

Beat: Politics

ZAINAB SALBI ““ HELPING WOMEN IN WAR AND CONFLICT ZONE TO HOSTING A TALK SHOW

THE HOST OF THE NIDA A SHOW

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USPA NEWS - Zainab Salbi is an Iraqi author, women's rights activist, humanitarian, social entrepreneur, and media commentator who is the founder and former CEO of Washington-based Women for Women International. But after dedicating 20 years to the harrowing work of helping women in war and conflict zones...

Zainab Salbi is an Iraqi author, women's rights activist, humanitarian, social entrepreneur, and media commentator who is the founder and former CEO of Washington-based Women for Women International. But after dedicating 20 years to the harrowing work of helping women in war and conflict zones, hosting a primetime talk show is a surprising career twist.

It's certainly an ambitious one ““ guests have included Oprah Winfrey, Bill Clinton and Donna Karan. And the Nida'a Show, which premiered last month on the Discovery Channel's TLC network, is being broadcast in 22 countries across the Middle East and North Africa. Yet none of this scratches the surface of Salbi's real aim for the programme: to inspire women to not only change their lives, but to also change the culture of the region. While the famous names may add sparkle, the show will be a success, she says, if it bridges divides and starts a discussion about 'issues that the culture is not comfortable addressing in public'. (The Guardian)

At the age of 23, she founded Women for Women International, a grassroots humanitarian and development organization dedicated to serving women survivors of wars rebuild their lives. Under her leadership as the organization's CEO (1993-2011), the organization grew from helping 30 women upon its inception to more than 400,000 women in 8 conflict areas leading to a distribution of more than \$100 million dollars in aid and loans, and has impacted more than 1.7 million family members. (Zainab Salbi)

In 2010, President Clinton nominated Salbi as one of the 21st century heroes as featured by Harper's Bazaar. Newsweek and The Guardian identified her in the Top 100 list of Most Influential Women (2011). The Economist Intelligent Unite named Salbi as one of most inspirational women (2011) and she was identified by Fast Company in the 100 most influential women list (2012), and by PBS Makers series as one of the women who make America. Most recently, Salbi was identified by Fortune Magazine as one of the Most Influential Women on Twitter (2014) and by Wear Your Voice as one of the Most Influential Women on Social Media (2015). (Zainab Salbi)

We talk a little about the west's fear of radical Islam; Salbi emphasises that fear of Isis is running high throughout the Middle East, too. 'Someone I knew in Jordan told me her hairdresser of three years has joined Isis. So, we are also looking at each other with fear. But the more we act on fear, the worse things get. The only way we can combat this is to highlight the 90% of voices who are saying something different. At the moment, we only hear from the terrorists “‘ Just because we are scared, I don't think we should be silent.'

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