

“CORDAID: Impact of counter terrorism measures on women activists”

Date: Monday, 1 March

Cristina Ayo

On March 1st, to kick off CSW 54 a parallel event addressed issues of counter terrorism procedures that distress women activists on the ground particularly responses, strategies, and the need to defend human rights to ensure security. The event was put on by CORDAID (Catholic organization for Relief and Development) and the WHRD IC (Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition). Five women activists from Colombia, Uganda, India, Indonesia, and the Philippines were on the panel expressing their concerns and heartfelt stories that have affected their colleagues and other women activists in their communities that have suffered under the name of state security by their respective countries. In particular the woman from Colombia, Rosa Emilia Salamanca, spoke about the current and past conflicts of Colombia and its great impact particular to women. She expressed the danger in that the way women are treated in these conflict zones has become a “normal” state of treatment; therefore, many of their efforts for justice and peace become subsided. She also discussed the difficulty in establishing national action plans for human rights meanwhile knowing the ills and insecurity that women activists have when trying to maintain peace in the country. The panel highlighted the negative impacts of human rights abuses that has resulted from counter terrorism measures and all expressed the issue of not forgetting essential human rights when trying to ensure state security.