



On September 16th, Tuesday's Children and Women without Borders/SAVE-Sisters Against Violent Extremism came together in Irvington, NY, just as rioting was spreading across the Middle East in reaction to an inflammatory film.

Participants shared with us the journey they have been on since September 11, 2001, when they lost a husband or child in the attacks. They spoke of the difficulties of having to mourn in public, because the events through which they lost their loved ones were not only a personal, but also a public catastrophe.

The most remarkable feature of this meeting was the complete absence of hatred, desire for revenge, and demonization of the Muslim communities at home or abroad. On the contrary, the women shared their experiences with us: Cindy M., for example, told us how she asked a man who had come to her house to give her an estimate for renovation work to leave when he started speaking badly of Muslims, and particularly the Mosque that was supposed to be built near Ground Zero. When he asked her why she wanted him to leave, she responded: "This is exactly the kind of talk that got my husband killed."

These women have not gotten stuck in their own stories, but now are eager to look beyond their own borders to see how women around the world are dealing with the ever-present challenges

of violent extremism in countries such as Pakistan, Yemen, and Mali.

“We are very aware that although 9/11 was the worst day of our lives, it was only one day. How are the women holding up in countries where terrorism is a daily threat, where the children fear that their parents might not come home every day?” The women expressed this sentiment with one voice.

Together, the women created the following statement:

*“Women must be aware of their power, potential, and responsibility to educate others against violence and extremism and to stop the killing and hatred. We are women of one fabric, and we must stand together, united, to make this a more peaceful world for all.*

*Terrorists around the world forge a contract with death. We embrace life. Our loss should never be your loss.”*

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SAVE provides space to groups of credible voices, such as these family members of victims of 9/11, to exchange their experiences and viewpoints, and to send a message to other women around the world who are also struggling with the consequences of terrorism. SAVE is headquartered at the Women without Borders offices in Vienna, Austria. For more information, please visit: [www.women-without-borders.org](http://www.women-without-borders.org) & <http://www.women-without-borders.org> .