

# NEWSLETTER

MAY 2023

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# WPC SPEARHEADS COLLABORATIONS FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

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## MEETING WITH SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (SMEDA) (MAY 09, 2023)



Secretary WPC and Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Industries, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, recently held a productive meeting with Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) in Lahore to discuss the crucial topic of women entrepreneurship in national economy. During the meeting, Dr. Shahida Rehmani emphasized the significance of empowering and supporting women in business as a vital driver of economic growth and innovation. The discussions focused on identifying strategies and initiatives to promote and nurture women entrepreneurship, recognizing its potential to contribute to job creation,

economic development, and societal progress.



# FOSTERING BILATERAL RELATIONS THROUGH PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

(MAY 11, 2023)

## MEETING WITH SYRIAN DELEGATION

Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani, accompanied by other Members of the National Assembly (MNAs), recently engaged in a productive parliamentary friendship group meeting with the Syrian Delegation. The meeting served as a platform for both countries to strengthen bonds and foster dialogue, with a shared commitment to building a brighter future.

Discussions focused on deepening bilateral relations and exploring areas of mutual interest and cooperation. This diplomatic engagement reflects the dedication of both nations to promoting understanding, collaboration, and peaceful relations, laying the groundwork for enhanced cooperation in various domains.



## MEETING WITH THE DELEGATION OF KENYA

A Kenyan delegation, headed by H.E. Farah Maalim Mohamed Ahmed, MP Fourth Chairperson of Committees met Secretary Women Parliamentary Caucus Dr. Shahida Rehmani on sidelines of International Constitutional Convention. Hon. Members National Assembly of Pakistan expressed gratitude to the Excellencies for participating in the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the #Constitution1973 of Pakistan. They also congratulated Kenya on the peaceful holding of the August 2022 Presidential Elections, which augurs well for the democratic process.

Ms. Shahida remarked that Pakistan attaches importance to its relations with the East African region and Kenya enjoys great respect from the Government and the people of Pakistan. Pakistan has adopted "Engage Africa Policy" to enhance engagement with the entire African Region. We also appreciate the support of the Kenyan side for hosting the first Pakistan Africa Trade Development Conference in Nairobi as an important step to initiate productive engagement with Africa.

She stressed the need to encourage exchange of High-level visits between Pakistan and Kenya.



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# REREADING THE CONSTITUTION THROUGH GENDER LENS

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## MEETING WITH UN WOMEN PAKISTAN REPRESENTATIVES TO EXPLORE COLLABORATIONS ON CONSTITUTION AND GENDER EQUALITY (MAY 14, 2023)

Women Parliamentarians MNA Dr. Nafisa Shah, MNA Mehnaz Akber Aziz, and Senator Rubina Khalid recently held a significant meeting with Mr. Zafarullah Khan and Mr. Hassan Hakeem from UN Women Pakistan. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential collaborations for an upcoming assignment that focuses on the intersection of the constitution and gender equality.

During the meeting, fruitful discussions took place regarding the importance of constitutional frameworks in promoting

and safeguarding gender equality, as well as identifying strategies to strengthen legal provisions to advance women's rights. The engagement highlighted the commitment of the parliamentarians and UN Women Pakistan representatives to work together towards achieving gender equality goals. This collaborative effort signifies a crucial step towards promoting gender-responsive legislation and creating an inclusive society that upholds women's rights and empowerment.



## MEETING WITH UN WOMEN AND MINISTRY OF LAW REPRESENTATIVES TO REVIEW PAKISTAN'S CONSTITUTION FROM A GENDER LENS (MAY 16, 2023)



Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani, accompanied by Dr. Nafisa Shah, MNA and Ms. Mehnaz Akber Aziz, MNA presided over a significant meeting held at the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) Secretariat. The meeting was attended by Mr. Zafarullah Khan, Ms. Nadia Aly from AGHS Legal Aid and Mr. Hassan Hakeem from UN Women Pakistan and representatives of Ministry of Law.

The primary objective of the meeting was to discuss a collaborative effort between the

WPC, Ministry of Law, and UN Women Pakistan to review the Constitution of Pakistan through a gender lens. Deliberations revolved around the need to ensure gender-responsive provisions within the constitutional framework, promoting women's rights, and addressing gender-based inequalities. The meeting signifies a strong commitment from the WPC to foster a more inclusive and equitable legal framework, striving for gender equality and empowering women in Pakistan.



# MEETING WITH UZBEKISTAN AMBASSADOR TO ENHANCE BILATERAL RELATIONS AND FOSTER COOPERATION

(MAY 19, 2023)



Dr. Shahida Rehmani held a meeting with the Ambassador of Uzbekistan at the WPC Secretariat. The meeting centered around discussions aimed at strengthening bilateral relations between Pakistan and Uzbekistan while exploring new avenues for cooperation across various sectors. The productive exchange highlighted the shared commitment of both countries to deepening diplomatic ties and fostering a fruitful partnership. The engagement signifies the beginning of an exciting chapter in the friendship between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, with promising prospects for collaboration and mutual growth.



## GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING ON ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND THE ROLE OF SMEDA (MAY 24, 2023)



Meeting of the General Assembly was held with the main objective to make women's economic empowerment a priority. WPC meeting chaired by Dr. Shahida Rehmani where the need to explore existing avenues for collaboration and knowledge sharing were discussed. In this regard, a presentation was given to Members with a focus on information sharing and discussion on how to bridge the gap within organizations, experience sharing and to enhance outreach to be able to reach out to women entrepreneurs across the country by Ms. Nadia Seth, GM Policy & Planning, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA). It was unanimously decided by the Members to do a follow up

on this presentation for a deeper collaboration with SMEDA. It was also decided that a subcommittee on the area of economic empowerment of women should be formed.



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## MINORITY RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS (MAY 25, 2023)



Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani and esteemed WPC members including Ms. Wajiha Qamar, Ms. Nuzhat Pathan, along with Mr. Kesoo Mal Kheeral Das and Mr. Naveed Aamir Jeeva had a meeting with a delegation from National Leadership Dialogue for a crucial discussion on minority rights and the need to revise marriage and divorce laws regarding minorities according to the requirements of time. It was an insightful and collaborative meeting, emphasizing the need for inclusivity and equal opportunities.



## MEETING WITH ISLAMABAD WOMEN'S CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (IWCC)

(MAY 30, 2023)



Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani held a meeting with the Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce. The discussion focused on strengthening women entrepreneurship in Pakistan by working across party lines. Ms. Samina Fazil (Founder President), Ms. Rizwana Asif (President), Ms. Sonia Saleem (Senior Vice President) and Ms. Naima Ansari (Former President) were among the delegation.



## SUPPORTING THE DONATION DRIVE (MAY 30, 2023)



Madam Secretary WPC, Ms. Shahida Rehmani participated in an event to express her solidarity with the flood affected farmers of Balochistan. The event was

organized at Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS) by Hon'ble Jan M. Jamali, Speaker Pa Balochistan.

Addressing the seed donation ceremony, Baluchistan's Legislative Assembly Speaker Jan Muhammad Jamali said that 85 percent of Balochistan was affected by the floods last year, and the donated seeds will revive rice plantations in the province, where rice is a major crop. The government and people of China extended great help to Pakistan in rehabilitation work after the flood, and through the seed donation, it will help the people who lost all their fortune in the calamity.

## PROMOTING ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

(MAY 31, 2023)



Dr. Shahida Rehmani, Secretary WPC, met with the representatives from FAFEN to discuss new and exciting

opportunities to establish a strong democratic framework for future engagements that foster gender equity. Moreover, new pathways to explore new avenues of cooperation were put forward that pave the way for transformative initiatives. Together, we can strengthen democratic engagement and foster gender equity.



# NOTICE BOARD

Senator Sana Jamali, the youngest Senator, was featured on the forum of IPU where she highlighted the importance of women representation in politics.



## CELEBRATIONS



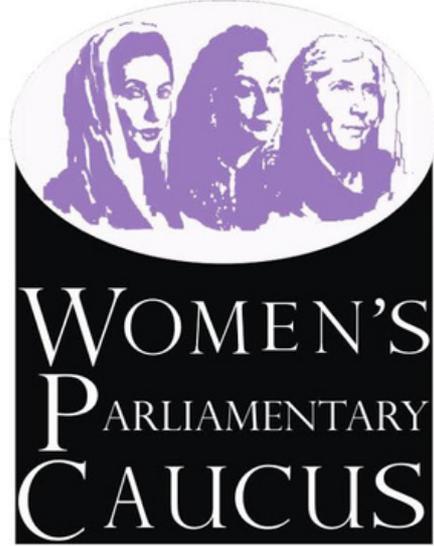
## FELICITATIONS

- Joint session of Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) passes The Maternity and Paternity Leave Bill, 2020. The bill was presented by Senator Quratulain Marri.
- WPC congratulates Naila Kiani, a shining beacon of Pakistani women, for successfully scaling Mount Everest alongside Pasang Temba Sherpa. Naila is the first foreign female climber to summit the peak in 2023, a testament to her indomitable spirit.
- WPC congratulates Advocate Nadia Khan for being elected as Finance Secretary of Peshawar High Court Bar Association. More power to you

## CONDEMNATIONS

- Secretary WPC condemned the incidence of violence in Bahria Town Lahore and wrote to IG Punjab to express her concern regarding the unfortunate incidence. She demanded justice for the victims on immediate basis.
- WPC strongly condemns the horrifying incident in Barakahu, Islamabad and demanded justice for the 8-year-old girl who was abducted, raped, and murdered. This tragic event highlights the pressing need to combat violence against our children.
- WPC vehemently condemned the despicable act of extremists, who cowardly targeted two girls' schools in North Waziristan. This horrifying incident underscores the ongoing struggle for girls' education in Pakistan, where equal access to education remains an urgent concern.
- WPC strongly condemns the brutal killing of innocent teachers in #Parachinar in two separate firing incidents. We express solidarity with the families of the victims and demand prompt justice.





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