

# Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process

**A Report on the  
National Roundtable Conference  
of Women Legislators**

**Islamabad, 29th September, 2011**

in collaboration with

HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG  
PAKISTAN



# **“Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process”**

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MESSAGE BY THE PATRON WPC



It's my pleasure to congratulate the Women's Parliamentary Caucus for successfully holding a Round Table Conference on an important issue of 'Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Processes.' The women parliamentarians have proved their worth in recent years by pro-actively participating in legislative Business of the House. Their presence and meaningful contribution to the parliamentary practices has set a stage for women in politics to follow for all times to come.

Women parliamentarians are now standing at a juncture where they need to be given due recognition within their parties and a way should be paved for awarding them party tickets to run for general elections. At this point, I would like to extend my heartiest felicitations to the participants of the Roundtable Conference for passing a unanimous declaration that commits all the parliamentary parties' leadership to review their party rules for awarding a minimum of 10% quota to their respective women candidates for general elections on winnable seats. This is indeed a leap forward and has added another feather in the WPC's cap. It also gives me a great sense of pride to see that the WPC is increasingly taking up relevant issues aiming towards social, political and economic empowerment of women in Pakistan.

I extend special thanks to all the political parties' leadership that nominated high level representation to participate in the Roundtable and share their respective party positions on the issue of special quotas for women politicians. This is demonstrative of their will to move forward with an inclusive approach.

Towards the end, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Secretary, Treasurer, Working Council and all members of WPC for making the idea of across-the-board Parliamentary alliance of women empowerment of beaming reality. They have indeed written a new chapter in Pakistan's parliamentary history, which has set a bench-mark for future parliaments to follow.

Dr. Fahmida Mirza  
Speaker  
National Assembly of Pakistan

MESSAGE BY THE SECRETARY WPC

I would like to congratulate all political parties and Women Parliamentarians on this remarkable achievement. It is under the able guidance and close supervision of the Hon. Speaker, Dr. Fahmida Mirza, that we have been able to build a consensus across political parties to work towards promoting women's rights and agenda in Pakistan. Under her Patronage, the WPC has provided the platform for the Women Parliamentarians to raise a collective voice regarding the issues of relevance and significance to their rights and empowerment.

Considering the commendable achievements of women legislators in the parliament; women should not only be given an opportunity of representation through reserved seats in the legislatures but also by contesting on general seats through reserved quotas allocated within their respective political parties. I am confident that the political parties will now come forward and review the existing special measures for women's participation, making them more transparent and effective.

Dr. Nafisa Shah, MNA  
Secretary WPC





ACRONYMS

AJ&K	Azad Jammu & Kashmir
ANP	Awami National Party
BISP	Benazir Income Support Programme
BNP	Balochistan National Party (Awami)
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CNIC	Computerised National Identity Card
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CPRW	Convention on Political Rights of Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ECP	Election Commission of Pakistan
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FIR	First Information Reports
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
GoP	Government of Pakistan
HRCP	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
ICCPR	International Convention on Civil and Political Rights
IDW	Internally Dislocated Women
IDP	Internally Dislocated Persons
IFES	International Foundation for Election Systems
IPU	Inter Parliamentary Union
KZR	Kudos Zeal Renewal
KPK	Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MNA	Member National Assembly
MLA	Member Legislative Assembly
MMA	Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal
MoWD	Ministry of Women Development
MP	Member Parliament
MPA	Member Provincial Assembly
MQM	<a href="#">Muttahida Qaumi Movement</a>
NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority
NCWP	National Commission of Women Parliamentarians
NCSW	National Commission on the Status of Women
PATA	Provincially Administered Tribal Areas
PDMA	Provincial Disaster Management Authority
PLSP	Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project
PML-N	Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz
PNL-F	Pakistan Muslim League – Functional
PML-Q	Pakistan Muslim League – Quaid-i-Azam Group
PPP	Pakistan People’s Party
PPPP	<a href="#">Pakistan People’s Party Parliamentarians</a>
PPP/S	Pakistan Peoples Party Sherpao
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SDPD	Strengthening Democracy Through Parliamentary Development
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNSCRs	United Nations Security Council Resolutions
UNW	United Nations Women
WPC	Women’s Parliamentary Caucus

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Existing mechanism of women's quota of special reserved seats in the National and Provincial Assemblies has been an issue frequently raised and discussed informally amongst the women parliamentarians. Given their concerns on emerging challenges being faced by them around the issue, the members of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) in the Parliament of Pakistan, under the able guidance of its Patron, Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Speaker National Assembly, conceived the idea of arranging a one day Round-Table Conference to deliberate on women's quota in the parliament. It was to initiate a dialogue with the leaderships of all parliamentary parties regarding the existing reserved seats for women in the legislative assemblies and whether the mechanism adequately met the mandate of democratic and representative politics. This was further meant to explore alternatives in the light of existing best practices around the world.

The one day Round-Table Conference was, consequently, held on September 29th 2011. A lot of hard work went into the organization of this Conference and those who assisted in organizing the Conference need to be acknowledged at the very offset of this report;

The Conference would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of the Hon. Speaker National Assembly and Patron of Women Parliamentary Caucus, Dr. Fehmida Mirza; Members of the WPC Working Council whose keen interest in the issue and political ownership provided the beacon in organizing the Conference; In this regard, particular reference needs to be made to Dr. Nafisa Shah MNA

and Secretary WPC, and Ms. Bushra Gohar MNA whose constant supervision and guidance helped in successfully arranging this Conference.

WPC deeply appreciates the invaluable contribution of the distinguished Resource Persons including Ms. Anis Haroon Chairperson NCSW; Mr. Sher Afghan, Joint Secretary Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP); Mr. Naeem Mirza, Chief Operating Officer Aurat Foundation; and, Dr. Farzana Bari, Chairperson Women Development Studies, Quaid e Azam University, Islamabad. Without their academic input and presentations, the contents of the Conference would have remained insufficient.

The support and assistance of WPC staff including Ms. Huma Chughtai, Consultant WPC; Mohammad Ali Kazmi, Deputy Coordinator; Syed Wasim Kazmi, Assistant Coordinator; Mr. Muhammad Junaid Iqbal, Graphic Designer; and Mr. Rizwan Maqbool, Naib Qasid, is deeply appreciated as they worked relentlessly towards ensuring a well organised Conference.

Last but not the least, sincere gratitude is extended to WPC's partners for their gracious support in funding the costs of this Conference. In this regard, the keen interest and a very kind support of Ms. Brettta Patterson, Country Director and Ms. Saima Jassim Head of Program of Henrich Boll Stiftung (HBS) is highly appreciated. From the UNDP's SDPD project, the WPC acknowledges and commends the support of its entire team especially of Ms. Marvi Sirmad, NPM, and Mr. Jamil Qureshi.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Quotas for women's reserved seats in the legislatures are crucial for ensuring women's political space in the legislative bodies. These are considered to be special measures<sup>1</sup> for women's political empowerment and for their 'inclusion' in the legislative and policy making processes that ultimately are the key to women's economic, legal and social empowerment impacting the sustainability in the national development.

The women parliamentarians in Pakistan have been extremely proactive in conducting legislative business in the recent years. With revival of the quota for reserved seats in the national and provincial legislatures, the women parliamentarians have proved their worth. The 17.5% special reserved seats for women in the National Assembly of Pakistan not only provided an opportunity for an unprecedented <sup>2</sup>increased number of women in the House, but a remarkable contribution to the legislative business by them was also recorded. Consequently, the women parliamentarians now stand encouraged to explore options beyond the existing quota system to further strengthen their political potentials. They feel that time has come to review the present form of quota and to examine if it adequately addresses their representation and inclusion in the legislative process. This calls for reaching out to the leaderships of all parliamentary political parties and initiating a substantive dialogue with them on the subject. This would include considering options like setting aside a certain percentage of quotas for women to contest directly in the general elections on winnable seats. With mutual consent of all women parliamentarians, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus organised a one day Roundtable Conference to initiate this dialogue

with the leaderships of the Parliamentary Political Parties.

The discussions and deliberations between the party leaderships and the stakeholders were quite encouraging. There was a unanimous sense of agreement amongst the participants that the political parties need to review their rules and respective structures to include women in the mainstream decision making processes and to also allow a quota for granting tickets for women for the general elections. As a result, all political parties' leaderships conceded to review their respective party structures and rules for a greater inclusion and positioning of women within their respective parties structures. They agreed to build consensus within their respective parties to provide a minimum of 10% quota for women on winnable seats before the next elections.

Towards the end of the Conference, a consensus “Declaration” was adopted reflecting the will of women parliamentarians from all parties and their respective political parties leaderships present at the Conference. The historic Declaration commits to:

- 1) further, protect, and preserve the provisions of reserved seats for women in the National Assembly, Senate and the Provincial Assemblies,
- 2) enhance and strengthen women's representation in the legislatures by considering to set aside 10% quota for women on winnable seats before the next general elections by working within the respective political parties mandates, and
- 3) to increase women's representation at all levels of decision making in the political forums.

<sup>1</sup>Pakistan is state party to the UN CEDAW, CPRW, ICCPR, and UDHR that seek special measures for ensuring women's participation in the legislative bodies.

<sup>2</sup>As a result of the 17.5% women's quota for reserved seats in the National Assembly, the overall current percentage of the women in the National Assembly rose to 19% that includes women who came to the Assembly through general elections.

# CONFERENCE DECLARATION

## Declaration

We, the Women Parliamentarians Members of Provincial Assemblies of Balochistan, Khyber - Pakhtoon Khwa, Punjab, Sindh, Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and representatives of political parties, participating in the one day Roundtable Conference on the “*Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process,*” organized by the Women Parliamentary Caucus held in Islamabad on Thursday, September 29th 2011, hereby adopt the following Declaration on this day of the September 29th 2011:

## Recalling that

The Constitution of Pakistan provides women equal rights, rejects all forms of discrimination and promotes their full participation in public life under Articles 25, 34, 35 and 37.

## Further Recalling that

The National and International Commitments of Government of Pakistan, including the National Policy for the Development and Empowerment of Women (NPDEW) 2002, Convention on Elimination of All kinds of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), underscore attainment of equal opportunities for women in the public and political spheres as inextricably linked to human rights, democracy and inclusive sustainable development and human security.

## Paying tribute to

All the women leaders of Pakistan particularly Mohtrama Fatima Jinnah, Begum Rana Liaqaut Ali, and Shaheed Mohtrama Benazir Bhutto whose courage and exemplary contributions in public and political life have greatly inspired, built a sense of

confidence and empowered the women of Pakistan.

## Recognizing

The 17 per cent reservation for women in the assemblies and 17 seats in the Senate provided for in Articles 51 and 59 of the Constitution is a significant step in empowerment of women in politics.

## Acknowledging

The outstanding performance of the Women Parliamentarians and members of the provincial assemblies in the legislative business in the recent years demonstrates and recognizes the meaningful role of women in legislatures and has further strengthened democracy in Pakistan.

We, the Women Parliamentarians and Political Party Representatives in this Roundtable Conference, on this 29th day of September 2011, resolve the following:

- Commit to protect and preserve the provision of reserved seats for women in the National Assembly, Senate, and the Provincial Assemblies.
- Further commit to enhancing and strengthening women's representation in legislatures by working within our respective political parties and elected representatives, and examining how the systems of elections to the reserved seats could be made more democratic and transparent; And that women are represented at all levels of decision-making within the political forums.
- Build consensus among the political parties to amend the Political Parties Act so as to provide mandatory quota of 10 per cent of winnable general seats to women and to mainstream them in electoral processes before the next elections.



A Group Picture of some of the Honorable Participants



## REPORT

### 1. Background and Rationale

The idea of holding this Roundtable Conference was conceived and realized as a result of some thought provoking periodic discussions that were held internally amongst various members of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus across party lines. The discussions reflected on the outstanding performance of women parliamentarians in the recent years. The increasingly proactive role of women legislators in the legislative business led them to review the existing quota system for women in the legislatures.

With 17.5% special reserved seats for women in the National Assembly of Pakistan, the performance and contribution of women parliamentarians in the legislative business has been remarkable. Analysis of this positive change points towards the following factors: a) special quota for reserved seats in the legislatures that facilitated women's entry into the area of law making, b) the dynamic patronage of the woman Speaker National Assembly, who is a seasoned politician and has given adequate opportunities to the women parliamentarians to display their due potential, and c) a vibrant Women's Parliamentary Caucus that provides a platform to women parliamentarians, across party lines, to meet and understand women issues and to address those through their respective political mandates.

Today there are about 19 percent women legislators in the National Assembly. This is an unprecedented number of women representation in the National Assembly that has largely been possible on account of the quotas that continue to be a bridge between women in politics and the legislative assemblies around the world.

Quotas or reserved seats in the legislative bodies are widely recognized as a key to ensure political participation of women leading towards their economic, legal and social empowerment. There are many forms of quotas that have been adopted around the world which have their own respective merits and demerits. In Pakistan, the quotas are created through the party list system, thereby, holding women more accountable to their respective parties than to the people. Therefore, there is an emerging need to increase the space for women on rather solid grounds in order allow them to freely play a meaningful role in representative politics.

With the changing trends and transformation occurring in the arena of political and parliamentary practices around the world, it has become even more pertinent to review and initiate a dialogue on the existing forms of quotas being provided to women to avail indirect representation in the legislative bodies. In the given scenario, the women parliamentarians across the world, including Pakistan, are now reconsidering aspects, issues and options regarding the existing quota system. Pakistani women in politics now want to move forward in politics and are, therefore, discussing whether the present form of quota adequately addresses the issue of representation and inclusiveness for them? If so, then for how long should it be depended up? And, if not, then what could be other options? The Pakistani women parliamentarians are reviewing the current system of reserved quota seats for women in the parliament with the aim to see if the system is strengthening women's participation in politics on a sustainable basis or not.

Meanwhile, the need to strategize the sensitization of political parties to the perspectives on issues related to women's positioning, their meaningful role and representation in the parliaments is also being felt. This is the result of strong apprehensions prevailing amongst women rights activists and the civil society who feel that the quotas tend to make political parties complacent and unwilling to provide the party platform to women to contest direct elections. To deal with this issue, some countries have taken due measures ensuring political parties provide adequate seats to women politicians to contest elections on winnable seats. Known best practices in this regard are being studied.

#### 1.1. Objectives

In order to deliberate on the mentioned concerns of women parliamentarians on the issue, the WPC undertook to engage with political parties leaderships in a dialogue. It was intended to explore the best options for strengthening women's representation in legislative assemblies. A one day Round Table Conference in this regard was, therefore, organized by the WPC on September 29th, 2011 at Islamabad. (Copy of the Program is attached in Annex I)



The main objectives of the Roundtable Conference were as follows:

1. To assess the impact of the existing quota for women in our political and legislative systems.
2. To discuss and deliberate on whether the existing reserved seats for women in the legislative assemblies adequately meet the mandate of democratic and representative politics.
3. To engage the political parties in the discussion to strengthen women's representation within political parties structures and to deliberate on the existing range of quota systems in use around the world.
4. To explore ways and means through which women's representation may be further enhanced and strengthened in the political arena, and to propose recommendations to the political parties and the parliament on any legislative measures or policy changes that may be required in this regard.

## 1.2. Participants

Senior office bearers of all parliamentary political parties and key members of the National and Provincial Assemblies were invited to participate in the Conference. The parties represented at the Conference included PPPP, PML-N, ANP, PML-Q, MQM, JUI, PPP (Sherpao), BNP, PML-F, AJK Muslim Conference.

The invitations were extended under a two pronged strategy; a) a letter was written to the heads of all parliamentary parties seeking nomination of their two representatives including the head of the women's wing, and the general

secretary of the party; and, b) a letter was written to the Speakers of all National and Provincial Assemblies, AJK, and Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assemblies, and to the Chairman Senate to nominate one woman legislator from each of their respective parliamentary parties.

The Conference received a visibly positive response from all the parties. There was an optimum participation from across nine political parties. Senior office bearers of parliamentary political parties and members of the National and Provincial Assemblies some of whom included MNA Yasmeen Rehman (PPPP), Mr. Ehsan Wyne (Secretary General ANP), MNA Bushra Gauhar (ANP), MNA Ms. Asiya Nasir (JUI), Ms. Farrukh Khan (President PML-Q Women Wing), MNA Ehsan Iqbal & MNA Nuzhat Sadiq from PML (N), Ms. Ghazala Gola (PPPP) Women Minister Balochistan, MPA Balochistan Assembly Bibi Zarina Bibi (BNP), (Deputy Speaker AJK Legislative Assembly) Ms. Shaheen Dar, Senator Saeeda Iqbal (ICT), Senator Farah Aqil (KPK), Senator Najma Hameed (Punjab), Senator Surriya Amir-ud-din (Balochistan), MPA Sindh Assembly Ms. Heer Soho (MQM), MPA Punjab Assembly Ms. Nargis Faiz (PPPP), MLA Mrs. Amina Ansari (PML-Q) from Gilgit-Baltistan participated in the Conference. Detail list of participants is attached in Annex – II.



## 2. Overview of the Conference Proceedings

The one day Roundtable Conference initiated a dialogue with political parties on different ways to strengthen women's representation in the legislative assemblies. As a result of this dialogue, the party leaders and the women legislators attending the Conference ultimately agreed to build a consensus within their respective political parties in providing a minimum of 10 percent quota for women on winnable seats before the next general elections. This was a great achievement and a leap forward for women's political empowerment in Pakistan. The Conference was, hence, a great success on many accounts including the level and number of participation, in terms of its rich discussions, and in terms of the concrete outcome in the shape of a Declaration. The adoption of a consensus 'Declaration', towards the end of the Conference, demonstrates the collective voice raised by women parliamentarians to empower women within the political arena by giving them more space in representative legislative bodies. (Copy of the Declaration is attached in earlier pages).

Chief Guest of the Conference was the Honorable Deputy Chairman Senate, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali.

### 2.1. Inaugural Session

The Inaugural Session began with an introduction to the theme and purpose of the Conference by Secretary WPC Dr. Nafisa Shah. In her opening remarks, Dr. Nafisa highlighted the outstanding and proactive performance of the women legislators in legislative business in the recent years. She commended the significant role of the Speaker Dr. Fehmida Mirza in encouraging women parliamentarians by allowing them their due space in the Business of the House. Referring to her personal observations and to her academic research undertaken on the issue of quotas for women in the legislative bodies, Dr. Nafisa asserted that the achievements of women legislators would not have been possible without the instrument of quota. She underscored the need to have quotas for women not only within the legislatures but also within the political



parties for granting tickets in the general elections. Dr. Nafisa emphasized that time had come for the political parties to review the existing special measures for women's participation in the legislatures and made them more transparent, effective, and empowering for women in politics.

The Chief Guest, Hon. Deputy Chairman Senate, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali, in his address, reasserted the potential and the meaningful role women have played in the legislative business over the recent years in



Pakistan. While commending their outstanding performance, Mr. Jamali highlighted the strong nexus between sustainable development and the positioning of women at the political and decision making levels. He said that he was a firm believer in the dynamic potential of women in all spheres, particularly the legislatures where their contribution and influence on law and policy making could have some amazing impact on the lives of not only women citizenry but also on the entire nation. As women, he reiterated, had a different outlook and approach towards life. The honourable chief guest expressed his deep concern on the existing highly disproportionate number of women and men in the legislatures. In order to bring a positive change in the lives of our people, the Chief Guest strongly recommended the need to give atleast a 33 percent representation to women in the legislative assemblies if not fifty percent.

### 2.2 Thematic Sessions

Apart from the Inaugural and Concluding Sessions, the Conference program was divided into two thematic sessions with two ten minutes presentations each from experts on the given issues. Hence, there were altogether four presentations made by the experts in the Conference. The presentations were followed by question answer sessions and open discussions by the participants. The discussions mostly revolved around three main points i.e.:

- Issues and Challenges for facilitating greater and more meaningful representation of women within party structures



- To what extent do political party structures need to be changed and how.
- What should be the way forward

An overview of these two sessions is given as follows:

### 2.2.1 Session One:

#### Women Within Political Parties' Structures in Pakistan – Role and Positioning.

The session was moderated by **Dr. Nafisa Shah**, MNA/ Secretary WPC.

#### 1) Party Positions

The session began with a brief introduction by the senior representatives of political parties to the position and perspectives on the 'Existing Setup & Mechanisms' for promoting women politicians within their respective Political Parties. The idea was to set a stage for the Conference in understanding 'as to what extent the political parties facilitate or hinder women's entry into parliament? This aimed at gauging whether the women's political participation was a technical issue or was it attached to the traditional mind sets within the party leadership.



Mr. Ehsan Iqbal (PML-N)

Secretary General PML-N, MNA Ehsan Iqbal, opened the discussion by stating the need for reviewing the Political Party's Act. He said that the laws need to be amended recommending that one-third women participation should be made mandatory in each political party for the general

seats. Following the statement by Mr. Ehsan Iqbal, MNA Nuzhat Sadiq, President PML-N Women Wing, shared her party's position on women's political empowerment. In her power point presentation, Ms. Sadiq highlighted that her party has remained a strong believer of women's political empowerment since its inception in 1906. It envisioned a strong, democratic, and prosperous Pakistan with the help and support of women through her party's policy of non-discrimination, equal opportunities for both women and men, by undertaking an inclusive and constant approach for improvement within party structures and



Begum Nuzhat Sadiq (PML-N)

its policies. Ms. Sadiq emphasized that "This is our desire, our mission, and our vision to increase women participation at all levels." She stated that PML-N stands committed to increase women's participation at central and provincial levels. Ms. Sadiq, however, felt that

the potential of women legislators needs to be recognized and supported by their men colleagues by providing them adequate space to exercise this potential. Towards the end of her presentation, MNA Nuzhat Sadiq also strongly recommended that the process for selecting candidates for the women reserved seats needs to be made more transparent to ensure quality representation of women.

MNA Yasmeen Rehman from the PPP was invited next to share her party position on women's political participation. Ms. Rehman reminded the participants that it was her party that always ensured advancing the women empowerment by bringing them at the forefront and providing them a meaningful role within the party structures as well as within the legislatures. She referred to Begum Nusrat Bhutto and Mohtrama Benazir Bhutto Shaheed for their policies and initiatives taken towards women's emancipation in Pakistan. Giving women strategic positions at the policy and decision making levels like the first woman Prime Minister, first woman Deputy Speaker, first woman Speaker, first woman foreign minister, first woman minister for information, first woman cabinet secretary, and giving women the largest number of ministries in the cabinet, remained her party's proud acclaim. She said that her party firmly believed that women in positions can bring a positive change in the mindsets and make a huge difference in the development of their country, and this is also the spirit of democracy. MNA Yasmeen asserted that with the remarkable performance of women legislators in the recent years, it was time to review the existing special seats for women in legislatures, as well as to introduce special quotas for granting party tickets to women in general elections by the political parties.



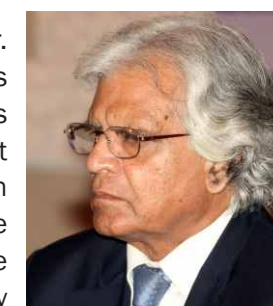
Yasmeen Rehman (PPP)



(L-R) Dr. Nafeesa Shah, Ehsan Wayne, Ehsan Iqbal, Begum Nuzhat Sadiq & Dilawar Abbas

While appreciating Chief Guest Mir Jan Jamali's recommendation of having atleast 33 percent women in the assemblies, MNA Ms. Yasmeen Rehman said that in realistic terms, the quota for women for granting party tickets should initially be between 10-20 percent.

ANP Secretary General, Mr. Ehsan Wayne, while stating his party's position on women's political participation said that ANP since its inception in 1956 has ensured women are politically empowered and are mainstreamed within party structures. As a result, ANP has never had a separate



Mr. Ehsan Wayne (ANP)

'Women's Wing' as such. He asserted his party position by stating that while quota system has promoted women's political participation in legislatures around the globe and that political parties in Pakistan also follow this in line with our Constitutional provisions, it was best to follow democratic norms and give equal opportunities to women party workers. He said that the culture of bringing in women relatives into mainstream politics should be discouraged. Mr. Wayne, however,

endorsed that the quotas could be useful in facilitating women in entering the legislatures. He, therefore, recommended that there should be quota for women by the political parties while allocating party tickets. MNA Jamila Gillani added to the ANP's position on women by



Jamila Gillani (ANP)

informing that their party has made various wings for women on equity, equal rights, political and social rights, and violence against women including harassment. Ms. Gillani recommended that a 33 percent quota should be kept on reserved and general seats if a positive social change is to be expected.



Ms. Farrukh Khan (PML-Q)

President Women Wing of PML-Q, Ms. Farrukh Khan, while lauding the theme of this

Conference referred to it as a landmark event where decisions for the political empowerment of women were being taken. It was an All Parties Conference (APC) in real terms where such an important issue is being discussed. In her speech, Ms. Khan agreed that the presence of women in the legislatures should be atleast 33 percent, and the parties must facilitate this by giving atleast 10 - 15 percent quota to women while awarding tickets for the general elections. She personally believed that the representation of women in the legislatures should be atleast 20 percent if not thirty three percent. Former Senator and senior PML-Q Leader Mr. Dilawar Abbas also endorsed having quotas for women within party ranks as well as in allotting tickets for the general elections, as this would encourage more women to be part of the legislative business.

MNA Asiya Nasir from JUL informed that her party did



Asiya Nasir (JUL)

not have a separate women's wing and instead, a two-member women council handles women related issues at the centre and in the provinces. MNA Asiya pointed out that women in politics had to face a lot of challenges. While they worked hard as workers, they seldom got positions at the decision and policy making levels within their respective parties. She believed that special measures need to be taken facilitating women's participation in direct election through amendments in the Constitution and related laws. MNA Asiya recommended that smaller constituencies for women could be made for contesting in the general elections. She felt that the legislatures must have





Haider Abbas Rizvi (MQM)

atleast twenty five percent women representation.

MNA Haider Abbas Rizvi from the MQM while lauding the performance of women parliamentarians emphasized the significance and impact of their presence in the legislative bodies. He

underscored the role of women in the development of the country and emphasized the need to give women space at the policy and decision making levels of the government and political party structures. He said that MQM was a progressive party and encouraged women to undertake a meaningful role at all levels. He said that there should definitely be an increase in women's membership in the legislative bodies. This, he pointed out, included Senate as well, where women must also be considered on the 'technocrats' seats as Pakistan does have a lot of outstanding accomplished women in various fields.

Anisa Zeb Tahirkheli, representing PPP (Sherpao Group) strongly believed that there was a need to proceed with the legislative business with an inclusive approach by ensuring that the concerns and recommendations of women legislators are valued and duly included in all policy and legislation making. She emphasized the need for the capacity building and grooming of women parliamentarians on reserved seats in terms of their role and responsibilities as legislators. In addition to the increasing women quota in the assemblies, Ms. Tahirkheli also urged for allotting quota in the cabinet slot to women elected on reserved seats. She said that her party was open to all such affirmative measures that provided opportunities to the women in becoming part of the legislative and policy making in Pakistan.

In addition to the above, representatives from other parties including MLA Ms. Mehrun Nisa, Muslim Conference (AJK), MPA Mst. Saeeda Batool Nasir MMA (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), MPA Dr. Asma Mamdot PML-F (Punjab), MPA Bibi Zarina Zehri BNP (Balochistan),



Anisa Zeb Tahirkheli, PPP (Sherpao Group)

also participated in the discussions demonstrating a positive approach on the subject.

## 2) Presentations<sup>3</sup> on Thematic Issues

Following the sharing of parties' positions on Women Quotas by the parliamentary party leaders and their representatives, Session One further included two presentations by experts working in the area. Each presentation was followed by question answer and discussion session.

The two presentations in this session were as follows:

- Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), on: *"Provision for Women's Representation in Political Parties Act, Election Laws, and other laws"*
- Naeem Mirza, Aurat Foundation, on: *"Benchmarks for Success: Women in Electoral Systems, Political Parties and Quotas – An Overview of the International Best Practices"*

i) **PRESENTATION ONE:** Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), on: **"Provision for Women's Representation in Political Parties Act, Election Laws, and other laws":**

Joint Secretary ECP, Mr. Sher Afgan after presenting the vision and mission of ECP in his presentation gave an overview of women's existing number in the National and provincial Assemblies. He highlighted the provisions of the Constitution of Pakistan that distinctively provided for no-discrimination between women and men as a fundamental right. With the prevailing societal tribal mindsets, women had to face a lot of challenges in exercising their right to political and social life as a candidate for the general elections as well as a voter.

While quotas and reserved seats for women in the legislatures paved way for women to become legislators, he also underlined the need to ensure women are also facilitated and encouraged to leave homes to vote. Low women voter turn-out was a



Sher Afgan JS (ECP)



serious issue that needed to be duly considered and addressed appropriately. The Joint Secretary agreed that it was about time that the Political Parties may consider the grant of ticket to women candidates in their ranks providing them opportunity to contest election on general seats. He recommended that atleast 10 percent tickets may be reserved for women candidates for the purpose.

ii) **PRESENTATION TWO:** Naeem Mirza, a leading women rights activist and Chief Operating Officer of Aurat Foundation, was invited to make a presentation on: **"Benchmarks for Success: Women in Electoral Systems, Political Parties and Quotas – An Overview of the International Best Practices"**

The Presentation traced the existing mechanisms and types of quotas for women's political participation and their role in the legislatures. Mr. Mirza reiterated that strong political will to include women at all levels of political life including their meaningful role in the policy and decision making levels, was the key to all efforts in this regard. He said that it was through this political will that the quotas could be instrumental in removing the inherent discriminations between women and men, and in setting the numbers and gender balance right within political and legislative institutions.

Mr. Naeem Mirza introduced the participants with

three main categories of quotas for women's political participation, including:

- Reserved seats (constitutional and/or legislative), that regulate the number of women elected through party lists of nominations or direct constituency-based elections.
- Legislated candidate quotas (constitutional and/or legislative), that set a minimum proportion of women on candidate lists as a constitutional or legal requirement, and
- Political party quotas (voluntary) that set a minimum proportion of women on candidate lists as a measure written into the statutes of individual political parties.

Mr. Mirza made a special reference to Rwanda that has almost similar quota system of reserved seats as in Pakistan. The difference is in the electoral system that is based on the proportional representation. While giving examples of best practices within the given three categories of quotas, Mr.



Naeem Mirza (Aurat Foundation)

<sup>3</sup>Copies of Presentations attached in Annex IV



Naeem Mirza referred to many countries within Asia, Africa and Europe and the prevailing best practices. He made special reference to Rwanda which tops the IPU ranking. Mr. Mirza informed that since its elections in 2008, Rwanda has a quota of 56 percent women representation in the lower house that makes 45 women in the House of 80. The Constitution of Rwanda not only provides for the quota for women's reserved seats in its lower House of the Parliament but it also provides for granting at least 30 percent of posts in decision making organs.

In his presentation, Mr. Naeem Mirza highlighted that empirical research around the globe indicated high proportions of representation (from a minimum of 33% upto 50%). He further informed that direct constituency-based elections are the key to success for women's effective representation in elected houses of parliaments. Mr. Naeem Mirza, therefore, strongly recommended that Pakistan must consider reviewing and adopting other kinds of quotas to ensure better representation of women in the political arena.

### 2.2.2 Session Two

#### Women's Representation in Legislative Assemblies – Issues and Challenges.

Moderator: **Ms. Bushra Gohar**, MNA

The two presentations made in this session were from:

- i. Dr. Farzana Bari, a leading women and human rights activist, a renowned academician, and Chairperson of the Gender Studies Department of Quaid-e-Azam University, was invited to make a presentation on: *“Women in Legislative Assemblies; Existing Quota System – Opportunities and Options”*
- ii. Ms. Anis Haroon, Chairperson, National Commission on Status Women was invited to present her views on the: *“Role of Women in the Legislative Assemblies of Pakistan.”*

MNA Bushra Gohar opened the session by her remarks about the presence and meaningful role of women in parliaments. She said that the representation of women in



Bushra Gohar (ANP)

politics and legislative assemblies is a process, and women parliamentarians have now started moving this process forward by initiating dialogues and debate on the issue. She said that the Women Parliamentarian Caucus in Pakistan has been proactively pursuing and addressing women issues beyond and across party lines. She said that it was in the same stride that the WPC had assumed its role in initiating and coordinating this debate, and in ensuring the presence of representation from the senior ranks of parliamentary political parties and from the Provincial Assemblies. After her remarks, Ms. Gohar invited the resource persons to make their respective presentations.

#### **PRESENTATION ONE:** Dr. Farzana Bari was invited to speak on: **“Women in Legislative Assemblies; Existing Quota System – Opportunities and Options”**

Dr. Farzana Bari presented a critical analysis of women's existing representation in the legislative assemblies of Pakistan. She stated that despite the growing achievements of women parliamentarians in the legislative business, their active political participation has not yet been translated into political power. This point



is also proved from the contradictory reality of increased women's participation in the parliament and Pakistan's “slippage” from 127th position in 2008 to 132nd in 2010 on Global Gender Gap Index. The key challenges for women parliamentarians in this regard included lack of women politicians' constituency/powerbase on account of the existing mechanism for quota system that is heavily dependent on the pleasure of the political leadership which is male dominant. The system also pressurizes women to toe their respective party lines at all costs - even at the cost of compromising women's empowerment.

Dr. Bari also pointed out other factors that impeded women's growth and asserting political power that included authoritarian nature of political parties internally that gave no opportunity to women politicians to be part of the policy and decision making within their respective parties. Dr. Bari also shared her



observations and concerns regarding a sense of competitiveness between women politicians and party activists that obstructs the emergence of women leadership from the grass roots levels in particular. Lack of gender sensitivity, even amongst women parliamentarians, was yet another major factor that impeded crafting gender responsive policies and legislation.

Dr. Farzana Bari proposed that the quotas for reserved seats within the legislative assemblies should be substantive in number, i.e. atleast 33 percent. She strongly recommended that the quota should now be instituted within larger Electoral System, meaning thereby, that the political parties also need to review their respective mechanisms and opt for allocating atleast 20 percent quota for women in granting tickets for the general elections.

Dr. Bari further recommended that quotas should be adopted in a 'Transformative Approach' instead of an 'Integrationist Approach' as this becomes counterproductive for women's political empowerment. She emphasized the need to amend Political Parties Act in order to make it mandatory for the political parties to ensure that party tickets are allocated to women to contest for general seats. These amendments should also focus on positioning women within the decision making structures of the parties,

e.g. in their central and district level committees.

Last but not the least, Dr. Farzana Bari advised that the women parliamentarians need to forge alliances with their male colleagues, women rights activists, as well as with professional women bodies such as teachers, nurses, health worker, media professionals, factory workers, lawyer etc.

#### **PRESENTATION TWO:** Ms. Anis Haroon, Chairperson, National Commission on Status Women (NCSW) was invited to speak on: **“Role of Women in Legislative Assemblies in Pakistan”**

Ms. Anis Haroon, a leading women rights activist and one of the founding members of the Women's Action Forum (WAF), was invited to speak on the role of women parliamentarians over the years.

Ms. Haroon opened her presentation by lauding the women parliamentarians from the last two terms in particular, who had played a key role in the introduction and passage of some very significant pieces of women protection legislation that significantly impacted the lives of women in Pakistan in the most positive ways. She



Anis Haroon (NCSW)





made special reference to the Criminal Procedure Amendment Act of 2004 which provided for death penalty or 25 years of imprisonment for committing honour crimes, and the Women Protection Act of 2006, that made amendments in the offence of Zina as given in the Enforcement of Hudood Ordinance of 1979.

While tracing the number and participation of women in the legislative assemblies of Pakistan, Ms. Anis Haroon informed the participants that between 1947 and 1999, there were only 186 women elected or nominated in various legislatures. Upto 1977, only 28 women had contested and succeeded in the general elections. She said that the Pakistan's Constitutions from 1956 to 1985, all provided for reserved seats for women at both national and local level legislatures. In 1956 there was a 3 percent quota at all levels. The allotment of seats ranged from five to ten percent and was only through indirect elections by the members of the assemblies themselves. The 1973 Constitution passed during the regime Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, provided for the quota of 10 reserved seats for women in the National Assembly and 5 in provincial assemblies. This quota was time bound and was meant for two general elections only. In 1984, President Zia-ul-Haq doubled the number of reserved seats raising them to 20 in National Assembly and 10 in Provincial Assemblies. The timeline for the reserved seats was, however, not amended. The quota for reserved women seats, therefore, expired with the elections of 1988, as

stipulated by the Constitutional amendment of 1985. The national and provincial assemblies had, therefore, their lowest women representation in the 1993 and 1997 elections, as the successive governments had failed to amend the Constitutional provisions in this regard. In 2002, after much speculation and deliberations about the percentage for reserved seats for women in the national and provincial assemblies, the government eventually gave into 17 percent quota allocation for women. Hence, at the National Assembly, there are 60 reserved seats for women in the House of 357 members. Ms. Anis Haroon informed that while the government argued that this was three times more than the previous 20 seats, the Women groups continued to strongly recommend atleast 30 percent quota.

Ms. Haroon recalled that the government had completely ignored the collective voice of women seeking 30 percent reserved seats for women in the legislatures. These voices were raised by women rights activists from time to time like during the national consultation conducted by the Ministry of Women Development in May 2001, and the National Campaign for Restoration of Women's Reserved Seats in 1998. She criticized the government for having failed to reflect this in the recommendations of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry for Women and in the National Plan for Action. She further reminded the participants that eleven political parties had also endorsed the 30 percent quota for women in the

national and provincial assemblies in the past.

### 2.2.3 Overview of Discussions

During the discussions and the question answer sessions after each presentation, some extremely pertinent issues were raised by the participants that were clarified by the resource persons. There seemed to be lack of awareness on legal standing and perspectives about many areas with regard to the women voters in particular. There was also a lot of urge from the participants that there should be a series of exclusive sessions for women parliamentarians on various topics including the role and responsibilities of women parliamentarians under the 18th Constitutional amendment, a presentation from the ECP, NADRA, and IFES on various technical issues regarding women quotas, issues regarding women's CNIC, low women voter turnout, relevant provisions within the Political Parties Act and the election laws etc.

There was, however, a unanimous sense of agreement that the political parties need to review their respective structures to include women in the mainstream decision making processes and to determin specific quota for granting tickets for women for the general elections.

### 3. Concluding Session

**Chaired by MNA Ishrat Ashraf**

Moderator: **Yasmeen Rehman**, MNA



Begum Ishrat Ashraf (PML-N)

The Concluding Session brought out some very significant decisions and concrete recommendations. Most of these decisions are reflected in the Declaration that aims at committing the parliamentary parties to review and enhance the quotas for women seats in the legislatures of Pakistan through direct elections.

Other issues that were discussed and agreed upon included that:

- The National Language should be promoted instead of other foreign languages during such

conferences and events in particular.

- Adequate funds need to be specified for the women empowerment at all levels in the annual budget.
- Gender responsive 'Voter Education' needs to be promoted in order to draw greater number of women voters during elections.
- Male MPs should be engaged in all such processes to present and share their views on women's political empowerment.

Given the scope of the Conference, its agenda attempted to cover all key concerns and challenges being faced by the women parliamentarians in playing a meaningful role in the political and policy decision making. It gave them an opportunity to freely share their concerns regarding legal/technical and social impediments that obstructed their positioning and performance within their respective parties as well as in the legislatures.

Towards the end, MNA Ishrat Ashraf, Chair of the Concluding Session, presented her vote of thanks to all the participants, especially for raising a collective voice and for agreeing on a unanimous Declaration in this regard. She termed the Declaration as a 'Milestone' for the Pakistani women in politics. Ms. Ashraf said that the mere presence and active participation of the legislators and party leaders from across Pakistan was demonstrative of their concern and commitment to women's political empowerment. She further lauded the role of Women's Parliamentary Caucus, under the dynamic guidance of the Speaker National Assembly Dr. Fehmida Mirza and the close supervision of Nafisa Shah, Secretary WPC.



Dr. Nafisa Shah closed the conference with her vote of thanks to the entire WPC organising team.



## PHOTO GALLERY



Dr. Nafisa Shah - PPP, Ehsan Wayne - ANP



L to R: Tahira Aurangzeb, Anusha Rehman, Begum Najma Hameed - PML (N)



Ms. Farrukh Khan - PML (Q)



Syed Haider Abbas Rizvi, Ms. Kishwar Zehra - MQM



Ms. Anis Haroon - NCSW, Ms. Bushra Gohar - ANP



Ms. Anisa Zeb Tahirkheli - PPP(S), Ms. Yasmeen Rehman - PPP



Ms. Shama Arif Mithani - PPP



Begum Ishrat Ashraf - PML(N)



Mr. Dilawar Abbas - PML(Q), Ms. Asiya Nasir - JUI



Ms. Jamila Gillani - ANP, Ms. Tasneem Siddiqui - PML(N)



Ms. Farah Aaqil Shah - ANP



Dr. Saeeda Iqbal - PPP



Ms. Samina Khawar Hayat - PML(Q)



Mir Jan Muhammad Kahn Jamali - PML(Q), Dr. Nafisa Shah - PPP



Mr. Ehsan Wayne - ANP, Mr. Ahsan Iqbal - PML(N)



Dr. Aasma Mamdoot - PML(F)



Ms. Raheel Durrani - PML(Q)



Begum Nuzhat Sadiq - PML(N)



Ms. Sabeen Rizvi - PML(N)



Ms. Marvi Rashdi - PPP



Mr. Naeem Mirza - Aurat Foundation, Mr. Sher Afgan - Election Commission



Ms. Fehmida Iqbal - UN Women, Shamoona Hashmi - National Assembly



Ms. Nuzhat Pathan - PML(Q)



Bretta Patterson - HBF



Ms. Fauzia Tariq - UN Women, Mr. Shabbir Ahmed - IFES



Dr. Farzana Bari - Gender Studies Deptt. Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad



Surraya Ameer-Ud-Din - PPP, Ms. Ghazala Gola - PPP



# ANNEX I

## CONFERENCE AGENDA

### Roundtable Conference

Topic: “Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process”  
Date: (17th) September 2011

#### Rationale

Quotas or reserved seats for women in the legislative bodies are widely recognized as a key to ensure political participation of women leading towards their economic, legal and social empowerment. It provides an access to women to political space that is normally denied to them at legislative and policy making levels. Given the significance and need for dedicating and allocating this space, many countries around the world are working on the agenda of providing representation to women in the legislative process and political system. This is expected to ensure “critical mass” of gender representation and at the same time to ensure women's presence in the political and legislative systems.

Quotas have been a subject of intense debates, and it is often argued that quotas are against equal opportunity for all since it gives women preference over men and in being so, are undemocratic as the voters are neglected of the right to decide who is to be elected. Those opposing quotas argue that they are biased since they give preference to gender rather than the abilities or qualifications of the representatives. Further, they are also considered to create conflicts within parties and are considered to be in violation to the principles of liberal democracy.

With all the given disadvantages, it cannot be ignored that the quotas for women provide a safeguard against the barriers to entry in the political setup. Political cultures all over the world restrict and constrain women's space in the public sphere making it very difficult for them to participate in politics on equal footing with the men and, therefore, only special measures can remove the structural discrimination against women. It is further argued that since the right

to control nominations rests with the political parties, it does not violate the voter's rights and helps in making the process more transparent. There is also a debate on fundamental rights, as women's absence in the realm of power, politics and decision-making negates constitutional guarantees regarding equal rights and access of women to the public and political space.

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 at Beijing, many countries had agreed and have taken steps to ensure maximum representation of women in all political and public administrative positions. During a recent survey, it has been concluded that women constitute to an approximately 19 percent of the total parliamentarians around the globe with Rwanda taking the lead by a 56.3 percent followed by Sweden with a 47.3 percent women parliamentarians. This was ensured through the electoral gender quota policy and Rwanda has indeed set a trend in the world politics by effectively applying this system.

There are three types of quotas that are being used in the political systems across the globe: a) through direct reserved seats method (constitutional and/or legislative); b) by creating legal candidate quotas (constitutional and/or legislative) within political parties, and c) based on voluntary quotas announced by the parties.

Pakistan has generally had special reserved seats for women in the Parliament since the very off-set, the percentage of which was nominal. In recent years, Pakistan enhanced the percentage of reserved seats for women to an unprecedented number. Today, there are 16 percent seats for women reserved in the parliamentary setup. The reservations are created through the party list system, thereby, making women accountable more to the parties than to the people. Hence, there is still a need to increase the space for women to play a meaningful part in representative

politics.

It is felt that there is a need to debate whether the present form of quotas addresses the issue of representation adequately and for how long and if not, then what could be other options? At the same time there is a need to explore how political parties can be sensitized to the issues of representation of women, and to debate whether the present form of indirect representation provided to women is strengthening women's participation in politics on a sustainable basis. It is feared that quotas may make the political parties complacent and unwilling to provide the party platform to women to contest direct elections. Some countries have taken measures to ensure that political parties provide adequate seats to women politicians to contest elections on winnable seats.

The Women Parliamentary Caucus, which seeks to create a broad based consensus among all women members of parliament on an agreed agenda for the empowerment of women above part lines, proposes to provide a platform for this discussion in order to build consensus among the political parties to enhance and strengthen women's representation in political and legislative spaces in Pakistan.

#### Conference Objectives

1. To assess the impact of the existing quota for women in our political and legislative systems;

2. To discuss and deliberate on whether the existing reserved seats for women in the

legislative assemblies adequately meet the mandate of democratic and representative politics;

3. To engage the political parties in the discussion to strengthen women's representation within political parties structures and to deliberate on the existing range of quota systems in use around the world;
4. To discuss ways and means through which women's representation may be further

enhanced and strengthened, and propose recommendations to the political parties and the parliament on any legislative or policy changes that may be required in order to provide an enhanced scope to women's meaningful representation in the political arena.

#### Participants

1. Members Of Women Parliamentary Caucus (Two From Each Parliamentary Parties)
2. One Woman MPA From Each Political Party In All The Provincial Assemblies
3. Party Leaders Of All Parliamentary Parties
4. Heads Of Women Wings Of All Political Parties Wherever Applicable





# One Day Roundtable Conference on

## “Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process” (17th September 2010)

### PROGRAM

17th September, 2011

#### Inaugural

0930 – 0945 hrs:

0930 - 0935 hrs: Recitation from the Holy Quran  
0935 - 0945 hrs: Introduction to the Theme and Objectives of the Roundtable by the Secretary WPC  
Nafisa Shah MNA

0945 hrs: Thematic Session Begins

0945 – 1300 Session One: Women in Political Parties Structures:  
  
Women Representation and Positioning within Political Parties' Structures in Pakistan

- **Moderator: Bushra Gohar MNA**
- **Discussants:**
  - i. Representative of Election Commission
  - ii. Naeem Mirza, Aurat Foundation
  - iii. Representative of FAFEN

0945 – 1100  
(@ Up to 15 minutes per party)

- Existing setup & mechanisms within political parties: To what extent are political parties facilitating or hindering women's entry into parliament – Perspectives of Political Parties Leaderships

1100 – 1130 Tea Break

1130 – 1300  
(@ Up to 15 minutes per party)

- Issues and Challenges for facilitating greater and more meaningful representation of women within party structures
- To what extent do political party structures need to be changed?

1300 – 1330

- Benchmarks for Success: Women in Electoral Systems, Political Parties and Quotas: Presentation by Naeem Mirza

1330 – 1430  
1430 – 1730

**Lunch & Prayer Break**  
**Session Two: Women Representation in Legislative Assemblies**

**Moderator:** Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali  
**Discussants:** Ms. Aasia Riaz (PILDAT)  
Representative of DRI  
Dr. Farzana Bari

#### Issues and Challenges for Women in Legislatures – Way Forward

1430 - 1445

- Presentation on “Women in Legislative Assemblies in South Asia region – A Case Study”

1445 - 1500

- Presentation on “Analysis of Political Parties Act, Election Laws, Constitution and other Relevant Pieces of Legislation”

1500 - 1545

- Discussion: Winning A Seat: Impediments, Challenges and Alternatives for Women in Politics

1545 - 1630

- Discussion: Are quotas the Way Forward – Options and Alternatives?

1630 – 1700

**Concluding Session:** Commitment and Adoption of a Resolution by Parties Leaderships to Revisit Their Respective Existing Mechanisms for allocating Party Tickets for General Elections, and to Make Amendments In the Relevant Electoral Laws and Political Parties Act Accordingly - Adoption of Declaration

1700 – 1800

**Tea and Refreshments**

ANNEX II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Sr.#	Name	Party	Provincial Assembly
Speaker's Nomination from Provincial Assemblies			
1.	Ms. Ghazala Gola	PPPP	Baluchistan
2.	Dr. Ruquya Saeed Hashmi	PML (Q)	
3.	Bibi Zarina Zehri	BNP	
4.	Mrs. Shahida Rauf	JUI	
5.	Ms. Mussarat Shafi	ANP	KPK
6.	Ms. Faiza Bibi Rasheed	PPPP	
7.	Ms. Saeeda Batool Nasir	MMA	
8.	Ms. Shazia Aurengzeb	PML (N)	
9.	Ms. Nighat Yasmin Orakzai	PML (Q)	Punjab
10.	Begum Nargis Samin	PPP (S)	
11.	Ms. Arifa Khalid Pervez	PML (N)	
12.	Ms. Humaira Awais Shahid	PML	
13.	Mrs. Nargis Faiz Malik	PPPP	Sindh
14.	Dr. Asma Mamdoot	PML (F)	
15.	Ms. Marvi Rashdi	PML (F)	
16.	Ms. Shama Arif Mithani	PPPP	
17.	Ms. Heer Soho	MQM	AJK
18.	Ms. Nuzhat Pathan	PML (Q)	
19.	Ms. Shaheen Dar Deputy Speaker	PPPP	AJK
20.	Ms. Shazia Akbar		
21.	Ms. Mehrun Nisa	Muslim Conference	Gilgit Baltistan
22.	Mrs. Yasmeen Nazar	PPP	
23.	Mrs. Amina Ansari	PML (Q)	
24.	Mrs. Mehnaz Wali	JUI	
Nominations from Political Parties			
Sr.#	Name	Party	Title/Designation
25.	Mr. Ehsan Wayne	ANP	Secretary General
26.	Ms. Jamila Gillani		MNA
27.	Mr. Ehsan Iqbal	PML (N)	MNA

28.	Mr. Zahid Hamid		MNA
29.	Ms. Nuzhat Sadiq		MNA
30.	Ms. Yasmeen Rahman	PPPP	MNA
31.	Ms. Sherry Rahman		MNA
32.	Mrs. Asiya Nasir	JUI	MNA
33.	Dr. Muhammad Ismail Buledi		Senator
34.	Dr. Farooq S attar	MQM	MNA
35.	Ms. Kishwar Zehra		MNA
36.	Mr. Mushahid Hussain	PML (Q)	Senator
37.	Ms. Farrukh Khan		Head of Women Wing
38.	Mr. Dilawer Abbass		Former Senator
39.	Mr. Naseer Mengal		Former Senator
40.	Ms. Samina Khawar Hayat		MPA
Special Invitation			
Sr.#	Name	Party	Title/Designation
41.	Mr. Jahangir Badar	PPPP	Secretary General
42.	Mr. Qamaruz Zaman Kaira		MNA
43.	Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali	PPPP	MNA
44.	Ms. Anisa Zeb Tahir Kheli	PPP (Sherpao)	Former Senator
45.	Ms. Anushay Rehman	PML (N)	MNA
46.	Ms. Tehmina Daultana	PML (N)	MNA
47.	Rana Tanvir Ahmed	PML (N)	MNA
48.	Senator Sughra Imam	PPPP	MNA
49.	Ms. Rahela Durrani	PML (Q)	MPA/ Chairperson Women Caucus, Baluchistan Assembly
Members of the Working Council, WPC			
Sr.#	Name	Party	Title/Designation
50.	Ms. Bushra Gohar	ANP	MNA
51.	Dr. Donya Aziz	PML-Q	MNA
52.	Ms. Reena Kumari	PML-F	MNA
53.	Mrs. Asiya Nasir	JUI-F	MNA
54.	Ms. Khush Bakht Shujaat	MQM	MNA
55.	Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho	PPPP	MNA
56.	Ms. Saima Akhtar Bharwana	Independent	MNA
57.	Ms Tasneem Siddiqui	PML-N	MNA
58.	Ms. Nafisa Shah	PPPP	MNA
59.	Begum Ishrat Ashraf	PML-N	MNA



RESOURCE PERSONS			
Sr. #	Name	Organization	Title/Designation
60.	Mr. Sher Afghan	Election Commission of Pakistan	Joint Secretary
61.	Mr. Nawaz		Section Officer
62.	Ms. Anis Haroon	NCSW	Chairperson
63.	Ms. Farzana Bari	Women Development Studies, Quaid e Azam University, Islamabad	Chairperson
64.	Mr. Naeem Mirza	Aurat Foundation	Chief Operating Officer

GUESTS/ OBSERVERS			
Sr. #	Name	Organization	Title/Designation
65.	Ms. Brettta Patterson	Heinrich Boll Stiftung (HBS)	Country Director
66.	Mr. Iqbal Haider Butt		Head of Programme
67.	Ms. Kalsoom Monica		Programme Officer
68.	Ms. Fauzia Tariq	UN Women	Programme Specialist
69.	Ms. Fahmida Iqbal		Programme Officer
70.	Mr. Azhar Saeed Malik	Governance Unit UNDP	Head of Governance Unit
71.	Mr. Jamil Qureshi	SDPD	Technical Advisor
72.		SDPD	
73.	Mr. Shabbir Ahmad	IFES	Country Program Director
74.	Ms. Asiya Riaz	PILDAT	
75.	Ms. Khawar Mumtaz	NCSW/ Shirkat Gah	Member/Chairperson
76.	Ms. Simi Kamal	GEP	Chief of Party
77.	Ms. Bushra Jaffar	GEP	Deputy COP
78.	Ms. Nasreen Azhar	NCSW	Member

## ANNEX III

### CONFERENCE SPEECHES

#### SPEECH BY NAFISA SHAH- QUOTA'S FOR WOMEN

Deputy Chairman Senate, **Mr Jan Jamali**, Honourable MNAs, MPAs, and Senators and members of the civil society

It is my pleasure and a privilege to welcome you all to this important meeting organised by the Women Parliamentary Caucus in collaboration with the Heinrich Boll Foundation and the SPDP on the theme of Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process here in Islamabad.

First of all I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for the Chief Guest Honourable Jan Jamali, Deputy Chairman of the senate, for gracing us with his presence. I would also like to thank all the political parties for extending their support to this important issue.

Let me begin by conveying the regrets of Speaker Fehmida Mirza who could not be with us because of her occupation in overseeing relief work in her district and on behalf of this forum and the Caucus I would like to convey our deepest empathy with the people of Sindh because of the situation of floods. At the same time I would also like empathise with the people of Punjab who are facing the dengue epidemic. Our hearts go out to the families who are suffering and we hope and pray that God gives us the strength to face and overcome these tragedies.

Colleagues, dear members of the Senate, national and provincial assemblies,

What brings us together today is at the very heart of political debate in Pakistan: what kind of political power do women have in this country, as voters, as policy makers, and political activists. In my view this is no less than an APC, as all parties are represented here discussing a very important issue: women's political representation in Pakistan with the specific discussion on women's quotas.

It is an established fact that the quotas have increased the representation of women in political and legislative forums all over the world. Today an

estimated 19 per cent of the legislators are women, and this is largely possible due to the instrument of quotas.

There are three types of quotas that are being used in the political systems across the globe: a) through direct reserved seats method (constitutional and/or legislative); b) by creating legal candidate quotas (constitutional and/or legislative) within political parties, and c) voluntary quotas announced by the parties.

In Pakistan, reservation of seats for women in the national and provincial assemblies, senate and local government has a long history. It was agreed in the First Constitution of 1956 at a minimal level of 3% at both levels, and women were elected on reserved seats through indirect election. The revised Constitutions of 1962 and 1973 also provided reservation of seats for women at similarly low levels of 2.75%, and 5% respectively in the national and provincial assemblies. In 1985 the number of reserved seats for women in the Pakistan national assembly was raised to 20 (10%) for the period of 10 years or three general elections whichever came earlier.

Under the Legal Framework Order, 60 seats were provided for in the National Assembly.

Currently, under the 18th amendment, Pakistan has provision for reserved seats for women in its Constitution. Under the provision of Article 51, sixty seats are reserved for women in the National Assembly out of a total of 342 members,17% with a similar percentage in the provinces, while in the Senate seventeen seats out of 100, are reserved for women, 4 for each province and 1 for Islamabad.

Proportional representation system of election has been adopted to fill reserved seats for women in the national and provincial assemblies, as each political party receives its share in reserved seats for women in proportion to the total number of seats won by them in the general election. In the Senate reserved seats for women were filled indirectly on the basis of parity.

Five years ago, I researched for a UNDP report, which was co-authored by Shirin Rai, myself and Azar Ayaz on this very issue. I would like to share some findings of this important report. In our survey we found that the quota system introduced to increase the presence of women in public life had achieved some success in the following different ways:

- Large numbers of women were inducted into public life at the local level, so women had become more visible at the policymaking level, and increased numbers of women were present in Provincial Assemblies and the National Parliament
- Local governance was benefiting from women councilors' work, especially in bringing women's concerns to political institutions
- Leadership roles were increasingly being performed by women in political institutions
- Women in the parliaments often outperformed men in the business of the parliament.

By and large, women parliamentarians and office holders supported women seats as the minimum policy tool that made women visible and their voices important: One minister supported the principle of quotas since “Otherwise women in this society are bypassed completely. It is difficult to get them out. Another political activist also echoes the same – the potency of women's voices when they finally speak: “Women MPs are talking and that is important. Previously the cultural construct was that women should not even be heard that they should be silent. Now at least they can be heard.”

But although female MPAs conditionally supported the quotas as an entry point, and as an opportunity, many reiterated their marginal status and that a clear demarcation between those elected on reserved seats and those on a general seat was made while allocating funds, or political offices. In addition, to quote one representative political knowledge or struggle was not necessarily what won you a position in the proportionate list: “In order for a woman to be elected on a reserved seat in the National Assembly, she must convince her political party that her name should be on the party list of female candidates, but she does not need any direct support from the voters of the constituency” , creating a dependency on party elites on the one hand and a legitimacy gap in her constituency on the other.

Our Report suggests that while quotas are important in addressing the exclusion of women from the public political sphere, they can only form one part of **a multi-**

**faceted strategy for empowering women,** for instance:

- Quotas need to be embedded in a democratic culture and a socio-economic context where women's work in both public and private spheres is valued.
- Quotas need to be supplemented by other strategies that focus on transforming the public space within which women and men perform their public roles through education, media campaigns and developing gender equality networks.
- The electoral system has to become more favourable to women's representation and we need to further debate whether mechanism of proportionate representation is the best form or that reserved seats should be constituency based as in some countries.
- And finally that political parties need to create mechanisms for encouraging women to be elected on key decision making bodies in their party.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**  
*Quotas in Political Parties*

It is now felt that there is a need to debate whether the present form of quotas addresses the issue of representation adequately. At the same time there is a need to explore how political parties can be sensitized to the issues of representation of women, and to debate whether the present form of indirect representation provided to women is strengthening women's participation in politics on a sustainable basis. It is feared that quotas may make the political parties complacent and unwilling to provide the party platform to women to contest direct elections. Some countries have taken measures to ensure that political parties provide adequate seats to women politicians to contest elections on winnable seats.

As a women parliamentarian, I welcome the instrument of proportionate representation and quotas that has ensured our presence. However I would like to reiterate that it is time to move forward. Political parties are crucial to increasing the participation of women in public life. This is because to quote Lovenduski “Parties are crucial gatekeepers to government office, one of the main channels of political mobilization in a society and a major source of public policy...Voters express party preferences; hence [male domination of politics] is the result of internal party decisions<sup>4</sup>.”

Despite the history of military regimes, there are hundred plus registered political parties in the country<sup>5</sup>. The political context of military rule, a history of prominent political families' dominance in political parties and a general lack of political accountability has meant that political parties have not generally developed a fully representative structure in their own cadres. This has affected the selection of women candidates, and therefore their election, their participation in decision-making and their role in party politics. Although Pakistan has seen the rise of a fascinating cadre of women politicians, Fatima Jinnah, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, Nusrat Bhutto, Begum Nasim Wali Khan, Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan, their vision, their gains and precedents must now be institutionalized in political parties.

One way that political parties have responded to the concern about the lack of women in both their membership and organization is to point to the **women's wings of political parties**. Although women's wings of political parties are considered as important spaces allowing women to participate in politics, they are also viewed as ghettos for women.

One way of ensuring a change in the party system is to increase women's membership of political parties as well as their participation in the functioning and administration of political parties. **Changes to the procedures and functioning of political parties are therefore an important part of the strategies to increase women's presence in representative politics**. These changes are crucial if quotas for women are to be met in a way that brings politically active women into public institutions.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Women Parliamentary Caucus, which seeks to create a broad based consensus among all women members of parliament on an agreed agenda for the empowerment of women above part lines, proposes to provide a platform for this discussion in order to build consensus among the political parties to enhance and strengthen women's representation in political and legislative spaces in Pakistan.

The Conference Objectives are as follows:

1. To assess the impact of the existing quota for women in our political and legislative systems;
2. To discuss whether the existing reserved seats for women in the legislative assemblies

adequately meet the mandate of democratic and representative politics;

3. To engage the political parties in the discussion to strengthen women's representation within political parties structures and to deliberate on the existing range of quota systems in use around the world;
4. To discuss ways and means through which women's representation may be further enhanced and strengthened, and propose recommendations to the political parties and the parliament on any legislative or policy changes that may be required in order to provide an enhanced scope to women's meaningful representation in the political arena.

To conclude, we in the women parliamentary caucus consider this issue a very serious one, if the women of this country are to move forward. As democrats, as voters, and as party workers, we are committed to social justice and this can only be ensured if our electoral, political and legislative systems have means to ensure that there is a significant representation of 50 per cent of our voters – that is women. In my ending note I would urge the political parties to make this a foremost agenda of their reform so that systems of quotas in legislative forums are replicated in the political parties internally as well as during the award of candidature.

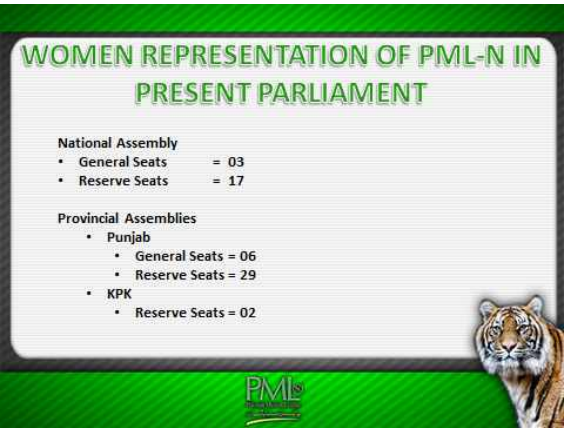
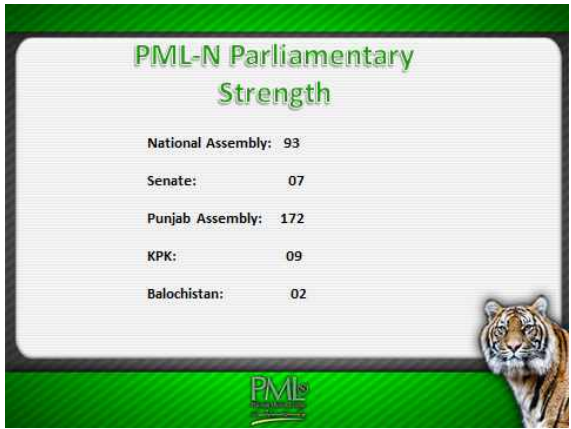
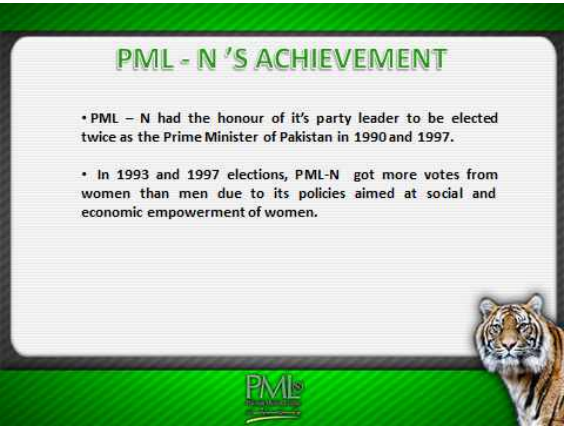
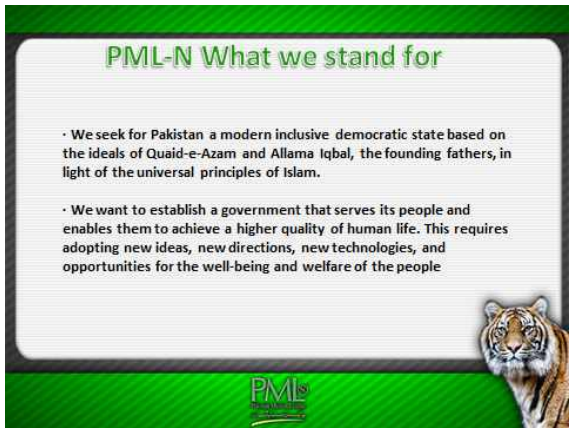
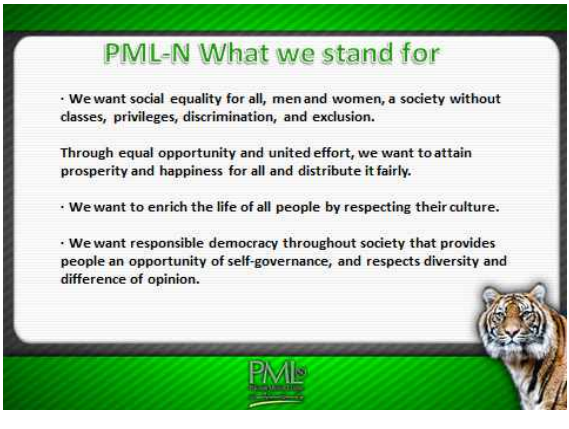
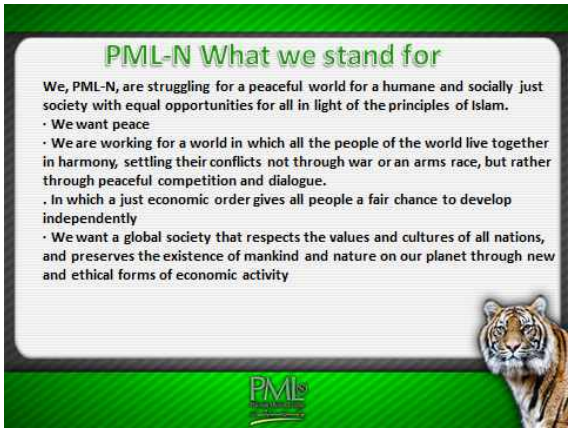
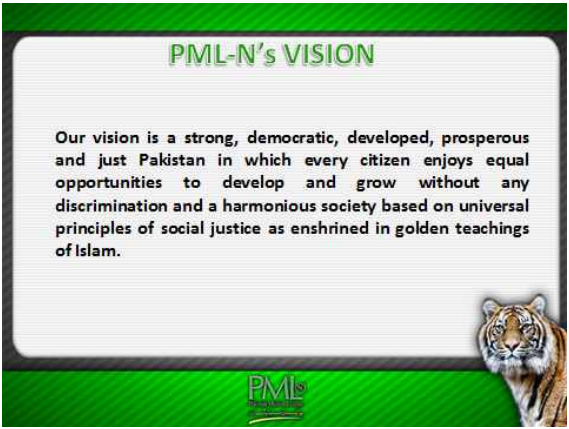
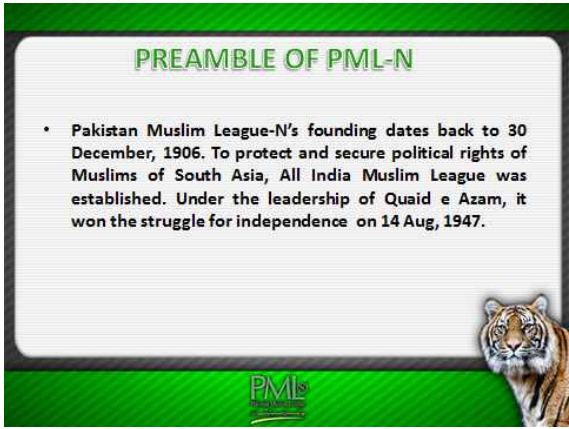
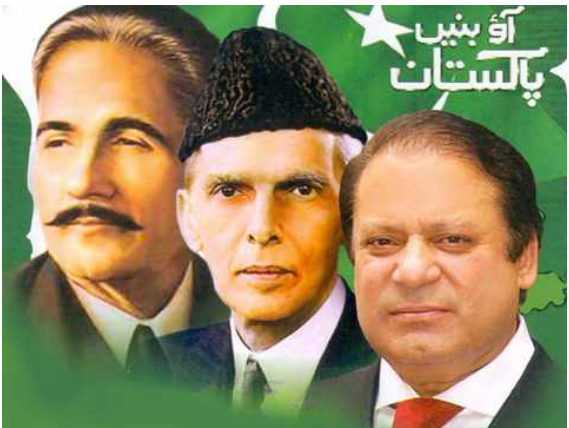
Once again I thank you all for your support to this debate.



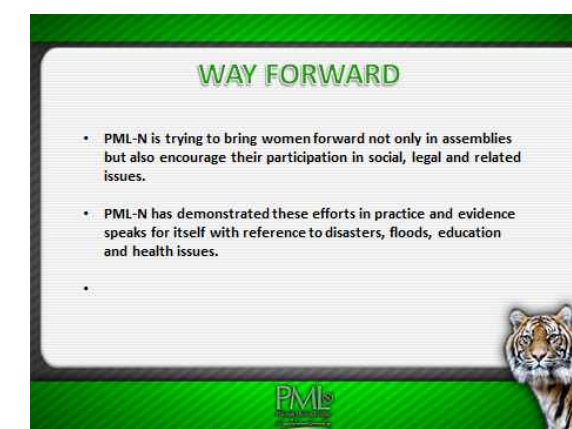
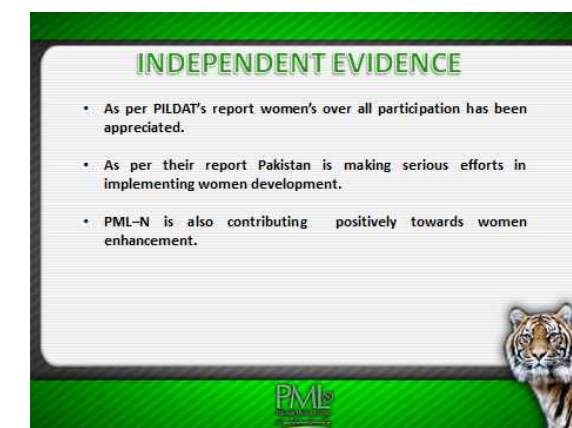
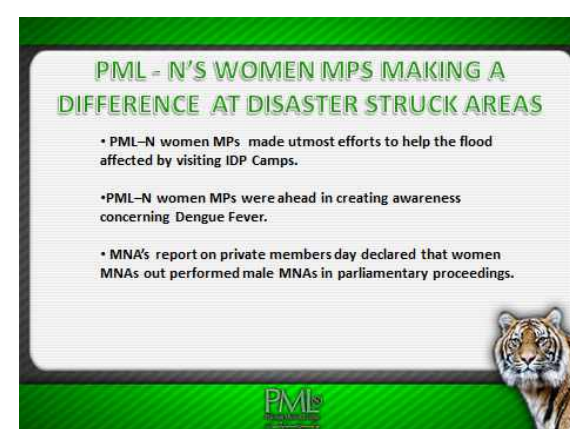
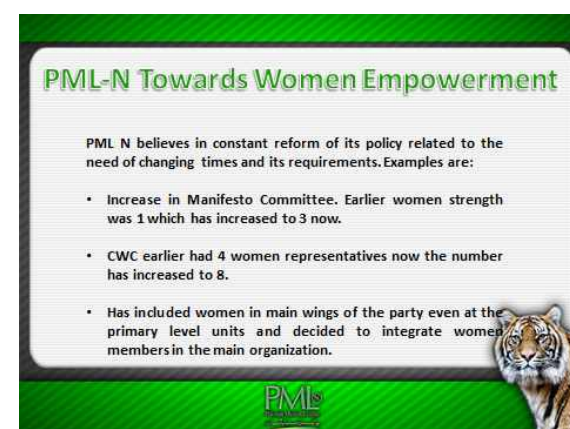
ANNEX IV

PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION 1









## PRESENTATION 2

Dr. Farzana Bari, Chairperson, Women Development Studies,  
Quaid e Azam University

### Legislative Quota: Issues and Challenges

### Rationale for Gender Quota in Politics

- Global debate on gender quota in politics is shaped by Intrinsic vs Instrumentalist argument
- Intrinsic approach is based on justice argument that contends that women's political participation is purely a democratic and human rights issue

- Instrumentalist Approach uses utility and symbolic argument.
- Utility approach base itself on the notion that women have distinct interests, political priorities and legislative behavior
- Symbolic argument focus on cultural impact and role models

### Legislative Performance of Women's Representatives

- Impressive Performance in the Parliamentary Business in both 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> National Assemblies.
- In the 12<sup>th</sup> national assembly women parliamentarians moved 101 private members bills, 60% interventions of women on the parliamentary floor related to women, social sector and public interest issues

- In the 13<sup>th</sup> National Assembly out of 34 PMB tabled, 17 (50%) moved by women MNAs.
- Out of 136 CANs, 37 are moved by women.
- Of a total of 3,339 parliamentary questions, 1687 (50.5%) are submitted by women member.

- Women MNAs sponsored 75 out of 78 resolutions (96.1%). More than half (51%) motions were put forth by women representatives.

- Overall 60% of parliamentary business is untaken by women (FAFEN).
- Women MNAs are more regular in their attendance of parliamentary sessions. The quorum issue has been averted due to women's presence in the parliament.

- Active Participation in Standing Committees.
- Cross party Women Parliamentary Caucus is established.

### Disconnect between Participation and Representation

- Active political participation has not been translated into political power
- Contradictory reality of increased women's participation in the parliament and Pakistan's slippage from 127<sup>th</sup> place in 2008 to 132<sup>nd</sup> in 2010 on Global Gender Gap Index.

### Key Issues and Challenges

- Lack of Constituency/Power Base because of Indirect Modality of Election on Gender Quota.
- Dependency on political leadership and women are pressured to toe party line

- Male domination and masculine nature of political parties
- Lack of inner-party democracy
- Competiveness amongst women politicians and party activists

- Lack of gender consciousness amongst women MNAs (no criteria)
- Lack of motivation to cultivate constituency (no public hearing, identification of constituency, lack of financial resources)

- Weak Women's Movement
- Lack of linkages with women's professional groups and civil society organizations

#### Intersectional Approach to women

- Transformative Approach to Quota than Integrationist
- Inter-connection of Quota with Institutional Reforms .

- Alliance building with male parliamentarians
- Strong formalized linkages with professional women bodies such as teachers, nurses, health worker, media professionals, factory workers, lawyer etc.

#### Beyond Quota: What?

Quota must be substantive in numbers (33%)

- Direct Modality of Election (constituency base) and joint electorate (research based options)
- Quota should be Instituted within Larger Electoral System

% women in Parliamentary Committees as members and as chair

- Amendments in the Political Party Act to make it mandatory for political parties to place women in party structures such as central committees, district level etc and grant them party tickets to contest on general seats .

- Networking: cross-party women caucuses at the national, provincial and local levels.

- Greater role of WPC

- Strong Women's movement outside the parliament that influence political agenda

## PRESENTATION 3

### Electoral Systems, Political Parties and Quotas – An Overview of the International Best Practices

By Naeem Mirza  
Aurat Foundation

Women's Parliamentary Caucus'  
One Day Roundtable Conference on:

Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process  
29 September 2011, Islamabad

#### Benchmark of success for women's effective political & legislative representation

- **Commitment by political parties:** Political parties hold the key to the equal participation of women in political life. Political culture responsive to women's needs and aspirations within political parties make them a recognizable factor;
- **Types of quota system matter.** Quotas, whether voluntary or binding, do have an impact. However, some quota systems are not effective. Modality of elections determines the ratio of success;
- **Types of electoral system matters.** There are electoral systems which are more likely to produce better results. For example, international experience tells us that 'first past the post' electoral systems are less likely to get women elected than proportional systems.
- **Women's rights movement matter:** The presence and influence of women's rights movement and groups contribute towards an enabling and supportive environment for political party women.

Number of countries with a gender quota for lower or single house of parliament

Region	Any type of quota	Reserved seats	Legislated candidate quota	Political party quota (voluntary)
World	90	16	33	54
Africa	24	11	3	12
Asia	18	5	8	6
Latin America & Caribbean	18	0	13	12
More Developed regions	30	0	9	24

#### Democracy and women's quotas

- Democracy cannot fully be realized unless there is equal participation of women and men in political and legislative process and decision-making;
- Quotas remove historical discriminations, and pave way for mainstreaming women into politics;
- Quotas set the numbers and gender balance right in political and legislative institutions;
- Quotas, as one of the mean for change, contribute towards realization of women's equal rights and status in society.

#### Three types of quotas

##### 1. Reserved seats (constitutional and/or legislative)

Reserved seats regulate the number of women elected through party lists of nominations or direct constituency-based elections.

##### 2. Legislated candidate quotas (constitutional and/or legislative)

This type of quota set a minimum proportion of women on candidate lists, as a constitutional or legal requirement.

##### 3. Political party quotas (voluntary)

This type of quota set a minimum proportion of women on candidate lists, as a measure written into the statutes of individual political parties.

One country may have several quota types.

#### Countries with reserved seats quotas

Eastern Africa (9)	Other Africa (2)	Southern Asia (3)	Other Asia (2)
Burundi	Egypt	Afghanistan	Kyrgyzstan
Djibouti	Niger	Bangladesh	Jordan
Eritrea		Pakistan	
Kenya			
Rwanda			
Somalia			
Sudan			
Tanzania			
Uganda			

- The quota type is prevalent in 16 countries of Africa and Asia, mostly in growing democracies
- Usually, this model has guaranteed seats for women candidates through party lists.
- The biggest disadvantage is the absence of 'electoral constituencies'.
- A few countries have and some are trying for constituency-based direct elections under this



### Best practices of legislated candidate quota system

Rwanda deserves special mention and appreciation. It currently tops the IPU ranking in leading the world for having 56% proportion of women's representation in the lower house, with 45 women in the house of 80, in elections 2008.

Rwanda has a quota system of reserved seats like Pakistan's, but its electoral system is PR and its Constitution says:

"The State of Rwanda commits itself that women are granted at least 30 percent of posts in decision making organs" (Constitution, Article 9 [1]). The 80 members of the Chamber of Deputies are elected as follows: 53 members elected by direct universal suffrage through a secret ballot using closed List PR; 24 women two from each province and from the city of Kigali by an electoral college with a women only ballot; 2 members elected by the National Youth Council; and one member elected by the Federation of the Associations of the Disabled (Constitution, Article 76).

### Best practices of legislated candidate quota system

- In Nepal, the Constitution says: Constituent Assembly shall comprise of 240 members elected from each of the constituencies with the FPTP system, 335 members elected from the political parties with the PR system, and 26 members appointed by the Council of Ministers. Women must constitute at least 33 percent of candidates for the FPTP system and the PR system combined.
- In Spain, in March 2007, the Equality Law modified the electoral law and introduced the "principle of balanced presence". Party electoral lists are required to have a minimum of 40 percent and a maximum of 60 percent of either sex among their candidates in elections to the Lower house (Congress of Deputies). The law was first applied in the general elections of March 2008.
- In Mauritania, before the 2006 elections, quotas for women were introduced by decree. In constituencies which are to elect two members to the National Assembly, all candidate lists must include one candidate of each sex. Where three are to be elected, the lists must include at least one female candidate placed first or second.

### Countries with political party quotas

- Out of top 30 rankings in world for over 30% proportion of representation in lower house of parliament, 23 countries have quotas; most of these countries have political party quotas
- Political party quotas have brought seven countries to the threshold of gender parity (50-50) in national parliaments. One (Rwanda) has already achieved it.
- Political parties, who voluntarily adopted quotas for women, in fact, accepted and internalized the vision of gender equality, as party policy and not just as official obligation.
- Political party quotas have reformed several institutions of governance – political parties, legislatures, governments – as well as the constituents in favour of women's role in leadership and decision-making.

### Countries with legislative candidate quotas

- Nearly **33** countries are using this type of quota in all continents, both in developing and developed world. Some of these are Angola, Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, France, Indonesia, Mexico, Nepal, Spain, Uzbekistan.
- Quotas are delivering and women have made foothold in constituencies; they are making bold initiatives on women's rights.
- These quotas reflect respective States' commitment to gender equality, in particular, their willingness to accept **women as equal partners in decision-making**.

### Countries with political party quotas

- **108** political parties in **54** countries have introduced voluntary quotas for women with proportions ranging from 20% to 50%. This model is present in all continents, in developed Nordic and European countries, as well as in African and Latin American countries. In Asia, only a few countries have adopted it. Some of the countries are: Australia, Austria, Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, France, Germany, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Kenya, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Mozambique, Morocco, Norway, Niger, Romania, Spain, Sweden, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, United Kingdom.
- These quotas have contributed immensely to high and growing proportion of women's representation in parliaments and the global average, i.e 19.4%

### Countries with political party quotas

- Women contest direct constituency-based elections and have risen to high positions of decision-making in their countries, as well as, in their own parties.
- Most of the countries with political parties have the PR system; though other systems like FPTP and parallel are also being used.
- High proportions of representation (from a minimum of 33% to 50%) and direct constituency-based elections are the key to success for women's effective representation in elected houses of parliaments.

### Some best practices of political party quota system

- In Tunisia, it has been decided that political parties will submit lists of candidates comprising of 50% women for the next parliamentary elections.
- In Norway: four major political parties, Norwegian Labour Party, Socialist Left Party, Centre Party and Christian People's Party have voluntary quotas ranging from 40 to 50 % for both sexes; Norwegian Labour Party says that in all election lists there must be a 50 percent quota for both sexes, and both sexes shall be represented in the first two positions.

### Some best practices of political party quota system

- In South Africa, the African National Congress has adopted a 50% gender quota in local elections. In 2007 this was increased to electoral lists at national levels as well. The party statute reads: "the provision of a quota of not less than fifty percent of women in all elected structures" (ANC Constitution, Article 6 [1]). Currently, ANC has won 264 seats, little less than two-thirds majority.
- In Germany, the Social Democratic Party has decided that at least 40 % of each gender should be in boards and lists; the Left Party says that "on nomination lists, the first two and then every other place are reserved for women". Alliance 90/The Greens have a 50 percent quota for women on party lists and; the Christian Democratic Union has decided that at least one-third of CDU electoral lists and party officials should be women. If this quota is not met, the internal elections have to be repeated.

### Some best practices of political party quota system

- In UK, the Labour Party members have two votes - one for a woman and one for a man. The man and woman with the most votes is selected. In 2001, the Liberal Democrats adopted a 40 percent target of women candidates, and at the same time rejected all-women shortlists. Prior to the 2005 elections, the party placed women in 40 percent of the "winnable seats".
- Sweden has set another shining example. The Social Democratic Party has fixed party quotas under Zipper system (one sex alternates the other on party lists). The Left Party has set a 50% minimum quota for women on party lists. Green Party also has a 50 % gender quota on party lists. The Moderate Party has gone a step further by saying that two women and two men shall be placed on the top four positions on the party list for the election to the European Parliament.

## PRESENTATION 4



**ELECTION COMMISSION OF PAKISTAN (ECP)**

**PRESENTATION**

**BY**

(Syed Sher Afgan)  
Joint Secretary  
Election Commission of Pakistan  
29 September, 2011  
Marriott Hotel Islamabad

### VISION OF ECP

"To fulfil its Constitutional obligation of holding free, fair and impartial elections in an effective, credible, transparent and independent manner; meeting the aspirations of the nation for a strong democracy in Pakistan"

### MISSION OF ECP

"To organise free, fair and impartial elections through enhancing its organisational capacity; preparing and maintaining credible electoral rolls; delimiting constituencies in a transparent manner; encouraging voters' participation; and building constructive relationships with all stakeholders, thus introducing comprehensive electoral reforms in Pakistan."

### Composition of Senate

Provinces & Admn. Areas	General	Women	Technocrat/ Ulama	Non-Muslim
Punjab	14	04	04	01
Sindh	14	04	04	01
KPK	14	04	04	01
Balochistan	14	04	04	01
FATAs	08	00	00	00
Federal Capital	02	01	01	00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>04</b>

### Composition of National Assembly

Provinces & Admn. Areas	General	Women	Non-Muslim	Total
Punjab	148	35		183
Sindh	61	14		75
KPK	35	08		43
Balochistan	14	03	10	17
FATAs	12			12
Federal Capital	02			02
<b>Total:</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>342</b>

### Composition of Provincial Assemblies

Provinces	General	Women	Non-Muslim	Total
Punjab	297	66	08	371
Sindh	130	29	09	168
KPK	99	22	03	124
Balochistan	51	11	03	65
<b>Total:</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>728</b>

### ELECTORAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN UNDER CONSTITUTION/LAW

- Article 263 says that words importing the masculine gender shall be taken to include females;
- There is not a single provision which tends to prohibit a women from casting her vote or discriminate against women in any manner whatsoever so far as the exercise of their right to vote is concerned;
- Similarly no provision exists in any electoral law restraining women from contesting election

### Local Government Institutions

- There are three tiers of Local Government Institutions under the Local Government Ordinances, namely
  - Zila Councils
  - Tehsil/Taluka/Town Councils
  - Union Councils

33% seats have been reserved for women in all the above three tiers of local government institutions

### Restricting women from voting— Nature of the Act

- The act of entering into agreements by certain persons including political parties and candidates with a view to restraining women from voting at an election, by its nature, appears to fall into the category of the offence "*under influence*", which under the existing law is a "*corrupt practice*";
- An offence of "corrupt practice" is a cognizable offence and is triable by the Sessions Judge and an appeal lies before a Division Bench of the High Court. Section 81 of the Representation of the People Act, 1976 deals with the Offence of "undue Influence";

### AMENDMENT OF SECTION 81 OF RP ACT 1976

- Section 81 of the Representation of the People Act, 1976 is proposed to be amended by inserting in sub-section (1) thereof, the following clause to read as under:
- Section 81: Undue Influence.**—A person is guilty of *undue influence*, if he—
  - Enters into an agreement restraining women of a particular area or a polling stations from exercising their right to vote;
  - Provided* that each signatory to the agreement, or, in case of an unwritten agreement, each party to such agreement shall be individually responsible for the act;
  - Provided* further that in case of a political party, symbol allotted to it shall be cancelled;
- Section 2 of the RP Act, 1976 is also proposed to be amended so as to include therein the definition of the word, "person" with its wider import.

### INTRODUCTION OF NEW SECTION 103AAA IN THE RP ACT, 1976

- Power of Commission to declare a poll void.**—(1) If from facts apparent on the face of the record and after such summary inquiry as it may deem necessary, the Commission is satisfied that, an agreement has been entered into between certain persons of that area with a view to restrain women of a particular area or of a polling station from exercising their right to vote, it may declare the poll held in that area or a polling station void and, order re-poll thereof.
- Provided* that in case such agreement extends to a whole constituency, the Commission may declare the poll void as a whole and, by notification in the official Gazette, call upon that constituency to elect a member in the manner provided for in section 108 of the Representation of the People Act, 1976.
- Provided* further that notwithstanding the powers conferred on it by sub-section (1) the Commission may order filing of a complaint under Section 94 of the Act before a Court of competent jurisdiction against persons who entered into such agreement.



#### Insertion of a proviso to sub-section (9) of Section 38 of the RP Act

- Following proviso may be added in Section 38 of the Act
- Provided that the Presiding Officer of a combined polling station shall count the votes polled by male voters and by female voters from the marked copies of electoral rolls and shall mention the number of votes polled by male and female voters separately in the statement of count to be prepared by him in the form prescribed for the purpose;

#### Introduction of new Section 27A in the RP Act

- Exercise of right of votes by women voters.**— The Returning Officer, before consolidation of results under Section 39, shall examine the statements of counts received from each Presiding Officer and if it transpires that at a certain polling station less than 10% of the total female votes assigned to that polling station were polled, he shall, pending consolidation proceedings, report the matter to the Commission and the Commission may declare the poll at polling station as a whole void if it is a female polling station and in case of a combined polling station, declare the poll as void only to the extent of female booth or booths and direct re-poll thereat and if after re-poll the result remains the same the Commission shall direct consolidation of results excluding the votes polled at such female polling station or female polling booth.

#### Introduction of new Section 27A in the RP Act

Contd...

- Provided that for the purpose of calculating the percentage of female votes polled at a female polling station or polling booth or booths, as the case may be, the rejected votes shall also be included in the total number of votes polled.
- Provided further that re-poll referred to in this Section shall be held within seven days of the actual poll.

#### Recommendations

- The Political Parties may consider the grant of ticket to women candidates in their ranks providing them opportunity to contest election on general seats;
- A certain percentage, say, 10% tickets may be reserved for women candidates;

## ANNEX V

### MEDIA CLIPPINGS

## DAWN.COM | provinces

#### **Women demand 10pc share in party tickets**

**From the Newspaper | Metropolitan > Islamabad  
| By Amir Wasim  
September 30, 2011**

ISLAMABAD, Sept 29: Women legislators and political leaders belonging to almost all major political parties on Thursday called for allocation of 10 per cent mandatory quota of party tickets for women in the next elections.

The demand came from the women parliamentarians in the form of a declaration at the conclusion of a roundtable on “Strengthening women’s representation in political and legislative process” organized by the Women Parliamentary Caucus here.

“We resolve to build consensus among the political parties to amend the political parties act so as to provide mandatory quota of 10 per cent of winnable general seats to women to mainstream them in electoral processes before the next elections,” said the declaration released to the media.

Deputy Chairman Senate Mir Jan Mohammad Jamali was the chief guest at the conference that was attended by women representatives from the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP), Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), PML-Q, Awami National Party, Muttahida Qaumi Movement, PPP(Sherpao), Baluchistan National Party and the PML(Functional).

Speaking on the occasion, the deputy chairman Senate highlighted the meaningful role women had been playing in the legislative business. He admitted the nexus between sustainable development and the role of women at the political and decision-making process, and recommended the need to give a minimum of 33 per cent representation to women in the legislative assemblies.

WPC secretary and PPP MNA Nafisa Shah referred to the outstanding and proactive performance of the women legislators in legislative business in the recent years.

She recommended to the political parties to review the existing special measures for women’s participation in the legislatures making it more transparent, effective and empowering for women in politics.

The participants of the roundtable, including senior office-bearers of the political parties and members of the national and provincial assemblies, resolved to protect and preserve the provision of reserved seats for women in the National Assembly, Senate and the provincial assemblies. They also committed to enhancing and strengthening women’s representation in legislatures by working within their respective political parties to increase women’s representation at all levels of decision-making in the political forums.

Prominent among those who attended the event were Yasmeen Rehman (PPP), Bushra Gauhar (ANP), Asiya Nasir (JUI-F), Tasneem Siddiqui (PML-Q), Nuzhat Sadiq (PML-N), PPP Senator Saeeda Iqbal, Senator Farah Aqil, and MPA Nargis Faiz Malik.

Through the declaration, the participants of the roundtable recalled that “the Constitution of Pakistan provides women equal rights, rejects all forms of discrimination and promotes their full participation in public life.”

They also paid tributes to women leaders of Pakistan, particularly Fatima Jinnah, Rana Liaquat Ali and Benazir Bhutto “whose courage and exemplary contributions in public and political life have greatly inspired, built a sense of confidence and empowered the women of Pakistan.”

**Making their presence felt: Women legislators to press for 10% quota**

Published: September 30, 2011



Agree to build consensus among their parties to press for more representation.

**Female parliamentarians agreed to work towards building consensus among political parties to provide a minimum of 10 per cent quota for women on “winnable” seats before the next elections, said a press release on Thursday.**

The declaration was made by the Women Parliamentary Caucus on the one-day roundtable conference titled “Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process” to initiate a dialogue with political parties on the different ways to strengthening women's representation in legislative assemblies.

Speaking at the occasion, Deputy Chairman Senate Mir Jan Jamali highlighted the role women have played in the legislative process in recent years. He acknowledged the nexus between sustainable development and the role of women and recommended the need to give a minimum of 33 per cent women's representation in the legislative assemblies.

Nafisa Shah, a PPP Member National Assembly, in her opening remarks, referred to the proactive performance of the female legislators in the national and provincial assemblies. “The political parties should take measures to enhance women's participation in the legislatures, making it more transparent and effective,” she said.

Representatives from PPP, PML-N and ANP among others attended the conference.

The parliamentarians committed to protect and preserve the provision of reserved seats for women in the National Assembly, Senate and the provincial assemblies. “We want to enhance women's representation in legislatures by working within our respective political parties,” said a participant; she added, “Women's representation at all levels of decision making in the political forums should be increased.”

The participants also paid tributes to Fatima Jinnah, Rana Liaqut Ali and Benazir Bhutto for their contribution to the cause of women in the country.

*Published in The Express Tribune, September 30th, 2011.*

**Political parties agree to 10pc general seats quota for women**

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Women parliamentarians and party leaders from different political parties agreed to build consensus among their respective political parties to provide a minimum of 10 percent quota for women on general seats before the next elections.

Women Parliamentary Caucus issued a declaration after one-day Roundtable Conference titled, 'Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process' on Thursday to initiate a dialogue with political parties on the different ways to strengthen women's representation in legislative assemblies.

The parliamentarians across party lines committed to protect and preserve the provision of reserved seats for women in the National Assembly, Senate and the Provincial Assemblies and further committed to enhance and strengthen women's representation in legislatures by working within their respective political parties to increase women's representation at all levels of decision making in the political forums. The declaration called to build consensus among the

political parties to amend the Political Parties Act so as to provide mandatory quota of 10 per cent of general seats to women to mainstream the electoral processes before the next general elections.

Senate Deputy Chairman Mir Jan M Jamali, in his address highlighted the meaningful role women have been playing in the legislative business. He admitted the nexus between sustainable development and the role of women in political decision-making and recommended the need to give a minimum of 33 percent women representation in the legislative assemblies. WPC Secretary MNA Nafisa Shah in her opening remarks referred to the outstanding and proactive performance of the women legislators in legislative business in the recent years and recognized the Speaker Fehmida Mirza's role. She recommended that the political parties should review the existing special measures for women's participation in the legislation making it more transparent, effective and empowering women in politics. Senior office-bearers of parliamentary political parties and members of the national and all four provincial assemblies participated in the dialogue and explored ways.

**AWAMI WEB**

**Roundtable conference organized by WPC today**

*Posted by Awami Admin on Sep 28th, 2011 // No Comment*

A Round table Conference on “Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative process” is being organized by Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) on Thursday 29th September, 2011 at Serena Hotel, Islamabad.

Senator Jan Muhammad Jamali, Deputy Chairman, Senate will inaugurate the Conference.

Besides, members of Working Council of Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), one Women MPA from each political party within the Provincial Assemblies, representatives and heads of Women Wings of

Political Parties, General Secretaries and Representative from different national and international organizations will participate in Conference.

The Conference will discuss the quota for women in Political and Legislative System, the reserved seats for women in Legislative Assemblies, strengthening of women representation within the structure of political parties and ways & means to further enhance and strengthen women representation in the legislative process.





### Lady MPs to build consensus for 10% women quota

Posted on September 30, 2011

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Women Parliamentarians and Party Leaders from across political parties, agreed to build consensus among their respective political parties to provide a minimum of 10 per cent quota for women on winnable seats before the next elections. This was stated in the Declaration issued by the Women Parliamentary Caucus on the one day Roundtable Conference "Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process" on Thursday to initiate a dialogue with political parties on the different ways to strengthening women's representation in legislative assemblies. The Chief Guest, Hon. Deputy Chairman Senate, Mir Jan M Jamali, in his address highlighted the meaningful role women have played in the legislative business. He strongly admitted the nexus between sustainable development and the role of women at the political and decision making, and strongly recommended the need to give a minimum of 33 percent women's representation in the legislative assemblies. MNA Nafisa Shah and Secretary WPC, in her opening remarks referred to the outstanding and proactive performance of the women legislators in legislative business in the recent years and recognized the Speaker Fehmida Mirza's role, and recommended that the political parties to review the existing special

measures for women's participation in the legislatures making it more transparent, effective, and empowering for women in politics. The parties represented were PPP, PML N, ANP, PMLQ, MQM, PPP (Sherpao), BNP, PML(F). Senior office bearers of parliamentary political parties and members of the National and all four Provincial Assemblies which included MNA Yasmeen Rehman, Secretary General ANP, Ehsan Wyne, MNA Bushra Gauhar, MNA Asiya Nasir, MNA Tasneem Siddiqui, Women Wing President PMLQ Farrukh Khan, MNA Ehsan Iqbal, MNA Nushat Sadiq, MNA Ghazala Gola Women Minister Baluchistan, Deputy Speaker AJK, Senator Saeeda Iqbal, Senator Farah Aqil, Shaheen Dar, Shama Mithani MPA, MPA Nargis Faiz, MPAs from Gilgit-Baltistan and AJK, participated in the dialogue and explored ways. The Parliamentarians across party lines committed further to protect and preserve the provision of reserved seats for women in the National Assembly, Senate and the Provincial Assemblies, and further committed to enhancing and strengthening women's representation in legislatures by working within our respective political parties to increase women's representation at all levels of decision making in the political forums.



### Next election: Speakers for 10 percent quota allocation to women

SEPTEMBER 30, 2011  
RECORDER REPORT

Women parliamentarians and leaders from across the political parties agreed to build consensus among their respective political parties to provide a minimum of 10 percent quota for women on winnable seats before next elections.

This was stated in the declaration issued by the Women Parliamentary Caucus on the one day

roundtable conference "Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process" to initiate a dialogue with political parties on the different ways to strengthening women's representation in legislative assemblies, here on Thursday.

The chief guest, Deputy Chairman Senate, Mir Jan M Jamali highlighted the meaningful role women have

played in the legislative business. He strongly admitted the nexus between sustainable development and the role of women at the political and decision making, and strongly recommended the need to give a minimum of 33 percent women's representation in the legislative assemblies.

MNA Nafisa Shah and Secretary WPC while recognizing Speaker Fehmida Mirza's role recommended the political parties to review the existing special measures for women's participation in the legislation, making it more transparent, effective, and empowering for women in politics.

The parliamentarians across the party lines committed further to protect and preserve the provision of reserved seats for women in the National Assembly, Senate and the Provincial Assemblies. They committed to enhancing and strengthening

women's representation in legislatures by working within their respective political parties to increase women's representation at all levels of decision making in the political forums.

Senior office bearers of parliamentary political parties and members of the National and all four Provincial Assemblies which included MNA Yasmeen Rehman, Secretary General ANP, Ehsan Wyne, MNA Bushra Gauhar, MNA Asiya Nasir, MNA Tasneem Siddiqui, Women Wing President PMLQ, Farrukh Khan, MNA Ehsan Iqbal, MNA Nushat Sadiq, MNA Ghazala Gola Women Minister Baluchistan, Deputy Speaker AJK, Senator Saeeda Iqbal, Senator Farah Aqil, Shaheen Dar, Shama Mithani MPA, MPA Nargis Faiz, MPAs from Gilgit-Baltistan and AJK, participated in the dialogue.- PR

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### SANA: SOUTH ASIAN NEWS AGENCY

#### Roundtable conference organized by WPC today

South Asian News Agency (SANA) · September 29, 2011

ISLAMABAD, (SANA): A Round table Conference on "Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative process" is being organized by Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) on Thursday 29th September, 2011 at Serena Hotel, Islamabad.

Senator Jan Muhammad Jamali, Deputy Chairman, Senate will inaugurate the Conference.

Besides, members of Working Council of Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), one Women MPA from each political party within the Provincial Assemblies, representatives and heads of Women Wings of

Political Parties, General Secretaries and Representative from different national and international organizations will participate in Conference.

The Conference will discuss the quota for women in Political and Legislative System, the reserved seats for women in Legislative Assemblies, strengthening of women representation within the structure of political parties and ways & means to further enhance and strengthen women representation in the legislative process.



### Parliamentarians evolve consensus for provision of 10% quota for women

Islamabad

Myra Imran

Friday, September 30, 2011

Women parliamentarians and party leaders from across political parties have agreed to build consensus among their respective political parties to provide a minimum of 10 per cent quota for women on winnable general seats before the next elections.

This consensus was reached in a one-day roundtable conference titled Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process organized by the Women Parliamentarian Caucus.

A declaration issued by the Caucus at the end of the conference urged the party leaders and members Parliament to initiate a dialogue with political parties on the different ways to strengthening women s representation in legislative assemblies. Deputy Chairman Senate, Mir Jan M Jamali was the chief guest on the occasion.

The parties represented were PPP, PML-N, ANP, PML-Q, MQM, PPP (Sherpao), BNP, PML-F. Senior office-bearers of parliamentary political parties and members of the national and all four provincial assemblies including MNA Yasmeen Rehman, Secretary General ANP, Ehsan Wyne, MNA Bushra Gauhar, MNA Asiya Nasir, MNA Tasneem Siddiqui, Women Wing President PML-Q Farrukh Khan, MNA Ahsan Iqbal, MNA Nushat Sadiq, MNA Ghazala Gola Women Minister Baluchistan, Deputy Speaker AJK, Senator Saeeda Iqbal, Senator Farah Aqil, Shaheen Dar, Shama Mithani MPA, MPA Nargis Faiz, MPAs from Gilgit-Baltistan and AJK participated in the dialogue.

In his address, Jamali highlighted the meaningful role women have played in the legislative business. He strongly admitted the nexus between sustainable developments and the role of women at the political and decision-making, and strongly recommended the need to give a minimum of 33 per cent women s representation in the legislative assemblies.

He said women are competent and highly qualified, but the reserved seats should not be filled as formality, rather he added, deserving and proficient women should be placed on key posts who can work for the betterment and uplift of womenfolk.

MNA Nafisa Shah and WPC secretary general, in her opening remarks referred to the outstanding and proactive performance of the women legislators in legislative business in the recent years and recognized Speaker Fehmida Mirza s role, and recommended that the political parties to review the existing special measures for women s participation in the legislatures making it more transparent, effective, and empowering for women in politics.

The parliamentarians across party lines committed further to protect and preserve the provision of reserved seats for women in the National Assembly, Senate and the Provincial Assemblies, and further committed to enhancing and strengthening women s representation in legislatures by working within our respective political parties to increase women s representation at all levels of decision making in the political forums. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Iqbal Secretary

General Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) said political party act should be amended and recommended that one-third women participation should be made mandatory in each political party for general seats.

He said five major challenges that hinder women from taking part into mainstream politics include economic participation, educational attainment and achievement, feminization of poverty and health, political empowerment and social dignity and lack of access to justice.

Member National Assembly Yasmeen Rehman representing Pakistan People s Party (PPP) said first prime minister, speaker National Assembly and deputy speaker provincial assembly hails from PPP, which shows clear manifesto of the party to promote and empower women.

Asia Nisar of Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI) informed the conference that there is no women wing in JUI but a two-member women council handle women related issue in centre and provinces. Haider Abbas Rizvi from Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) suggested that for increasing number of women in Senate, they should be considered for seats of technocrats.

Anisa Zeb Tahirkheli, representing Pakistan People s Party Sherpao (PPPP) said that women parliamentarians on reserved seats should be trained and groomed. She also urged for allotting cabinet slot to women elected on reserved seats and funds should be reserved for them so that they can work for womenfolk with dedication and responsibility.

#### Vote of Thanks by Secretary WPC Nafisa Shah

- I would like to thank the Patron of WPC Dr. Fehmida Mirza, and all the members of the Working Council of WPC who encouraged and supported the idea of organizing this Round Table Conference on such a crucial issue of **Strengthening Women's Representation in Political and Legislative Process**
- Deputy Coordinator WPC, Ali Kazmi, Assistant Coordinator WPC Syed Wasim Kazmi, Consultant/ Coordinator Ms. Huma Chughtai, and Rizwan Maqbool Peon WPC, whose timeless hard work made this Round Table Conference possible.
- I would also like to thank our donors namely;
- Ms. Bretta Patterson, Country Director Henrich Boel Stiftung and Ms. Saima Jasam Head of Programs
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- Mr. Mahboob Gurmaani, Director Public Relations
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- We would also like to thank the entire team of

Rapporteurs from the Research Centre of the National Assembly  
And finally I would like to thank Islamabad Police and the Interior Ministry for providing security coverage to this Roundtable Conference and making it a great success.



Conference Declaration being Finalized  
L to R: Ali Kazmi, Dr. Nafisa Shah, Bushra Gohar, Wasim Kazmi, Huma Chughtai, Rizwan Maqbool and an MLA from Gilgit Baltistan