



women's action forum نھواتین محاذ عمل

RESOLUTION

WAF Lahore held a multidimensional Open Event on February 12th 2012 celebrating 30 years of WAF, an organization that has been in the vanguard of the women's movement since 1981. February 12th also marks the 28th anniversary of the momentous challenge to General Zia Ul Haq's military government and his 'Islamization' process. On the 12th of February 1983, women in Lahore broke the deafening public silence against the military regime by protesting on the Mall. That day the women's movement laid claim to its place in history for the struggle for equal rights and for a democratic and just dispensation for all Pakistani citizens.

WAF applauds the women of Pakistan who have fought a relentless struggle for equal rights and justice not only for women and minorities but in support of all oppressed people in Pakistan. While the women's movement has not been able to fully succeed in its long term mission it has had considerable success in highlighting the oppression of women and in foregrounding women's rights on the national agenda. Several pro women legislative changes in the recent past testify to the strength of the movement and the positive role women Parliamentarians play in propelling the movement forward. However, while positive legislation is laudable in itself the challenges of implementation still lie ahead. Success will depend on simultaneously challenging structural, ideological, social and cultural impediments. Equally it depends on the interpretation of the law by a judiciary free of its own political and cultural biases.

Women's Action Forum resolves to continue its struggle for a democratic, secular state in which all its citizens are ensured justice and equality. A democratic state is premised on each institution of the state fulfilling its mandate within the parameters defined by the Constitution. Regardless of the 'failings' of a particular government the will of the people must be respected. The military under any circumstances must not be allowed to circumvent, challenge or impede the democratic process. The nation cannot be held hostage to military ambitions and adventures; the agendas of 'intelligence' agencies or 'security' interests that threaten the future of Pakistan.

WAF demands that every effort be made for peaceful resolutions of conflicts both within the country and in the region in which human and women's rights are not bartered on the grounds of expediency. WAF stands with all those who bear the brunt of a cycle of violence; the killing and maiming of innocent citizens; arrests; 'disappearances' and 'ethnic' targeting and demands that a peaceful and just political resolution to the conflict and violence in Baluchistan. WAF extends its support to the people of Baluchistan who have suffered decades of violent suppression of their aspirations and rights. Women are often are most vulnerable in conflict situation. WAF takes this opportunity to pledge that the voices and experience of women of Baluchistan will no longer be silenced.

The struggle for a democratic, human and just nation must continue. The future and security of Pakistan lies in the well being of its citizens and not on territorial borders. The State must take responsibility to ensure that human rights and human security take precedence over 'state security' and that 'territory' is not is privileged over humanity. Women's Action Forum pledges to continue its struggle for a democratic; just, equitable and secular state.