

# NEW UNIVERSITY IN EXILE CONSORTIUM SCHOLARS CONFERENCE

## THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES UNDER AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

**MONDAY, APRIL 17, 2023**

1:00 – 5:00 PM CEST

In-person and online

Campus Condorcet, Centre  
de colloques, Place du Front  
populaire, 93322  
Aubervilliers

Join Online:  
[https://spaces.avayacloud.com/spaces/  
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**THE  
NEW  
SCHOOL**



THE NEW  
UNIVERSITY  
IN EXILE  
CONSORTIUM

UNIVERSITÉ  
**PARIS8**  
VINCENNES-SAINT-DENIS



## **Welcome Remarks**

1:00 – 1:10 PM CEST

Arien Mack, Founding Director, New University in Exile Consortium

Annick Allaigre, President, Université Paris 8

## **Panel 1: The Treatment of Minorities Under Authoritarian Regimes**

1:10 – 2:40 PM CEST

**Moderator:** Tomasz Kitlinski, Poland

### **Panelists:**

- Teoman Aktan, Iran
- Natalia Fedorova, Russia
- Nahed Ghazzoul, Syria
- Asli Kotaman, Turkey
- Naima Mohammadi, Iran

## **Panel 2: The State of Women in Afghanistan Today**

3:00 – 4:30 PM CEST

**Moderator:** Crystal Bayat, Afghanistan

### **Panelists:**

- Safia Hussaini, Afghanistan
- Faisal Karimi, Afghanistan
- Shafiqah Khapalwak, Afghanistan
- Aziz Mohibbi, Afghanistan
- Massume Zaki, Afghanistan

## Keynote Presentation

4:30 – 5:00 PM CEST

### **Rina Amiri, U.S. Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls, and Human Rights**



Rina Amiri is the U.S. Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls, and Human Rights. Under the Obama Administration, she served as a senior advisor to the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Ms. Amiri brings over two decades of political expertise, advising and working with governments in various conflict settings in West and the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, Central and South Asia, and Europe. Her areas of focus are peace and security, with a specialization in inclusion in mediation processes.

## Reception

5:30 – 7:30 PM CEST

With exhibition by Marcia Tiburi, Visiting Professor, Université Paris 8

## Speaker Biographies

**Teoman Aktan** is a former fellow of Columbia Global Center | Amman who was first expelled from the Iranian academy in 2011 due to his humanitarian and political activities. Since 2016, he has worked to defend the rights of refugees and migrants in Turkey with UNHCR, Doctors Without Borders, and Human Resources Development Foundation. He earned his Ph.D. in Political Science and Public Administration from Istanbul University in 2018.

**Crystal Bayat** is an Afghan social activist and advocate for human and women's rights. In 2021, she was named by the BBC as one of the 100 most influential women of the year. Bayat earned her bachelor's degree in Political Science from Delhi University 2019, her specialization in international studies from the United Nations Institute, and will begin graduate studies at Carnegie Mellon University this fall.

**Natalia Fedorova** is a new media artist, writer, literary scholar, and translator from Russia. She is the co-founder of Machine Libertine, a media poetry project, served as a Fulbright guest researcher at Trope Tank, MIT, and has served as author, editor, and curator of numerous articles, magazines, and exhibitions. She earned her Ph.D. in literary theory from Herzen State University and is currently a visiting scholar at Université Paris 8.

**Nahed Ghazzoul** is a Syrian researcher, linguist, and activist. She recently finished her tenure as a Research and Teaching Scholar in the Department of Languages at Paris Nanterre University. Prior to Nanterre, Ghazzoul was a research fellow at Columbia Global Center | Amman, and an Assistant Professor at Al-Zaytoonah University, Jerash University, and Aleppo University. She earned her Ph.D. in linguistics from Lancaster University in 2008 and has participated in a number of conferences supporting the rights of women and young people.

**Safia Hussaini** is Ph.D. candidate at Université Paris 8 where she is currently working on her doctoral thesis investigating the situation of Afghan refugee women in France. Before coming to France, Hussaini worked as the general manager of research at the Ministry of Immigrants and Returnees Affairs in Kabul, Afghanistan.

**Faisal Karimi** is an Afghan journalist, media entrepreneur, and researcher who currently serves as Visiting Scholar at San José State University's School of Journalism and Mass Communication. Prior to his time at SJSU, Karimi was an Assistant Professor at Herat University's School of Journalism and Communication until 2021. He is the founder and director of the Afghanistan Institute for Research and Media Studies (AIRMS) and Afghanistan Women's News Agency (AWNA). Karimi earned his M.A. in New Media Studies from Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 2020 and was recently named "Journalist of the Month" by the International Journalists Network.

**Shafiqah Khapalwak** is a poet, writer, columnist, and translator from Afghanistan. She is a Visiting Fellow at Wellesley College's Peace and Justice Studies Department and is the director of the Musawer Foundation, which focuses on children's literature, education, and rights advocacy. She graduated from the American University of Afghanistan in 2020 and recently participated in the Forbes 30/50 Summit in Abu Dhabi.

**Tomasz Kitlinski** is a political philosopher, cultural and social analyst, and civic activist from Poland, where he was targeted by the current authoritarian regime. He served as a Fulbright scholar at the Transregional Center for Democratic Studies at The New School, a Marie Curie Actions fellow at the University of Brighton, an Associate Professor at Kobe College, and most recently an Academy in Exile–New University in Exile Consortium fellow at Freie Universität Berlin. Kitlinski studied under Hélène Cixous and Julia Kristeva and earned his Habilitation from the Polish Academy of Sciences.

**Asli Kotaman** is a Turkish scholar of visual and film studies and currently serves as a Philipp Schwartz Fellow at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn in Media and Communication. She earned her Ph.D. from Marmara University in 2007 and previously held faculty positions at Kadir Has University, Plato College of Higher Education, the University of Management and Design in Bishkek, and Beykent University.

**Naima Mohammadi** is a visiting assistant professor in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. Her 2018 book, *The Sociology of Polygamous Families in Iran*, highlights the circumstances of Sunni Iranian women under Islamic laws in the Baluchistan region. Her most recent research focuses on the semantic implications of the Islamic veil as a visible symbol for Muslim women. She earned her Ph.D. in Political Sociology from Tarbiat Modares University in 2013.

**Aziz Mohibbi** is an agricultural and environmental engineer and the former chancellor of Bamyan University in Afghanistan, where he ran programs prioritizing the training and hiring of women academics. He is a SAR Scholar hosted jointly by Maynooth University and Trinity College Dublin and has previously worked at Kabul University, the UN Environment Program in Afghanistan, and as a consultant for the environment and natural resource commission of the Afghan Parliament. Mohibbi earned his M.A. from the Asian Institute for Technology in 2010 and his Ph.D. from the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology in 2018.

**Massume Zaki** is an Afghan physicist who currently serves as a researcher at École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, where she works in Nanophotonics and Metrology Laboratory. She was an assistant professor at Kabul Polytechnic University and as a lecturer at Kateb University, and Khatam Al-Nabieen University before the Taliban took over the country. Zaki has a B.S. in atomic physics and M.S. in photonics.

## **Acknowledgements**

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We would like to acknowledge the Consortium Scholar-led Conference Organizing Committee: **Abdulgaleel Ahmed, Palwashsa Hassan, Gubad Ibadoghlu, Kazim Karimi, Asli Kotaman**, and **Omar Sadr**.

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## **About the New University in Exile Consortium**

The New University in Exile Consortium is a globally expanding group of colleges and universities in the U.S., Bangladesh, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, the Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Each institutional member is committed to hosting at least one exiled scholar every year and these exiled hosted scholars constitute our scholar cohort. We work with them individually and together to try and lessen the profound sense of dislocation which exiled scholars suffer and which adversely impacts their intellectual and personal lives. In the past year, the Consortium has expanded its mission to include finding placements for threatened Afghan and Ukrainian academics, students, and artists at Consortium member institutions.

Is your institution interested in joining the Consortium? Email us at [uieconsortium@newschool.edu](mailto:uieconsortium@newschool.edu)

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