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16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

**INT' AGREEMENTS ON COMBATING VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN**

Perspectives from Türkiye and the United States



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SATURDAY
DECEMBER 13, 2025



12.00 PM (EST)
20.00 (TST)



ZOOM PANEL



Meeting ID: 886 4236 7457

Passcode: 463272



Introduction

Violence against women is a structural human rights violation worldwide, and international law clearly defines the responsibility of states to prevent these violations, provide protection, punish perpetrators, and implement equality. Mechanisms such as CEDAW, CEDAW General Recommendations 19 and 35, the Istanbul Convention, Belém do Pará, Lanzarote, and United Nations Security Council resolutions are the strongest global frameworks established to protect women from violence.

This panel is organized as a contribution to, and in solidarity with, the United Nations' **"16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence"** campaign. Aligned with the global awareness efforts carried out between November 25 and December 10, the event aims to highlight and deepen the understanding of legal mechanisms for combating gender-based violence.

The dynamics of violence against women, legal regulations, and implementation challenges in both Turkey and the United States share both overlapping and distinct aspects. Therefore, it is crucial for legal professionals from both countries to come together to discuss the functioning of international agreements, national practices, legal gaps, and opportunities for strengthening.

Organized jointly by the American Turkish Women's Association and the Red Pepper Association, this panel aims to highlight the role of CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention in protecting women and to bring together international law and practical field experience.

Background

The objective of this event is to discuss **the role of international conventions in combating violence against women**, based on the current legal frameworks and implementation experiences of Turkey and the United States, with the participation of lawyers from both countries. The event aims to highlight the role of **CEDAW**, relevant **General Recommendations**, the **Istanbul Convention**, and **international human rights mechanisms** in protecting women.

Furthermore, it aims to raise awareness on current and intersecting issues such as digital violence, obstacles faced by migrant and refugee women, human trafficking cases, and problems accessing protection mechanisms; and to **strengthen the exchange of experiences and best practices** between the two countries.

This panel aims to bring together women's rights advocates, lawyers, and civil society actors on the same platform to **produce both legal knowledge and solidarity**.

Content

The event will offer a comparative and practice-oriented discussion that brings together the international legal framework and its implementation in Turkey and the US. The panel will address:

- CEDAW, General Recommendations 19 and 35, the Istanbul Convention, and the role of other international mechanisms in combating violence against women.
- The post-Istanbul Convention process in Turkey, existing protection mechanisms, and challenges in implementation will be evaluated.
- In the United States, laws on violence against women, risks faced by immigrant and refugee women, human trafficking, and digital violence will be discussed.
- Legal experts from both countries will share case studies from the field on protection measures, barriers to accessing justice, and practical implementation issues.
- New risk areas faced by women in the context of digital violence, online harassment, and cybercrime will be discussed.
- The four fundamental obligations of the Istanbul Convention and the responsibilities imposed on states by CEDAW will be explored in depth in a question-and-answer format.

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**#16GünlükAktivizm #KadınaYönelikŞiddeteSon #İstanbulSözleşmesiYaşatır
#CEDAW #KadınHakları #ToplumsalCinsiyetEşitliği #EndViolenceAgainstWomen
#OrangeTheWorld #ATKB #KırmızıBiberDerneği #16DaysOfActivism
#EndViolenceAgainstWomen #CEDAW #İstanbulConvention #GenderEquality
#HumanRights #LegalFramework #WomenEmpowerment**

Program

Opening remarks & Introduction by

Berna Gürdal -Turkish Women's League of America

Fatma Aytaç- Red Pepper Association

Video Share : *Unveiling the Mystery of CEDAW: Essential Equality*

Expert Speakers

Nazan MOROĞLU LL.M

MEF University Faculty of Law

Arzu GÜRCAN LL.M

Brooklyn New York, Lawyer

Discussion

Closing remarks

Moderator: **Burcu Sağıroğlu**

Policy & Advocacy Manager

Joyful Heart Foundation

Biographies



Nazan Moroğlu LL.M

She was born in Istanbul in 1947. She attended the German High School and Istanbul University Faculty of Law. She completed her master's degree in Women's Law at Istanbul University; her master's thesis, "*The Surname of Women*"—the first academic study in this field—was published in 1998. Moroğlu, Turkey's first expert in Women's Law, currently teaches the course "*Women's Human Rights Law*" at MEF University Faculty of Law.

She is the founding chair of TÜBAKKOM (Women's Law Commission of the Union of Turkish Bar Associations, 2000); a founding member of the European Women Lawyers Association; Vice President of the Istanbul Bar Association (2018–2022); Coordinator of the Istanbul Women's Organizations Union (2003–2023); and served as President of TÜKD (2010–2014). Moroğlu is also a board member of the Nazım Hikmet Foundation, the 65+ Elderly Rights Association, and LABEP – Secular and Scientific Education Platform; spokesperson of the Istanbul Constitution Platform; advisory board member of Yanındayız Association and KAGİDER; a member of SODEV; and Vice President of the Lawyers' Foundation.

Moroğlu has been recognized by the International Federation of University Women as one of the *100 Pioneering Women of the Century* worldwide. She has numerous publications in education and women's human rights, and has received many awards for her work.



Arzu Gürcan LL.M

Arzu Gürcan, a 1995 graduate of Ankara University Faculty of Law, worked as a lawyer in Istanbul before completing her master's degree in U.S. law in New York.

Since 2005, she has been practicing law in New York City, primarily focusing on immigration law, corporate law, and commercial law. She occasionally participates as a volunteer in the activities of various social and community organizations. Additionally, she engages in voluntary work to help women who are victims of violence connect with government agencies, aid organizations, and shelters, assisting them in overcoming language barriers and accessing support.



Moderator: Burcu Sağıroğlu

Burcu Sağıroğlu completed her undergraduate degree in Political Science (MPP) at Colby College and earned her master's degree in public policy at the University of Maryland, College Park. Since 2019, she has been working as the Public Policy and Advocacy Manager at the Joyful Heart Foundation. In this role, she conducts legal analysis and advocacy across all U.S. states, the Puerto Rico territorial administration, and the federal government to expand the legal and judicial rights of survivors of sexual violence and to bring digital violence within a legal framework.

She has completed a 40-hour victim advocacy training at the Crime Victims Treatment Center, the oldest rape crisis center in New York. In her free time, she volunteers on the board of her high school alumni association, at a reproductive rights center, and with local environmental groups.

Project Teams



Turkish Women's League of America (TWLA)

The Turkish Women's League of America (TWLA) is a nonprofit civil society organization founded and managed by volunteer Turkish women in the United States, dedicated to preserving, promoting, and passing on the Turkish language and culture to future generations, while upholding the principles and reforms of Atatürk.

Established in New York in 1958, TWLA is one of the oldest Turkish-American associations in the U.S. and proudly operates the New York Atatürk School, which has been active since 1971.

Our organization's mission is to strengthen cultural ties within the Turkish-American community, foster friendship and solidarity among women, and develop projects that support gender equality.

Since 2021, as an organization accredited by the United Nations Global Communications Department (UNDGC), TWLA continues to raise awareness and contribute in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in the areas of quality education, climate action, and social equality.

Inspired by the words of the Great Leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, “**O heroic Turkish woman! You are worthy not to crawl on the ground, but to rise to the skies on the shoulders of others!**”, TWLA continues to work devotedly to ensure that Turkish women achieve the respected position they deserve in society.

www.atkb.org



Red Pepper Association

Red Pepper Association is an independent civil society organization that aims to empower women and girls, implement gender equality in all areas of life, and prevent all forms of discrimination. The Association works toward a world where violence against women is eliminated, all individuals have equal rights and responsibilities, decision-making bodies are equally represented and inclusive, and society is fair and just.

The Association carries out projects in areas such as gender equality, women's participation in education and employment, the empowerment of girls, prevention of violence, emerging risks in the digital age, and the protection of women's rights. Additionally, it develops support programs for girls in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) to ensure they become equal and strong actors in the world of the future.

Red Pepper Association advocates for the effective implementation of key international instruments, including the Istanbul Convention, CEDAW, the Lanzarote Convention, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and ILO Convention 190. In this regard, it collaborates with policymakers, civil society actors, and experts at both national and international levels.

The Association holds consultative status with the United Nations ECOSOC and is an active member of networks such as the Women's Coalition in Turkey, the Women's Platform for Equality, the European Women's Lobby Türkiye Coordination, and the Patiska Platform. Locally, it is represented within the Kadıköy City Council and the Women's Assembly.

Red Pepper Association continues to work toward a society where women's human rights are fully realized and where equality and justice prevail.

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