

## Supna Zaidi Bio 2017

Supna Zaidi is the founder and executive director of the Council for Democracy and Tolerance (CDT), a non-partisan, international community-building organization that seeks to counter the growing threat from extremist ideology by fostering pluralism and tolerance and is also a Strategic Policy Analyst at the Counter Extremism Project (CEP), a not-for-profit, non-partisan, international policy organization that combats the growing threat from extremist ideology.

Supna's areas of expertise include the roots of extremism, foreign policy, human rights, immigration, and international development issues. In her role with CEP, Supna [testified](#) in 2016 before the House Homeland Security Committee on ISIS's role in South East Asia, drafted original research and opinion pieces. Her article, "[The Emerging ISIS Front In Bangladesh](#)" anticipated the Dhaka attack on Holey Artisan Bakery in July 2016.

As an immigration attorney, Supna represented victims of FGM at asylum interviews, deportees under Special Registration after 9/11, and detainees in deportation hearings in the U.S. Supna also represented clients before US Immigration Court and drafted appellate briefs, successfully reversing numerous deportation orders.

Supna is currently on the advisory board of the Muslim American Leadership Alliance ([www.malanational.org](http://www.malanational.org)); and on the steering committee of the Alliance of Inclusive Muslims ([AIM](#)), which will have its first international conference in Tunis, Tunisia at the end of September 2017.

Previously, Supna provided policy and intelligence analysis for the banking sector in New York City. As the sole risk analyst for the Americas region at Deutsche Bank, Supna provided ad hoc security assessments as crises emerged in multiple formats (oral, written and conference presentations) and drafted of special research requests by different bank divisions such as commodities trading who needed to better understand the security situation at a given time in the Middle East to determine its effect in the energy industry.

Supna earned her law degree from New York Law School (2003), and double-majored in Political Theory and the History of the Near East (Ottoman History), with a minor in Religious Studies. Her senior thesis explored the principles of moderation and individualism in Islamic political theory necessary to advocate for democracy in Muslim-majority countries as a paradigm that is not "Western," as Islamists argue, but also an inherent part of Islamic tradition.