borders Afghanistan. We started working, actually, with the women, because they were so helpless, but then I realized that it is not only the women: it's actually the youth, also, who had no clue what to do, so we started working with them. In the process I learned that it is not only this community of people that we need to work with, but it is actually the youth in different universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa—that is, the previous name of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is North-West Frontier Province—so we started building the capacity of the youth, the educated lot, the educated youth, on conflict transformation and peacebuilding. But it was not only the capacity-building, and it did not end with the training or sensitization on the issue of violent extremism and radicalization and how to build peace within the community, within the groups that they are living in and working with. It was basically—you know, we give them a post-training assignment to sensitize, to work with the fellows in the university, to go back to their community and identify the youth which are vulnerable to these sort of onslaughts by the extremists, and also the youth who may be in the fold, working with the extremists. And this was just the beginning of the process, and I never thought, personally, that I am going to end up doing something that I am doing now. Because we just thought, "We will just help the youth to understand the impact of this sort of indoctrination on their own lives and on the lives of their loved ones."

The first boy who was identified and brought by one of the friends to me was from a district called Dir, a far-flung area in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, who actually tried to commit a suicidal attack in one of the markets of—it's a famous story, it's, like, a famous incident, and it was in 2008—[he tried] to detonate the jacket that he was wearing, and it failed. The boy ran away from the spot to save himself but at the same time, when he was running, he saw that the two people who were keeping an eye on him started shooting at him, and during the shooting three schoolgirls fell in front of him. And he told me, later on, he said, "While I was running, I made a promise to myself: I will never go back there." So this was the first case, and I did not realize that this first—the handing [over] of this first boy would ultimately take me on this path of helping more and more. The boy we helped in transformation, of course, through different—we do it in different phases. I'll, of course, be very brief about it. So this is the type of work that we do: preventing more youth becoming radicalized. Secondly, we also help them in transformation. If they are at any stage of that sort of indoctrination, we help them in bringing them back, through psychosocial counseling and offering them support of every sort in the form of livelihood, life skills—and it's in phases and it's a long process that we follow. One thing that we do is—I'll be very brief; I am only going to take 10 to 12 minutes because I want it to be more interactive and I would like to respond to your queries if you have any. Since this indoctrination is not limited only to the youth and

it's not only—actually, you know, because there is a misconception: that these are the products of madrassas [radical Islamic schools]. Since 2008, personally, I have deradicalized 79 youth. 400 are in line now. They are not the products of madrassas; only five of them have ever gone to madrassas. So it is all—I just wanted to say that this is a myth, and this is a misconception.

Secondly there is also another myth—that, see, Pakistan can handle it, that, you know, Pakistan has access to all the Taliban, Pakistan has control over the Taliban in Pakistan and across the border. This is another myth. It is such a complex phenomenon, because, like I said, I have been working with these boys who have access to all these people, and when I talk to them I get so confused—"I just started to [follow] such a plain path, I can just travel this way and I can talk to this and that"—but this—believe me, Pakistan alone cannot handle it at all, because it is such a complex thing. Pakistan does not have the capacity, it does not have the expertise, it does not have, actually, the technology to address this issue. And, somehow, the international community feels that Pakistan should do it; then they don't look at it, [at] what we are trying to handle and what we are suffering [from]—because the rest of the world is safe because of us. We are fighting somebody else's war; it is an imposed thing on us. So we have to look at it from that angle as well. And then, see, whenever I talk to the people they say, in some other parts of the world they say, "Because, you know, Pakistan did this, or the people did this, and that's why they are suffering." Who brought the sufferings to us? Who is being killed every day in the streets of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA? Whose blood is being shed? Yesterday—day before yesterday—24 people we killed. Every day an innocent dies in that part of the world. So who is responsible for it? We have to look at it: if it is a drone or if it is a suicidal attack, it is killing somebody innocent. There must be one person who is the most wanted one and they hit that [person] through the drone, but then what about the 60 to 70 others who are innocent, who have never done anything wrong? And what message are you actually sending to that part of the world? And from this whole conflict, from this whole—I would say—process of violent extremism—the human factor is totally missing. I am here to humanize that, and I always tell to the thoughtful, the people who have a heart and a mind to think and a heart to feel, "Think of this from a human angle as well." So, yes, there is a way to address it. The solution lies there. The only thing is if we look at it from that angle—that whenever there is a problem there is always a solution. And I always tell the people the solution lies within the community, the solution lies within Pakistan itself. We have to explore it. We have the ways to address this issue. The only thing is, we need an understanding from the international community, we need an understanding from our neighbors, we need understanding from our regional actors that we have the ways and the means to address it, even at the local level. We are so resourceful, but since the situation is so complex it cannot be handled just by one organization, by one individual, by one government department. It has to be all-inclusive, it has to be integrated, it has to be comprehensive, and I think it is an international problem, and the international actors who are very, very active there have to become more active when it comes to addressing this issue of violent extremism. Because, believe me, today it is the Pakistani, it's the Pakhtun, it's the Sindhi, it's the Baluchi and the Punjabi who is suffering. People should not think it will not cross the boundaries of Pakistan. It will. So please, instead of adding to it, try to help us in combating it. Thank you. [*Applause*.]

Ellis: Okay, well, let's start with what you ended with, and you said, for everything there is a solution, the solution's within Pakistan, and you mentioned drones. So let's talk about what kinds of solutions there are. What are the lessons you've learned from what you have been doing, and working with young people who have engaged in extremism, and tell us about what impact there would be if drones—if drone attacks were stopped. What difference would that make?

Qadeem: One of the high officials in the US asked me once how we can create that goodwill for the US in Pakistan, in the hearts of Pakistani people. I said there is only one way to the heart, if you really want to reach the hearts of the Pakistanis—especially, you know, in the area that you are talking about: stop the drones, and the billions of dollars that you spend on these drones—if you can translate them into infrastructure, providing [local people with] opportunities for employment, education institutions,

hospitals, that definitely will help in building trust in the hearts of the people of the same area which you dread and which you fear.

Ellis: But is it likely that, if we are talking about—let's say—within Pakistan, so much money is spent on defense, as in many other countries, and I think this is something that in many countries people discuss: cutting back on defense spending and hoping that it will go into education and health and economic empowerment. But how likely is that to work within the context of your country?

Qadeem: In the defense budget of Pakistan. So you have to look at the reality—where Pakistan is located—look at the geography of Pakistan. We have two major powers, of course, India and China, and then Iran is also there, and Afghanistan is there, and look at our very porous border with Afghanistan, and of course a long border with India. So we cannot come out of that regional and political dynamics when it comes to the sovereignty and security of the country, and I think there is a common understanding that you can only defend your country through these means if you are, you know, strong enough to defend it. So that is—you cannot break, you cannot come out of that sort of reality. Yes, I do believe in it: that we need to spend more on education, because if you invest in education today, definitely we'll be able to overcome some of the problems that we are facing today. But at the same time there are other factors which are responsible for this sort of situation: it's not only the defense budget or it's not illiteracy. There are so many other factors, the root causes of this violent extremism that we are trying to grapple with since 2008, but I think if you look at the—it all started with what? It has a history to it, and that started, I think, when the first Russian soldier put his foot down in Afghanistan. It started with that.

Ellis: Well, can you talk about—you said that there are a lot of root causes for the extremism aside from drones, and if you could talk about that and what can be done about this. Also, your work has focused a lot on male youth and working with mothers, and I think people would be interested in hearing about that approach, and what about the involvement of women in extremism? Maybe there aren't as many suicide bombers—there are some, at least, in the region—but how are you including them also?

Qadeem: See, I think drone [use] is not the cause; it is one of the causes. There are many root causes—there are, of course, multiple causes of the situation that we are in today. One is the indoctrination of the youth, and that indoctrination is in an ideology—believe me—which is not Islamic. We all believe—there is a myth—that these suicidal, that these extremist boys, they are very religious, they are doing it because there is this concept of jihad associated with it, and this is—they are doing it, they become suicidal, because they have been convinced that there is a life after death which will be more peaceful and beautiful and stuff like that. But while working with these boys, one thing that I have realized: it has nothing to do with religion, it has nothing to do with Islam. It has everything to do with power, with money, the space that we have actually left somewhere for these people to put in the effort, and it has expanded because we have never tried to counter it. I just would like to know where in the Quran—and this has been a question from all the scholars and the Islamic theologians as well—where does, in Islam, where in the Quran, does it say that suicide is allowed, that killing of the innocent people is allowed? So because we have never tried to challenge the authority of these people who are known but unknown to us, and, secondly, we are so fearful that the moment I utter something of this nature I'll be attacked—so this handful of people, this very small number of people who [are] keeping the rest of—I think 99% of—Pakistanis hostage. The 99% people have never stood up, have never asked what authority they have. So when we started talking to the youth in the language of the same Quran which was used to dislodge them, which was used to misguide them, when you show them, "This is what the text is. What you have been told is, yes, from the text, but out of the context. This is the context," nobody can challenge [it]. So when I say we have the solution, we have the solution for it. The problem is there but we have the answer to it, we have the—we can address it.

It is going to be—because I use it the same way when I started working with the mothers, because I realized that this is this mother who is responsible for sending her son to that group. It is this mother who never asked her son, "From where have you brought this mobile [phone]? From where have you brought, in a month's time, 20,000 rupees?" 20,000 rupees is too much, you know, for a common, very poor family, for a very poor boy who has no employment, who has no education, so from where is he bringing 200 dollars? It is a fortune for them, so I thought, "This is the mother and [she is the one] who always feels that 'my son is innocent.'" I actually got into contact with one of the mothers whom—I was told by my staff in Swat that her son is innocent, I mean, that this mother is really helpless because her house is demolished by the security forces and her son is in the [militant] hideout. And I said, "Okay, let me meet her." My staff said, "Please don't go to that house. There are two eyes on that door: one, the security agencies, and the second is, of course, the militants, so please don't go to that house." I went to her house and I just started talking to her, and she said, "My son is innocent"—the son's name was Saddam—"Saddam is innocent, Saddam is 16 years of age and he has never committed anything wrong," and I said, "Okay, if your son has not done anything wrong, I promise you that I will help him, and I will talk to the people around, [so] that he should not be harmed. So whenever you feel like he is ready to talk to me, and whenever he comes home, do let me know." So, after a week or so, she called me and I went to her, I went to Swat, and I started talking to Saddam. Saddam has no moustache, he was just 16 years old, and I started talking to him, and when I listened to him I said, "See, why don't you come and let's go to the security agencies here, the offices there, and I promise you that they will not harm you. But the way you are thinking—you have to change this thinking." Initially, he never agreed, he did not agree to it. I told him that, "When you will be actually going out in the hideouts, you never know when you will be killed, but here, you, at least, will live." After a week, again the mother called and said, "He has agreed," and in the meantime I spoke to the military personnel who are there [and said] that, "If we can bring him to you, there is a school called Sabaoon in Swat which actually works on the rehabilitation of these youth," and he agreed to it. So when he saw Saddam—and the mother was insisting he is innocent—when he saw Saddam, he said he was the most wanted, because he was responsible for the killing of seven military personnel, including a major in a remote-control bomb [attack]. So, see, that gave me an opportunity to start thinking on some other lines, engaging the mothers. The boy's story is—the end is, he spent a year in the school; he is totally transformed, rehabilitated; he has opened his own shop in the same area; we helped in the reintegration because the community did not want to see Saddam's face. That's another story.

But what I am trying to imply is that we always forget that, in this whole radicalization process, the role of mother is very important, because she is the first one to register, to notice the attitude and the behavior change in her son and in her male relatives—particularly in the son. When we started working with the mothers, we helped in developing her critical thinking—one—[and] secondly, but then she would ask us a question: how can I ask a question [of] my son? He is bringing me the food, he is helping with this and that. So we found the answer: empowering those women economically, so that they can have a say, at least, at home. And then, this worked, so today those women are not only asking their sons if they bring the money or if they notice any change in their son—they do ask them. They also know the way to bring them back, because this is what we tried to build their capacity around. We call it Mothers for Change, because we always forget the mother's role in shaping the behavior and the attitude of the child. So we are trying to work around that. We are already working on it. We have mothers' groups in these areas and we have youth groups—we call them TOLANA, and *tolana* in Pashto means *together*. We cannot call them peace groups, because *peace* is a word that we don't use in our work—because the moment you utter the word *peace* it means you'll be targeted. So we work around peacebuilding and social cohesion—but we call it social cohesion. We call it working around tolerance and accommodation, but we don't talk about peace. But we do everything around peace, and trying to, of course, infuse in the minds of the young and in their mothers how important it is for them to understand that they are the best-placed people to counter extremism in their own ways.

Ellis: So just, quickly, to follow up—and then we're going right to the audience so get your questions ready—if you could address what I raised before: the role of girls and how they participate in extremism

as well, and then, lastly, just to end up, since you have all this experience with the Taliban: your new prime minister has talked about [how] he supports negotiations with the Taliban. It's also going on in the context of Afghanistan, and if you could just say a few words about that, that would be great.

Qadeem: When we think of extremism, we only think like "the extremist will just be blowing up himself." Women's roles, or girls' roles, could be otherwise as well. I know two of the girls who were sisters of one of my radicalized boys; they used to make suicidal jackets. So we worked with the whole family. Then there are women who would collect money and gold and help support one of the leaders of the movement in Swat—that was 2009—and there were others, like women and, of course, girls, who would convince the boy, the child, and of course the neighbor to send their sons to [*Inaudible.*] and the group of that extremist leader. Then there are the girls who somehow—like I said, we have never tried to develop a counter-narrative to what the other group preaches. We have never tried to come up with a counter-narrative. This is the time that the female Islamic scholars should develop a true interpretation of the Quran: not what the other wants to say but what we really want to see in the text of the Quran, what is there. Because whenever [the extremists] want to say a verse, it is there in the Quran, but you know they never actually give you the context, it is always out of the context, and I can give you so many examples of that. So we really need to look at the context. And when I have a dialogue with these people, with some of them, they think that it's the woman who doesn't know anything about the Quran—this is how they look at a female—but when you start quoting the Quran and you start arguing with them, they have no answer. So you have to come up with that knowledge.

Ellis: They did that in Malaysia: there was a whole movement of women who said the only way to combat things was to study the Quran and come back and—

Qadeem: Yeah, they are doing it there, but actually, you know, they call it—and I don't agree with them—they call it looking at the Quran from a gender lens. I think the Quran is really gender-sensitive, because every verse of the Quran, it says—whenever it addresses a male, a woman, it addresses [them] simultaneously: *wa al-mu'mineen wa al-mu'minaat* [male believers and female believers], that is, a male and a female, *wa al-muslimeen wa al-muslimaat* [male Muslims and female Muslims]. So I mean, it all says about humanity, it all speaks about human beings. It does not say that this is a male and a female and this reward is for the male and this, of course, this punishment is for the female. No; if it's a reward, a punishment, it's on [an] equity and equality basis. And lastly—my prime minister, of course, he—talking to the Taliban is not really easy. I mean, it is good that, at least, we are initiating a process because they are the major stakeholders in this process, but then see who is on the other side of the table: who is representing whom? There are many groups, so all the groups are included in these talks? There are 40-odd groups of the Taliban, and none of them agrees [with] the other, so what's the representation, and whom are we going to talk to? This is important, but at the same time—I think, see, we have to understand that when we are talking to Taliban, we have to put [forward] our conditions. We should not succumb to their pressure and we should not be just listening to what they want to say. We cannot talk to them as equals, but in dialogue you have to have [an] equal partner, so these are some of the complexities of this process. I think there are other ways to address this, but this is not the forum to talk about it. [*Laughter.*]

Question: Yes, my name is Kami Butt and I'm originally from Pakistan and I write for the Pakistani Spectator, and I'm not a scholar but I think that you know more than I do about [the] Quran. I heard this secular Muslim woman who said that Muhammad, God's peace be upon him, really believed that God is a female and they said the reason, he said on every *sura* [chapter]: *bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim* [in the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful]; you know, it means *womb*, so he is saying God is so merciful, like the womb of a woman who protects her child. So the question is: is that true, or was she just kind of—?

Question: Hi. Margaret Rogers. I just returned from a year in Afghanistan, where we were involved somewhat on this issue. I am most interested to hear you talk a little bit more about who is doing the

radicalizing. You said that there is a misconception that this is mostly accomplished in madrassas. Since you said that's a tiny percent, who is doing it? And the second thing is just a comment on your work: is there anything that you can say has been most effective in deradicalizing these boys?

Question: Yes, I'm Nitin Bajaj with the World Food Programme of the United Nations, and I come from India. You said it's a misconception that madrassas are a problem, but the way that it's been depicted in the Western media all these years, it seems like it's a natural source of recruitment, be it for Tehreek-e-Taliban or for other groups. So do you think it is not a problem, the madrassas?

Qadeem: I think this one is just—I would not comment on it at all because for me God is God, Allah is Allah. I just don't know the gender, myself. Secondly, on who is doing the radicalization: see, it is so difficult, and I think I am going to answer your question in this answer as well. I didn't say that the madrassa is not producing—I said the myth that it is only the products of the madrassas. But not all madrassas are producing radicalized students, not all madrassas. There are some madrassas, definitely, who are meant for it, and it is not only in Pakistan, I think, it's across the Muslim world. In the context of Pakistan, like I said, [of] the 79 boys that I deradicalized only 5 of them belonged to a madrassa.

In the context of Pakistan, who is radicalizing them—there are so many groups, thanks to our, I think—I spoke to somebody and I found that they have been, actually—they named some people, and I found there are so many nations who are so interested in working with these youth and making them into something like human boys, so if I start naming the different groups who are so active in Pakistan, that will be, I think—this is not the place to discuss it, but there are different groups. There are indigenous groups, there are groups who are outside Pakistan; the funds, the money, the weapons, it's coming from multiple sources—so there is no one source, there is no one country, there is no one agency, there is no one actor that I will name, and I can name, that he or she or this group is responsible for radicalization of youth. And again, I would like to emphasize, it has nothing to do with the religion. You remember there were some mercenaries in the previous centuries? We have these mercenaries here now. They are mercenaries. It is all the power game, the money game.

Ellis: In terms of what has been most effective?

Qadeem: What's most effective is, I can always claim, I think, the way we try to evolve this process of deradicalization. It's a very indigenous way. It worked for us, and I'm sure it can be replicated anywhere in the world because we work—we started with a very small initiative that is working with the boys one by one, but then we found that, when you spend a week with one, you need to bring them together, so this is one of the success stories that I can share: that 79 of them are well-placed now, seven of them have got their degrees from different universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, one of them [has] become, you know, a real political leader—the same person whom I spoke to you about, the one who wanted to detonate himself, because we had to talk to the group with whom he was associated, that spared his life, and that helped him—otherwise they'd never spare anybody. The fact is that we have now the mentors, a male and female mentor in the same area where we try to help deradicalize the boys, or help in transformation of these boys, so the mentor is in interaction with the group, with the boys, all the time, whenever they need help and support. This is the impact that we have, of course, made, and, like I said, from this week we are going to have—we have lined up 400 more that we will helping in transformation and rehabilitation and reintegration in their communities, and this is another 15-month process that we have just initiated.

Question: I'm Lee Roussel and my question is very simple: we've talked about how the young boys are recruited. What about the mothers? How do you recruit them?

.

Question: Emma Yourd from International Relief and Development. We run a program for conflict victims in Pakistan and we work a bit with PAIMAN on our program as well, and I was wondering if you

could comment on what types of psychosocial assistance you provide to the young boys: is it a lot of group therapy? Is it more individual? How does that psycho-social element come forth?

Question: Shikha Bhatnagar. I was wondering if you could comment about the recent elections, but more importantly, how do we—there is a misconception out there that South Asia somehow, its elite, has maybe been at the forefront of female leaders, but of course those leaders were attached to very powerful men: Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto. How do we, the international community, the international development community, South Asians, the Diaspora, get more women involved in the leadership process at the local level and at the national level as well?

Qadeem: How we recruit mothers: see, initially, like I said, I got into contact with one; that was the beginning of this process. We have, like I said, TOLANAs—that is, the youth groups with whom we were working since 2008—and they help us at identifying the boys, and then we also have these female groups. They will just go and find out whose son is missing, who is more vulnerable. So this is our own group, who is there in the community, who would identify, but then we would also try to prioritize the list—which one we would like to work [with], who are more dangerous, who are not dangerous. So this is—there is a criteria, there's a checklist. According to that we work, and we then, of course, identify the mothers. So we have the mothers' groups who work with the mothers, who go and who verify whether it is true or not, so this is a lengthy process. It's not that easy.

Secondly, yes, the psycho-social counseling: it's in phases, see, because—and it depends on the boy, on the individual, as well. Those who have gone through this whole process of transformation, who are already radicalized—it takes a lot of time for them to overcome. Nobody understands this, but they are really traumatized. So it's very difficult for them, initially, to overcome that sort of trauma, so we give them a lot of space for healing, and then we do the psychosocial counseling, and it depends from individual to individual: it's between three to four weeks initially and then, again, like I said, it all depends on how far he has gone. So bringing him back takes the same time, and it takes, sometimes, months, and sometimes, because of the environment, because of the friends and the groups that we provide them with, it helps in overcoming all of that.

See, as you know—you are also from the region—I think, I look back, and a woman entering the political domain was like—it was considered as the man's domain, and how can a woman become a political leader? I think, though, there is a lot of things that have changed so far, but one thing that I have noticed—and I was a part of the government recently, and I always tell these women, and I have been telling all these women whom I have mentored and who are now sitting in the parliament, "See, if you really want to be in politics, you have to think the woman's way. You don't have to think the man's way, and you have to be assertive, not aggressive, and, third, you have to lobby with the like-minded men, and you will have the support." I'll just share a story with you: when we actually became—in our very first meeting as a cabinet the chief minister asked me, "What would you like to take?" and—the portfolio he was just distributing—"You take this one," and I was the first one sitting on his left, and I said, "I would like to take information." And he said, "Oh, no, Bibi, you can't take information because information is so dangerous. It's culturally very sensitive because every time there is a suicidal attack the information minister has to come on TV and talk to the media and say things, and then you will be attacked and you will be confronting all these people." I said, "I am already confronting them. I would like to—" He did not agree to it, and I literally snatched it from him; I said, "No, I want to do it," so at the end of the tenure he said, "Thank God I gave you the ministry." [*Laughter.*] See, it all depends on how you work it out, so, for us, if you really want to be in the political process, we need to assert ourselves on the political parties. We have to find a space for ourselves. Unfortunately, in South Asia, the woman who is at the lead would always try to stab the woman who is following her, instead of taking—so we need to do more hand-holding, we need to give space to each other. Only then, I think, will there be a critical mass of women in politics in South Asia.

Ellis: Just a quick followup: what do you think of the significance of the fact that Pakistan has had, over a certain number of years, two women ambassadors, and they were sent to Washington to represent their country? Any comment on that?

Qadeem: I think you are in a better position to comment on it [*Laughter.*], because you must have experience, firsthand experience. I think they were excellent—

Ellis: They are impressive women.

Qadeem: They are really impressive women, and I am sure Fozia would like to comment on it because she just had experienced one of them.

Fozia Fayyaz: Yes, Sherry Rehman, the former Ambassador, she was my boss—

Ellis: And the one before that was named Maliha Lodhi.

Fayyaz: Yes, I've worked with Sherry Rehman and it's been a great experience. She was my second boss here in Washington, DC, following Ambassador Hussain Haqqani, and I didn't find any difference because of one being male and one being female. So it's been a great learning experience for me, and I found a very powerful person in her—very assertive, as Madame Mossarat was saying, and she has been great.

Question: Good afternoon. Thank you so much for your talk. My name is Varsha Ramakrishnan; I'm a fellow from Hopkins with the Pulitzer Center. So it's really interesting to hear about your efforts to reintegrate and your success stories with these boys. So my question is: as part of your program, do you bring these boys back in to the societies to talk to the other boys that have been radicalized, and, if you are doing that, how effective is it, and how are you managing to do that as part of your program?

Question: Yes, my name is Umar; I'm from Pakistan. My question is: counterterrorism researchers have identified that there are two major areas which serve as nurseries for the Taliban. One is the NWFP and FATA area and the second one is the South Punjab. Do you provide activities and services to South Punjab, as well? One, and second is: now there is another tendency that woman suicide bombers, they are exploded in Pakistan—very recent explosion yesterday—that are female. Would you please enlighten us: what are the motives behind the female focus?

Question: Hi, Neetha Tangirala with IREX. In a room full of practitioners who are administering programs in the region or who are interested in administering programs in the region, what is your recommendation for the international development community when looking to help civil society on the ground—truly help without hindering, in a sense?

Qadeem: Okay, I think your question—the boys—because, you know, we work in the groups, we have these youth peace groups, so it's all about learning and working together, and they talk a lot about this social cohesion and tolerance, and they hold these community dialogues and community sessions. So it is creating a sort of impact but, like I said, it's a process, and it cannot be done in one day or in a month or a year. It takes time to help internalize [among] the people that this is right and that is wrong, so we work in groups, and these boys—they definitely become a part of our TOLANA when they go back to their communities and they talk to the people.

Yes, we are very much cognizant of what is happening in South Punjab. I would just say I think we—the breeding ground, really, today, is South Punjab. We ignore it, everybody ignores it—like they had been ignoring it in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA—but today, I think, if we really want to help the people come out of this radicalization and violent extremism they need to work with the madrassas, especially—there are some identified madrassas, very strong ones, in South Punjab. We have just

entered that area; we have started with the mothers whose sons are in madrassas, because wherever we enter an area we first try to do the assessment, if we have just entered it.

Secondly, what is the motivation? I think I must tell you one thing: the woman who detonated herself in Baluchistan—she was not a Pakistani. So the female suicidal [attackers] are not Pakistanis, and don't ask me, "Who are they?" My recommendation is understanding: the international community has to understand the ground realities, because we all believe in the negative image that the media somehow project in selling their stories. They don't look at the positive side, the—I would say—the ways and means where the local people themselves are trying to address it in their own ways. I have never heard those stories in CNN or BBC. I have never heard my story in CNN and BBC, because, there, they can't sell it. They would like to sell something which will just project something very negative. But see, the positive thing is that there are people who know how to address this issue, that there is a whole group of youth and women who are trying to find the ways of moderating extremism. It's not only through the mothers that we are working, it's not only through the male and female youth that we are working, we are working—we have a combination of schools and madrassas we have put together, and they work together. It's the peace education that we are trying to impart to the youth of these schools and madrassas.

How the international community can help is: see, as I said, you cannot do it piecemeal, and the international community has adopted a piecemeal approach to addressing this sort of issue in Pakistan. You have to have an integrated approach to it, it has to be more comprehensive, and it has to be—you have to have the will to do it. You don't have the will to do it. We have the will to do it. Help us. Strengthen that will, but you have to come up with that political will to support us. You have to have that ethical, that moral [will] combining to help Pakistan come out of this, because you are the ones who have weaved this around us. I would say the whole international community—I would say—is responsible for what we are facing today in Pakistan, so help us in coming out of it. And it cannot be done by Pakistan itself: it has to be done by everybody, because it's not our issue alone. It's everybody's issue.

Question: Hello, my name is Maryam Laly, with the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy. My question is: what are your thoughts on the role of women and youth in terms of fighting against religious violence against minorities?

Question: Bob Pearson with IREX. My question is just: you emphasized the value of the local organization and your—we'll call it—very close relationship with the community, with mothers, and with the boys who are affected. If the international community could help, your methodology needs somehow to be scalable, and therefore I think there's a certain question—at least on my part, perhaps with others—about how it is that the international community could help you with something that is so dependent on local involvement. And what is your theory about how it could be scalable to larger activity in Pakistan?

Question: Marcia Wiss, at Hogan Lovells. You mentioned, when you were talking about drones, that money should be spent on infrastructure development and economic benefit and, in the Cold War period, the '50s through the '80s, the US government was very supportive of Pakistan, Russia was very supportive of India, the USAID was very active in Pakistan. Is there any residual recognition of that? Was there sustainability [of contributions], or is that done?

Qadeem: See, like I said, the minority issue in Pakistan is really—I think people who have a heart to feel and a mind to think—it is really hurting for us. We are trying to bring a group of people, both from the religious—I mean, from the faiths, different faiths—trying to have a dialogue with them. The government has already initiated that. There had been a lot of talks around this issue in the media also. But since it is a process that—it's supposed to be initiated at all levels, we need to have a dialogue, an

interfaith dialogue with different groups of people. We have not yet done it as a process; we still need to do it.

Secondly, the methodology: believe me, it can work anywhere in the world—not only in Pakistan—because it is, like I said, it's very much based and it very much is dependent on the local context. But understand: [if] you don't have the support, the confidence, and the trust of the local people, you cannot do it anywhere in the world. So we can scale it up, we are already scaling it up; like I said, we started it with 79, today there are hundreds who are lined up and whom we are going to work with, but we have very little resources to do it. It has to be taken, you know, on a larger scale, and it needs a lot of resources, because it's not at one level that you are working. It's not that you are just identifying a few hundred people. It's—you are identifying hundreds and thousands of families as well, and it is a lengthy process and it needs all sorts of resources—men and material both—and it's very time-consuming. And then nobody is convinced that it can happen, but when we started it, the 79 ones that we work with—we used our own resources for the transformation and for the deradicalization. But when one of the international agencies looked at the success of that, they find it—you know, the 400 more. Now there is another organization—when they looked at the success of this whole process, because they saw the impact themselves, they met the mothers, they met the mentors, they met the boys, so they have now—they are now supporting us for another 300 mothers and 400 boys. So we can scale it up provided we have the resources, and it's not—like I said, it is not one organization. There can be many who can replicate it, and we are open to share our process, of course, our models, our methodology, with anyone who would like to do it. We welcome that.

Drone [use]: see, I totally agree with you. Pakistan had been one of the largest recipients of the US aid since 1947, after Egypt and Israel. See, it is the—and we do respect, we do recognize, the support that had been given to Pakistan since its inception, but one thing that is very important with aid, that what was attached—all of the strings. So the recognition is there, but I think there is a lot of resentment as well. We do recognize the support that the Americans had been providing to the Pakistanis from time to time. The other day there was an ad—it comes from time to time on the television—it says, "From the people of the United States to the people of Pakistan, we support"—you know there is support in [the] energy sector. It is there, but, see, you look at the larger context. Don't give us aid; give us that sympathetic understanding of the problems that we are in today. So when you leave Afghanistan, don't leave us in [the] lurch this time. Thank you.

Question: Good afternoon, and thank you for the work you're doing; I understand it's very hard, and we have similar issues in America—right here in Washington, DC—a lot of people at the ground roots level looking for help above. I'm Major William Mott and I'm with the National Security Agency; I'm doing a thesis on the security apparatus in Pakistan. Former Ambassador [Cindy] Courville to the African Union invited me today. My question was: is Pakistan ready to make a bold move to broker some kind of peace treaty with India, so that it could, in change, lower its defense spending and spend more money on humanitarian projects?

Question: Thank you. My name is Ian Strome, of the Potomac Institute. Following up on this Pakistani gentleman's question earlier about the motives of female suicide bombers, I just wanted to know: can you comment at all on who is responsible for radicalizing some of these women? And I'm asking this because of the bombing two weeks ago of the female students on a bus by a female suicide bomber, so I'm just wondering what kind of woman is trying to attack a car of women.

Qadeem: It's hard to answer that one. I think—I wish I had the answer to you. I had some Indian sitting here and I really would like to take her opinion on this as well. See, India and Pakistan now have to think rationally. I was a part of Track II diplomacy way back in 1992; for six years I remained a part of a group called Neemrana—that's a back-door channel between the two countries, [with members] who work around the issues which are not very—which are very burning, but at the same time they can help in defusing the tension. And I remember, in the first year—and I was a young professor at the time and

the only female amongst the ancients and the old generals and the bureaucrats—and when they would talk of Kashmir, they would start and they would become so aggressive, and I would just look at their faces and I'd say—There were two more women but they were—you know, I would say—more experienced than myself, and I remember, after two years, when we would talk of Kashmir sense would prevail, and they started calming down. So I think, after 64 years now, both the nations have to think logically and rationally: enough is enough, we can't blame each other anymore, and we need to, I think, work around—not only the peripheral issues, but the core problems also. We are mature enough to handle Kashmir, mature enough to handle the other issues between the two countries, and I think we should learn the lessons from the mistakes that we have already made. But—believe me—even if Pakistan and India come to terms with each other and we have the best of relations, the mad race for the weapons, for the raise in the defense budget, would not come to an end, because it's not between Pakistan and India. It's regional dynamics. And anyone is left?

Ellis: The last one was about the suicide bombers: what are the motivations for women to kill other women?

Qadeem: See, I think, like I said: indoctrination, indoctrination, indoctrination, and no counter-narrative. We need that, we literally need it; that's the need of the time. We need to do something about it. And, if you remember, the first person who—the fist suicidal woman was a Sri Lankan. Her motivation was what? Revenge. So you cannot ignore that. Reaction, revenge, it's not only—please, it's not that ideology. Yes, it's the ideology of power, the ideology of money, which is very, very important in this context. It's not only like, you know, when you say, "It's Islam and it's religion." Believe me, they don't even offer prayers, so how can you call them religious? How can you call them Muslims? And when you ask them, "Okay, please translate—give me the translation of *bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*," which he just uttered—it's a simple one, it's a basic one—they don't know even that. And I am actually talking to you from my experience, by interacting with them. Thank you.

Ellis: Well we've come to the end of a very, very informative and interesting program, and we have heard about positive things going on in Pakistan, and trying to have a dialogue about misconceptions. So I think this has been a wonderful exchange. We just want to thank Mossarat so much, and also want to thank you for your great questions, and look forward to seeing you next time, so thank you again. [*Applause.*]