

## JOINT STATEMENT

We the women parliamentarians from ECO Countries assembled for the meeting of the Women Parliamentarians at the First Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of the ECO Countries being held in Islamabad, this 11<sup>th</sup> day of February 2013;

*Share* the common aspirations of our people within the region to live in peace and prosperity through social and economic justice;

*Welcome* the efforts of all ECO countries to strengthen social and economic justice of which women empowerment is an integral part;

*Considering* that the women of ECO region can be a source of great strength for the overall sustainable development of the ECO region

*Realizing* that the needs and concerns of ECO women are more or less common in the emerging geo-political, socio-cultural and economic scenario, and so are some of the constraints to meet these challenges;

*Recognizing* that the women representatives have a special role and responsibility in articulating and shaping women's socio-economic and political empowerment within their respective countries;

*Reaffirming* the desire to build a just and inclusive order within the region that promotes people-centric social and economic justice.

*Inter alia* calls upon member countries to focus on the social, economic and political empowerment of women as well as on the potential of women's agency for social change

It is acknowledged women achieve results and advance their interests:

- i. If in numbers which is important for the critical mass factor
- ii. If they organize themselves into women's groups within parties and on multi-party level such as the Women's Parliamentary Caucus in Pakistan
- iii. If they are mainstreamed into the body of politic of the parliamentary system

## DO HEREBY UNDERTAKE THROUGH THIS ISLAMABAD DECLARATION

- To join hands and raise a collective voice through initiating discourse and series of dialogue to address the emerging socio-economic needs and concerns of the women of the ECO countries;
- To make concerted and collective efforts to position women for undertaking meaningful role at the policies and decision making levels within all spheres of the political and socio-economic development;
- To emphasize on adopting special measures to promote women's economic, social and political progress within our respective countries
- To evolve mechanisms that ensure positive and greater cooperation through launching ECO Women Parliamentarians Forum

The Meeting Further extends its gratitude to the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Countries for deciding to incorporate such an initiative into its Charter and to encourage the holding of its first meeting as the first agenda item at its First Conference being held in Islamabad 10 – 13 February 2013

Transmits the joint statement to the Executive Council with the request that the honorable Speakers individually and collectively would continue to facilitate in taking it forward

Further requests, it is transmitted to the first meeting of the Women Parliamentarians at the First Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Countries for attention as having taken place successfully and appropriately