

MARYUM SAIFEE

395 Riverside Drive 7A New York, NY 10025 (202)-569-4961 msaifee@gmail.com

Experience

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Senior Policy Advisor, Secretary's Office of Diversity and Inclusion

July 2021- present

- Advising the State Department's new Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer on strategy, policy, and programming.

Instructor, Foreign Service Institute

February 2021-July 2021

- Trainer in the Foreign Service Institute's Transition Center focused on building resilience and a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive foreign affairs community.

TRUMAN CENTER FOR NATIONAL POLICY

Senior Visiting Fellow, New York, NY

November 2020-February 2021

- Led a 30+ member Task Force on transforming the U.S. Department of State into a more just and equitable institution with a focus on diversity and inclusion. The Task Force was co-chaired by Ambassador Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, Representative Joaquin Castro, and Senator Chris Murphy.

COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

International Affairs Fellow, Human Rights Foundation, New York, NY

October 2018 –October 2019

- Senior advisor for the Human Rights Foundation where I led strategy on a variety of initiatives, including #TheFreedomDrive campaign, a roadtrip across the United States featuring Saudi dissident Manal al Sharif and her call for the release of jailed activists and the dismantling of the guardianship system. The campaign helped lift the ban on women traveling without a male guardian's permission.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Foreign Service Officer, various locations

September 2008 – October 2018

- 2017-18, U.S. Consulate Lahore, Pakistan | Acting Public Affairs chief and spokesperson for the U.S. Consulate in Lahore where I managed press operations for Punjab, the most populous state in Pakistan, during a time of regional instability and a national political transition; Managed 10 staff and over \$2 million in grants advancing job creation, youth entrepreneurship, education, and gender equality.
- 2016-17, Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues, Washington D.C. | Senior Policy Advisor
Led the U.S. government's response to combat Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). As a survivor of FGM myself, I leveraged my story and amplified the voices of other survivors to shape policy; Secured over \$1 million in new funding and created Embassy toolkits to strengthen anti-FGM advocacy.
- 2015-16, Secretary's Office of Religion and Global Affairs, Washington D.C. | Policy Advisor
Steered the first strategic dialogue between civil society and the Secretary of State on gender, religion, and peacebuilding; Drafted policy memos persuading overseas posts to activate faith-based communities

in their activities around the global response to the Paris Climate negotiations.

- 2013-15, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Washington D.C. | Policy Advisor Provided policy guidance on regional organizations in the Middle East, specifically the Arab League and Gulf Cooperation Council, and oversaw the implementation of the first Memorandum of Understanding between the Arab League and the State Department.
- 2011-12, U.S. Embassy Baghdad, Iraq | Vice Consul
Adjudicated Special Immigrant Visas for Iraqis who had risked their lives working for the U.S. government. I also spent three months in Erbil where I conducted outreach at universities and Syrian refugee camps in Kurdistan.
- 2009-11, U.S. Embassy Cairo, Egypt | Deputy Cultural Attaché
Managed over a dozen exchange programs, including the Fulbright program; Designed programs engaging youth on transitional justice and political participation in the immediate aftermath of Mubarak's ouster and the Arab Spring.

AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER

Outreach Manager, Chaya, Seattle, WA September 2002 – October 2003

- Developed outreach strategy to reach South Asian survivors of domestic violence that involved engaging with faith leaders from Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh communities. Created briefings on post 9-11 anti-immigrant backlash for educators responding to racially-motivated bullying.

PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER

English teacher, Jordan Valley, Jordan July 2000-August 2002

- Designed curricula and taught English language to students and computer courses for teachers at a secondary school for girls in the Jordan valley, on the East Bank of the Jordan River.

Consulting

WOMEN DELIVER

Senior Manager for Research, New York, NY October 2019 – February 2020

- Built an organization-wide research strategy and led a team of two associates in the commissioning of new research products in reproductive rights and climate change.

FORD FOUNDATION

Search Consultant, New York, NY June 2007-September 2008

- Managed the recruitment and selection process for Program Officers in the Criminal Justice and Asset Building portfolios, as well as the West Africa Regional Representative.

ACUMEN FUND

Summer Associate, New York, NY June 2006 – August 2006

- After an organization-wide rebrand, developed communication products to highlight Acumen Fund investments in South Asia and East Africa.

Education

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK, NY

M.A., International Affairs, 2007

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, AUSTIN, TX

B.A., Government, 1999

Publications

2021 | Truman Center Task Force | Building a More Just, Equitable, and Innovative State Department
<http://trumancenter.org/ideas/task-force-report-transforming-the-state-department/>

2021 | NPR's Morning Edition | The State Department Should be More Diverse and Engaged Across the US
www.npr.org/2021/03/03/972493656/state-department-should-be-more-diverse-and-engaged-across-u-s-report-says

2021 | Just Security | Why Reconciling Domestic and Global Human Rights Policy is a U.S. National Security Imperative
<https://www.justsecurity.org/75185/why-reconciling-domestic-and-global-human-rights-policy-is-a-us-national-security-imperative>

2021 | Council on Foreign Relations Blog | Why Ending FGM Advances U.S. Interests
www.cfr.org/article/why-ending-fgm-advances-us-interests

2020 | Feminist Realities | Anatomy of a Survivor's Story
www.awid.org/anatomy-survivors-story

2020 | Ms. Magazine | FGM's #MeToo Moment
<http://msmagazine.com/2020/02/04/fgms-metoo-moment/>

2019 | NPR's Weekend Edition with Scott Simon | Speaking out against FGM
<http://www.npr.org/2019/08/03/747833445/speaking-out-against-fgm>

2019 | Change.org, FGM is an American Issue | Let's Push Washington State to Ban FGM
www.change.org/banfgminwa

2016 | The Guardian | I'm a survivor of female genital cutting and I'm speaking out
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/feb/08/victim-fgm-speaking-out-cut-genitals-culture-of-silence>

2016 | Al Jazeera Plus | Female Genital Mutilation Survivor Tells Her Story
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlyj9hgdbRQ>

2017 | Georgetown University | Ending FGM: A Survivor's Perspective
<http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/responses/ending-fgm-c-a-survivor-s-perspective>

Awards and Affiliations

2022, Women inPower Fellow
2020, Senior Visiting Fellow, Truman National Security Project
2019, Scholar, Presidential Leadership Scholars
2019, International Affairs Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations
2019, Steering Committee Member, U.S. Network to End FGM
2019, Advisory Board Member, Too Young to Wed
2019, Rosie McGrath Activist Award, There is No Limit Foundation
2017, Advisory Board Chair, Sahiyo
2017, Advisory Board Member, Coalition for Women, Faith, and Leadership
2017, Superior Honor Award recipient, U.S. Department of State
2016, Meritorious Honor Award recipient, U.S. Department of State
2015, Term Member, Council on Foreign Relations
2012, Meritorious Honor Award recipient, U.S. Embassy Baghdad
2011, Meritorious Honor Award recipient, U.S. Embassy Cairo
2005, Editorial Assistant, Columbia University Journal of International Affairs

Artwork

<https://www.maryumsaifee.com/painting>

Languages

Arabic (intermediate), Spanish (intermediate)

