THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN COUNTERING TERRORISM IN NIGERIA WRITTEN BY PASTOR ESTHER IBANGA AND PRESENTED ON SEPT 09 2015 AT THE UN.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for the opportunity given to me to address such a distinguished group. I

these conversations.

major stakeholders in this crisis and should be allowed to be involved in the solution.

Again in my experience, most violent extremism stems out of either an ideological belief or grievances against existing or perceived injustice by the State. To address this, WOWWI also undertook developmental projects in those aggrieved communities in Jos; Nigeria such as the digging of a borehole for drinkable water in a Christian community named Peace Well, which became a meeting point for both Christians and Moslems; An old dilapidated classroom was renovated in a Muslim community; , prosthesis were locally fabricated and given to victims of bomb blast and tricycles donated to disabled persons; all across religious lines. Visits and help was also undertaken to Internally Displaced Camps (IDP) camps. While these actions may not be much in themselves;, they send a strong message that people of all religions and tribes can come together to help victims of terrorism and address the needs of these communities if the government will not..

In spite of all the initiatives undertaken by wowwi, there is still a major challenge of exclusion of women in decision- making processes of countering terrorism or violent extremism by state and local actors. This must change and be prioritized domestically and at the United Nations. Women civil society groups must also be a part of the development and implementation of

international community to combat this threat in their own communities.

Again; groups such as WOWWI cannot continue to do their work to combat this threat without resources to support them. Funding is another major challenge as much more could be done with adequate funding that we are currently unable to do.

Internal conflicts are also a challenge but which actually give us an avenue to practice conflict resolution from within and without.

In spite of these challenges we are however not giving up; as the struggle continues but I urge you, your excellences, to make this a priority.

Thank you very much for providing me with this opportunity and attention to these important matters. God bless you all.