



# women's action forum **نہواتین محاذِ عمل**

## **National Women's Action Forum (WAF) Statement on Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) 7<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

It has been the unfortunate practice of our military and civilian rulers to disregard the just grievances of citizens who protest peacefully, while surrendering to and appeasing to the demands of vested interests who use violent and confrontational methods. Our own history has repeatedly shown that such state policy has forced peaceful citizens to become rebellious and, at times, take up arms.

The population of tribal districts (formerly FATA) has suffered over a decade of violence and cruelties inflicted on them by local and foreign militants, military operations, drone attacks, war and massive displacement, during which many lives have been lost, with families being traumatized and homes and properties destroyed. We demand that the state should urgently address the valid and just grievances spelt out by the Pakhtun Tahaffuz Movement who have lived through this mayhem and endured much suffering during the war on terror.

We welcome the recent long overdue merger of tribal districts (formerly FATA) with Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. It was much needed to give franchise to the people of tribal districts (formerly FATA) and mainstream them in our national legal and constitutional framework. However, adoption of interim administrative order on tribal districts (formerly FATA) governance that re-enacts FCR in a new form is against the spirit of mainstreaming tribal districts (formerly FATA) and should be revised accordingly.

The recent clashes in Wana, where members of the local Aman Committee, who are believed to be Taliban, have imposed their own writ in the area, attacked PTM supporters and threatened its leadership are highly disturbing. It is even more alarming that our state institutions have permitted these committees to impose their own system of governance and chosen not to condemn the perpetrators of violence against PTM in Wana. Our history is a witness that whenever our state institutions have patronized good militants versus bad militants, it has had long-term disastrous results for both the internal and external security of our country. Moreover, use of violence can nudge a peaceful movement to become violent that can severely undermine the interests of peaceful citizens as well as the security situation in the country.

We believe that the mobilization of the tribal districts (formerly FATA) youth is a positive development in the country and we whole-heartedly support them in their struggle for dignity, peace and justice. Thus, together with them we demand:

1. Revision of present interim administrative order in tribal districts (formerly FATA) to align it with the spirit of merger with Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and to ensure protection of the legal and constitutional rights of people of tribal districts (formerly FATA);
2. Strict action against a section of Taliban who are resorting to violence on the pretext of 'aman committees';

3. Protection of PTM leadership from violence;
4. Release of missing persons and end to extra judicial killings. Those who have committed crimes should be tried in courts of law;
5. Stopping the humiliation of women and men at security checkpoints;
6. Stopping the harassment of families on pretext of search operations;
7. Removal of landmines from tribal districts (formerly FATA);
8. Release of political prisoners as well as people arrested under the pretext of collective responsibility charges and other such charges;
9. Remove all restrictions on media reporting of PTM activities;
10. Strict action against the use of any form of intimidation on activists, journalists, and others who support or sympathise with PTM.
11. Facilitate the women family members of the missing persons to get legal aid through formation of special committee of the government;
12. Ensure participation of women of tribal districts (formerly FATA) in decision-making processes at all levels.