

Suzan Aref

Suzan is a human rights activist. She is the founder and director of Women Empowerment Organization since 2004, she was the coordinator of the Iraq Cross-Sector Task Force (CSTF) 1325 as per the decree of the Iraqi Council of Ministers in 2017.

Since 2012, She has been playing a leading role to ensure a robust partnership between CSOs and both governments of Iraq and Kurdistan in developing the Iraqi national action plan 1325 which was adopted by both governments in 2014 and thus Iraq became the first country in the MENA region to have a national action plan (NAP) for UNSCR 1325. She has contributed a lot to develop the Iraqi National Report on the Implementation of NAP 1325 (2014-2018).

Suzan is coordinating a large alliance of civil society (Alliance to support the implementation of the UNSCR1325) which included 40 NGOs cross Iraq to support the development of Iraq's national plan and its implementation.

Suzan was one of the peer reviewers of a guideline study (Guidance for practitioners in Iraq-International protocol on the documentation and investigation of sexual violence in conflict).

In August 2018, Suzan represented the Iraqi CSTF 1325 at the UN Security Council and presented the great achievements and implementation of NAP 1325 for the WPS agenda. She highlighted the partnership of government and civil society, which is a distinctive model in the region.

She has also worked with the European Union in 2018 as a gender expert on a report on gender analysis in Iraq on the situation of women in Iraq in terms of political and economic participation. She has Worked as a Consultant with UNODC in 2019 on a research study titled "Strengthening the Capacity of Women Professionals Working in the Counter-Terrorism Sector in Iraq".

Suzan Aref consolidates efforts and promotes participatory action among government institutions, local organizations, international organizations, embassies, and UN agencies on supporting women's agenda, security, and peace.