

Women's Action Forum perturbed with the bloody carnage in Karachi on 12th May, called a meeting of women's group and concerned individuals in Karachi on 17 - 05 - 2007, at AF office at 3:30 pm.

WAF Meeting Minutes

Date: 18th May, 2007

The meeting started with Anis Haroon's introduction. She said 'we are together to review, share our thought, brain storm and chalk out a strategy regarding women's groups role in such a volatile situation. She recalled in the past also WAF had initiated a peace dialogue between different communities by bring them together on one platform. Basically WAF worked with violence affected households and encouraged women to come out of their silence and share their stories with each other. The initiative called 'Witness to Violence' gave birth to a group named 'MAKA' (Mazloom Aurat Ki Awaz) and worked actively till 2000. Later, due to many reasons, it became dormant but still they are in touch and helped in whatever way it is possible.

Zubaida Mustafa gave a background of Karachi's politics emphasised that no issue can be resolved through violent means. The army and its allies should be accounted for and take the responsibility of 12th May incidents. She traced the history of armed conflicts between Islami Jamiat-e-Tulba and APMSO in education institution in late 1980's. The Alligarh colony massacre in 1986, paved way for ethnic division of the city. The military operation against MQM and armed resistance lead to unprecedented violence in Karachi in nineties. It was subsided for the time being but given a chance flared up again. She said women should rise above this net of ethnicity, religious extremism violent politics and should make personal contacts to be effective. Fahmida Riaz said that we (Karachites) are ashamed of what happened that day. As the citizens we must apologise to the Chief Justice for not being able to welcome him here. We should also condemn the celebrations in Islamabad on 12th May when Karachi was on fire. The Reference filed on Malafide intention should be taken back. She continued while we support our lawyers movement we should be conscious of not encouraging fundamentalist extremism."

A discussion followed and we reached to following conclusions. A press release should be drafted based on following points.

- 1- An independent citizens inquiry commission to be formed comprising of retired Judges, eminent citizens, lawyers media persons and civil society representatives.
- 2- WAF and other women's groups reiterated their faith in non-violent, non-partisan and democratic politics. We condemn the element of force and coercion exhibited in ethnic and religious politics.
- 3- We support the lawyers struggle for the independence of Judiciary and salute their perseverance in facing the onslaught of a military state.

- 4- We appreciate our TV Channels, anchors, interviewers and media people who dared to report factual positions in adverse circumstance. We condemn the attack on 'AAJ' TV a private channel who braved the unabated firing for six hours.
- 5- The ownership of the events of the 12th May should not go unaccounted for. The culprits were clearly seen brandishing guns and the footage has been secured.
- 6- There is a vast amount of documented evidence available with organizations and individuals which have been secured. We demand that these be used in a count of judicial inquiry to identify the culprits and their political affiliations.
- 7- We appeal to all citizens / photographers and computer experts to upload and save all footage and photographs to ensure accountability.
- 8- We the citizens of Karachi apologize to the Chief Justice for not being able to welcome him as his office deserves. The Govt. of Sindh and its allied parties created this obstacles and a horrendous situation that prevented his reaching the Sindh High Court.
- 9- We demand that the 'Malafide Reference' against the Chief Justice should be withdrawn before the announcement of the general elections to restore peace and sanity in the country.

10- We strongly condemn the way highest government officials in especially the prime minister and the president shrugged off the blood bath in Karachi. We hold them responsible for the loss of innocent lives and master minding the carnage.

11- WAF with other women's groups announced to initiate a peace process through personal contacts. Women in a group of 4-5 will visit the homes of all victims of Karachi carnage. The message is rise above the ethnic divisions, unite for peace and demand accountability from the government."

Later this net will be enlarged to enclose other civil society groups and see what could be possible a seminar, a roundtable or a protest with affected families.

List of Participants:

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|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1- Anis Haroon (WAF) | 1- Anis Haroon (WAF) |
| 2- Nighat Taufiq (Shirkat Gah) | 2- Nighat Taufiq (Shirkat Gah) |
| 3- Sumaira Hafeez (Shirkat Gah) | 3- Sumaira Hafeez (Shirkat Gah) |
| 4- Yasmeen Raza (Shirkat Gah) | 4- Yasmeen Raza (Shirkat Gah) |
| 5- Aliya Nisar (WAF) | 5- Aliya Nisar (WAF) |
| 6- Nuzhat Kidvai (WAF) | 6- Nuzhat Kidvai (WAF) |
| 7- Fahmida Riaz | 7- Fahmida Riaz |
| 8- Hilda Saeed (Shirkat Gah) | 8- Hilda Saeed (Shirkat Gah) |
| 9- Nasreen Siddique (WAR) | 9- Nasreen Siddique (WAR) |
| 10- Nushaba | 10- Nushaba |
| 11- Nazli J. Haque | 11- Nazli J. Haque |
| 12- Tarzia Mohiuddin (WAF) | 12- Tarzia Mohiuddin (WAF) |
| 13- Nargis Rehman (Karachi Women Peace Committee) | 13- Nargis Rehman (Karachi Women Peace Committee) |
| 14- Rabia (BITS) | 14- Rabia (BITS) |
| 15- Zubeida Mustafa (Dawn) | 15- Zubeida Mustafa (Dawn) |

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| 16- Nuzhat Shireen (WAF) | 16- Nuzhat Shireen (WAF) |
| 17- Naheed Syed | 17- Naheed Syed |
| 18- Seema Sheikh | 18- Seema Sheikh |
| 19- Shireen Ijaz | 19- Shireen Ijaz |
| 20- Anis Fatima | 20- Anis Fatima |
| 21- Malika Khan | 21- Malika Khan |
| 22- Hina Tabsum | 22- Hina Tabsum |
| 93- Marhaba - Student | 93- Marhaba - Student |
| 84- Ujma Noorani WAF | 84- Ujma Noorani WAF |
| 85- Azeza Dawood | 85- Azeza Dawood |