

ANNAUL REPORT

2006



National Commission on the Status of Women

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Foreword

Societies that dare to change have to address the most difficult and complex questions. These are the questions to strive for equity, equality and justice for all. These may appear simple questions but they are intertwined issues. The challenge is to bring in a culture of understanding, tolerance and perseverance. Again this is not an easy job as it relates to attitudes more than legal and constitutional guarantees. In an environment where power defines supremacy and control, the marginalized get more marginalized and the vulnerable is the easy victim of deprivation. Women in our society are no exception, rather the easy target. Attitudes are framed by education and culture. In our system cultural traditions create obstacles for education. The complimentary role of each other takes an antagonistic role. Thus the agents of change themselves become the forces of coercion. Under this climate of opinion any change is seen as alien and out of context.

National Commission on the Status of Women has to address this formidable issue, changing the lives of women of Pakistan, for a life of dignity and honour. The mandate given to the Commission is to review and analyze government laws and policies, and to recommend amendments accordingly. In this perspective the Commission has to play the role of the conscience of the government. This is not an ordinary challenge and no mean task. NCSW is committed to raise the voice for creating public awareness about the malaise of women that they suffer, not because of law, constitutional or religious, but because of fossilized attitudes.

The present board of members was notified in October 2005. It was expected that now the Commission would be enabled to focus on its representative areas. Due to lack of interest and professional commitment the desired participation remains elusive.

National Commission on the Status of Women, since its inception 2000 is still without a proper independent secretariat and technical staff. In the absence of an adequate infrastructure, it becomes increasingly difficult to function as per mandate. Nevertheless the Commission takes its mandate seriously and these handicaps could not deter it. Due to this seriousness of the commitment the Commission enjoys the trust of the government, international agencies, NGO's, civil society and the society in general. This level of trust has been achieved by involvement and commitment beyond the call of duty.

I joined the Commission in January 2006. The foremost responsibility was to revitalize, and reactivate the Commission from the state of dormancy. This report is indicative of the Commission's commitment and untiring efforts for the period of Jan 2006 – Dec 2006.

Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra
Chairperson

About the Report

This report expands into seven parts. First part focuses on the profiles of the present members of the Commission. Second part highlights the activities under the UNDP funded project 'Institutional Strengthening of NCSW'. Third part of the report is about the full Commission's meetings held in 2006, discussions held and the decisions made. Minutes of Commission's Executive Committee are put together in the fourth part of the report. Chairperson of the Commission kept a busy schedule throughout the year in various activities to further the cause of the women of Pakistan and the mandate of the Commission. Fifth portion of the report provides a glimpse of important engagements of the Chairperson.

Commission had serious deliberations throughout the year about its role and responsibilities and the challenges it faces. Many recommendations were made after these meetings, international visits, and the international conference. These recommendations are compiled in the sixth part of the report.

At the end of the report some selected newspapers clippings and photographs provide an opportunity to the reader to have a glimpse of those activities that have been undertaken in 2006.

Members' Profile

NCSW Members' Profile

1. **Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra**

Dr. Arfa holds Masters Degrees in Asian Studies and Urdu and completed her PhD History from the University of Hawaii, USA in 1983. She has also been awarded a number of Research Fellowships including at the University of Hawaii, UNESCO Thailand, Mashal, Lahore and Government College, Lahore.

She has previously remained Principal, Government College for Women, Lahore (1989 – 2002) as well as at Lahore College for Women, Lahore (1988 – 1989). She also held the positions of Vice Principal and Assistant Professor at Lahore College of Women (1966 – 1984). She remains visiting faculty at Lahore University of Management Sciences and National College of Arts, Lahore, a guest lecturer at NIPA, Lahore and Karachi and Administrative Staff College, Lahore and member of the Board of Governors for some of the most prominent colleges, councils and trusts in the country. She has also been a broadcaster and a telecaster.

Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra has more than 40 years of experience in working for progressive development of her country. Starting her career as a teacher, she shaped the minds of her students and later contributed to the refinement of the education system to ensure a progressive approach in learning and knowledge. While working in the education system she also devoted her time and efforts towards various social and development causes. Dr. Arfa not only gave action to the causes but also gave voice to them through the media and public forums.

She has been recognized for her accomplishments through awards and rewards internationally and nationally throughout her professional career. Her most recent accomplishment being her role in the government's passing of the 'Women Protection Act' in 2006 followed by an international conference on women's rights which was attended by representatives from all over the world and most importantly by the President and Prime Minister of the country. Offering a rare blend of creative and operational strengths, in her current assignment as the Chairperson, National Commission on the Status of Women. Dr. Arfa has revitalized the cause of women through awareness, advocacy, strategic research and seeking and positively changing public opinion.

Dr. Arfa's exceptional track record is based on her will to change the future of the people of Pakistan and her philosophy of attending to the minutest of detail and leaving no stone unturned to ensuring the fulfillment of the cause of progressive development. Be it conservation water, promotion of inter and intra faith understanding, environmental concerns or preservation of culture and heritage of Pakistan, Dr. Arfa works for all with unmatched dedication.

She has been published internationally and nationally on countless occasions. Her flare for languages has allowed to be well versed in English, French, Arabic, Persian, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi. She has also variously, contributed to the literature of the country.

2. Ms. Ashi Chanda

Ms. Ashi holds a BA (Arts), an LLB, and MA (Urdu) and a Primary Teaching Certificate. She has worked as a teacher at Zafar Muslim Model Boarding High School, Risalpur and currently operates a tuition center at home. She is involved in advocacy and protection against discriminatory laws and violence against women and works towards increasing youth competencies to get the right education for life and for the job that will provide them the opportunity and stability and eventually to achieve social, educational, economic and environmental justice.

3. Dr. Begum Jan

Dr. Begum Jan completed her MD from Medical College Jalalabad, Afghanistan. She has worked as a Female Medical Officer in Private Health Care Centre and at Adezai Basic Health Unit for Afghan refugees and as a Field Medical Officer, Ansar Burni Welfare Trust, Peshawar. She is the founder of the NGO Tribal Women Welfare Association for the development of women in FATA.

4. Dr. Faqir Hussain

Dr. Faqir Hussain completed his LL.B. from University of Peshawar in 1975 and went on to complete an LL.M (1983) and a Post-Doctoral Fellowship (1992) from School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, London.

He currently holds the position of Secretary of the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad. Previously he held the post of Joint Secretary of the Commission. He has also been lecturer and Assistant Professor in the Law Faculty of the University of Peshawar.

He has participated in a number of seminars and conferences within the country and abroad including South Asian Workshop on Juvenile Justice, Sri Lanka, May 1997; Conference on Law Reform Agencies in the 21st Century, Dhaka, 2002; and Leader, Pakistan Delegation to the UN Commission on the Status of Women, New York, March 2002. He has also published over 30 papers on legal/judicial issues in various research journals and has published a number of books and reports including Personal Liberty and Preventative Detention; Electoral Reform in Pakistan; Status of Women in NWFP; Judicial System of Pakistan; Women Representation in Elective Bodies; and Reforming the Law of Zina.

5. Erum Wali Khan

Ms. Erum holds an MA in Sociology from University of Peshawar and is currently completing an M.Phil in Anthropology from Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. She is the LUMS –McGill fellow on Social Enterprise Development Programme.

Working as a freelance social development consultant with specialization in education, gender and training, she has conducted a study on Teachers Motivation and Incentives for Rural Support Programmes Network and worked with Human Resource Development Network in the organisation of the 2nd International HRD congress on ‘Attacking Poverty through Public Private Partnership’. October 2004. Previously she has worked with the British Council’s Northern Areas Education Project; World Wide Fund of Nature, Pakistan, Gilgit; National Rural Support Programme, Islamabad; and Adult Basic Education Society. She remains Chairperson of the Community Support Development Programme and a Gender Consultant for the Belour Advisory and Social Development Organization and Honorary Director for Children College, Primary School Jutial, Gilgit.

6. Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb

Professor Farkhanda graduated from Government College Lahore with M.A (English). She attended Northwestern University and University of Delaware, USA. She is also a LLB graduate from University of Punjab. She has also participated in certificate courses in humanitarian law by ICRC, Islamabad and a humanitarian law course in National Law School, Negar Bhavi, Bangalore, India. She has also regularly participated in seminars dealing with various issues, including torture and inhumane punishments; child labour; viable democratic process in Pakistan; and workshops on juvenile justices and prisons.

She is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Balochistan and Chairperson of Women’s Studies Department, University of Balochistan, Quetta. She has previously been a visiting professor of law at University Law College. She has also been an avid human rights activist and one of the initial members of HRCP, Pakistan. She has attended numerous national, regional and international conferences on women, including in India, Nepal, Malaysia and Thailand, and participated in the Beijing Conference and continues to be active in Beijing + 5, Beijing + 10. She is also the Vice President of LAWS (Legal Association for Women and Suppressed – a self-financed NGO). She has been involved in a number of campaigns relating to women’s issues including rehabilitation of widows, handicapped and street children, on jail reforms and child’s rights and eradication of child labour. She is also a member of several boards relating to human rights issues including National Advisory Board on Social Welfare; Provincial Steering Committee on ‘Women in Crisis’ and the Expert Committee on ‘Gender Reforms Project’.

She has a number of written reports, researches and publications including papers on torture and inhumane punishment; child labour and child abuse; role of women in national development and study on Access of Women to Health Facilities.

7. Dr. Firoza Ahmed

Dr. Firoza holds a Graduate Professional Certificate (1960), Master in Social Work (1961) and a PhD in Community Development, Adult Education and Management of Community Programme (1963), from Florida State University, USA. She also attended courses at the Pakistan Administrative Staff College, including the National Management Course.

Her experience spanning over 50 years includes national and international positions. Her professional experience in the USA includes being the Principal Investigator in projects with the US office of Health, Education and Welfare; as Director, National Audit Basic Education and Welfare and the Adult Education Association of the USA; as Chief Consultant, Warner and Warner International Associates. She has served as a member, WHO's Expert Advisory Panel on Information, Education and Communication and temporary advisor to Steering Committees. She also held the position of Liaison Officer with the UN and External Agencies for the observation of UN Decade of Women.

Within Pakistan, she has worked on urban and social welfare programmes and served as Joint Secretary with the Ministries of Local Government and Rural Development; Health, Special Education and Social Welfare; and Ministry of Women Development. She has been an independent consultant hired by international and national agencies such as ILO, UNICEF, Plan International and the Government of Pakistan to advise on various projects including the CEDAW project and preparation of the National Report on CEDAW; preparation of training packages for Children and Women in Difficult Circumstances; to NCCWD on Child Labour; Situation of children in jails etc. She has also conducted short courses with APWA, Preston University etc. She has remained visiting faculty with Preston University, Agriculture University, Government of Punjab, Preston Institute of Management Sciences. She also continues to write editorials and articles on social sector subjects in the Muslim newspaper, Dawn and The News.

In her many years of experience, she has published a vast amount of articles, researches and studies. These include 'Participation of rural women in development activities', for an APWA conference; NGO of women and youth in integrated rural development programmes, UNDP/FAO; Building leadership from the grassroots; UN; Training of Pakistan Air Force Women's Association on Self Enrichment and Professional Growth, Preston Lecture Series; and Addressing Psychological Issues of Women Victims of Earthquake, On Women

8. Prof Mehar Taj Roghani

Professor Mehar received her M.B.B.S from Fatima Jinnah Medical College, Lahore in 1965 and completed her training in the UK receiving her DCH from Glasgow in 1969 and MRCP in 1972 from Dublin.

She held the position of Minister for Health NWFP from Feb 2002 – Dec 2002 and is Director, Preventative and Promotive Health Service, Govt. of NWFP. She has had 25

years of teaching experience to medical students and health workers and remains Professor of Paediatrics, Khyber Medical College, Peshawar and previously has been Head of the Department as well. She was elected as President of Pakistan Paediatrics Association Centre and remains a member of Pakistan Red Crescent Society and the Executive Committee, APWA, among others.

She has a large number of health related publications and has contributed to a number of books including the National Textbook of Paediatrics for the Developing Countries. She has also attended and presented at a number of national and international conferences including a course on Primary Health in Thailand, Manila; 6th Asian Congress on Paediatrics, Tokyo, Japan; National Conference on Medical Education, Islamabad.

9. Dr. Muhammad Tufail Hashmi

Dr Tufail is a Hafiz-e-Quran and completed his M.A (Arabic) (1972) and M.A. (Islamic Studies) (1973) and Ph.D. (1984) from Punjab University. He also holds a Post-Graduate Diploma in Applied Linguistics (1978) from Riyadh University, Saudi Arabia. He taught in Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) initially as a lecturer and ultimately as a Professor. He was also appointed Dean, Social Sciences and Islamic Studies Department and Dean, Faculty Arabic and Islamic Studies. As a visiting professor he has taught international courses in Fiji, Guyana and in national universities such as F.G College for Women, F-7/2 and International Islamic University (IIU), Islamabad. He has also recorded a number of international and national TV and Radio Programmes. He is a permanent jurist consultant of the Federal Shariat Court and of the Pakistan Law Commission and is a member of the Committee for Religious Education, Pakistan. He is also on the board of prominent universities including Al-Huda University, Nottingham University UK, and Shariah Academy and Faculty of Shariah. IIU, Islamabad.

He has organized and attended a number of workshops and conferences in various capacities such as a Supervisor of Arabic Teachers; Teaching Arabic to non-Arabs (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia); World Islamic Forum Conference, London, UK. He has a number of published research articles, books and conference papers on different aspects of Islam such as 'Family: An Institution under threat and its remedy'; 'Enforcement of Islamic Law: gradual progress and priorities (Rastah, Birmingham UK); Imprisonment, need for fresh Legislation; Tarjuman-al-Quran, Lahore; Inception and Evolution of Legal commentaries of the Holy Quran, Hikmat-al-Quran, Lahore, Right of Children in the light of Sirah Punjab Auqaf Academy, Lahore and 'Tadwin-i-Tabaqat', prescribed for M.Phil, Islamic Studies, Pakistan. He has done a detailed critique of 'Hudood Ordinances'.

10. Dr. Naheed Ali

Dr. Naheed has M.Sc. (Entomology) (1979) and M.Phil (Malacology) (1988) from University of Peshawar and was awarded a scholarship to complete her PhD from Kings College London, University of London in Molecular Ecological Entomology.

She began her career as a Lecturer and currently holds the position of Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Zoology, University of Peshawar.

Her articles have been published in international and national journals. She is the co-author of the biology book for class 9th and 10th and supervises M.Sc research theses.

11. Professor Dr. Parveen Shah

Professor Dr. Parveen holds M.A (Hon), Economics (1973), M.A in Sindhi (1975), M.Phil in Agri. Economics (1990) and a PhD in Economics (2003) from University of Sindh, Jamshoro. She also had the opportunity to attend a number of seminars on issues relating to women such as ASR Women Development Studies workshop on 'Women as Property and Women and Property' and Consultation o' Women Study Centers', workshop on Gender and Governance, Fatima Jinnah Women's University; and 'Women in Higher Education Management'.

She is currently Director of the Institute of Women Development Studies, University of Sindh, Jamshoro. She joined the department of Economics as a Lecturer and is now a Professor. In her capacity as Director, she has organized several seminars and programmes including 'Status of Women in Today's World', Sindhi Women in the New Millennium', Women and Media and Gender Awareness'. She has been a member of a number of eminent boards and committees, including member of the National Curriculum Committee and of the Zakat and Baitulmal Committee.

She also has a large number of research publications including 'The role of communication in the development of rural women', 'Socio-Economic Conditions of Women in Pakistan with special reference to Sindh Province and Education for rural women in Sindh.

12. Ms. Simi Sadaf Kamal

Ms. Simi received B.A (Hons) (1981) and M.A (1983) in Geography from University of Cambridge. She had also received master trainers certificates and several training certificates in planning, management, research, gender and related areas by attending courses in several countries.

Her extensive work spanning over 25 years, focuses on water, sanitation, environment, social development, gender and humanitarian themes etc. She has extensive experience in institutional diagnosis, assessment, evaluation and development, as well as strategic planning, management systems review; over 150 assignments and postings as team leader and consultant covering advisory services, policy development etc. Some of her key experience includes being Team Leader of Hissar Foundation's Campaign for Earthquake Relief and Rehabilitation; Consultant on Gender Mainstreaming in Pakistan's Mid Term Development Framework; Team Leader of the Gender Reform Action Plan for the Government of Pakistan; Gender Consultant on World Bank study on Rural Transport Services and Gender in Pakistan; Team Leader on evaluation of FPAP's Training for

Women's Development Programme; and Consultant and author of a joint UNICEF/Government of Sindh Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Sindh etc. She is also author and co-author of over 180 research and evaluation reports, handbooks and manuals. Some of these include Handbooks on Mobilizing Resources for Social Development; Technical Resource Handbooks on Project Development and Management, Project Implementation; Modules on Social Research for Irrigation and Drought Rehabilitation, Monitoring and Evaluation for Irrigation and Drought Rehabilitation.

13. Prof. Saleema Atta

Professor Saleema completed her MA Economics from Peshawar University. She remained at Peshawar University initially as a Lecturer and eventually as a Professor (1967 – 2004). She also held the position of Dean, Faculty of Art and Design and Dean of Faculty of Arts from 2001 – 2004.

She has presented a number of papers at various national conferences on Economics, Role of Women in Economic Development and the Kashmir issue. She remains an active member of Azad Kashmir Association of Women and an executive member of Dar-ul-alah, member of Edi Welfare Association and the President of Welfare Society for Women and Children.

14. Dr Shahida Haider

Dr Shahida completed her M.B.B.S. from Punjab University, Lahore, and later her MCPS from Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Karachi, Pakistan. She received her D.CH from London, UK. She has attended several Child Health in-service training courses in Pakistan and abroad and has also presented at several national and international conferences.

She started her career at Fatima Jinnah Medical College, Lahore, where she was eventually selected and remained as Professor and Head of Paediatric Department until her retirement. During her tenure, she was also responsible for conducting several UNICEF sponsored workshops relating to mother and child welfare in many cities in Pakistan. Post-retirement, she was involved in the establishment of a College of Business Administration and Computer Sciences in Lahore.

15. Dr. Tahira Kamal

Dr Tahira completed her M.B.B.S from Bolan Medical College, Quetta and her M.P.H. from Health Services Academy, Islamabad. Her professional experience includes working as an emergency medical officer in World Health Organisation and as a medical officer in ADC National Programme for PHC and F.P Quetta, BHU Hazar Ganji, Quetta, BHU Khilli Khali and Lady Duffrin Hospital.

Within the health sector, she has been a member of a number of UN Missions relating to Afghan refugees, assistance for health in flood emergency and for the WHO Mission for RBM. She has also worked as a supervisor in a number of health surveys and conducted a number of trainings on various health issues for WHO, UNICEF, Asia Foundation, AGHS legal aid cell and several others. She is also a member of Legislative Watch Group, Aurat Foundation, Quetta; Red Crescent Society, Balochistan; trainer for Penal Reform International, Paris; and a board member for HARD (Health and Rural Development).

She has also conducted a number of research studies and presentations including ‘Situation Analysis of Burn Patients in Quetta, Balochistan’; ‘Preliminary Studies on Malaria and Anemia in Pregnant women in Balochistan; Agricultural Policy and Health; and ‘Unfair Distribution of Resources in Pakistan’.

UNDP-NCSW Project:
Institutional Strengthening

Institutional Strengthening of National Commission on the Status of Women

Preamble:

National Commission on the Status of Women, entered into an agreement with UNDP in 2004 for a project that would have three fold affect. The project was so designed;

1. Given the situation NCSW itself needed mechanisms for its institutional strengths, otherwise implementation of the mandate entrusted would remain obscure.
2. Research on the issues affecting the lives of millions of women were considered to be the primary focus for enabling recommendations encompassing social realities and the access to rights guaranteed by religion and constitution.
3. Public awareness through advocacy was adopted as a two pronged strategy. One having an interface of NCSW with the stakeholders and second touching base with the society for a broader understanding of the issues.

The Commission is mandated to review the policies and laws. Dissemination of research findings is also part of the mandate. Unfortunately, technical and administrative support and expertise required for such work is still absent. The need to have a clear vision, shared by all the members of NCSW regarding their roles and responsibilities was the primary concern.

With these considerations, a two-years project was designed for the institutional strengthening of the NCSW and was signed in June 2004. Unfortunately the Commission was almost dormant as the earlier members had completed their tenure and the new members were not brought on board. Consequently the project could hardly progress. Upon the initiation of the full Commission in Jan' 2006 only six months were left for the project to complete. An extension for six months at no cost basis was requested from UNDP and the two year project was successfully completed in twelve months time.

The project team was hired by the end of first quarter i.e. September 2004. Work on two researches was initiated by Feb' 2005:

1. Women's Right of Inheritance and its Implementation and
2. Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women

Request from Anti Narcotics Force of Pakistan was received in early 2005 for collaboration for a research on 'Socio-Economic Factors Responsible for Drug Addiction Among Women in Pakistan'. The ANF never honoured its commitment for cost sharing and NCSW bore all expense. Due to ambivalent attitude of ANF, this pertinent research was never finalized.

All draft research reports were ready by the end of 2005. Rigorous consultative process was undertaken in 2006 and the feedbacks were integrated.

Capacity Building was initiated at two levels i.e. members and the researchers. This exercise was completed in 2005 for researchers and in 2006 for the members.

Advocacy for the recommendations of the report on 'Hudood Ordinances' was initiated and was continued till Feb 2005 when it was suspended for the rest of the year as there was no Commission on board.. It restarted in 2006 with a focus on the recommendations of other research reports also. Members of the Commission were involved in all these activities

Research, advocacy and capacity building related activities provided an opportunity to create and strengthen linkages with other partners. As well as long term and short term consultants were brought on board for enhancement of monitoring and management capacities of the Commission.

Consequently all activities were successfully completed without any compromise on the quality. The Commission was able to make an impact at the highest level through its activities though still working with skeleton staff. Absence of permanent administrative and technical staff limited the benefits of the project due to lack of human power essential for institutional memory.

This was a unique project that encountered all kinds of oscillation during its life span. Initially one whole quarter was lost due to the delays in the hiring of the staff and when it started taking off by the end of Feb 2005 it suddenly came to a standstill due to the completion of tenure of the remaining three members including the chairperson of the Commission. For almost a year no major activity could be taken because there was no one to take the responsibility. As a result only 38% financial implementation was possible by the end of 2005.

First three months of 2006 were mostly used to orient new members about the status of the project, its activities and especially the researches. An annual work plan was finalized with consensus and was shared with the UNDP. It again took three months to build a common understanding with the UNDP. The staff to be hired was agreed upon by the end of June 2006 and at last the activities could be undertaken. It was only the last six months that the time was utilized at the optimal level and each and every planned activity was completed on time without any compromise on quality and full judicious financial implementation. A highlight of each quarter activities follows.

Details of the project activities:

1. Researches

Under the project the following five researches were undertaken:

- Women's Right of Inheritance and its Implementation (WRI)
- Status of Home based Women Workers in Informal Sector (HBWW)
- Concept of Justice in Islam: Qisas and Diyat (Q &D)
- Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women (IFLRDW) and
- Psychological and Socio-economic Factors Responsible for Drug Addiction Among Women in Pakistan

First drafts of all reports were ready by the end of 2005 but review and larger consultative process was still to be initiated. After the formal approval of the Commission all reports were sent to the experts and specialists for third party review in the first quarter. Feedback received on these reports helped to revise the drafts of the reports. In the second quarter a nation- wide stakeholders' consultative process started. This consultative process was in two phases. In the first phase, by the end of second quarter following three reports were presented for the consultation:

1. Women's Rights to Inheritance and its Implementation
2. Status of Home-based Women Workers in Informal Sector
3. Psychological and Socio-economic Factors Responsible for Drug Addiction Among Women

While in the third quarter following one report was presented for consultation:

1. Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women

This consultation process helped the Research Unit to improve the reports further in the last quarter of the year.

Four researches i.e. 1) Women's Right of Inheritance and its Implementation (WRI); 2) Status of Home based Women Workers in Informal Sector (HBWW); 3) Concept of Justice in Islam: Qisas and Diyat and 4) Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women, were identified at the time of conception of the project. Research on 'Psychological and Socio-economic Factors Responsible for Drug Addiction Among Women' was undertaken on the request of Anti Narcotics Force on the principle of cost sharing which ANF never honoured.

Concept of Justice in Islam: Qisas and Diyat and Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women were purely desk researches and later on consultative process was initiated before finalizing the policy recommendations.

Data was gathered for the following three researches by involving consultants, research institutions and individual researchers:

1. Women's Rights to Inheritance and its Implementation
2. Status of Home-based Women Workers in Informal Sector
3. Psychological and Socio-economic Factors Responsible for Drug Addiction Among Women

Out of these three only the report on 'Women's Right of Inheritance and its Implementation' was completed and printed. Research on HBWW requires to widen its scope and deepen its analysis while the last one is pending with the collaborative partner i.e. ANF.

Initially five researches were undertaken but in the end for the sake of quality the following three research reports have been made available in printed form and ready for launching.

- Women's Right of Inheritance and its Implementation (WRI)
- Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women (IFLRDW) and
- Concept of Justice in Islam: Qisas and Diyat (Q & D)

Research report on 'Concept of Justice in Islam: Qisas and Diyat' was the only research report translated in Urdu and printed. Other two reports are under consideration for translation.

Findings of all three reports were also compiled in user friendly brochures in Urdu and English. Key findings of these researches were highlighted through messages as posters.

2. Advocacy

To establish the authenticity of the research it is imperative that the findings are put forward for a wider public review. This enables to make recommendations that are pertinent and can confidently be pursued for policy making. For this basic consideration, series of advocacy forums, consultative meetings, radio talk shows and making and launching of documentary film were earnestly taken up by the Commission in 2006

a. Advocacy Forums

Seven advocacy forums were organized in different places. Members of the Commission from the respective provinces were fully involved in the organization of these events. Through these forums the recommendations of all reports were presented to the people at district level. Eminent speakers participated in these forums. These forums at the district level also encouraged other civil society organizations to run advocacy campaigns on the issues relevant to their respective areas. The data basis was provided by the research reports of the Commission. This enabled effective networking at different levels.

NCSW organized these forums in Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Lahore, Islamabad, Hyderabad and Multan. Each was attended 500 participants from academia, lawyers, civil society organizations, parliamentarians, political parties, line departments and media. The details are given below:

1. **Karachi;** July 26, 2006; Hudood Ordinances

- Ms. Nuzhat Shirin
- Mr. Naeem Mirza
- Justice ® Shiaq Usmani
- Dr. Tufail Hashmi
- Mr. Iqbal Haider
- Justice ® Nsir Aslam Zahid
- Justice ® Javed Iqbal and
- Dr. Arfa Sayed Zehra

2. **Peshawar;** August 09' 2006; Qisas and Diyat

- Dr. Farooq Khan
- Mr. Qazi Jamil
- Mr. Fakhar Zaman
- Ms. Rakhshanda Naz and
- Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra

3. **Lahore;** August 19' 2006; Honour Killing

- Mr. Syed Afzal Haider
- Dr. Riffat Hassan
- Justice ® Nasira Iqbal
- Begum Mehnaz Rafi and
- Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra

4. **Quetta;** August 25' 2006; Honour Killing

- Justice ® Majida Razvi
- Mr. Aurangzeb Advocate Supreme Court
- Ms. Fauzia Shaheen and
- Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra

5. **Islamabad;** August 30' 2006; Women Protection Bill 2006

- Mr. Makhdoom Ali Khan
- Ms. Sherry Rehman
- Dr. Mohammad Farooq Khan
- Dr. Tufail Hashmi

- Justice ® Majida Razvi
- Prof. Anees Ahmed
- Ms. Neelam Hussain
- Ms. Nasreen Azhar and
- Dr. Khalid Masood
- Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra

6. **Multan**; September 01' 2006; Hudood Ordinances

- Dr. Farooq Khan
- Mr. Zia-ur-Rehman
- Justice ® Nasira Iqbal and
- Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra

7. **Hyderabad**; September 12' 2006; Inheritance Law and Rights of Women

- Mr. Sher Ali Rizvi
- Mr. Ayaz Latif Palijo
- Mr. Abdul Sattar Chandio
- Mr. Nasir Ali
- Mr. Yousaf Leghari and
- Ms. Parveen Chacher
- Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra

b. Consultative Meetings

Prior to finalizing the policy recommendations provincial and federal consultative meetings were organized and the members in their respective province played an active role. In all twenty consultative meetings were organized. The consultative process was undertaken in two phases. In the first phase three researches i.e. Home Based Women Workers, Women's Right to Inheritance and Psychological and Socio-economic Factors Responsible for the Drug Addiction Among Women were presented while in the second phase 'Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women' was presented at provincial and federal level.

In these consultative meetings relevant experts, line departments, scholars, civil society organizations, academia and media persons actively participated. These meetings were organized in all provincial capitals and in federal capital. NCSW was seriously concerned that adequate participation from FANA and minorities is essential. And for this purpose two special meetings were organized in Islamabad and Gilgit.

c. Radio Talk Shows

For a wider dissemination and participation thirteen radio talk shows were produced and broadcasted through Pakistan Broadcasting Cooperation. In each talk show eminent

scholars were invited as panel. All scholars came on voluntarily basis and Commission had to make the logistic arrangements only. NCSW remains grateful to the scholars' volunteer support. Series of these talk shows was produced and aired in the last quarter of 2006. The records of these talk shows are available with NCSW. Following are the topics and the speakers of the talk shows:

Topics for Radio Talk Shows:

Qisas and Diyat Law:

1. Qisas and Diyat Law in the light of Quran and Sunnah
2. Constraints and Implications of Qisas and Diyat Law
3. Psychological and social Impact of Qisas and Diyat Law

Hudood Ordinances:

1. Hudood Ordinances: Impact on legal system and implications for women to access justice
2. Islam and the Hudood Ordinances: A just interpretation
3. Hudood Ordinances: moral and social implications
4. Women's Protection Bill

Honor Killing

1. Evolution of the concept of honor killing in the light of Law and Islamic conjunction
2. Culture and Religious factors underlying Honor Killing
3. Honor killing Bill

Inheritance Law:

1. Concept of Inheritance
2. Women's Right to Inheritance and its implementation
3. Implementation of Policy / Legal Framework and Customary practices

Family laws:

1. Impact of Family Laws on the rights of divorced women in Pakistan
2. Gaps in the prevailing legal system

Panelists for Radio Talk Shows:

1. Dr Mohammad Farooq Khan (Religious Scholar)
2. Professor Tufail Hashmi (Member NCSW, ICT)
3. Begum Mehnaz Rafi (PML-Q)
4. Ms Sherry Rehman (PPP)
5. Justice (Retd.) Majida Rizvi
6. Mr. Javed Ahmed Ghamdi (Director, Al Mawrid)
7. Justice (Retd.) Javed Iqbal
8. Justice (Retd.) Nasira Javed
9. Khalid Masood (Chairman Islamic Ideology Council)

10. Justice (Retd.) Mohammad Taqi Usmani (Former Justice Supreme Court Appellate Bench, Naib Sadar Darul Uloom Karachi)
11. Neelam Hussain (SIMORGH)
12. Rakshanda Naz (Aurat Foundation)
13. Naheeda Mehbub Ellahi, Deputy Attorney General of Pakistan.
14. Naeem Shakir (Advocate)

d. Hudood Ordinance Amendments: Roundtable Highlights

National Commission on the Status of Women, in 2003, presented a comprehensive research study on the infamous Hudood Ordinances, as they have caused misery, humiliation and insults to women. Eminent scholars, legalists, practitioners and activists analyzed it objectively and the majority was of the consensus that it needs to be repealed. This report acted as a catalyst for the thinking people and a public debate started. The report had recommended that all those clauses which have been picked up from Pakistan Penal code and placed in Hudood Ordinances, should be transferred to their origin. The Quranic laws govern the lives of Muslims, and there are not two opinions. Over the years these Ordinances have proved to be a tool of exploitation against innocent citizens, especially the women. They created an ambiance that powerful become more powerful and the powerless became helpless.

In 2006, after 27 years the government itself felt that these Ordinances were flawed and proved a source of coercion and injustice. The President of Pakistan took the initiative for reviewing these ordinances. This was a welcome sign, that at least the imperfection of the Ordinance was realized. Confirming the importance and vitality of National Commission on the Status of Women the President included the Chairperson, Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra in the high level core research committee. Considering the climate of opinion, extreme caution was commanded to minimize antagonism. It was felt that only two Ordinances Zina and Qazaf will be amended to bring some relief to women. The obscurantist raised a storm, even for these two amendments. The government faced a lot of opposition but succeeded in getting the amendments passed through legislation as Women Protection Act 2006.

NCSW supported these amendments as it was a right step in the right direction, and opened a channel for further amendments. These amendments were welcomed by the civil society organizations, as these were seen as a positive move.

In the first half of the year 2006 a lot of debate was generated on the report of ‘Hudood Ordinance’ especially in media. Consequently Government decided to bring some positive changes to provide relief to the victims of these Ordinances. This move was strongly condemned by the some religious groups and even the liberal groups were not happy because major clauses were not touched. In this backdrop it was important to bring all the key actors around a table to discuss the changes suggested so far and to see what is possible and what needs to be pursued in future.

The main purpose of convening the Roundtable was to discuss each and every clause of the Women Protection Bill in the light of report of NCSW given on ‘Hudood Ordinances’ and the things left for further legislation. The issues including Rape, *Zina Bil Jabar* were discussed. It also came under discussion that either the Law should be repealed or amended. Commission organized this roundtable on a very short notice and still was able to bring together more than fifty eminent people from all parts of the country to discuss this issue. This roundtable was organized on 30th August 2006 in Marriott Hotel, Islamabad. Shortly thereafter the Women Protection Act 2006 was promulgated.

e. Documentary film

A documentary film is an effective medium to address serious issues and generate debate thereupon. It was decided to make a documentary film on two research studies i.e. 1) Women’s Right to Inheritance and 2) Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women. As these are the issue that adversely affect the lives of women in Pakistan. The documentary was produced in the last quarter of the 2006. Basically it is made in Urdu and subtitled in English.

f. Launchings

1. Documentary:

Commission has produced a documentary on ‘Hudood Ordinances’ in 2005 which could not be launched in the same year. As there was no Commission so, once the full Commission became functional, it was decided to launch the documentary. Timing of launch of this documentary synchronized with the public debate already generated in the media on the validity of Hudood Ordinances. The launching ceremony was organized on July 11 2006 in Marriott, Islamabad, and was well attended by the participants from all walks of life.

2. Posters:

Ten posters were designed and printed to highlight the findings of the researches undertaken and completed by the Commission in 2006 for general public. Themes of the posters are given below:

To disseminate these key recommendations a poster launching ceremony was organized by the Commission on September 29 2007.

3. Institutional Strengthening

For capacity building two levels of activities were initiated i.e. one for the members and the other for policy research unit.

It was identified in the First Annual Report of the Commission that one of the factors affecting the performance of the members is their non-familiarity with their own role and responsibilities as well as linkages between policies for women's development and empowerment and strategies such as National Plan for Action and Gender Reform Action Plan. In the 21st meeting of the present members it was once again realized by the members that they needed to familiarize themselves with the basic policies and strategies to perform their role in a better way. Holding of a capacity building workshop, international study tours and organizing an international conference were identified as key activities for strengthening the knowledge. The details of the activities are as follows:

a. Workshops for the Members

1. The mandate of the Commission is to review the policies and laws as well as implementation arrangements with a gender perspective. Though some members have long experience of undertaking such work but there are few who did not have hands on experience of such work. It also came into the knowledge of the Commission that ILO has a window through which one learning opportunity could be organized. So conceptualization of this event was undertaken in collaboration of NCSW and ILO. ILO was not only being able to mobilize resources for this workshop but also undertook logistic arrangements of the event.

Consequently a three day workshop for the members of the Commission as well as for the staff of Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Women's Development/ Departments was organized in Pearl Continental Bhurban, Pakistan on May 22-24 2006. Dr. Jyoti Tuladhar acted as the main facilitator along with Mr. Geir Tonstol and Ms. Iseline Danbold. During the workshop the participants learnt about the basics of Gender Audit, Gender Audit Process, Gender Knowledge and Awareness. These concepts were practiced through small groups work. Participants learnt the importance of periodic evaluation of any program and Gender Audit is considered the right tool for this purpose.

2. NCSW held a capacity building workshop for its members from September 7-9, 2006 in Karachi. The main objective of the workshop was to develop the strategic program of the commission for the next three years.

The main focus of this workshop was to study the ground realities with regards to women such as:

- tribal laws and customary practices/attitudes including those affecting minority women and their implications;
- political participation of women, i.e. the right to vote, candidature and involvement in decision-making processes;
- socio-economic conditions like population, health, educational empowerment, environment, employment, and other related issues.

In this workshop, the members reviewed various national and international documents to reinforce existing commitments, identify gaps and come up with a strategic advocacy plan

of the Commission. The essential documents that were reviewed included the National Plan of Action, the National Plan for Development and Empowerment of Women, the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Gender Reform Action Plan (GRAPs) and the Convention to End all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

b. International Study Tours

Exposure to other cultures, peer institutions of similar nature and response of the members and society could be a great source of learning for those who are embarking on the mission to strengthen the Commission in Pakistan.

With these considerations, international study tours of India, Jordan and Philippines were organized for the members of the Commission. Three groups were formed as per the individual choices of the members.

Group for Jordan included:

1. Dr. Faqir Hussain
2. Dr. Mehar Taj Roghani
3. Dr. Naheed Ali
4. Dr. Tahira Kamal
5. Dr. Begum Jan
6. Dr. Tufail Hashmi

Group for India comprised of:

1. Ms. Simi Kamal
2. Ms. Suhela Asif
3. Dr. Parveen Shah

Group for Philippine included following members:

1. Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra
2. Ms. Erum Wali Khan
3. Prof. Farkhanda Aurengzeb

The objectives of the study tours were:

- To exchange views on common issues and share experiences and practices
- To interact with other international organizations/ related agencies
- To familiarize the members to the functioning of other Commissions

After the visit all the members felt that the study tours were extremely effective in enhancing their knowledge about other counterpart Commissions. The comparative analysis of different structures and operation modes, and their achievements and challenges gave the members a better understanding of their own role.

Comparative study of similar institutions promotes analytical understanding of the issues. Study of other Commissions and their working helped the members to find the similarities and the differences. Each group shared its report with the full Commission. A brief of reports of the three groups follows:

INDIA:

The delegates felt that NCW India and NCSW Pakistan have the same basic principles in terms of working for women's status, empowerment, participation and development, and both work towards ending discrimination against women. Given the fairly similar socio-economic condition in India and Pakistan, and similar attitudes to family, the role of women in society, both Commissions have similar views and similar problems to be addressed with reference to women. Both are concerned with women's political representation, their socio economic development, violence against them inside and outside the family, as well as their legal rights.

The main differences are in structure, authority, power, clout direct action, support from civil society and the media. In these areas NCSW Pakistan has a lot to learn from the experiences of NCW India.

The whole cascade of Women's Commissions in India appear to have proper secretariats and the full staff, including Indian Civil Service appointees, other bureaucrats, legal aid specialists, counselors and support staff. They also have strong linkages with the police, the judiciary, the media, civil society and what appears to be liaison and contact on a daily basis. When a complaint comes, the machinery immediately goes into action.

The delegates felt that one of the key advantages of the NCW is that it has summoning powers and can summon anyone from a Minister to a private citizen in the services of women's rights and gender justice. This power is used at all levels. However, one could see what an uphill task is at hand given that gender discrimination still pervades India as it does all countries of South Asia.

Another area where NCSW can learn from the NCW is its very strong linkages with women's organizations and the media. With this support the NCW has garnered considerable influence that adds to its constitutional powers.

In addition to its work in the legal and political empowerment of women, redressal of grievances and lobbying, the other levels of Commissions also engage in some project-style action with women's NGOs whose role is to serve and empower women. While this is feasible in the context of the Delhi Commission, it is not suggested as a possible line of action for NCSW which is primarily an advisory body.

JORDAN:

The delegates felt that the study tour to Jordan was a unique opportunity to visit a developing Muslim country to understand the status of women regarding their social,

cultural and economic position. The JNCW focused a great deal on population issues and realizing its potential as a sensitive issue, they hold regular meetings with the Imam of mosques or tribal elders before presenting it to the general public to avoid backlash.

Also, Jordan is a signatory of CEDAW however they do not accept in total the articles which are against the basic theme of Islam or against the accepted norms of their society.

Jordan has three types of courts – religious courts, including Shariah courts for deciding the personal matters of Muslims, Ecclesiastical Courts for deciding personal matters for Christians and other minorities, and a special court including high council or supreme council constituted to interpret the constitution and/or the law. The legal system of Jordan is mixed, partially following Shariah in personal matter like inheritance, marriage, divorce, dower, maintenance and custody of children etc. The civil and criminal law is patterned on the European model.

A man seeking a second wife has to seek permission from the first wife.

Some areas where the JNCW faced challenges were that the regular Jordanian law is not in favor of women seeking divorce; due to tribal customs a cousin can claim the right of marriage over a woman if her suitor is not a relative.

PHILIPPINES:

The Philippines is a developing country that was colonized by three different countries, Spain, USA, and Japan however they are not grappling with the same issues that Pakistan is. For example they have a 97% literacy rate.

Legislation for women development has been very active in the Philippines; a number of women protection and development bills/ acts have been enacted, however their implementation is a big issue.

The NCRFW enjoys good relations with the government, civil society, and NGOs. The Filipino Commission also has very strong links with UN agencies, donors, and the media who are consequently helping them in advocacy for their cause of women.

Like Pakistan, Philippines is also divided into major segments: progressive and conservative. Philippines is predominantly Roman Catholic. They have conservative segments that oppose initiatives like family planning. To overcome such problems, NGOs together with the NCRFW are using the media as a tool and are flexible in their approach depending on the message and the audience.

Members and the Chairperson of the commission are selected by the President, which at times hinder the work of the commission because of the lack of relevant experience required for the Commission.

Information technology is being used very effectively by different organizations in the Philippines. SOS-SMS programs for migrants are one such example in which Filipino workers are provided with a cell number which is accessible through SMS where migrants and victims can register their complaints.

Unlike Pakistan, minorities in the Philippines have a very strong voice. Ten percent of the population of the Philippines is Muslim and they are considered the conservative segment of society. The differences in the beliefs especially in the Laws of Inheritance and Divorce Laws between Muslims and Catholics have forced the authorities to devise different laws for each group.

Besides the regular court, Philippines has a Shariah Court for the Muslim minority to decide matter like second marriages, inheritance, divorce, dowry, and maintenance and custody of children. Roman Catholicism does not allow divorce whereas women activists are struggling for the enactment of laws for divorce.

c. International Conference

National Commission on the Status of Women decided to hold an International Conference on December 8-9' 2006 in Lahore. The choice of Lahore was made purely on merit, one being the intellectual capital of the country and two its historic charisma that captivates visitors. It was also felt that Lahore would provide a wider base of audience representing all sections of society. The main theme of the International Conference was 'The Other Self: Conflict, Confusion or Compromise' with five following sub-themes:

- Justice Delivered or Denied
- Governance & Development
- Family and Society: Image and Honour
- Politics: Shadows of Power
- Expressions in Creativity

Commission considered seriously that an in-depth analysis from a wider angle would make this Conference, substantive and effective. National and international scholars, practitioners and academicians were invited to present their analyses and experiences with regarding various contours and levels of gender issues and women status in different societies.

Invitations were made in a wider spectrum from South Asia, South-east Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America for the participation in the conference. They brought forward different issues affecting women in the existing situations, highlighting obstacles and challenges. Consequently, recommending the measures and strategies as practicable solutions.

The Conference was noteworthy that both Prime Minister of Pakistan and President of Pakistan graced the opening and the closing sessions of the Conference. It was unique for its intellectual strength and deliberations. Given the skeleton staff it was a formidable task

to complete but untiring effort and deep sense of commitment on their part let this Conference to be a roaring success. NCSW was obliged by the unlimited support from the Government of the Punjab.

Proceedings in brief are as follows:

OPENING SESSION

WELCOME ADDRESS

Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra, Chairperson NCSW

In her welcome address, Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra welcomed the distinguished guests, various speakers and participants. She began by giving a brief introduction of the NCSW and its mandate.

She highlighted achievements of the NCSW, the most important NCSW's report on 'Hudood Ordinances' which brought fresh awareness and stirred the society as a whole. She said that the Commission brought the best legal and religious expertise together to look into this Ordinance for analysis and review. The initiative to address the issues that continued to mutilate the lives of the innocent citizens of this country, was a solid step in solidarity with the civil society who has been agitating against it for all the past years.

Dr. Arfa shared the main theme of the conference: Confusion, Conflict and Compromise. She said that the conflict needs to be resolved; confusion needs to be removed and compromise needs to be understood. In human society, each must have an equal playing field. Selfish and vested interests create confusion; clash of interest does not think of resolution that could create an ambience of compromise. A paradigm for just life is not to command but to comment, not to explain but to understand, not to apologize or to agonize but to support and strengthen, she emphasized.

She added that the international Conference aspires to bridge the gaps of miscommunication and to create an atmosphere of understanding through comparative analysis and objective review. NCSW has a keen desire to share the ideas, discuss the issues and grasp the challenges. Today, we live in a world torn between strife and malice, between authority and servitude, between self-righteousness and accusations. We need to remind ourselves of benevolence, of tolerance, of service, of compassion and above all to let others live. The authoritative, the obscurantist, the feudalistic mind set is oblivious of all these values that promise dignity and empowerment.

Dr. Arfa concluded by saying that societies generally develop with their ingrained faith in the potential of the individual, and by all those ideals, that if translated into action, could ensure justice and equity. A universal misunderstanding permeates that only political power or economic acumen can make societies strong. The sensitive mind, the sharp intellect and the rational thinking is a much stronger element in creating a will for sustainable change and development than all other forces put together. This may be the

unseen, but it cannot be denied that this is the driving force that transforms existence into life. She emphasized that one who dares to accept challenge and uphold the truth, is the one who can resolve conflict, address confusion and contemplate compromise.

KEY NOTE ADDRESS

Dr. Masuma Hassan

Dr. Masuma Hassan gave the keynote address. She began by her address by highlighting the history of women's struggle for their rights around the worlds. She spoke about conflict, confusion and compromise in the struggle of women worldwide to control their own lives.

She said that British and American women achieve their right to vote in 1920 and 1928 respectively. Women in Muslim countries were granted their rights thorough the spread of Islam, however this was not reflected in many Muslim societies today where women still do not have the right to vote.

Dr. Hassan moved on to talk about western colonial rule and how that affected women in colonized societies. Colonial rules did not rock the boat by interfering with existing social customs, rather they accepted them. Paradoxically, it was the very movement against colonial rule in Asia, Africa and Latin America which gave women their great break in the battle for their political and economic rights. In almost all the countries emerging from colonial rule, constitutionally women had equal rights with men, whether in Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, or Indonesia, to name only a few countries. It took some time, however, to break down discriminatory rules.

The “confusion” began when women tried to exercise equal rights and when the state tried to promote these rights. Fundamental rights for women posed a great threat to conservative forces and feudal and tribal interests. From their point of view, if women enrolled in large numbers in educational institutions and professional colleges, voted in equal numbers with men in general elections, occupied and increasingly large number of seats in the legislatures, became prominent in business and industry, patriarchal domination would be compromised and a near revolution would take place.

Dr. Hassan said that men and women who have supported women's empowerment have organized themselves into pressure groups, lobbied, tried to mobilize public opinion, taken to the streets, courted arrest, and attempted to access the most remote areas. But it is important to recognize that other forces, apart from their own movements, are on their side in this struggle.

The most important force is the commitment of governments to the empowerment of women. However skewed their priorities and however much they may shelve their responsibilities, the fact is that most governments-not all – are formally committed to universal suffrage, universal education and health care, and the equal participation of women and men in national life. There are pockets of resistance to these concepts in all our countries but can these policies be reversed?

Secondly, the sheer gains made through economic development lead to the empowerment of women – or they should do. Urbanization is one of the most important processes working in favour of women. It is a great social leveler which encourages – often compels – women to step out of the home because of poverty. It provides easier access to education, health care, transport, credit, employment opportunities and freedom of movement.

Thirdly, she added, she would place great value on the network of women's power, both internationally and within national boundaries. This network has become a permanent part of the women's empowerment landscape. In every continent, there are a growing number of women's organizations which have become the custodians of their rights; so many that they defy enumeration. They mobilize public opinion, advocate, lobby, monitor, assess, and act as women's watch institutions. They provide education, health care, relief, succor, shelter, crisis centers, legal aid, information, and credit. They have created vibrant platforms for expression. They span the whole world. Can they all collectively compromise?

Dr. Hassan mentioned the efforts by the UN for the empowerment of women and the response of many governments to landmark events like the Beijing Platform for Action has been disappointing. Promoting gender equality and empowering women was one of the UN's millennium development goals, to be achieved by 2015. Centuries of exploitation could never be eradicated within a couple of decades. But the pronouncement itself was important and gave us a peg from which to pressurize governments and continue or struggle.

She continued by highlighting the dismal reality of women's position. In some countries, there is an attack on the independence of women in the name of religion and culture which has to be countered. Growing militarization, armed conflicts and the wars started by men in pursuit of global and regional hegemony, unending civil wars and ethnic violence have made women and children the worst sufferers, displaced and homeless, impoverished, widows and orphans, subjected to exploitation and sexual harassment. Market driven economies and deregulation policies have deprived them of jobs and livelihood in poor countries where their competitiveness has been eroded. Globalization has made it easier to traffic in women.

Violence against women is rampant. The World Health Organization has estimated, through its worldwide surveys that (from 10 per cent) up to 69 per cent women have been physically assaulted at some point in their lives. This aggression leads to the most brutal crimes against women such as murder, honor killings and other forms of physical abuse

Women's work is still under- paid and under counted in national statistics, trapped as they are because of poverty, illiteracy and lack of skills in jobs in the informal sector, and it is unacknowledged in the rural sector. Measures like those relating to privatization of water, and policies ruining the environmental balance, marginalize their ability to manage resources.

Recently, the Pakistani parliament passed the Women's Protection Bill which, hopefully, will give relief to women. Never before have had so many women participated in public life in Pakistan because of the large reservation of seats at the local level (33 per cent) and in both houses of parliament (60 in the National Assembly, 17 in the Senate). The need is to overcome social pressures which prevent women from standing as candidates and casting their votes, as happened in Pakistan in elections in representative of their communities, and not mere figureheads are elected and their voices are not stifled.

Dr. Hassan concluded by saying that in all developing countries there is an imbalance among regions, between the educated and uneducated, the rich and the poor, urban and rural dwellers with respect to the empowerment of women. Bridging these gaps is the responsibility of national governments. Equally important is the strong emerging nexus between study and research in women's issues in academia and this network of women's associations and activists help lines, websites and internet working groups. These tools have to be inter-connected and used benefit the poorest of poor women who cannot even understand and access them.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Mr. Shaukat Aziz, Prime Minister of Pakistan

“I am very privileged to be in your midst today of what is clearly a very important Conference on the status of women which represent half the population of the country and the world. No nation can progress today if we don’t empower the women to reach their true potential. Our government is committed to do so and we are heading in the right direction. Extremism and adherence to irrational traditions retard the process of social reform and development. Our objective is development with dignity. We want growth with equity. Our model of development is inclusive of all, not exclusive for a few”.

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz stated this “The recent Women Protection Act is a milestone which will go a long way in restoring the dignity of women, protecting their legitimate rights and ending their exploitation in society. Our parliament rose above the political divide and supported a just cause. Let me say that this law is the first step of a long journey. This is the beginning of the process. We are determined to stamp out all vestiges of discrimination and exploitation against women,” PM maintained.

We believe the empowerment to be encompassing and cover all aspects, political, economic, social, legal and many others. In the realm of political empowerment our government has given 33% representation of women in local and federal legislatures. The women political school set up in 2002 for the political empowerment of women to enable women in Pakistan to hold public offices and to raise their issues and concerns. The government has established district resource centers for women councilors in every district across country.

“Our government promulgated Criminal Law Amendment Act 2004 to safeguard the basic right of women i.e. right to live. Similarly in order to provide relief to women languishing in jails, Law Reform Ordinance 2006 was enacted. In order to eliminate cruel customs and inhuman practices, which clearly are contrary to the Islamic teachings, six new legislations are under process, which will deal with forced marriage, inheritance, vani, marriage with Quran, vatta satta and divorce. These laws will free women from the clutches of sinister customs and give them full legal backing to safeguard their rights, dignity and self-respect,” he said.

“Progress is meaningful only when it benefits all – rich and poor, man and woman, young and old. All rungs of the social ladder must participate in and benefit from the national development efforts. That is our vision for Pakistan and we will leave no stone unturned to translate it into reality,” Prime Minister promised.

The Prime Minister in conclusion said the Conference would provide a useful forum for voicing ideas and proposals for the emancipation and empowerment of women. “I am positive that the deliberations will guide us for future actions,”.

PLENARY SESSION I: JUSTICE DELIVERED OR DENIED

Chair: Makhdoom Ali Khan, Attorney General of Pakistan

Speakers:

- **Osama Siddique (Pakistan)**
- **Geeta Devi (India)**
- **Salma Ali (Bangladesh)**
- **Dr. Shanta Thapalia (Nepal) and**
- **Renu Singh (India)**

PLENARY SESSION I: JUSTICE DELIVERED OR DENIED

The theme ‘Justice Delivered or Denied’ was chosen to highlight women’s access to legal services and the problems faced by them to avail these services, focusing on parallel systems of justice in countries like Pakistan where cultural norms take precedence over the rule of law. The session also addressed the various discrepancies that exist within the legal and judicial institutions and how the government in power can affect the strength of these institutions. Abstracts of the papers presented in the sessions are as follow:

Martial Laws and Lawyers: The Crisis of Legal Education in Pakistan and Key Areas of Reform Osama Siddique

“Since its creation in 1947, Pakistan’s political and constitutional evolution has been arrested by praetorian rule through several impositions of Martial Law, the most recent one after a military coup in 1999. The world’s seventh nuclear power is a geo-politically significant but highly unstable state with a weak democratic culture and growing inner fissures caused by political obscurantism, religious radicalism, economic stagnation, institutional decline and growing lawlessness. In this chaotic context, the Pakistani justice system finds it self overburdened and incapacitated, not least because of the regressing quality and professionalism of those who are its constituent parts.

The vital nexus between the quality of legal education and the quality of justice is universally recognized. Socially relevant and high standard legal education produced elements of change and champions for justice; quality research inspires and fueled an environment of analysis, debate and critique and resultantly a culture of tolerance and democracy. It boosted the caliber and professionalism of legal professionals, judicial institutions and society in general. Lawyers and legally trained people form the backbone of a vibrant, informed and proactive civil society that strives for political, social and economic justice. That this community had remained or, as many argue, had been kept underdeveloped in a country that had been under direct military rule for more than half its existence, is no coincidence.

This paper attempted to evaluate the nature and extent of the problems confronting legal education in Pakistan and proposes some reforms. Given the wide ambit and complexity of the topic, it focused initially on providing some snapshots of independent evaluations of the state of legal education in the country over the past almost six decades. It then looked at the specific problems of faculty capacity, lack of innovation in teaching methodologies, outdated examination systems and poor research output. Then it moved on to an analysis of curricular shortcomings, and regulatory role confusions and inefficacy. After briefly discussing a couple of promising recent public and private sector reform initiatives, the paper culminated with a set of broad recommendations. While historical under-funding of legal education, dated and cumbersome governance mechanisms of public sector

universities, and the near absence of quality bar examinations and continuing legal education programs, are equally pertinent areas of inquiry, they are independent and complex themes requiring extensive review and are thus not within the ambit of this paper.”

Justice Delivered or denied

Geeta Devi-India

This paper envisaged justice in a broader sense of recognition of rights for women and the enjoyment of rights by women; and the commitment made by the state parties under the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women that obligates the state to address these situations.

It looked at various sources of law viz., codified laws, personal laws and customary laws that parallel structures i.e. the formal courts and courts recognized by religious groups viz., church and the Sharia law and their conflicting judgments were one of the causes for confusion. The recognition or non-recognition of rights, the interpretation of these rights, the conflict of decisions, the prevailing political environment all compel women to make compromises.

Field Experiences and Policy Changes

Salma Ali-Bangladesh

This paper analyzed the constraints to access justice, detect future challenges and projects good practices in this area, identifying areas of action in Bangladesh context. It first reviewed published researches and surveys and then moved on to outline Bangladesh Women Lawyer's Association's field experiences. It concluded by providing recommendation for a stricter enforcement of laws, serious efforts to effect the change in police attitude towards women and existing methods of investigation of criminal cases and argued that there is a need to form an independent Human Rights Commission/ Women Rights Commission and for intensifying civil society activities.

Legal Aid and Consulting Centre

Dr. Shanta Thapalia-Nepal

This paper focused on lack of access to health, unpaid domestic work, dirty work environment and displacement of women and children (inside and out of country) prostitution, education heal, HIV /AIDS and migration to other countries and old age groups are suffering.

The paper also discussed the political upheaval and changes in the country which made the involvement of women in politics possible and new amendments in laws to make them

more gender sensitive. At the end paper concluded by suggesting some strategies and policy recommendations to make this transition period of conflict, confusion and compromise more smooth.

Including The Excluded- An Indian Perspective **Renu Singh-India**

Globalization has been the buzzword in the last two decades and there has been a growing trend to look upon disability in the global context. Terms like *integration*, *mainstreaming* and *inclusion* have increasingly entered into the field of education; in keeping with the spirit of 'Education For All' as affirmed by UNESCO Salamanca Statement, 1994(endorsed by 92 govt. and 25 international organizations), the UN Convention On the Rights of the Child, 1989(ratified by 177 countries worldwide), together with various legislations and policies adopted by both Northern & Southern countries. The Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons has been extended for another decade (2003-2012) and the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action, Towards An Inclusive Barrier-Free and Rights-Based Society of Persons With Disabilities, was adopted in October 2002, to guide policy development and implementation for the next decade.

Historically special education developed as a specialized service delivery system separate from general education, since children with disabilities were perceived as "*different*" from their typical peers. Widespread cultural biases based on both gender and on disability greatly impinge the available educational opportunities This paper examines educational status of children with disabilities in India from an equity perspective and highlights the findings of a study conducted in Government Schools of Delhi.

PLENARY SESSION II: GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT :**Chair: Dr. Marjan Radjavi****Speakers:**

- **Bandana Rana (Nepal)**
- **Dr. Marjan Radjavi (Canada)**
- **Dr. Rukhsana Zia (Pakistan)**
- **Attorney. Evelyn S. Dunuan (Philippines) and**
- **Farrah Naz (Afghanistan)**

PLENARY SESSION II: GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT:

The second theme on 'Governance and Development' focused on the administration and development and its responsibilities to all citizens without any predijice. This theme discussed existing programs of Non Government Organizations, Government and International Financial Institutions plan to address the condition and status of women, along with initiatives taken and challenges faced in development processes.

Gender and Governance: Post Conflict Challenges Bandana Rana-Nepal

The paper talked about the impact of armed conflict on women and girls as incalculable. Women are forced to take upon themselves more responsibility for family security and well being, often without the necessary resources or social support. Women encounter discrimination and human rights abuses, sexual and domestic violence and exploitation. Women are disadvantaged by laws, policies and programming that do not take gender concerns into considerations.

Women rights activists work for conflicts throughout the world. They mobilize individually and collectively, to address the urgent needs of conflict affected populations – before and after the war. Yet at the time of peace negotiation and restructuring women's rights activists mostly remain ignored by controlling systems. Thus in post- conflict situations women's rights activists face an uphill task to negotiate constructive relationships with state institutions.

Some of the post conflict challenges that women generally face are: exclusion in the framing of the country's future governance, increase in violence against women, the impact of forced displacement, changed roles of women, fragmentation of women's groups and activists.

Considering the immense impact of armed conflict on women and girls the UN Resolution 1325 is immense in significance. The Resolution urges all member states to adhere to the commitments made related to women peace and security. It provides a platform for all sectors working in conflict management and peace process to advocate and monitor the inclusion of women in resolving aspects of conflict through peace and security.

Governance and Development:
Using International Law for Policy Change
Dr. Marjan Radjavi-Canada

“I propose a paper investigating the manner in which the culture of international legal declarations enter into social organizing for securing women’s rights at the local level; and how the language of duties, obligations, and privileges, and definitions of justice and persons intersect with other social discourses and practices (see Messer, 1993). What is the role/discourse/practice of women’s NGOs in furthering the provisions of international law, if state programmes do not fully comply with basic commitments to ensure equal access to public services for both men and women?

In this study, NGO discourses and practices are the specific focus; namely the use of international law to appeal for gender non-discrimination in the area of public services. NGOs have become an important site through which appeals to international law of non-discrimination in public services occur. The NGO discourse, actions and events are intelligible through the international norms that motivate them, but also through the complex, overlapping structured social norms in which they are situated. Implementation of these international norms, when coupled with civil society lobbying for government adherence to their principles, can together serve to establish informed policy change and new institutions.

A positive international legal framework for women’s rights can do much to assist women’s claims for equality, equity, and empowerment at the local level. While ratification in itself creates obligations on the participating state parties to align domestic law and practice, it also creates opportunities for new forms of advocacy directed towards interpreting concepts of equality and justice, and implementing and monitoring local and national practices in accordance with international standards. Each public service (water, health, housing, education) operates within its own larger political, economic, and social context, but each also reflects common societal and institutional legacies of hierarchy and power in gender relations. Therefore, while an understanding of specific contexts and relevant customs are integral to understanding gender-oriented reforms in these sectors, this understanding is only indispensable at the moment the custom exists, and must be adapted to reflect flux, renegotiation and realignment with human rights when these occur.

Ratification of international treaties can result in traceable concrete initiatives taken by governments. It is difficult however to empirically prove a causal link between ratifying international treaties and broader improvements in women’s human rights in that favourable conditions of political will, institutional mechanisms, and resources may predate ratification or may be present but superseded by other factors after accession. Nevertheless, these norms and institutions which respond to public service provision responsibilities make a difference in the status of women in Party countries. I propose to discuss how this occurs through a series of case studies.”

Governance and Gender in Pakistani Context: The Way Forward

Dr. Rukhsana Zia-Pakistan

The paper briefly introduced the relationship of gender of development with the understanding that development is a human right (HR) while gender equality is an integral component of human rights. There is debate through the different approaches regarding these concepts whereby Human Right is either seen as the end result of development ,or as an integral part of process of development ,or, as a tool to achieve development. The latter is more limiting from “humane” point of view as it relegates development to the economic Domain. This paper did not ascribe to the latter approach.

Setting of the agenda for development, in a globalized world of today, is also seen as a prerogative of the internationally mobilized will. Millennium Development goals (MDGs) are a result of this collective will and define the development Goals developing countries in general. The presence of World Bank and its various programmes in developing countries does clearly define how MDGs are viewed and more importantly, how initiatives are strategized for the attainment of these goals (Painter 2004, 21-22). This is also true for Pakistan. Emphasis given to governance, specifically how the various elements of “good governance” are defined, are consequently viewed from a particular perspective of development. The paper tried to delineate the various elements of governance that are prized in the light of this perspective and comprehend how the proposed ‘good governance’ and unique gender dynamics, defined by the cultural and religious influences, play out in Pakistan. Recommendations were stated for the way forward, in keeping with international research but contextualized within the unique gender perspective that prevails in the country.

Eliminating Compromise and Expediting Delivery of Justice to Violence against Women (VAW) Victims

Attorney. Evelyn S. Dunuan-Philippines

Philippines, being a signatory to various international treaties, is a staunch advocate of human rights. With women comprising 50% of its population, the Philippines remains steadfast in its commitment to implement the international policies on women which include among others, the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA). These international policies give full attention to eliminating incidence of violence against women (VAW).

Poverty has greatly affected the context in which VAW takes place in the Philippines. Social and political contexts such as race, class, and ethnicity likewise exacerbate the extent and magnitude of VAW cases in the country.

To address these, Philippines adopted policies on gender equality. The articulation of gender equality in the 1987 Philippine Constitution affirms the country’s resolve to eliminate barriers to full development of women, VAW being one of these barriers. National

development plans and plans of actions were developed to carry out the provisions in the international as well as national laws and policies.

To date, significant developments have been achieved in addressing and eliminating VAW, both by the government and non-government organizations. Key challenges exist but Philippines is steadfast in its campaign to eradicate VAW.

**Bonds of Honour: Experiences of Afghan Women in North East
Afghanistan
Farrah Naz-Afghanistan**

The paper presented the images associated with honour of the family in the society in the North East Afghanistan and describes their affect on women. The paper argued that the changes in society during and after the war had resulted in more insecurity, marginalisation of women and the poor and increased incidences of violence against women. Although Afghan society was always a patriarchal society but with the changes in degree of control exercised by men during and after the war and degradation of fundamental values, the absence of support systems and mechanisms for women, the failure of the state to regulate the systems of support and justice, are some of the factors which are adversely affecting women in the North East Afghanistan. The paper presented some case studies where a certain image associated with honour was seen to be violated and the women suffered consequently.

PLENARY SESSION III-POLITICS: SHADOWS OF POWER

Chair:Ms. Mehnaz Rafi, MNA & Chairperson Standing Committee on Women's Development

Speakers:

Dr. Furrukh Khan (Pakistan)

Ms. Nigar Ahmad (Pakistan)

**Dr. Sabiha Syed (Pakistan) and
Samia Bashir (Sudan)**

PLENARY SESSION III-POLITICS: SHADOWS OF POWER

The third theme 'Politics: Shadows of Power' was to analyze women's role in politics and the existing situation, issues, initiatives and challenges faced by women with regards to political participation, support, and value it receives in return.

The 'Others' Within: Status of Women in Pakistani Ideology Dr. Furrukh Khan-Pakistan

Pakistani ideology, in congruence with most other national ideologies sets out certain strictures which are expected to be adhered to by the citizenry. However, the burden placed on women is significantly greater and the adherence expected from them is more rigidly codified than in the cases of men. Pakistani women seem to have been circumscribed in bonds of religious, cultural and national ideologies as envisioned by the patriarchy of this country. The internalized anxiety of the patriarchy manifests itself in the national ideology in an increasingly machoistic control over the private and public parameters set out for women. Notions of a society's ideals about its nationalism, cultural and religious etiquette are inexorably linked to the position of women, and more precisely, to their bodies.

The Way Together State-CSO Interaction for Violence Against Women Nigar Ahmad-Pakistan

This paper pointed out that civil society is not betraying Pakistan when they discuss Violence Against Women. Civil society's role is not to politicize but to provide relief, rehabilitation after a disaster. The criticism that women working in NGOs are just Begums with nothing else to do is unfair. It is a public service to point out that the role the state should be playing in protecting human dignity. Making the public aware of the wrongs is a public service. Civil society is playing a key role in keeping the government in check.

The paper also indicated that Pakistani men are painted as beasts but there are a lot of progressive men. There has been a massive struggle since 1975. At times, during the massive struggle nothing was happening but the Hudood Ordinances were touched in two decades. Paper described the difficulties that women activists have faced and the gruesome threats. It talked about the role of American media in exposing atrocities in Iraq.

Pakistani Women: A Search for Political Identity Dr. Sabiha Syed-Pakistan

This paper gave an overview of women in Pakistani politics and the history of the global struggle for suffrage. New Zealand was the first country to give women the right to vote in 1893. Paper identified a few problems: the masculine model of political life, absence of the education and training relevant for politics and the electoral systems. It also touched the

difficult decision to run for office, as it is harder for women because of resistance from families and lack of support from political parties who are afraid to lose seats if they will support more women candidates. It talked about women's unpaid labour in home and how domestic expectations affect women in politics. It highlighted how women are essentially refugees who go from their father's home to their husbands' homes. This affects their confidence and ability to raise the money necessary to run an effective campaign. Also corruption scares women.

Political Participation of Sudanese Woman Samia Bashir-Sudan

The paper began by an introduction about the Sudan: geographical position , size of population , ethnic groups , languages , religions , cultures etc... Next , the author enumerated the six political epochs of the Sudan since independence in 1956 up till the present day, showing the dates of their beginnings and ends and making comments. Then followed a paragraph in which the author defines what she means by the phrase "political participation".; Next she surveyed the " achievements; " of Sudanese woman during the first five epochs making comments and observations.

A some what detailed account was given about the recent developments in the status of women during the present regime: the so called " Alingath Alwatani Revolution"; In the conclusion the author summerized and evaluated the results bearing in mind the three issues: conflict , confusion or comprise.

PLENARY SESSION IV- FAMILY AND SOCIETY: IMAGE AND HONOUR

Chair: Ms. Nilofer Bakhtiar, Minister for Tourism

Speakers:

Ms. Simi Kamal (Pakistan)

Ms. Anna Vanzan (Italy)

Advocate Zia Ahmed Awan (Pakistan) and

Ms. Bilquis Tahira (Pakistan)

PLENARY SESSION IV- FAMILY AND SOCIETY: IMAGE AND HONOUR

The fourth theme 'Family and Society: Image and Honor' focused on the existing social and traditional norms and values towards women, especially discriminatory practices. The use of violence against women and the subsequent effect on women and society as a whole.

“Whose Honour? Differential Effects of the Interplay of Formal and Customary Laws on Women and Men in Pakistan” Simi Kamal-Pakistan

The problems of women in Pakistan, who live under a plethora of tribal, feudal, Islamic and Indo-British laws, are often so varied and local in nature that they cannot be always explained by blanket causes or solved through typical solutions expounded by feminist and international legal rights bodies. The "status" of women cannot be easily explained by analyzing their legal rights alone, as "status" encompasses not only their actual position vis a vis traditional, tribal and customary rules but also the socio-economic context of their lives. Conflicting legal systems compounded by parallel traditional customary paradigms is not restricted in Pakistan. At times confusing laws and traditions govern people's lives and unjust customs and traditions unfavourable to women outweigh egalitarian laws.

This paper was based on a comprehensive sociological study which was undertaken to analyze the effects of the interplay of formal and customary practices on women and men in the four provinces of Pakistan. The study carried out in 1997 and 2002 systematically researched the extent to which this interplay affected the lives of women and men differentially and determined which of the existing laws (or combination of laws) best supported women.

This paper brought to light the range of practices, perceptions and attitudes that interpret, misuse and distort statutory laws and the male and female perceptions regarding economic, social, cultural, legal and political status of women. The study specifically covered attitude towards work and education, mobility, ownership and inheritance rights, marriage, exchange marriage, divorce procedures, compensations for murders/killings, domestic violence, rape, adultery, social behaviour and recourse to justice.

Exporting (dis)honor: the practice of honor killing among the Pakistani Community in Italy

Anna Vanzan-Italy

In various countries throughout the world, particularly in the Global South, women who are considered to bring dishonor to their families because of sexual indiscretions are victims of the so called "honor killings ". Such killings, encoded in the ancient custom of some Pakistan areas (particularly Sindh, Baluchistan, Punjab), are also exported to the West, where the migrated communities are more subject to the pressure of custom and practice in contrast to the sexual norms observed at home.

However, when practiced abroad, honor killing paradoxically brings even more negative effects than it does at home. In fact, in addition to constitute an obvious and continual threat to innocent women, it also enforces the stereotype of the "poor helpless Muslim woman" which has successfully being wielded by the advocates of the theory of Islamic civilization's inferiority, i.e., by the supporters of the incompatibility between "us" and "them". Therefore, honor killing is invoked as a further pretext in order to exclude Muslims/Pakistanis from the right of obtaining citizenship in the countries where they live and work. Ironically, Muslim/Pakistani women result to be the double victims of this situation, as they are both physically injured by honor killings and socially excluded from the rights and the protections that the new citizenship would guarantee them.

However, some women's role in honor killing is ambiguous, as it has recently been demonstrated in relation to the murder of Hina, the 19-year-old-Pakistan girl killed by her male relatives in Brescia, the town which hosts the biggest group of Pakistanis settled in Italy (13000 people). In fact, it seems that an important role in this assassination has been played by the girl's mother, thus confirming the powerful and perilous position of postmenopausal matriarchate as the other side of the coin of patriarchy.

It is well known that in the frame of the relationship between the Western/hosting communities and the Muslim/immigrant populations a very important role is played by the gender question. In Italy, after the case of honor killing happened in August 2006, the relationship between the local people and the Pakistanis has been taken a violent stance. This paper examined the role of honor killing among the Pakistani community in Italy, its perception among the Italians, its possible repercussions on the project of multiculturalism and on Pakistani women's life in Italy.

Family and Society, Image and honor

Advocate Zia Ahmed Awan-Pakistan

A glance at the socio cultural scenario of Pakistan reveals that gender-based violence is deep-rooted in the society irrespective of language and ethnicity. Women are not given their due role, rights and respect furthermore they are treated as chattels. The presentation covered the socio-customary practices in context of discrimination, stigmatization and violence against women.

Patriarchal structure of society, weak socio-customary practices and discrimination against women are very serious concerns/issues which need to be understood as a multidimensional problem, which intensifies the issue of trafficking and over all issue of violence against women. Violence against women has increased voluminously due to the negligence of at various levels including family, community, government and society. According to Madadgaar database, 46,364 women are victimized from January 2000 to June 2006. It is estimated that more than a million women and children are trafficked every year and forced in to prostitution and forced marriages.

The presentation covered the following points:

- Status of women in society
- Socio-customary practices like:
 - Swara marriages
 - Vani
 - Honor killing or Karo-kari
 - Domestic Violence
 - Consent marriage
 - Jirga System
 - Discriminatory attitudes and workplace harassment
- Some exemplary case studies
- Recommendations

Owning My Honour Bilquis Tahira-Pakistan

This paper talked about the determinants of violence particularly in the name of honour. Gender stereotyping of women in literature perpetuates violence. It also touched the issues that how constructs control women bodies and sexuality and restricts choices of life and liberty. The increase in honour killings was due to Islamization process started in Zia-ul-Haq's era that has increased impunity to such crimes.

It pointed out that gender-based violence is pervasive and cuts across divides of class, ethnicity and religious orientations at the family, societal and state level and is used as tool of oppression. Women are targeted due to patriarchal values. Because of the division of private and public space, honour killing go unreported.

The psychological dimensions are far more difficult and go beyond the physical abuse. Over the years laws and literature has limited women role and images and society has become more conservative.

PLENARY SESSION V-EXPRESSIONS IN CREATIVITY

Chair:Ms. Zehra Nigah, Reknown Poet and Critic

Speakers:

Ms. Zehra Nigah (Pakistan)

Ms. Kishwar Naheed (Pakistan)

Dr. Nomanul Haq (Pakistan)

Ms. Zaheda Hina (Pakistan)

Ms. Sajida Haider Vandal (Pakistan)

Ms. Moneeza Hashmi (Pakistan) and

Ms. Yasmeen Hameed (Pakistan)

PLENARY SESSION V-EXPRESSIONS IN CREATIVITY

The fifth and final theme was 'Expressions in Creativity' which was chosen to highlight women's vital contributions to various forms of art and expressive media such as visual art, poetry, script writing, dress designing, journalism and television direction and production.

Expressions in Creativity Ms. Zehra Nigah-Pakistan Chair

Expressions in Greeting کے معنی ہماری زبان میں بہت وسیع ہیں۔ فطرت جب انسانوں کو صلاحیتیں عطا کرتی ہے تو وہ یہ نہیں دیکھتی کہ وہ مرد ہے یا عورت۔ یہ تقسیم منصفانہ ہوتی ہے۔ معاشرہ صلاحیتوں کی غیر منصفانہ تقسیم کر دیتا ہے۔ خواتین کی شاعری پر زمانے اور ماحول کے اثرات مرتب ہوئے جس کی مثال ملنا نامکن ہے۔ عورتوں کی شعر گوئی میں جرأت سچائی اور ایمانداری، تینوں خاصیتیں موجود ہیں۔ مگر اس سب کے باوجود وہ خود گمنام رہی۔ لیکن اس کے سفر کا حوصلہ کم نہیں ہوا۔ زندگی کی دھوپ چھاؤں سے بٹی یہ عورت اپنے اظہار میں کہیں خوفزدہ نہیں۔ زمانے کی شدت پر اس کی آواز صدائے احتجاج بھی بنی اور اپنی فکری میراث کا سلیقہ بھی باقی رہا۔ ہماری عورت کا تخلیقی جوہر کسی زمانے، موضوع، طرز یا زاویہ کا قیدی نہیں۔ انسانی ذہن آزاد رہتا ہے، چاہے جسم قیدوبند میں ہی کیوں نہ ہو، وہ اپنے اظہار کو معنی کی گہرائی کے ساتھ، اعتبار اور اعتماد سے ادب کا جوہر بنا رہی ہے۔

Expressions in Creativity Kishwar Naheed- Pakistan

The presentation was structured around the following areas:

- What is confessional poetry, why it is taboo for women writers?
- Double personality of a woman writer, a house wife and a writer who is hardly given facility to compose herself and write.
- The fear from within has not yet gone off from the persona of women writers.
- A woman writer is not supposed to write on her physical changes as they effect on her personality.
- Social ethics demand that a woman may write on family bliss whether the family provides solace to her or not.
- Recipe of creative expression for women is offered by male critics on compassionate level.
- Prejudice of male writers based on non-understanding the women issues.
- Sexist out look of male writers towards female writers- universal phenomena.

- Contradictions of society explored, outlined and expressed more vehemently by women writers

“Explicit and Implicit Feminisms in Classical Urdu Poetry”

Dr. Nomanul Haq- Pakistan

The feminine in Urdu poetry has generally been studied from the viewpoint of social history, rather than as a substantive ingredient of the literary content itself. This paper looked at different genres of classical Urdu verse from both angles, calling them “explicit” and “implicit” feminisms—that is, the poet’s social attitudes to women and womenhood on the one hand, the feminist imaginative range and symbolism of their poetry on the other.

Expressions in Creativity

Zaheda Hina- Pakistan

This paper questioned the absence of women from history especially in sub-continent. It highlighted with example that social taboos and cultural norms curbed creative voices of women from noble families. Only those who were considered sexually loose had the permission and space for creativity. The paper also pointed out that this situation did not occur overnight but is the consequence of centuries’ long oppression and it is just the expression of this oppression. At the end it said that movement of liberation and Rights, women could find the space to express themselves creatively without being labeled negatively. It highlighted that by liberating its individuals society itself will enjoy this full experience and expression of creativity of a whole being in true sense of the word.

Expressions of Creativity

Sajida Haider Vandal- Pakistan

“Expressions of Creativity” covers a whole range of activities from the everyday cooking of food, to the embroideries and variety of exquisite art and craftwork produced by thousands of unknown women in Pakistan. There is, in addition, the inspirational works of high art, music, drama, prose, poetry and architecture produced by the relatively small number of well known women. Expressions of creativity in the traditional and folk arts had special meaning and significance for the community where it was practiced with the artists choosing to remain anonymous but obviously well known within their own community. Due to the repetitive nature of traditional art work, the meaning of the symbols is now diffused but the creative spirit often prevails. While some find themselves trapped in the imagery of tradition, others achieve a breakthrough with more contemporary expressions rendered with traditional techniques. A noteworthy example of creativity in traditional art forms is the tremendous outburst in miniature painting led by the National College of Arts which has given it a new identity with contemporary meaning and relevance.

In architecture too, aspects of creativity are manifold, but I will restrict my presentation to the contemporary woman architect, however, I do not subscribe to the view that the work of women architects is necessarily different or better or that women are more sensitive; it is

the quality of the professional that is the ultimate test. Till recently architecture was a male dominated profession in Pakistan and my journey as an architect in a miniscule way demonstrates the problems of entering into what are perceived to be male domains. My own work and career has been varied as a teacher, researcher and a practitioner. Along with my major responsibility as a teacher and an educationist, I have attempted to maintain an active practice with the twin objectives of remaining in touch with the latest developments in the profession, and to demonstrate to my students all that I profess.

To conceive, design and bring forth a building the architect needs to operate at different levels and with a great variety of people. The client, the market, the engineer, the contractor, the artisan or the skilled technician, all impinge and impact upon the imagination of an architect. Varieties of creativities come into play as the architect navigates through this large number of vested players with his imagination and creation intact – that, at least, is the challenge.

Expressions in Creativity Moneeza Hashmi- Pakistan

This paper explored the concept of the “other self” which is hidden within each one of us. What role does that “other self” play in our lives, who is this “other self”, how does the “other self” adapt to the laid down norms of behaviour, where does the “other self” derive it’s strengths from and what are the weaknesses of the “other self” are some of the questions that this paper sought to address.

The paper went on to examine the “conflicts” and “compromises” that a creative person may (or may not) come across in the course of pursuing their creative instincts. How does being a female affect one’s creativity and where/why does one have to resort to compromises in order to live within required perimeters. In conclusion the paper discussed the boundaries of creativity in the gender perspective.

Women and Creativity: Poetic Trends in Urdu Literature Yasmeen Hameed- Pakistan

This presentation was about poetry and women in poetry. Six decades ago, women artists would not be mentioned or appreciated at all. It shares how a famous woman poet was introduced by mentioning her male relatives.

There is a lot of variety in how women live their lives, some choose to stick to the norm. Some choose to be more defiant and violent; some are defiant but do so passively. Most creative writers resent injustice, but some reach overtly, some are silent and express through words and some drift and wander and their search for truth is elusive.

Women have achieved the right to express their truths. We have yet to learn how to respect these truths. Women have to understand that women writers differ in their ideas about freedom and expression. These writers must have the right and freedom to choose how to

express their feelings. Voicing an opinion about poetry is one thing but ridiculing poetry is not acceptable.

Creativity has played its role in bringing about change. The reactions to women's poetry and writings have influenced the choices they make and causes they fight for.

CLOSING SESSION

Welcome Address

Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra, Chairperson, NCSW

Honourable General Pervez Musharraf, President of Pakistan,
 First Lady Begum Sehba Musharraf,
 Ms. Sumaira Malik, Federal Minister for Women Development and Youth Affairs
 Lt. General @ Kahlid Maqbool, Governor Punjab
 Mr. Pervez Elahi, Chief Minister Punjab
 Eminent Scholars
 Distinguished Delegates,
 Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Before I thank the honourable Chief Guest, President of Pakistan I would, in all humility, and very gratefully acknowledge the honourable First Lady, Begum Sehba Musharraf for the singular honour that she has afforded to the National Commission on the Status of Women by gracing the Conference. All of us, here, Madam, are extremely touched by your support to the women of Pakistan. Thank you very much indeed.

It is a moment of gratification. It is a moment of gratitude. It is a moment of humility, it is a moment of pride. It is a moment to make new pledges, it is a moment to seek fulfillment. It is a moment to believe that a dream can come true. It is a moment to hold the head high. It is a moment to seek empowerment with dignity. I thank you and congratulate you for the Women Protection Bill.

Since January 2006, I have the honour to chair the Commission; when all other members of the Commission also came on board. Within almost a year, the Commission is completing the UNDP Institutional Strengthening Project which remained dormant, as there was no Commission on board. Today, this august gathering is a guarantee of the Commission's continuous and rigorous efforts to realize its potential. I am extremely grateful to the distinguished delegates who accepted our invitation and gave us a chance to learn and interact. Our speakers from abroad deserve special thanks, as well our colleagues here in Pakistan for their recognition of the common cause. The constant desire to make this world a better place to live, through understanding, compassion and mutual appreciation of the issues, is the common thread that weaves our aspirations together.

National Commission on the Status of Women was instituted by you sir, through an Ordinance in 2000. This was a strong indication of the will of the government to empower women and engender the policies. The mandate given to the Commission was to review policies and examine laws, for lessening the burden of oppression, injustice and inequity that women continue to bear. Let me in all humility, submit to you Sir, that upholding your vision of the Commission, it took upon the responsibility of reviewing the Hudood Ordinances, as it was more of a source of exploitation than of ensuring security. The Commission's research presented in the report on Hudood Ordinances, did not go unnoticed. It created awareness, and stirred the conscience of the society as a whole, which

began to think and ponder. The civil society organizations had taken the issue into cognizance since the Ordinance was introduced. The Commission brought the best legal and religious expertise together to look into this ordinance for analysis and review, and to highlight the rights promised in the constitution and the doctrine of Islam. Sir, your initiative to address the issues that continued to mutilate the lives of innocent citizens of this country, has culminated, with foresight and courage in the Women Protection Bill, recently promulgated. NCSW was the first one to support and declare that this was a right step in the right direction, now the same is vouchsafed by the Council of Islamic Ideology. This will surely help in minimizing the coercion and moral exploitation of the women of Pakistan.

The main theme of the Conference revolves around three concepts - Confusion, Conflict and Compromise. Conflict needs to be resolved, confusion needs to be removed and compromise needs to be understood. In a humane society, each actor must have an equal playing field. Selfish and vested interests create confusion; clash of interests does not think of resolution that could create an ambience of compromise. A paradigm for just life is not to command but to comment, not to explain but to understand, not to apologize, not to agonize, but to support and strengthen.

For continuum, life for every one should be meaningful and progressing. Meaningfulness is attained, only if a life has an ideological base, and in our case, I mean our Pakistani society, this basis is provided by our religion Islam. It guides us throughout and has the power and strength to steer us away from all confusions and conflicts. The feudal and the obscurantist mind set does not believe in change and fails to accept it. As this threatens their established positions. It requires re-examining and thinking afresh to steer the society, clear of the mesh of confusion.

This international conference aspires to bridge the gaps of miscommunication and to create an atmosphere of understanding through comparative analysis and objective review. NCSW has a keen desire of sharing the ideas, discussing the issues, and grasping the challenges. Today, we live in a world torn between strife and malice, between authority and servitude, between self-righteousness and accusations. We need to remind ourselves of benevolence, of tolerance, of service, of compassion and above all to let others live. The authoritative, the obscurantist, the feudalistic mind set is oblivious of all these values that promise dignity and empowerment to individuals.

Societies generally develop with their ingrained faith in the potential of the individual, and by all those ideals, if translated into action that could ensure justice and equity. A universal misunderstanding permeates that only political power or economic acumen can make societies strong. The sensitive mind, the sharp intellect and the rational thinking is a much stronger element in creating a will for sustainable change and development than all other forces put together. This may be the unseen, but it cannot be denied that this is the driving force that transforms existence into life. One who dares to accept the challenge, and upholds the truth, is the one who can resolve conflict, address confusion and contemplate compromise. With this hope and expectations, the distinguished delegates engaged

themselves in defining the parameters of change. I thank them all and each one of them on behalf of the Commission, and on my behalf.

Sir we wish to draw your attention to the fact that even after the Women's Protection Bill has been passed by the parliament, strange enough and disturbing to most of us is the ultra parliamentary consultations that continue with a group of obscurantist scholars with vested interests. To our dismay they are neither elected peoples' representatives that they have a right to opine on a bill which has been presented to the apex centre of legislation, nor do they enjoy the authority of unchallenged scholarship. Unfortunately Sir, I submit with deference that such are the efforts to sabotage any initiative which brings relief, security, equality and dignity to women. Our concern is that if this process continues, the other areas of vital importance such as Qanun-e-Shahadat, laws of inheritance and other extra-judicial practices such as karo kari, vani, swara etc will suffer.

Your Excellency, we would like to suggest some measures that would strengthen the National Commission and will provide the enabling environment to take forward the Government's proactive stance on empowering women. We suggest that to make NCSW an effective body, it is given an autonomous statutory status. Presently it is only a recommendatory body. Until it has powers to summon documents and persons from any government department and to inquire about the measures they have taken for gender mainstreaming, it cannot play its rightful role and act as a direct instrument of change. We also request that the Governors of the provinces take the initiative of setting up provincial offices of the Commission, where possible with independent premises.

Sir we are very appreciative of the quotas in local government, provincial and national parliaments. We hope that you will continue to support the cause of women in national decision making by allocating half of the seventeen technocrat seats in Senate for women. Also technocrat seats should be initiated both in national and provincial assemblies and half of these reserved for women. This will allow women of ideas, knowledge and skills, who are outside the political parties, to play their rightful role in the Senate and Assemblies.

I thank you all once again, and above all you Sir, Mr. President for honouring us. I assure you Sir, that for the cause of women in particular and for any national cause in general you will find NCSW standing behind you.

Conference Resolution

Dr. Marjan Radjavi

To harness the energy of this conference and make joint efforts for a life of dignity for women worldwide, Dr. Radjavi presented resolution of the conference comprising of following actions:

- To honor international commitments by integrating them into implementation of policies and plans of action in all institutions including National Commissions on the Status of Women ;
- To strengthen the National Commissions with adequate resources and power and the establishment of offices at sub-national levels;
- Following dialogues among existing Commissions in South Asia, to establish a regional apex body of National Commissions, starting with South Asia and then enlarging it;
- To establish a consortium of existing National Commissions worldwide and advocate for the formation of National Commissions where none exist.

Address of the General Pervaz Musharraf President of Pakistan

Addressing the concluding session of the First International Conference “the Other Self: Conflict, Confusion or Compromise”, General Pervaz Musharraf, President of Pakistan vowed to defend the Women Protection Act, as long as I am there, no-body will touch this law.”

The President explained how difficult it was to make amendments in this section of the Hudood Ordinance, which nobody dared thinking changing it in the last 30 years. The issue is so sensitive that it has not only strong religious reactions but serious political and administrative repercussions.

The government has to walk a fine line, striking a balance between the dire political and administrative consequences and a complete understanding of the lawful rights of women. He believed it was very difficult for the government to make acceptance of the Bill smooth to minimize the threat of agitation by the obscurantists.

The President said that the government managed the situation by engaging the moderates between the two extremes – the liberals and the hardliners. He said the liberals wanted complete repeal of the Hudood Ordinances, while the hardliners didn’t want it to be touched. So he added, the government preferred to move inch-by-inch rather than taking a high leap and not gaining anything.

The President said the religious sections are diverse sections, so the government engaged the relatively responsive quarters for support to take the first step in the right direction. President Pervaz Musharraf said the government would never try amendments in Hudood-Allah but the Ordinance could be reviewed and amended for it was the work of humans. He believed the real problem behind such controversies was the gap between the theory and practice in Islam. The theory pertaining to women rights and laws is beautiful in Islam, yet in practice, things are quite different. “We need to bring the theory in Islam in consonance with the practice,” he added.

Stressing the women’s emancipation, the President believed it was a bigger issue than the Women Protection Bill. He said women needed to be empowered politically and economically. He further said that the political empowerment would give them voice in the parliament, enabling them to handle issues more effectively and steer policies pertaining to them. He claimed his government has ensured women’s participation in all tiers of the government, and around 30,000 women were members of the legislatures starting from the district government to the Senate.

President Musharraf also highlighted the significance of changing existing laws and social practices. “We need to address all issues which harm and do injustice to women”. President made his intention clear that the government would soon legislate against six social customs, including inheritance, women trafficking, forced marriages and marriage to Quran, forced exchange marriages and Vani.”

The President was of the view that there was an urgent need for the capacity building of women in Pakistan. He said around 70% of the women live in rural areas and do live a life of common comfort. He urged the government and NGOs to come forward for women's development. President quoted the governor State Bank of Pakistan, four women pilots in the PAF and 31 female officers being trained in the military academy. He assured that the government would consider the demand for increasing the women quota in national and provincial parliaments.

President Musharraf strongly criticized the trend of singling Pakistan out for being the hub of violence against women. He narrated how he tried to help Mukhtaran Mai even when he was abroad. He said his heart bled for such victims may it be Mai or Shazia, but he was opposed to maligning Pakistan abroad. He noted that the SAARC countries and other countries of the world had similar problems.

The President concluded that it was a universal issue and needed to be combated together. He sought the provincial governments and NGOs help for pointing such malpractices in the society, however, he warned, being a fighter, he would fight all such elements who try to defame the country on this account.

Commission's Meetings

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Subject: - **MINUTES OF THE 20 MEETING OF NCSW HELD ON 21 -22
FEBRUARY 2006 AT ISLAMABAD**

Twentieth meeting of the National Commission on the Status of Women was held on February 21 and 22, 2006 in the Committee Room of NCSW under the Chairpersonship of Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra. List of participants is enclosed as Annex-I. Meeting had a diversified agenda and was held in three parts: briefing session, regular working session and an open discussion. Annex-II.

1 February 2006

Opening Remarks by Chairperson

On 21 February 2006, the proceedings commenced with the opening remarks by the Chairperson welcoming the Members of the Commission and observing that it was an important occasion to reactivate the Commission, in efforts for the empowerment, equity and development of women of Pakistan. She apprised the participants that due to seriously injured in the earthquake the Commission's Member from AJK Prof. Ms. Saleema Atta could not join whereas Ms. Farida Shaheed, member from Punjab and Dr. Tahira Kamal, member from Balochistan were unable to attend the meeting due to prior commitments. The Chairperson acknowledged with gratitude and appreciation for the excellent work done by former Chairperson Justice ® Majida Razvi, during her tenure.

Briefing by Secretary NCSW

After the introduction of new members, Secretary NCSW gave a detailed briefing on the objectives of the Commission, its strength and the activities/assignments performed so far. She highlighted the objectives of the NCSW, i.e. working towards emancipation of women, equalization of opportunities and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Member/Secretary, NCSW informed the members about some of the significant aspects of the operational process of the Commission and explained the framework and main features relating to administrative and financial matters. She stressed the need of an independent secretariat of the Commission for better efficiency, and appointment of a permanent Secretary to the Commission.

UNDP PROJECT:

Institutional Strengthening of National Commission on the Status of Women (IS-NCSW)

Ms. Sofia Noreen, National Project Manager, while giving presentation on "IS-NCSW Project" informed the participants that the Project has been extended upto December 2006. She reported that the Project signed in June 2004, aims at strengthening the organizational capacity of NCSW for Policy Analysis, Research and Advocacy, to enable it to emancipate women, equalize socio-economic opportunities, and to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. NPM further apprised that training workshops on Gender

Self-Awareness and Gender based Research Methodologies were organized under this Project to enhance the capacity building of the participants.

During the briefing session on IS-NCSW, Ms. Viqar-un-nisa Hashmi, Policy Research Officer apprised the participants about the progress on following research studies:

- Qisas & Diyat Ordinance
- Home-Based Women Workers in Informal Sector of Pakistan
- Women's Right to Inheritance and its Implementation
- Psychological and Socio-economic Factors Responsible for Drug Addiction among Women
- Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan

The role and work of NPM and Policy Research Officer was appreciated by the Chairperson and members for their continuous commitment in a period when the Commission was not in existence. Dr. Firoza Ahmad and Ms. Sirni Karnal commented that there is a need for strategic plan for the Commission and in order to bring strong management system a full-fledged secretariat of the Commission is the urgent need. It was observed that the members must identify their interest area for reviewing the research project.

ILO — Women Employment Concerns and Working Conditions

Dr. Tauqir Shah, Project Coordinator, ILO, gave a comprehensive presentation to the members of the NCSW on the Project “Women Employment Concerns and Working Conditions”. The Project aimed at poverty reduction and enhances economic status eliminating gender blind policies and practices for working women.

Following suggestions were made by the participants:

- Statistics Division may be invited to participate in the next meeting for a briefing.
- Lady teachers working in private schools are being paid pathetic salaries, necessary policies/legislation is needed to determine a salary package at par with other employees. -
- Ministry of Labour was launching a Project for training of 30,00,000 workforce. NCSW should take up the matter with the concerned Ministry to extend maximum possible training facilities to women workers in Pakistan.
- Women workers and students face great difficulties while traveling in public transport. Better facilities for women is needed urgently.

22 February 2006

On the second day of the meeting, proceedings commenced with a detailed presentation made by the Secretary MoWD on “Implementation of National Gender Reforms Action Plan (GRAP)”. He informed that this was first comprehensive GRAP in Pakistan, which has equal participation of men and women at all levels of policies, political instruments in the long run, with broad based emancipation. He further added that the Project was approved in May 2005 with an estimated cost of Rs. 418.563 million and the National Commission on the Status of Women will be a partner in its implementation. A total amount Rs. 8.923 million has been placed for capacity building and institutional

restructuring and strengthening of NCSW. Secretary, MoWD assured full support of the Ministry in the Work of the Commission. In his presentation the Secretary MoWD informed that NCSW is a member of the gender mainstream Committee which is not reflected in the PC-I. The details of GRAP relating to the restructuring of NCSW are as under:

- • To be strengthened as a policy/legal research, review and analysis; recommendatory and advisory body.
- Complete operational and conceptual autonomy
- Establishment of an independent and separate secretariat with two Wings (a) Technical Wing (to be headed by a Technical Advisor from private sector);
- and (b) Administrative Wing (to be headed by a whole time Secretary NCSW)
- Under the above two Wings, establishment of four units (a) Policy Research Unit; (b) Policy Analysis unit; (c) Advocacy Unit; and (d) Administration, Coordination and Finance Unit.
- Establishment of provincial offices
- Chairpersons having status equal to that of Minister of State.
- Adopting transparent and vivid merit policy for the selection of members of NCSW
- Submit Annual Report to Prime Minister and Parliament through MoWD
- The Commission to have an advocacy role
- Requisite amendments to be made in the Ordinance of the Commission

Dr. Shoaib Saddal, representative of the Secretary, Ministry of Interior pointed that the NCSW is at No. 10 in the hierarchy, vis-a-vis the importance and role of NCSW. Secretary, MoWD agreed with the observations and commented that as key partner in implementation NCSW is a watchdog. Ms. Simi Kamal observed that in the presentation NCSW is included as a member of Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee, while in PC-1 document NCSW is surprising absent from the list. Monitoring of funding under GRAP at provincial and local levels can be assessed by the members at provincial/local level.

Open House Discussion

Open house discussion aimed to enable the members for giving their opinions/ comments/observations regarding the mandate of the Commission. During the course of discussion following points were raised:

Dr. Begum Jan pointed out that lengthy legal procedure caused delay and indeed was an obstacle for women to take part in the local bodies elections in Tribal Area, beside the general social attitude of forcing women for not participating in the balloting. NADRA may be directed to open its offices in FATA enabling local women to get National Identity Cards easily and ensure to charge the fee according to government rules. Prof. Mehr Taj Roghani strongly voiced the need for providing education opportunities for girls for creating awareness. She felt a need to focus on mortality rates and malnutrition of mother

and child. Chairperson informed the Commission about the previous reports namely: (i) Hudood Ordinance; (ii) Inquiry into the status of Women Employment in Public Sector Organizations and (iii) Annual Reports of NCSW. Chairperson remarked that the Commission's mandate according to the Ordinance, inter-alia, is to examine the policy, programmes and other measures taken by the Government for women development and gender equality to assess implementation as well as to review all laws, rules and regulations affecting the status and rights of women and send suitable recommendations to the concerned authorities for necessary change. She commended the vision, foresight, energy and dedication that can be expected from the members of the Commission and drew attention to the need for enhancing the status of women in Pakistan and specific issues relating to crime and violence against women as well as drug and human trafficking.

Following Research Proposals were shared with the members for their comments:

1. Marriage with the Holy Quran (CH)
2. Women Employment Concerns in Private Sector — focusing on Education (ILO)
3. Policy Research on girl child labour in Pakistan.
4. Issues in induction of women in police force in Pakistan (National Police Bureau).

Prof. Ms. Naheed Ali observed that regarding the induction of women in police the women are biologically different from men, hence they should not be given the option. Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb observed that it was not a matter of coercion but of decision making and she commented in detail on the importance of each case. Dr. Shahida Haider brought to attention that it pertains to basic human rights. Dr. Shoaib Saddal felt that it will help in bringing out a humanizing effect in the police. Dr. Parveen Shah felt that opportunities and choices should not be denied. Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani again emphasized on education and health. Ms. Simi Kamal observed that the role of Commission is of an oversight committee above all committees and is responsible to report to the President directly. Secretary NCSW stressed the long felt need for an independent secretariat of the Commission for efficacy and efficiency.

Decisions taken:-

- Members were asked to identify specific areas of their interests/expertise for the effective input in Commission's mandate.
- Members were asked to give their proposals for research so that they can be reviewed by the Commission.

The Chairperson in her concluding remarks considered members of the Commission to be a dedicated team and hoped that the Commission will be of substantial help to improve the situation of women in the country. She stressed to infuse a new spirit of struggle among the women so that they may be the equal opportunity beneficiaries in all fields of life and prove themselves an equal partner in the national success. Chairperson suggested that the work of the Commission may be guided by the need to:

- a) Strengthen the NCSW to work for carrying on its mandate as well as the follow up of the decision taken in previous meetings.

- b) Seek extensive consultations and association of public/private organizations through visits/meetings of the Commission convened in all the Provinces.
- c) Vitalize the powers and functions as provided in the NCSW's Ordinance and GRAP.
- d) Establishment of credibility and commitment in the work of the Commission through visible commitment and involvement.
- e) Repeal of discriminatory laws/ordinances that effect the basic human rights.
- f) Create awareness among the public of the vital importance of the fact that development of women play significant role in the progress of country, overall growth of economy, and a just social order.
- g) Recommend steps/guidelines to the Government at policy making levels to give priority to the cause of women enabling them to accept the contemporary challenges.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair by Dr. Firoza Ahmad on behalf of the members.

Mrs. Suhela Asif

Member-Secretary

ANNEX-I

List of the Participants of 20th Meeting of NCSW
held on 21-22nd February, 2006 at Islamabad

S.No.	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	Chairperson
2.	Ms. Suhela Asif	Member/Secretary
3.	Prof. Dr. Parveen Shah	Member
4.	Dr. Miss Naheed Ali	Member
5.	Prof. Mehr Taj Roghani	Member
6.	Dr. Faqir Hussain	Member
7.	Dr. Begum Jan	Member
8.	Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb	Member
9.	Ms. Erum Wali Khan	Member
10.	Dr. Firoza Ahmed	Member
11.	Ms. Ashi Chanda	Member
12.	Dr. Muhammad Tufail Hashmi	Member
13.	Dr. Shahida Haider	Member
14.	Ms. Simi Kamal	Member
15.	Mr. M. Anwar Khan	Representative of Ex-officio Member (Finance Secretary).
16.	Ms. Siara Karim	Representative of Ex-officio Member (LJ&HR Secretary).
17.	Dr. Shoaib Suddle	Representative of Ex-officio Member (Interior Secretary).

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

1.	Ms. Farida Shaheed	Member
2.	Dr. Tahira Kamal	Member
3.	Prof. Saleema Atta	Member

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Subject: **MINUTES OF THE 21st MEETING OF NCSW HELD ON APRIL 28-29, 2006 AT ISLAMABAD**

The 21st meeting of the National Commission on the Status of Women was held on April 28 - 29, 2006 in the Committee Room of NCSW under the Chairpersonship of Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zebra. List of attending participants is enclosed. (Annex I) The agenda was diversified addressing the issues concerning legislation, the strategic set up of NCSW and the awareness regarding gender audit.

The Chairperson welcomed the participants in her opening remarks and noted with thanks the presence in person of the Law and Interior Secretaries for the first time as ex-officio members.

Day 1 - April 28, 2006

Item-1 **Confirmation of the Minutes of 20 Meeting of NCSW held on February 21-22, 2006**

Minutes of meeting were adopted after incorporating the observations of the members.

Item-2 **Draft Bill on Violence Against Women:**

The draft bill was tabled generating a detailed discussion. Secretary Law, ex-officio member, felt the need for a thorough study and review as a pre-requisite for such an important and sensitive issue. He stated that it is to be seen that the law addresses social situations as well as what mechanisms need to be spelt out in the bill. Serious examination of the clause contents was emphasized. He suggested a committee of two members to be formed to look into it in accordance with other relevant laws.

Secretary Law further added that each legislative bill should be with an objective for a draft legislation, and also having mechanisms for implementation. It should also be ensured that duplication is avoided for effectiveness. He offered himself as part of the Committee in his position as a member of NCSW. The other name was suggested of Ms. Simi Kamal. The members approved the Committee.

Chairperson suggested that the bill should be examined clause by clause and the comments of members should be taken into consideration for discussion.

It was decided that the members' comments be shared with the proposed committee.

Ms. Simi Kamal offered comments on various clauses of the bill. She felt it has too many things under one bill. She said that what is needed is cross reference with other legislative documents on the issue to have a coherent and focused impact. Secretary Law spelt-out procedure for looking at different laws and draft bills for the information of the members of the Commission.

Secretary Interior desired to be briefed on NCSW. He was informed that as ex-officio member, Secretary, Interior Division is part of the Commission and all the proceedings/deliberations must have come to his knowledge.

Prof Dr. Naheed Ali pointed out that there was no mention of the Quran and Sunnah in the draft bill. Secretary Law addressed the observation that the constitution guarantees that every law would abide by the Quran and Sunnah, so each and every bill does not need to repeat it. To address the customary practices and cultural mores the attitudes have to be changed.

Secretary Interior suggested that a committee be set up to see what problems are faced by women in Pakistan. He was apprised that the government is seriously engaged at many levels to evaluate and examine the problems that women generally face, and research and evaluation is a continuous process.

Item-3 Briefing on GRAP Document

Ms. Simi Kamal, member, briefed the Commission on the sections of GRAP document dealing with NCSW. She explained, that maintaining the autonomy of the Commission, GRAP furthers the strengthening of NCSW in terms of financial and human resources. The Commission is to have its own independent secretariat, provincial offices and the allocated status of the Chairperson. GRAP document suggests two wings for NCSW i.e. Administrative Wing, headed by a permanent Secretary of NCSW, and the other as Technical Wing for research. The details can be perused at Annex-2. Chairperson reiterated her suggestion that Technical Wing may be renamed as Research and Advocacy Wing.

Item-4 Dr. Parveen Shah's proposal on a study on "Harassment Against Nurses".

The proposal was discussed in detail. It was felt that inspite of fragmented projects a comprehensive view should be taken of the issue; that could be addressed in each province and other areas. Chairperson explained to the members that each member can send any proposal as per priorities of their area. The full Commission then can review and opine.

Ms. Simi Kamal supported the Chairperson's view by adding that members may suggest related research topics in line with current areas that the Commission is engaged with, and take into view the research work being done in MoWD in order to save repetition.

Dr. Firoza Ahmed also supported the proposal.

Item-5 ILO Gender Audit Workshop

Mr. Saad Gillani of ILO gave a brief presentation of the workshop logistics etc, while Ms. Simi Kamal explained the concept of Gender Audit as a tool to look into policies, plans and programmes of different organizations through gender lense.

Chairperson also explained the concept of gender audit in all spheres for monitoring the policies, plans and programmes of all line Ministries.

Details of the workshop regarding dates and venue were shared with the members to note for their participation.

Item-6 **Update — Latest development regarding NCSW:**

Chairperson briefed the members on the latest developments in NCSW. She also informed that MoWD has reviewed a bill regarding Hudood Laws and NCSW's comments contained in its Report on the Ordinance are incorporated in it. She also informed that some budget allocation is due for NCSW under GRAP.

Day 2 - April 29, 2006

Item-7 **Detailed Work Plan of IS-NCSW & Members**

Input/Commitments/Capacity Building — National Project Manager

Ms. Sofia Noreen, National Project Manager, gave a very comprehensive presentation on this agenda item. The members showed their keen interest in the capacity building and advocacy skills. The members were of a strong opinion to exposure visits. It was repeatedly emphasized by all the members that for Institutional Strengthening of NCSW the exposure visits to similar Commission/Organization/Institution were essential alongwith inviting international experts to the Commission. This will provide a chance of comparison and understanding of the common issues, while getting informed about various mechanisms for implementation. The members felt that it will give sustainability to their efforts. The visits to India, Bangladesh and Malaysia were suggested. The members can be divided into groups, maximum of 3 in number. Each group could have a lead person from amongst the official members. The expenses could be borne by making shifts in the line budget of the Project.

National Project Manager informed about the possibility of inviting experts, but the members felt that as the project has a provision the exposure visits will provide them not only first hand knowledge but insights for their roles as members of NCSW. (Details of Work Plan at Annex-III).

During the discussion Ms. Sofia Noreen also suggested that members may use the NCSW website and chat facility. Shortly an email-group will be formed.

Additional Agenda

Formulation of a Strategic Plan

This item was not part of regular agenda, but realizing its importance it was decided to draft an outline of a strategic plan of action for NCSW. The basis of this plan were outlined by Ms Simi Kamal in consultation with members keeping in view the NCSW mandate and mission. Ms. Simi Kamal also proposed that under the project a provision of fact finding mission should be initiated. Under this project IJNDP should hire a Coordinator/Facilitator to assign the requisite tasks of fact finding to members. After the completion of these tasks the Coordinator/Facilitator will submit a report direct to National Project Director and also to help in monthly forum meetings and quarterly workshops. This strategy will enhance the understanding of the members regarding the issues and problems of women, and positively contributing towards capacity building. These assignments could be shared in full Commission meeting, and can lead to a national level report. The draft outline is presented at Annex-IV.

Chairperson agreeing with the proposal added that this will be a step forward in institutional strengthening.

Item-8 Briefing on on-going researches under IS-NCSW

Ms. Viqar un nisa Hashmi gave a briefing on on-going researches in the NCSW.

Dr. Naheed Au and Ms. Simi Kamal expressed their interest in a close study of the documents.

Ms. Hashmi also informed the members of the date and venue of the Consultation Meetings with the members. The members approved the following suggested dates and venues.

Quetta	16 th May, 2006
Peshawar	1 st June, 2006
Karachi	18 th May, 2006
Gilgit	5 th June 2006
Lahore	29 th May, 2006
Jamrud	3 rd June, 2006

This schedule was considered as a tentative schedule to be changed according to the availability of the local members.

Ms Viqar assured her personal presence at these meetings and the members approved these dates and venues.

Chairperson emphasized the active role of the members and suggested that they should take the lead role in organizing these consultation meetings as well as all forthcoming project activities. She stressed that this is the essential part of institutional strengthening that the members become effective actors in NCSW's work. Chairperson asked the members to take the initiative in establishing the linkages in their areas. The members must realize their important role as members of NCSW linking it with their role as representative of their particular area to make NCSW and its work visible in the local community/organizations. The members welcomed Chairperson's decision and willingly accepted her suggestion.

Item-9 Orientation Session on Gender Mainstreaming — NCSW's Role and Responsibilities

A presentation was given by Mr. Imran Rizvi, on the subject to the members to have a general concept of what gender is all about and how it will be useful to the members in their work on gender monitoring, gender audit of the policies, plans and programmes of different agencies.

Item-10 Formation of the Executive Committee

The Chairperson informed the members of the NCSW of the formation of an Executive Committee as per NCSW Ordinance for larger representation and broadening the scope of membership. The Rules of Business have a provision of an Executive Committee comprising the Chairperson and one member only. Chairperson stated that the Executive Committee under the Ordinance is more encompassing for, meaningfulness. Prior to formal discussion of the agenda item, Dr. Roghani suggested that one member from each province

to be included; and suggested Dr. Naheed Ali's name for this Committee. The Chairperson informed her that the Executive Committee cannot be formed on geographical basis as there is a provision of only 3 members in the Ordinance apart from Chairperson and Secretary.

Dr. Shahida Haider proposed the names of Dr. Faqir Hussain, Ms. Simi Kamal and Ms. Farkhanda Aurangzeb for the Executive Committee on the basis of their exposure and expertise. The proposal was seconded by Ms. Erum Wali Khan and Dr. Tahira Kamal.

The proposal was unanimously accepted. It was decided to forward these names for notification.

The Chairperson thanked the members for their participation and contribution in the deliberations of NCSW 21 meeting and hoped that their commitment for the cause of women would always come first.

Mrs. Suhela Asif

Member-Secretary

ANNEX-I

List of participants 21 Meeting of NCSW
held on 28-29 April, 2006 at Islamabad

S.No.	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	Chairperson
2.	Prof. Mehr Taj Roghani	Member
3.	Prof. Dr. Parveen Shah	Member
4.	Dr. Begum Jan	Member
5.	Dr. Tahira Kamal	Member
6.	Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb	Member
7.	Dr. Ms. Naheed Ali	Member
8.	Ms. Erum Wali Khan	Member
9.	Dr. Firoza Ahmed	Member
10.	Dr. Shahida Haider	Member
11.	Ms. Simi Kamal	Member
12.	Mr. Justice Mansoor Ahmed	Ex-officio Member/Secretary Law & Justice Division
13.	Syed Kamal Shah	Ex-officio Member/Secretary Interior Division
14.	Mr. M. Anwar Khan FA (WD)	Representative of Ex-officio Member (Finance Secretary)
15.	Ms. Suhela Asif	Member/Secretary

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

1.	Dr. Faqir Hussain	Member
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ABSENTEE MEMBERS

1.	Ms. Farida Shaheed	Member
2.	Prof. Saleema Atta	Member
3.	Ms. Ashi Chanda	Member
4.	Dr. Muhammad Tufail Hashmi	Member

**GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

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**MINUTES OF 22ND MEETING OF NCSW HELD ON
JULY 13, 2006 AT ISLAMABAD.**

The 22nd meeting of the National Commission on the Status of Women was held on July 13, 2006 in the Committee Room of NCSW under the Chairperson of Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra. List of attending participants in enclosed (Annex-I) and the agenda at Annex. II.

The Chairperson welcomed the participants in her opening remarks and noted with satisfaction the presence for the first time of Prof Saleema Atta, Member from AJK and wished the member full recovery since she has suffered in Oct 8th 2005 earthquake. The Chairperson reiterated the contents of her letter of May 4, 2006 that the member could apply for leave of absence on medical grounds.

In response to the issue of absence from two consecutive meetings of the Commission raised by Prof. Mehar Taj Roghani, the Chairperson referred to Rules of Business.

Item-I Confirmation of Minutes of 21st Meeting of NCSW.

The minutes were presented for the confirmation.

Dr. Mehar Taj Roghani raised two issues, regarding the formation of Executive Committee 1) Prof Naheed Ali has proposed the name of Dr. Firoza Ahmed 2) how can one member propose 3 names.

The Chairperson informed that 1) Prof Naheed Ali did not propose the name of Dr. Firoza Ahmed at the time when the agenda item was dealt and proposals were invited, 2) one single member can propose/second more than one name as a panel.

The members present confirmed Chairperson's observation.

Item-II Reports of the Consultative Meetings by the Members held in Karachi, Lahore, Quetta, Peshawar, Gilgit and Islamabad

The Chairperson stated that the reports on Consultative Meetings have been submitted by three members namely, Ms. Simi Kamal, Ms. Farkhanda Aurangzeb and Dr. Shahida Haider. The rest of the members have not submitted their reports as yet.

Dr. Firoza Ahmed complained about the late information to her regarding the consultative meeting and the fact that she had to chair the sessions besides making a request to invite Federal Minister for Labour. She said that the Chairperson must have informed her in writing rather than a phone call from any other person.

In response thereof Chairperson stated that the members had been informed about the consultative meetings in the last NCSW Board meeting. With reference to invitation to Labour Minister, the proposal was made by the Director General, Pakistan Manpower Institute, and in our understanding a consultative meeting is not an appropriate forum for the Federal Minister to be invited. Policy Research Officer's schedule was back to back and generally she is particular in putting everything on record, in such a situation a phone call should have been fine.

Islamabad

At the outset Dr. Firoza Ahmed, member from Islamabad, again repeated that she was not informed well in time and furthermore she was not in a position to invite the Labour Minister as conveyed to her by PRO. The Chairperson informed that in the previous meeting of April 28-29, 2006 the members were informed about their role and responsibilities regarding these meetings under agenda item No.2 of Day 2. The Chairperson emphasized the importance of the role of each member as of representative of NCSW. She stressed the members to play a lead role and take the responsibilities of management and advocacy, because that is how the NCSW can be strengthened as an institution. The schedule of these meetings had earlier been confirmed in the 21st Meeting of NCSW as referred above.

Karachi

Since Ms. Simi Kamal was on leave Dr. Parveen Shah informed that the meeting was well attended.

Quetta

Ms. Farkhanda Aurangzeb gave a briefing on the consultative workshop held in Quetta. There were parliamentarians, government representatives, religious scholars, experts, and civil society representatives who attended these meeting alongwith others. She informed further that the Vice Chancellor of Balochistan University was extremely cooperative and provided all necessary support. The effort of NCSW was greatly appreciated by the participants. The Chairperson recognized with thanks the support of the Vice Chancellor, University of Balochistan.

Peshawar

The report from Peshawar was not received from Professor Naheed Ali. Prof. Mehar Taj Roghani had gone to perform Umra so she had no knowledge about it. However, Dr. Begum Jan, Member from FATA, who was present there, informed that there was a lot of hue and cry over the Inheritance Law from MMA and the report was criticized for political reasons. The MMA participants even suggested dissolution of NCSW, the member from FATA added.

Ms. Viqar-un-Nisa, PRO stated that she has received a letter of appreciation from Naib Ameer Jamaat-i-Islami, Chaudhry Muhammad Aslam Saleemi, on the same report

Gilgit

Ms. Erum Wali Khan presented her report on the consultative workshop held in FANA. She informed that since the report is not district specific and there is diversity of practices in FANA, a lot of discussion was generated due to this reason Ms. Viqar clarified that efforts were made to take varied samples as much as possible. During the course of discussion the issue of exchange marriages also came up since it is a major issue in FANA.

Lahore

Dr. Shahida Haider was on leave, but she had sent her written report informing that initially there was a heated discussion but as the things were explained, a climate of dialogue and understanding was developed. The meeting turned out to be a useful dialogue and a success in understanding the issue.

Item 3 Recommendations of Consultative Meetings

Ms. V. N. Hashmi, presented the recommendations on Women Rights in Inheritance, consequent upon these consultative meetings. The members discussed it thoroughly as it entails several laws and the complication thereof.

The recommendation of the establishment of birth and death registry came under critical review due to prevailing ground realities. Prof. Mehar Taj Roghani was of the view that the recommendations could not be applied in rural/backward areas. During the discussion, it came to be acknowledged that several recommendations combined policy and strategy both, therefore it was felt that the recommendations should be thoroughly examined by PRO and if need be grouped according to the nature of the recommendation.

Chairperson explained that provisions exist in law but what is needed is the implementation. NCSW's role is to make such recommendations that are be implemented by other agencies. NCSW's mandate is not implementation itself, yet it to pursue aggressively.

Dr. Roghani's concern for village/rural areas was appreciated for larger interests. Dr. Begum Jan's effort of having the report translated into Urdu for dissemination was thought opportune and useful for mass awareness.

Dr. Faqir Hussain suggested that meetings with other minority representatives to cover the issue form all angles and perspectives. He also proposed a collaborative effort with Law and Justice Commission.

Dr. Firoza Ahmed reiterated that a system of institutionalizing through communities be made. Devolved mechanism at the local council level be created for mass awareness campaign. The Chairperson added that provincial members may play the role in their respective provinces to liaise and coordinate with all concerned departments.

The matter regarding inheritance of grandson also come under discussion.

Representative of Ministry of Law suggested a Committee be constituted to study all laws relating to other communities as well. Dr. Shoaib Suddle said it was a complex issue and needed in depth study. NCSW and Law and Justice Commission may coordinate as Chairperson herself is a member of Law and Justice Commission. Dr. Faqir Hussain offered the help from Law and Justice Commission for legal expertise.

Representative of Ministry of Law and Dr. Firoza Ahmed suggested to form an expert committee to review the report on Inheritance. To this Ms. Viqar-un-Nisa Hashmi explained that experts from varied sections of the society were consulted and they have given their input and it was already incorporated.

Chairperson clarified the need is of improving the draft through editing and making the concepts clear. There is no disparity in the concept and content of the report. Dr. Shoaib Suddle supported the Chairperson's view.

In response to suggestion for the constitution of a committee of experts to review on inheritance law, Chairperson said that in the presence of experts within the NCSW Board another committee of experts is not required. However, she welcomed the suggestion of Dr. Faqir Hussain for collaboration of NCSW and Law and Justice Commission in finalizing the report.

The recommendations on the report on "Psychological and Socio-Economic Factors Responsible for Drug Addiction Among Women in Pakistan" were presented. Dr. Roghani stated that no results have been achieved so far despite all the efforts previously undertaken. Dr. Shoaib Suddle suggested that role of NCSW be highlighted at the beginning of the report.

Regarding recommendations of report on Home Based workers the Chairperson informed that there were certain gaps that need to be filled prior to any recommendations were presented.

Item 4 **Schedule of Forums**

The schedule of forums was discussed in detail and the schedule presented was agreed upon after minor changes. The responsibility of arranging the forums was offered to respective members. Dr. Firoza Ahmed, and Dr. Roghani had their reservations and stated their inability to take the responsibility except forwarding their lists of invitees to be incorporated by PAO. Peshawar forum would be undertaken by NCSW itself. A

consolidated list of invitees will be compiled in NCSW. Ms. Rehmat Yazdani, PAO, will consolidate this information.

Item 5 Appraisal of Executive Committee Meeting.

The Chairperson informed about the meeting of the Executive Committee discussions and decisions made as per following:

Review of the NCSW Ordinance and Rules of Business

The Executive Committee closely examined the two documents and suggested the amendments necessitated by GRAP recommendations. The Executive Committee incorporated recommendations by suggesting amendments in Ordinance and Rules of Business for effective functioning of NCSW. The Executive Committee also felt that for the strengthening of NCSW at Federal level the recommendations of GRAP should be implemented in letter and spirit.

Discussion on GRAP

The Executive Committee suggested the inclusion of GRAP's approved recommendation in the Ordinance and the Rules of Business. These have been reflected in the changes.

The Executive Committee felt that MoWD should facilitate the implementation of the GRAP.

PSDP Budget Allocation

The Executive Committee discussed the allocations provided in the current year's PSDP under GRAP of MoWD relating to NCSW. The Executive committee was of the opinion that as NCSW does not have specific head for depositing the development fund so a note should be moved to the Finance Division for obtaining permission to open a NCSW Account to avail the PSDP Funds. The Executive Committee also felt that it will not be physically possible to expense the allocated funds to the best use as the financial year is coming to an end, and there is not any time left for initiating specified activities. It was also decided that a note would be moved to the Secretary, Ministry of Women Development to this effect.

Future Work Plan

The Executive Committee discussed the future work plan of NCSW and the following activities were decided:-

Comprehensive Political Biography of Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah. Preparing a Directory of all Women Union Council Members of Pakistan for reference and record. Submitting a proposal to the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan in reply to a public advertisement ACCESS TO JUSTICE FUND for legal awareness in Balochistan. Conduct a study on Madrassahs for Girls, evaluating the system for bringing it into mainstream education. A

study on the requisition of Inheritance by Women in Balochistan. Launching of Hudood Ordinance Documentary film prepared and approved by the previous Commission under the Chairpersonship of Justice® Majida Razvi. Directory of Notable Women of Pakistan Compendium of Labour Law and Land Revenue Act specifically related to Women. Making documentaries on the current researches and studies conducted under institutional strengthening of NCSW.

The Members endorsed the Future Work Plan and consented to its execution.

Item 6 **Research Proposal on Victims of Zina Ordinance**

The Chairperson informed the UNDP is proposing to do a study on victims of Zina Ordinance. It has indicted that a sum of US \$ 100,000 should be made available from the present project and in the same time frame. This was not possible as the project's life ends in December, 2006, and this research would need more time. The members were of the opinion that this study is not mentioned in the project document, we should not deviate from it. And the study may be taken up later if resources could be mobilized from some other source and time frame needs to be negotiated for quality research. UNDP proposal was not agreed upon by the members in partipicle but with conditionalities mentioned above.

Item 7 **Any other Business.**

Dr. Begum Jan from FATA desired that letters sent to the Governor Office get lost. In future copy of letter sent to the Governor will also be endorsed to her. She desired that the Chairperson may also write to the Political Agent.

The items under the project "Institutional Strengthening of National Commission on the Status of Women" were discussed.

A 3-day Capacity building workshop for the members in the second week of September 2006 in Bhurban.

A.3- day Exposure visit to Philippines at the end of Oct 2006. This will provide a unique opportunity to have a first hand experience of comparison and analysis.

A-2 days regional conference from 14- 16 Nov. 06 in Lahore, where chairpersons of various commissions and intellectuals from other countries would be invited.

Members unanimously agreed with all above mentioned suggestions.

The Chairperson thanked the members for their participation and contribution to the deliberations of the NCSW 22nd meeting and also reiterated that the members would make their presence felt in the provinces and play a proactive role.

Government of Pakistan
National Commission on the Status of Women

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MINUTES OF THE 23RD MEETING OF NCSW HELD ON 6TH SEPTEMBER 2006
AT KARACHI

Twenty third meeting of the National Commission on the Status of Women was held on September 06, at Karachi, under the Chairpersonship of Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra. List of the participants is enclosed at Annex. I. Following was the agenda for the meeting:-

1. Confirmation of the minutes of the 22nd Meeting (already circulated)
2. Progress on the Consultative Meetings and Advocacy Forums
3. Update on the future activities of NCSW
4. Any other item, with the approval of Chair

2. Chairperson welcomed all the members and invited comments/ inputs of the members on the given agenda items one by one.

Agenda Item 1:

3. Regarding the confirmation of the minutes of the 22nd Meeting, Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani wanted clarification with regard to two points mentioned on page 5 of the minutes, 1) details about amendments in the Rules of Business, and 2) information about GRAP's funds. Chairperson informed that these amendments initiated in the Executive Committee's meeting had already been shared with the Commission. These amendments are suggested concerning setting up of an independent secretariat in NCSW and a Technical Wing for carrying out research. She further informed that once amendments are finalized and received in NCSW, these would be circulated amongst all members. She apprised details of Rules of Business that in the Rules of Business it was provided that the Executive Committee will comprise of only two members. In accordance with the provisions of NCSW Ordinance, there it is stated that the Committee would comprise of five members. She further explained that such amendments and others were basically the responsibility of the Ministry of Women Development. This facility to the Commission was not provided. Realizing the urgency the Executive Committee felt the need and took upon itself to suggest the amendments as per rules and forwarded them to the MoWD, for necessary action.

4. With regards to the funds released under GRAP it was informed that the Commission was able to get deposited Rs.1.557 million to its non-lapsable fund. The funds were released just a week before the end of the fiscal year 2005-2006. It was also shared that a regular follow up is being carried out regarding the issues of GRAP and their implementation. Two months have lapsed so far and no reply has been received from MoWD. It was felt that the political issues take preference over women's issues in general, and Commission's matters in particular.

5. Dr. Firoza Ahmed had two observations that on page 1 and 2 of the minutes of the last meeting the word "complained" was mentioned and observed that such a word like

“complain” need not be brought on record as it gives negative impression. She further elaborated that as the provincial Development Departments were usually interested to collaborate with NCSW’s work hence it was proposed by her to institutionalize the networking as it would help to provide support to the members at provincial level. Chairperson responded that the provincial government departments were not obliged to provide support to NCSW as they have their own agenda, nevertheless they are in NCSW’s contact. Dr. Roghani and Dr. Begum Jan requested that a letter may be sent to the office of the Governor for cooperation As the new governor is in office in NWFP, a fresh letter is needed. Dr. Begum Jan stressed that a letter to the political agent of FATA should be sent afresh once again as the women issues of FATA are not on priority agenda.

6. Chairperson appreciated that some of the members were able to develop contacts at the provincial level even in the existing structures and situations. Their personal efforts and liaison brings recognition to NCSW.

7. MoWD has been informed regarding the inability of Dr. Fareeda Shahid to join the Commission, and the nomination of an incumbent scholar has been requested to make NCSW effective by filling the vacancy. The members were apprised that during the last eight months, Commission has been extremely busy in conducting Consultative Meetings, and Advocacy Forums, along with its routine research and advocacy plan, as the IS-NCSW project is coming to close.

Agenda Item 2:

8. Update on the Consultative Meetings and Advocacy Forums was given by the National Project Manager, Ms. Sofia Noreen. She congratulated the members for their active participation in the planning and organizing these activities in their provinces and made it possible to complete this hectic exercise in time. The experts and scholars from all walks of life were invited in these meetings. NCSW’s presence was felt and seen in all provinces. Details of the Forums and Consultative Meetings are attached at Annex. II. NPM emphasized that the number of people mentioned in the attachment is not the maximum number. In reality the number of audience was much higher in all the meetings. The enriching discussions lasted for between three to four hours in each case. By this time remaining are only 1) Advocacy Forum to be held in Hyderabad, under the supervision of Dr. Parveen Shah and 2) a Consultative Meeting to be held in Gilgit under supervision of Ms. Erum Wali Khan. The members were informed that all administrative details have been finalized for these two forms also.

9. Chairperson appreciated the members and experts who participated in these meetings especially some young minds like Ms. Fauzia Shaheen of Quetta. She also informed that each member is a competent representative of the Commission and hence Commission itself. They are the chosen ones, given the responsibility to work for the cause of women of Pakistan at highest possible consultative and recommendatory level. Dr. Tahira Kamal congratulated the Commission for its efforts. Dr. Roghani said that instead of being happy on conducting the Advocacy Forums and Consultative Meetings as

per schedule, there was a need to look at the outcome of these events. These were only outputs and goal were not achieved so far. Chairperson again reiterated the mandate of NCSW that of creating awareness through advocacy and research that would lead to goals through implementation. The goals are to be identified and strategies to be planned.

Agenda Item 3:

10. Chairperson, informed that UNDP project for “Institutional Strengthening of NCSW “would end in December 2006, and added that an exit strategy had already been submitted to the MoWD, for facilitating future work of NCSW.

11. A Capacity Building Workshop is scheduled for the members, September 7 –9, 2006 in Karachi.

12. The Capacity Building Workshop will be followed by a Study Tour to India, Jordan and Philippines in early December 2006. Members would be divided in three groups according to their own preference and area of interest. The study tours would initiate in the first week of November.

13. An International Conference is scheduled to be held in Lahore by the end of November 2006, where member from other Commissions will be invited. Members were asked to identify national speakers for this conference, if they desire so.

14. It was also informed that after the Consultative Meetings the findings would be documented in the form of a report and each research report would go through a third party review before making it public.

15. After incorporating the observations made by Dr. Firoza Ahmed the minutes of the 22nd Meeting of the Commission were adopted.

16. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

(Mrs. Suhela Asif)
Member/ Secretary

ANNEX.I

List of participants
23rd Meeting of the NCSW held on September 06, 2006.

S.#	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	Chairperson
2.	Prof. Dr. Parveen Shah	Member
3.	Dr. Tahira Kamal Baluch	Member
4.	Prof Mehr Taj Roghani	Member
4.	Dr . Faqir Hussain	Member
5.	Dr. Begum Jan	Member
6.	Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb	Member
7.	Ms. Erum Wali Khan	Member
8.	Dr. Firoza Ahmed	Member
9.	Dr. Shahida Haider	Member
10.	Prof. Naheed Ali	Member
11.	Ms. Simi Kamal	Member
12.	Mrs. Suhela Asif	Member/Secretary

ABSENTEE MEMBERS

1	Prof. Saleema Atta	Member
2.	Dr. Muhammad Tufail Hashmi	Member
3	Ms. Ashi Chanda	Member
4.	Secretary Interior Division	Ex-Officio member
5.	Secretary, Law, Justice and Human Rights Division	Ex-Officio member
6.	Secretary Finance Division	Ex-Officio member

ANNEX.II**Consultative Meetings**

S. #	Date	Place	Issue	No. of Participants
1.	July 25, 2006	Avari Hotel Karachi	Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan	65
2.	August 08, 2006	Peshawar	Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan	79
3.	August 18, 2006	Avari hotel Lahore	Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan	90
4.	August 24, 2006	Serena hotel Quetta	Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan	95
5.	August 29, 2006	Holiday In Hotel Islamabad	Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan	102
6.	September 13, 2006	Gilgit	Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan	—

Advocacy Forums

S.#	Date	Place	Issue	Guest Speakers	No. of Participants
1.	July 26, 2006	Hotel Avari Tower Karachi	Hudood Ordinances	1. Ms. Nuzhat Shirin 2. Mr. Naeem Mirza 3. Mr. Justice ® Shiaq Usmani 4. Dr. Tufail Hashmi 5. Mr. Iqbal Haider 6. Mr. Justice ® Nasir Aslam Zahid 7. Mr. Justice ® Javed Iqbal 8. Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	99
2.	August 09, 2006	Pearl Continental Hotel Peshawar	Qisas and Diyat Law	1. Dr. Farooq Khan 2. Mr. Qazi Jamil 3. Mr. Fakhar Zaman 4. Ms. Rakshanda Naz 5. Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	69
	August 19, 2006	Avari Hotel Lahore	Honor Killing	1.Mr. Syed Afzal Haider 2.Dr. Riffat Hassan 3.Ms. Justice ® Nasira Iqbal 4.Ms. Begum Mehnaz Rafi 5. Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	73
4.	August 25, 2006	Serena Hotel Quetta	Hudood Ordinances	1.Ms. Justice ® Majida Rizvi 2.Mr. Mir Aurandzeb Advocate Supreme Court 3.Ms. Fouzia Shaheen; Women Political School 4.Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	84

5.	August 30, 2006	Kohinoor Hall Marriott Hotel Islamabad	Women Protection Bill 2006	1 Mr. Makhdoom Ali Khan 2.Mr. Sherry Rehman 3.Dr. Muhammad Farooq Khan 4.Mr. Tufail Hashmi 5.Ms. Justice @ Majida Rizvi 6.Mr. Prof. Anees Ahmad 7.Ms. Neelam Hashmi 8.Ms. Nasreen Azhar 8.Mr. Khalid Masood 9.Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	53
6.	September 1, 2006	Holiday In Multan	Hudood Ordinances	1. Dr. Farooq Khan 2. Mr. Zia-ur-Rehman 3. Ms. Justice (R) Nasira Iqbal 4. Prof. Dr. Mohammad Idrees 5. Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	70
7.	September 12, 2006	Indus Hotel Hyderabad	Inheritance Law and Rights of Women	1.Mr. Sher Ali Rizvi 2.Mr. Ayaz Latif Palijo 3.Mr. Abdul Sattar Chandio 4.Mr. Nasir Ali 5.Mr. Yousaf Leghari 6.Ms. Parveen Chacher 7.Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	—

**Government of Pakistan
National Commission on the Status of Women**

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Subject: **MINUTES OF THE 24TH MEETING OF NCSW HELD ON NOVEMBER 25TH 2006 AT ISLAMABAD**

Twenty fourth meeting of the National commission on the Status of Women was held on November 25, 2006 in the Committee Room of NCSW's Office at Islamabad under the Chairpersonship of Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra. List of participants is annexed **Annex. I.**

2. The following items were on the agenda:-

1. Confirmation of the minutes of the 23rd meeting (already circulated).
2. Reports and feed back on Foreign Study Tours to Jordan, India and Philippines.
3. International Conference on Dec 8- 9, 2006 at Lahore.
4. Implementation of GRAP.
5. Advocacy collaboration.
6. Any other item with the approval of chair.

3. Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra, Chairperson, welcomed the members and invited their comments on the minutes of the last meeting.

Agenda Item No.1

4. The Minutes of the 23rd meeting of NCSW were adopted unanimously.

Agenda Item No.2

5. Chairperson appreciated the efforts of Ms. Sofia Noreen, National Project Manager IS-NCSW alongwith her team for arranging very successful study tours for members of NCSW to Jordan, India and Philippines. She informed that the Ambassadors in Jordan, Philippines and High Commissioner in India were intimated of the programme through diplomatic bag. In all these countries focal persons were deputed by UNDP to organize the visit and extend possible help to the members.

6. Chairperson informed that Dr. Faqir Hussain and Prof Farkhanda Aurangzeb, Group Leaders for Jordan and Philippines respectively would not be able to attend the meeting due to prior official commitments. However, they have sent their reports. The copies were presented to the members. The members were requested to present their reports individually.

India

7. Ms. Simi Kamal, Group Leader, pleasantly shared that the visit proved very successful. The delegates received a warm welcome from the host institution and the arrangements during the whole visit were excellent. She informed that the National Commission for Women, India has magisterial powers and is not only one Commission but consisted of a set of Commissions in every state. The Commission in New Delhi was very active and its members were proactive. The delegation held strategic talks on common issues. She further stated that the Indian Women Commission was very powerful and empowered to interact with judiciary, police and other government functionaries. It had direct links with public as well as law enforcing agencies. Another important forum was Women Power Connect. While reporting, she appreciated the overwhelming response of Indian print and electronic media. The press conference was attended by 80 journalists and every T.V. Channel provided live coverage which was beyond delegates' expectations. A joint statement was also issued which proposed to have a regional consortium that could be linked with SAARC. The detailed report is enclosed **Annex. II**.

8. Dr. Shahida Haider informed that while responding to questions raised by Indian media about Imrana Case, Family Laws and Hudood Ordinance, Ms Simi Kamal did extremely well.

9. Ms. Suhela Asif, former Secretary, NCSW, who [retired as DG MoWD from Government Service and attended the meeting on the directions from MoWD] informed that Pakistan High Commission in India did not extend any help to delegates. The group tried its best to contact the Mission for a courtesy call on the High Commissioner but there was no response from the other side at all. Ms. Simi Kamal suggested that a letter of disappointment for such an attitude be addressed to the High Commissioner/Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Jordan

10. Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani appreciated the excellent performance of Dr. Faqir Hussain as Group Leader. She highlighted six key observations and informed that in Jordan the focal persons from Women Commission were deputed in every sector/organization. Besides, National Commission, they had Jordanian Women Union, Jordanian Women Association and Jordanian Legal Committee and all of these bodies were acting in a coordinated manner. She also told that the structure of shelter homes in Jordan was different from the other world as they unite the husband, wife and children. A report is enclosed at **Annex.III**.

11. Prof Naheed Ali while presenting her report observed that the structure of Jordanian Women Commission was different It consisted of full time employees who address even general problems of women beside legal and cultural issues. The Jordanian Commission had interaction with other government agencies, NGOs and legislative bodies. All important decisions/steps were taken with consensus, which reflect their sensible approach. She further stated that although Jordan was the signatory of CEDA, they did not compromise on the articles which were against the basic theme of Islam. Detailed report attached as **Annex.IV**.

12. Dr. Tahira Kamal informed that Jordanian National Women Commission was established in 1992, and by the passage of time enhanced the role of women in national development and encouraged their participation in economy, politics and at decision making levels. The Group also visited the Queen Zein Al-Sharaf Institute for Development (ZENID) dealing with women empowerment. She also informed about an important meeting with JNCW legal committee wherein Women Rights in the Jordanian Legislation and setup of courts were discussed. The detailed report presented by Dr. Tahira Kamal is attached at **Annex. V.**

13. Dr. Begum Jan briefly stated that the members were really impressed with the progress in Jordan particularly high literacy rate, low infant mortality rate and low unemployment. The development of the country was reflected as the gap between rich and poor did not seem to be very wide. She informed that due to strict immigration policies of the Jordanian Government no foreign immigrants were found. A stable government, with peaceful environment, and well mannered society was visible. Report is enclosed at **Annex.VI.**

14. Prof. Tufail Hashmi highlighted the importance of education in Jordan and observed that education was the basis for its economic development, social well being and export.

15. The report submitted by Dr. Faqir Hussain is enclosed as **Annex.VII.**

Philippines

16. As Professor Farkhanda Aurangzeb, Group Leader, was unable to attend the meeting, her report was received through fax. Chairperson informed that in Philippines the Commission was set up in 1975 and its Chairperson and members were all volunteers; who otherwise were businesswomen by profession. The status of Commission as Advisory Body has large set up consisting sixty staff members. Its structure exist in all cities of the country. Due to high level of violence against women there also exist crisis centers. In Philippines the literacy rate is 97% and the group during their tour visited colleges and two universities. The report prepared by Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb is attached as **Annex.VIII.**

Agenda Item No.3

17. Chairperson briefed the members of the update on the International Conference, December 8-9, 2006 at Lahore. President of Pakistan and Prime Minister have already been requested to grace the function as Chief Guests at Inaugural and Closing ceremonies respectively. So far the delegates from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Canada, India, Italy, Lebanon, Nepal, South Africa, Sudan and USA have conveyed confirmation to attended the conference Draft programme with names of speakers was distributed amongst the members **Annex. IX.**

18. Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra, also briefed the members about the main theme of the Conference titled ***The Other Self: Conflict, Confusion or Compromise***. The sub-themes are:-

- Justice Delivered or Denied
- Governance and Development
- Family and Society: Image and Honour
- Politics: Shadows of Power
- Expressions in Creativity

19. Chairperson informed that the speakers were free to choose their own topics. It was a great pleasure that not only the eminent scholars, experts, academicians and policy analysts welcomed the ideas, also the people from all sphere of life appreciated the holding of this conference. A cultural night will be held on the first day of the Conference.

20. Chairperson informed the members that the Minister for Women Development was requested to preside over one of the session of her choice and grace the Conference. Continuous requests in writing and telephonically has been made from Nov 7 to Nov 22, 2006. NCSW has received no reply till date; and now under compulsion of time NCSW has to make alternate request to other personage.

21. Chairperson urged that members of NCSW being the host of the Conference were required to take active part in all protocol, administrative and logistic arrangements. A detailed programme containing the protocol arrangements for the foreign delegates will be devised and each member of NCSW will be made responsible for such activities. Necessary arrangement, relating to accommodation, security and protocol were being made. In this regards letters were sent to Chief Secretary, for logistic support and IG Police Punjab, for security arrangements. Chairperson again stressed that the members are hosts of the Conference and there may be some problems but it is expected that members will discharge their responsibilities with utmost vigilance to make the Conference a successful event.

Agenda Item No. 4.

22. Regarding the implementation of GRAP and amendments in the NCSW's Ordinance, the Chairperson apprised the members about the factual position that in terms of Clause 6(1) of NCSW's Ordinance, Ministry of Women Development (MoWD) provides secretariat support to the Commission. In order to establish an independent and separate Secretariat of the Commission, as approved under GRAP, MoWD was to take necessary steps for amendment in the relevant clauses of the Ordinance. The matter was discussed in Executive Committee meeting held on June 13, 2006, wherein, inter-alia, amendments were proposed in the NCSW Ordinance and Rules of Business. A complete case of required amendments in annotated form was forwarded to the MoWD on June 15, 2006 for taking up the case with the concerned Ministries/Divisions. Since no reply was received again in August this year, and the file was not traceable in the Ministry. Chairperson sent another note alongwith a set of copies of the documents to the Secretary, MoWD for immediate action. Ministry has now conveyed that as discussed with the

Minister for Women Development by the Secretary, MoWD **‘for the time being status quo may be maintained as many other matters are under discussion’.**

23. Chairperson informed that the funds amounting to Rs.1.557 million released by the MoWD in June 2006 were for specific activities/interventions under GRAP within very short span of time and those activities could not be undertaken particularly when the funds were released at the end of financial year. She said that by delaying the process of amendments in the Ordinance, MoWD wanted to keep NCSW inactive.

24. Ms. Simi Kamal pointed out that the recommendations under GRAP documents were approved by the Cabinet and it was mandatory for the MoWD to take necessary steps for their implementations.

25. While the meeting was in progress Secretary, MoWD came to attend the meeting as a surprise. During the discussion he stated that the case for amendments in NCSW’s Ordinance was kept pending due to 1) Bill for Protection of Women was under discussion in the National Assembly, 2) UNDP directed the Ministry not to implement GRAP, as it will interfere with the project and 3) the Minister thinks that the Commission acts against the policies of the government specifically with reference to Women Protection Bills.

26. The Chairperson, said that the rationale for non-implementation of GRAP appears to be without any logic. The UNDP project is an independent partnership and it will complete by Dec 31, 2006. While GRAP is Government of Pakistan’s initiative. Chairperson, strongly refuted the false and unfounded allegations that the Commission works against the government policies with specific reference to the Women Protection Bill. She said, that it is a public record, that NCSW as a national institution, and she as Chair gave full support to the government’s initiatives, as it was a right step in right direction to give relief to the oppressed women of Pakistan. The members and the Chair took a strong exception to this remark. Chairperson herself has been a key person in consultative meetings in the process of this Bill.

27. The members also reacted to these remarks that these were irrelevant and illogical excuses. Ms. Simi Kamal said, that NCSW is a prestigious national institution and it has its own status and is not inferior to any other national organization. UNDP project or the Women Protection Bill has nothing to do with the restructuring of NCSW, and the implementing is the responsibility of MoWD. Dr. Shahida Haider, Dr. Parveen Shah, Dr. Begum Jan, and Dr. Tahira Kamal also observed that the factual position was not being presented and irrelevant and out of context points were being raised.

28. Prof. Tufail Hashmi, pointed out that the Commission’s report on Hudood Ordinance was prepared in 2003, inclusive of the opinion of religious and legal expert. It was a rigorous research and paved the way for public awareness resulting in the recent dialogue and discussions. That report was a research oriented discourse and addressed the issues of oppressed women, and this research has now become basis for this current bill. He considered the allegations as baseless.

29. Chairperson raised the question for the nomination of Member/ Secretary, NCSW after the retirement of Ms. Suhela Asif in the first week of November 2006. She wrote a note to the Secretary MoWD, but till date no officer has been designated to work as Secretary, NCSW. Secretary, MoWD informed the case for extension in the services of Ms. Suhela Asif is being considered for extension and if approved she will continue to work as Secretary, NCSW. Chairpersons said, however, interim arrangement could have been made by the MoWD. Secretary, MoWD suggested to the Chairperson that a meeting with the Minister be arranged. The Chairperson informed him that despite all sincere efforts the Minister has not acknowledged her letters and phone calls so far.

30. Secretary, MoWD offered logistic support to the Commission from the Ministry for the International Conference. Chairperson informed him that most of the logistic arrangements have already been made by the Commission with the help of the project staff.

Agenda Item No.5

31. Chairperson informed that Dr. Perveen Shah and Ms. Simi Kamal, some time back submitted proposals for advocacy collaboration. Such requests from other organizations/agencies are also addressed to NCSW from time to time. The same was discussed in the meeting of the Executive Committee on Sept 9, 2006. The Executive Committee decided to present this proposal in the Commission's full meeting for the approval of members. So the Chairperson has put the proposal for approval of all the members so as to enter into advocacy collaboration as and when required and after critical review. Members approved the proposal and authorized Chairperson to take appropriate decisions on such proposals for advocacy collaboration. The Chairperson observed that all such cases will be brought to the notice of the members.

32. The following decisions were taken in the meeting:-

- i) A letter of disappointment to the Pakistan's High Commission in New Delhi may be sent.
- ii) Letters of thanks may be sent to Pakistan's Ambassadors in Jordan and Philippines in recognition of their cooperation and hospitality.
- iii) A meeting of all members will be held on Dec 07, 2006 at 1900 hrs at Pearl Continental Hotel Lahore, to review the latest regarding the coming Conference.

33. Ms. Sofia Noreen, NPM, IS-NCSW and Ms. Ambreen Mirza, Documentation Officer attended the meeting on special invitation. Mr. Muhammad Tariq Nawaz, Section Officer NCSW was assigned to take the minutes of the meeting.

34. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

ANNEX.I

List of participants
24th Meeting of the NCSW held on November 25, 2006.

S.#	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	Chairperson
2.	Prof. Dr. Parveen Shah	Member
3.	Dr. Tahira Kamal Baluch	Member
4.	Prof Mehr Taj Roghani	Member
5.	Dr. Begum Jan	Member
6.	Dr. Firoza Ahmed	Member
7.	Dr. Shahida Haider	Member
8.	Prof. Naheed Ali	Member
9.	Ms. Simi Kamal	Member
10.	Dr. Muhammad Tufail Hashmi	Member
11.	Ms. Ashi Chanda	Member
12.	Mr. JahandarKhan, Senior Consultant Law Division	Representative of Ex-officio Member(Law Secretary)
14.	Dr. Shoaib Suddle, Director Genral, National Police Bureau	Representative of Ex-officio Member(Interior Secretary)
15.	Mr. Muhamamd Anwar Khan, FA(WD), Finance	Representative of Ex-officio Member(Finance Secretary)
16.	Mr. Mahmood Saleem Mahmood, Secretary, MoWD	
17.	Mrs. Suhela Asif	
18.	Mr. Muhammad Tariq Nawaz, Section Officer,NCSW	
19.	Ms. Sofia Noreen, National Project Manager,IS-NCSW Project.	
20.	Ms. Ambreen Mirza	

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

1	Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb	Member
2	Dr. Faqir Hussain	Member
3	Ms. Erum Wali Khan	Member

ABSENTEE MEMBERS

1	Ms. Saleema Atta	Member
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**Government of Pakistan
National Commission on the Status of Women**

Subject: **MINUTES OF THE 25TH MEETING OF NCSW HELD ON DECEMBER 7TH 2006 AT LAHORE**

Twenty fifth meeting of the National Commission on the Status of Women was held on December 7, 2006 at Lahore under the Chairpersonship of Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra. List of participants is annexed **Annex. I**.

2. The following items were on the agenda:-

- i) Confirmation of the minutes of 24th meeting (already circulated).
- ii) To review the final arrangements of International Conference titled ***The Other Self: Conflict, Confusion or Compromise***
- iii) Any other item with the approval of chair.

Item (i)

3. The minutes of the 24th meeting of NCSW were adopted unanimously.

Item (ii)

4. Briefly apprising the members about arrangements for the International Conference on December 8 - 9, 2006, the Chairperson appreciated the very supportive role of Mr. Mohsin Hafeez, Secretary to the President, and informed that the President's participation in the Closing Ceremony was confirmed on December 01, 2006 whereas confirmation about the Prime Minister's participation in the Inaugural Session was received on December 5, 2006. Chairperson expressed the gratitude that the Heads of State and Government both had agreed to grace the occasion.

5. Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra informed that Reception Committees as per directions received have been constituted for Inaugural and Closing Sessions to receive and welcome the Prime Minister and the President respectively, details as under:-

a) Inaugural Session December 8, 2006.

- 1. Chairperson, NCSW
- 2. Secretary, MoWD
- 3. Ms. Farkhanda Aurangzeb, Member NCSW
- 4. Ms. Simi Kamal, Member NCSW

b) Closing Session December 9, 2006.

1. Minister for Women Development & Youth Affairs.
2. Chairperson, NCSW
3. Secretary, MoWD.

6. The detailed programme for the Inaugural and Closing ceremonies of seating arrangements on the stage, reservation of seats for dignitaries, members of NCSW and representatives of print and electronic media were also shared. It was informed that Dr. Muhammad Tufail Hashmi, will recite from the Holy Quran on both the occasions. Mrs. Shirin Rehim, Assistant Professor, English Department, Punjab University, has agreed to moderate the whole conference.

7. As regards the programme relating to following sessions of the Conference on December 8 -9, 206, details are attached Annex.II:

- i) Justice Delivered or Denied
- ii) Governance and Development
- iii) Family and Society: Image and Honour
- iv) Politics: Shadows of Power
- v) Expressions in Creativity

8. Chairperson informed the members that most of the foreign delegates had arrived by that evening in the hotel. She emphasized repeatedly that as hosts of the Conference members must look after the guests and for every possible details where they feel they can offer some help. She also mentioned that personal discomfort if any could be ignored.

9. Chairperson informed that MoWD issued orders in favour of Mrs. Suhela Asif to act as Secretary , NCSW till December 10, 2006 and provided the services of a Stenographer only for ten days. She further informed that MoWD after a lapse of six months returned the case for amendments in the NCSW Ordinance with the remarks that the Minister for Women Dev. desired to maintain the status quo. In response Chairperson has addressed a note to Secretary, MoWD that if the Ministry desired to keep NCSW inactive especially concerning GRAP, the responsibility squarely lies with MoWD.

10. Chairperson recognized with thanks the hard work devotion and commitment of the project and NCSW office team, and all the internees.

11. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to Chair.

ANNEX.I

List of participants
25th Meeting of the NCSW held on December 7, 2006.

S.#	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra	Chairperson
2.	Prof. Dr. Parveen Shah	Member
3.	Dr. Tahira Kamal Baluch	Member
4.	Prof Mehr Taj Roghani	Member
5.	Dr. Begum Jan	Member
6	Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb	Member
7.	Dr. Shahida Haider	Member
8.	Prof. Naheed Ali	Member
9.	Ms. Simi Kamal	Member
10.	Dr. Muhammad Tufail Hashmi	Member
11.	Ms. Erum Wali Khan	Member
12.	Mr. Muhamamd Anwar Khan, FA(WD), Finance	Representative of Ex-officio Member(Finance Secretary)
13.	Mrs. Suhela Asif	
14.	Mr. Muhammad Tariq Nawaz, Section Officer,NCSW	
15.	Ms. Sofia Noreen, National Project Manager,IS-NCSW Project.	

ABSENTEE MEMBERS

16.	Ms. Saleema Atta	Member
17.	Dr. Firoza Ahmed	Member
18.	Ms. Ashi Chanda	Member
19.	Dr. Faqir Hussain	Member
20.	Secretary, Interior	Ex-officio Member
21.	Secretary, Law	Ex-officio Member

Executive Committee
Meetings

Executive Committee

Section (15) of Ordinance No. XXVI of 2000 states that ‘there shall be an Executive Committee of the Commission consisting of the Chairperson, Secretary and three other members to be elected by the Commission which shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Commission. For the present tenure following members were elected and notified as the members of the Executive Committee:

- Dr. Faqir Hussain
- Ms. Simi Kamal and
- Ms. Farkhanda Aurangzeb

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of National
Commission on the Status of Women held on June 13, 2006 at the
Secretariat of the Commission, Islamabad**

The first meeting of the Executive Committee was held on June 13, 2006. The following members were in attendance:

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1) | Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra | Chairperson |
| 2) | Ms Simi Kamal | Member |
| 3) | Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb | Member |
| 4) | Dr. Faqir Hussain | Member |
| 5) | Mrs. Suhela Asif | Member-Secretary |

Item-1 Review of the NCSW Ordinance and Rules of Business

The Executive Committee closely examined the two documents and suggested the following amendments necessitated by GRAP recommendations. The Executive Committee incorporated recommendations by suggesting amendments in Ordinance and Rules of Business for effective functioning of NCSW. The Executive Committee also felt that for the strengthening of NCSW at Federal level the recommendations of GRAP should be implemented in letter and spirit.

a) **Ordinance:**

Sub-clause 3(3) should be added here as under:

(3) Criteria for the selection of the Members of the Commission:

(a) Required experience of Commission Members from a background of law and legislation

- Shall include lawyers, ex-judges, ex-parliamentarians, ex-civil servants, law academicians and legal experts
- Academic qualification shall be a minimum of law graduation. preferably doctorates or
- post-graduate degrees and honors from local or foreign universities
- Experience of a minimum of 15 years in respective field

- Publishing history of research papers, books, articles, press writing etc
- Publicly known for advocating the cause of gender equality and women's development

(b) Required experience of Commission Members from a background of socio economic and legal problems

Shall include social sector and green sector's specialists, women and gender specialists and researchers, development policy planners, heads of professional and labour associations and reputed NGOs

- Academic qualification shall be a minimum of master's degree from local or foreign universities
- Experience of a minimum of 15 years in respective field
- Publishing history of research papers, books, articles, press writing etc
- Publicly known for advocating the cause of gender equality and women's development

Sub-clause 3 should become sub-clause 3 (4)

Present sub-clause 6(1) should be deleted and this should become sub-clause 60) as under:

The Commission shall have an independent and separate secretariat with two Wings

- Technical Wing (to be head by a Technical Advisor from private sector); and
- Administrative Wing (to be headed by Secretary, NCSW).

Clause 6(3) should become sub-clause 6(2)"who" to replace "and he"

Clause 7 the words "Power" should be added before Function of the Commission so that the title of Clause 7 reads as under:

"Powers and Functions of the Commission"

Clause 12 sub-clause 1 2(4) should be added as under:

"PSDP funds shall be placed in an exclusive Development Account Head."

(For details see Annex-I).

b) **RULES OF BUSINESS**

Clause 3(a)(b) should be replaced by Clause 15 of the Ordinance) as under:

There shall be an Executive Committee of the Commission consisting of the Chairperson, Secretary and three other Members to be elected by the Commission which shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Commission.

Clause 3(2) should read as under:

NCSW Secretary shall act as the Secretary of the Executive Committee.

Clause 4(1) should read as under:

Chairperson of the Commission shall be a full time person enjoying the status of Minister of State.

Clause 5(1) should read as under:

The members of the Commission shall enjoy the status of Federal Secretaries.

Clause 9 (a) should read as under:

Act as head of Administrative Wing and effect secretariat coordination of all professional and administrative work of the Commission.

Remove the word “regional and replace with “area”

Add clause 10 (i) as under:

Members will act as in-charge of provincial/area offices of NCSW.

A new clause 11 should be added here as under:

Powers and Functions of the Executive Committee

- (1) Oversee the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Commission
- (2) Monitor the execution of approved programmes and projects
- (3) Guide the work of the Technical Wing
- (4) Prepare materials, documents and agenda for full Commission meetings
- (5) Meet prior to and after each full Commission meeting and at other times as deemed necessary by the Chairperson

- (6) Prepare annual and periodic work plans and present to full Commission

Change in serial numbers after interventions:

Clause number changed from 11 to 12

Clause number changed from 12 to 13

Clause number changed from 13 to 14

Clause number changed from 14 to 15

Clause number changed from 15 to 16

Clause number changed from 16 to 17

Clause number changed from 17 to 18

Clause number changed from 18 to 19

Clause number changed from 19 to 20

(For details see Annex-II)

Item-2 Discussion on GRAP:

The Executive Committee suggested the inclusion of GRAP approved recommendations in the Ordinance and the Rules of Business. These have been reflected above.

The Executive Committee felt that MoWD should facilitate the implementation of the GRAP.

PSDP Budget Allocation:

The Executive Committee discussed the allocations provided in the current year's PSDP under GRAP of MoWD relating to NCSW. The Executive committee was of the opinion that as NCSW does not have specific head for depositing the development fund so a note should be moved to the Finance Division for obtaining permission to open a NCSW Account to avail the PSDP Funds. The Executive Committee also felt that it will not be physically possible to expense the allocated funds to the best use as the financial year is coming to an end and there is not any time left for initiating specified activities. It 'as also decided that a note would be moved to the Secretary, Ministry of Women Development to this effect,

Item-3 Future Work Plan

The Executive Committee discussed the future work plan of NCSW and the following activities were decided.

- 1) Comprehensive Political Biography of Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah.

- 2) Preparing a Directory of all Women Union Council Members of Pakistan for reference and record.
- 3) Submitting a proposal to the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan in reply to a public advertisement ACCESS TO JUSTICE FUND for legal awareness in Balochistan.
- 4) Conduct a study on Madrassahs for Girls, evaluating the system for bringing it into mainstream education.
- 5) A study on the requisition of Inheritance by Women in Balochistan.
- 6) Launching of Hudood Ordinance Documentary film prepared and approved by the previous Commission under the Chairpersonship of Justice ® Majida Razvi.
- 7) Directory of Notable Women of Pakistan.
- 8) Compendium of Labour Laws and Land Revenue Act specifically related to Women.
- 9) Making documentaries/docu-dramas on the current researches and studies conducted under institutional strengthening of NCSW.

Item-4

Any Other Business

The matter of attendance of members to the Commission meetings came under discussion. Chairperson informed that she had written to Ms. Fareeda Shahid and Prof. Saleema Ata in this regard. Ms. Fareeda Shaheed informed in writing that she had already intimated the Ministry of Women Development of her inability to join the Commission in December 2005 but the Commission was not informed about it.

Prof. Saleema Ata from AJK has not attended any of the two Commission meetings held so far. Regarding Ms. Ata's absence it came unofficially to the knowledge of NCSW that she has been unwell, the Chairperson wrote to the member that she could avail a leave of absence upto six months as per Rules of Business. But no reply has been received so far.

The Executive Committee was of a confirmed view that the Rules of Business be observed and followed strictly.

(Mrs. Suhela Asif)

Member-Secretary

No. 2(6)/2006-NCSW
Government of Pakistan
National Commission on the Status of Women

Subject: **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 2ND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
MEETING OF NCSW HELD ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2006 AT
KARACHI

The second meeting of the Executive Committee was held on September 9, 2006 at Karachi under the Chairpersonship of Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zebra. The following members attended the meeting:-

- 1) Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra
- 2) Dr. Faqir Hussain
- 3) Ms. Simi Kamal
- 4) Professor Farkhanda Aurangzeb
- 5) Mrs. Suhela Asif (Member/Secretary)

2. The main items of agenda were discussed in the meeting. The next steps to be taken as follow up of the Capacity Building Workshop:

2.1 Compilation of the report of workshop.

2.2 Compilation of Annual Report of NCSW.

2.3 Finalization of the participation of members of the Commission for Foreign Study Tour to Philippine, India and Jordan in the first week of November, 2006.

2.4 Future work plan.

3. During the course of discussion, Members of the Executive Committee were informed that the work relating to the compilation of report of Capacity Building Workshop has been assigned to the Consultant. As regards the compilation of Annual Report of NCSW, a proposal is being sent to the Government for appointment of a Consultant.

4. The Committee discussed the Foreign Study Tour according to the Member's own preferences and area of interest. Strategically it would be economy of time that all three groups would depart simultaneously and each group would be lead by one of the Executive Committee member. Complete list is attached.

5. It was also decided that officers from NCSW and IS-NCSW Project staff may be included in these delegations so as to facilitate and coordinate with their counterparts in these countries.

6. Exit Strategy and future work plan of NCSW was discussed. The UNDP Project "IS-NCSW" will be completing in December 2006, and in order to carryout the

ongoing and further research the Commission has submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Women Development, (a) to arrange necessary funds through government budget or external funding and (b) expedite the implementation of the approved CRAP enabling the Commission to function effectively as per its mandate

7. Ms. Simi Kamal proposed to hold a joint workshop at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro. NCSW, University of Sindh and Hisaar Foundation would be the joint organizers. The Executive Committee decided to bring the proposal in the next full Commission meeting in order to decide a policy mechanism for such collaborations in future regarding the issues of women of Pakistan.

(Suhela Asif)

Member /Secretary

ANNEX -I**List of Members for Foreign Visits****Jordan**

1. Dr. Faqir Hussain, - Group Leader
2. Prof Mehr Taj Roghani,
3. Prof Naheed Ali
4. Dr. Tahira Kamal
5. Dr. Begum Jan
6. Dr. Tufail Hashmi

India

- 1) Ms. Simi Kamal - Group Leader
- 2) Dr. Shahida Haider
- 3) Dr. Parveen Shah
- 4) Ms. Suhela Asif

Philippine

- 1) Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra
- 2) Prof Farkhanda Aurangzeb - Group Leader
- 3) Ms. Erum Wali Khan

No. 2(6)/2006-NCSW
Government of Pakistan
National Commission on the Status of Women.

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Subject: **MINUTES OF THE 3RD MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF NCSW HELD ON OCTOBER 16, 2006 AT ISLAMABAD**

A meeting of the Executive Committee was held on October 16, 2006 in the Committee Room of NCSW at Islamabad under the Chairpersonship of Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra. Following members attended the meeting.

1. Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra
2. Dr. Faqir Hussain
3. Ms. Simi Kamal
4. Professor Farkhanda Aurangzeb
5. Mrs. Suhela Asif (Member/Secretary)

2. The following items were on the agenda and were discussed in detail.

- International Conference on Dec 8-9, 2006 – details to be chalked out.
- Foreign Study Tour – modalities and briefing.

Foreign Study Tour

3. The Group Leaders were given necessary briefing for the foreign study tour. The details about air-travel, visa processing etc were discussed in detail. The responsibilities of the group leader were discussed including preparing a comprehensive report as well as the individual reports by the members.

4. Chairperson highlighted the purpose of the visits to enhance the knowledge and capacity build up of members, interaction with sister organization/related agencies as well as to enhance views/perceptions on issues of common interest and share experience. And more important to focus on the importance of the Commission, keeping in view its prestige.

5. It was decided that members of each group will move together at all times under the guidance of the group leaders and attendance to all official engagements/social gettogethers will be mandatory.

International Conference of Women Commissions.

6. Executive Committee discussed the holding of International Conference proposed to be held on December 8 -9, 2006 at Lahore. It was decided that the venue will be Lahore as it is the cultural and intellectual capital of Pakistan. The city has the ambience and the facilities to hold a high profile International Conference. It was decided that the main

theme of the Conference would be **Other Self: Conflict Confusion or Comprise** with the following sub themes:

1. Governance and Development
2. Justice: Delivered or Denied.
3. Politics: Shadows of Power.
4. Expressions in Creativity
5. Family and Society: Image and Honour.

7. The committee was apprised of the aims of the Conference is to bring into focus various perspectives and perceptions for a comparative analysis and intelligent understanding. In a world which is shrinking due to issues, problems and challenges, it becomes increasingly important to establish a strategic premise to shorten the gaps of inequality, injustice and insecurity. Meaningful dialogue clears the webs and opens new channels for understanding and tolerance. It was also reported that foreign scholars, experts, academicians and policy-analysts are being invited to participate in the Conference alongwith national counterparts..

8. Chairperson pointed out that the Conference is a step forward to impress the need of intercultural interaction by addressing cross cutting themes that govern the life one way or the other. The individual, the society and the systems have to be understood for a future of peace, justice and equity.

9. To honour the distinguished delegates a cultural evening will be planned. Tina Sani's name was proposed for the event.

Engagements
of the Chair

December:

Chief Guest at the final match of Women's Hockey Championship	Lahore
Interview to American TV	Lahore
Panelist at the launching ceremony of a research study by Sindh Education Foundation	Lahore
Meetings at University Law College	Lahore
Keynote Address at National Conference of Attorneys of Human Rights	Islamabad
Dinner reception on the occasion of 163 rd meeting of the Council of Islamic Ideology	Islamabad
Inauguration ceremony of 'Visit Pakistan 2007' by Ministry of Tourism	Islamabad
Dinner/ musical evening hosted by SDPI	Islamabad
Policy dialogue on 'Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations' by USAID-PLSP	Islamabad
International Conference organized by NCSW	Lahore
25 th Meeting of the Commission	Lahore

November:

Lecture on 'Transition from Agrarian to Industrial Society' at American Consulate	Lahore
Meeting with Asia Foundation	Islamabad
24 th Meeting of the Commission	Islamabad
Dinner by UNIFEM Program Director, Ms. Chandani Joshi	Islamabad
Meeting with German Ambassador, Ms. Ellen Goelz	Islamabad
Meeting with Naib Nazim, Rawalpindi	Islamabad
Study Tour of Philippines	Philippines
Meeting with the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair	Islamabad
Reception on exhibition of recent paintings by Nahid Raza	Islamabad

October:

Participation in a discussion on 'Repeal Hudood Ordinances' by SPO	Islamabad
Garden reception by British High Commissioner, Sir & Lady Lyall Grant	Islamabad
Lecture by Prof. Crawford on 'Investment Treaty Law: Recent Trends and Pitfalls'	Islamabad
Meeting with Director, Decentralization Support Program, Ministry of Finance	Islamabad
Meeting with Canadian High Commissioner	Islamabad

Lecture on 'Responsibility of Inter. States for its Courts Decisions' by Prof. Crawford	Islamabad
Program recording at ATV called 'Aag, aurat & Kanoon'	Islamabad
Executive Committee Meeting	Islamabad
Meeting with Nancy Foster and INGAD coordinator	Islamabad
An urgent meeting called by the President of Pakistan about 'Huddood Ordinances'	Islamabad

September:

Consultative meeting of Minorities on NCSW's Policy Researches	Islamabad
Launching of posters on women's issues by NCSW	Islamabad
National seminar on 'Right to Choose' organized by British High Commission	Islamabad
Seminar on 'MMA-PML (Q) deal on Hudood Ordinances: CS perspective'	Islamabad
Workshop series on 'Leadership of Social Enterprise' by KZR & QCT	Lahore
Opening reception-Exhibition of mix paintings by Zia Zaidi	Islamabad
Closing seminar of Rabta Police Training Program	Islamabad
Policy Advocacy Forum on 'Inheritance Rights' by NCSW	Hyderabad
Meeting of SPELT	Karachi
Workshop for members of NCSW	Karachi
Meeting Oxford University Press	Karachi
Policy Advocacy Forum on 'Hudood Ordinances' by NCSW	Multan

August:

Launching ceremony of 'Report on Human Security' by Mahbub ul Haq Centre	Islamabad
Consultative meeting on 'Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women'	Islamabad
Seminar on 'Hudood Ordinances: Time for Repeal' by SDPI	Islamabad
Advocacy Forum on 'Hudood Ordinances' by NCSW	Quetta
Meeting of Expanded Project Procurement Committee Meeting	Islamabad
Consultative Meeting on 'Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women'	Lahore
Advocacy Forum on 'Inheritance Laws' by NCSW	Lahore
International Judicial Conference	Islamabad

Meeting with UNDP	Islamabad
Advocacy forum on 'Qisas and Diyat' by NCSW	Peshawar
Consultative meeting on 'Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women'	Peshawar
Meeting with President APWA	Peshawar
Consultation on 'Zina Ordinance 1979 and its implications' organized by AF	Lahore

July:

Meeting with Governor State Bank of Pakistan	Karachi
Meeting with Aga Khan University, Karachi	Karachi
Steering meeting of SPELT	Karachi
Advocacy Forum on 'Hudood Ordinances' by NCSW and AF	Karachi
Khawaja Ghulam Farid's Conference	Islamabad
Women Conference	Islamabad
Old Ravian's Get together	Islamabad
Meetings –Hudood Ordinances Review	Islamabad
Meetings with the President of Pakistan	Islamabad
Dinner with Director Social Transformation Programs, Commonwealth Secretariat	Islamabad
23 rd Meeting of the Commission	Islamabad
Launching ceremony of documentary on 'Hudood Ordinances'	Islamabad
Meeting with Attorney General of Pakistan	Islamabad
Mid-term review of IS-NCSW with UNDP	Islamabad
Seminar by Islamic Relief, Pakistan	Islamabad
Reception U.S Ambassador on 230 th Anniversary of the Independence of USA	Islamabad
Meeting of Forum of South Asian Muslim Scholars	Lahore

June:

Launching ceremony of Centre for Missing and Exploited Children	Islamabad
Meeting with NPM of NICGAP	Islamabad
Lecture on 'Human Rights and Embedded Framework for Education and Learning	Islamabad
Consultation on Hudood Ordinances: A case for Repeal	Islamabad

Meeting with GM Hum TV	Islamabad
Meeting with Faiza Effendi and Rabia Khattak (UNDP)	Islamabad
Meeting with Justice Amjad Ali, Senior Member, NRB	Islamabad
Consultation meeting on Researches undertaken by NCSW	Islamabad
Launching of Book Islam and the Challenges of Modernity by Shaukat Ali	Islamabad
Launching of Book 'Gender and Empowerment: Evidence from Pakistan'	Islamabad
Executive Committee Meeting of NCSW	Islamabad
Seminar on 'Trans migrant Women of South Asia' by SDPI	Islamabad
World Day Against Child Labour 2006	Islamabad
Law and Justice Commission's Meeting	Quetta
Workshop on 'Access to Justice'	Quetta
CIDA mission	Islamabad
Meeting with consultant for Mid Term Review of IS-NCSW	Islamabad
Meeting with first secretary Netherland Embassy	Islamabad
Meeting with Dr. Riffat Hassan,	Islamabad
Meeting with representative of Daily Jinnah	Islamabad
Meeting with representative of UFONE	Islamabad
May:	
Concluding Session of 'National Education Conference 2006'	Islamabad
Inaugural Session of 'National Education Conference 2006'	Islamabad
Hands on Training for 'Gender Audit Facilitators'	Bhurbun
Meeting with Norwegian delegation	Islamabad
Chaired a session on 'Honour Killing' organized by Oxfam	Islamabad
Meeting with Gender unit of UNDP	Islamabad
Lecture on 'Education for life-Education for livelihoods' in college of Army Education	Murree
Expert Group Discussion on National Education Policy	Islamabad
Seminar on 'Gender Issues in Pakistan' by Pak. Administrative Staff College	Lahore

British Council Learning Forum: Third Plenary Session	Islamabad
British Council's cultural night	Islamabad
Access to Key Public Services-Education by World Bank	Islamabad

April:

Dinner in honour of Justice ® Majida Razvi by NCSW	Islamabad
22 nd Meeting of the Commission	Islamabad
Dinner Asia Foundation	Islamabad
Seminar on 'Islam & Human Rights' by Council of Islamic Ideology	Islamabad
Meeting with Mr. Mathew Gerber, 2 nd sec. of Australian High Commission	Islamabad
Meeting with Ms. Ellen Golz, 1 st sec Embassy of Germany	Islamabad
Reception to celebrate the Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth by British HC	Islamabad
Meeting with Asia Foundation	Islamabad
Participatory Workshop for Project Implementation Planning	Islamabad
Concluding Session of Higher Education's Convention	Islamabad
Meeting with Ms. Mariam Mehdi and Ms. Bandana Rana	Islamabad
Meeting with UNDP to discuss work plan of IS-NCSW	Islamabad
Women in the Publishing Business by Tayibah Taylor	Islamabad
Higher Education Commission- National Students convention 2006	Islamabad
Dinner at Embassy of USA in honour of Ms. Tayibah Taylor	Islamabad
Meeting with Ms. Taylor with Ms. Salam	Islamabad
Dinner at Aurat Foundation	Islamabad
Women Expo –Economic Empowerment and the 21 st Century Women	Karachi
Discussion on 'Life and Message of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) by IRED	Lahore
Reception by Ambassador of USA in the honour of ACYPL study tour to Pakistan	Islamabad
Talk of Mr. Cherie Booth on 'A Way Forward to Women's Empowerment'	Islamabad
Lunch by Mrs. Musharraf in the honour of Mrs. Cherie Booth	Islamabad
Reception by Ambassador of the USA in the honour of Asst. sec of State for South	Islamabad

March:

Chief Guest at 'One day Cricket Match with Delhi State Women Cricket Team'	Lahore
Meeting with CIDA mission	Islamabad
Meeting with Lincoln Group	Islamabad
Presentation for the Standing Committee on Women's Development	Islamabad
Attended NDI conference on 'Women's Political Empowerment'	Islamabad
Participation in a dialogue on 'Women- Justice' on Hum TV	Lahore
A talk to Soroptomist Club	Lahore
Meeting with UNDP representatives (Ms. Effendi and Ms. Khattak)	Islamabad
Dinner by Ambassador of Norway	Islamabad
Lecture at Imperial Business College	Lahore
Dinner by PD of UNIFEM to meet Socorro Reyes	Islamabad
Presentation on 'Economic Empowerment of Women in Earthquake Affected Areas'	Islamabad
Meeting on International Women's Day	Islamabad
Exhibition 'Struggle for Gender Empowerment' by SACHET	Islamabad
Seminar on 'Repeal of Hudood Ordinances' by Aurat Foundation	Islamabad
Morning tea with High Commissioner of Australia	Islamabad
Lecture on 'Western Discourses on Islam and Muslims in the West' Dr. Farish Ahmad	Islamabad
Meeting of Executive Committee of NCSW	Islamabad
International Women's Day Program recording	Lahore
Recording of 'Baat Khulay Gi' for International Women's Day	Lahore

February:

Meeting with ED Researchers	Islamabad
Conference on 'Social Justice and Gender Equality within Islam'	Bangladesh
Recording for Radio Pakistan for Meri Awaz	Islamabad
Dinner for Mr. Hassan Abdel, Regional Representative and the IOM team	Islamabad
20 th Meeting of the Commission	Islamabad

Meeting with group of 13 journalists (6 from USA & 7 from Asia Pacific) by PILDAT Islamabad

Conference on 'Social Justice and Gender Equality in Islam' Islamabad

Meeting of Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan Lahore

International Conference on 'Local Governance: Texts and Contexts-perspective from SA, Lahore

January:

Meeting with Ahmad Bilal Mahboob, PILDAT Islamabad

Meeting with Dr. Tauqir Shh, ILO Islamabad

Future Strategies

Future Strategies

The Constitution and Sharia both guarantee a life of honour, security and dignity to all citizens of Pakistan. Under the pressure of customary practices based upon traditions and cultural norms these rightful guarantees are ignored and denied to women. This phenomenon has resulted in very obscurantist and extremist attitudes. The Commission has the formidable task to bring change in these attitudes. The Commission's mandate is to do research on socio-economic and lego-political issues to create awareness for change. The challenge to create conducive understanding for gender harmony becomes grave in an environment where sincere commitment is lost to power. Hence the Commission faces many constraints and challenges, mostly lacking the institutional strength.

Discussions throughout the year in the meetings of the Commission, deliberations after international visits and international conference helped the Commission to propose following strategies for a better future:

- All the members of the Commission, except the Chairperson, presently work on voluntary basis. This affects the efficiency and commitment. It becomes extremely difficult for the Commission to .honour its formidable mandate. There is a dire need that the Commission is strengthened as an institution with permanent membership.
- NCSW's work is highly specialized and needs a thorough understanding of gender issues is the basic requirements. To maximize the potential of the members, if criteria and terms of reference are pre-developed, it will surely enhance the level of commitment.
- Institutional memory loss, discontinuation of the processes and approach are the outcomes of simultaneous conclusion of tenure of all members of the Commission. In the past Commission remained non functional almost for two and a half years from Aug 2003-December 2005. Reactivation of the Commission took some time. To avoid any such void in future it is recommended to appoint members for specific tenure, but with the attention focused on expanding the time frame, so that all the Commission does not become inactive at the same time. Amendments in the ordinance to this effect have been proposed to the government for bringing continuity in NCSW.
- The Ordinance makes it mandatory for the Ministry of Women's Development to provide the secretarial support to NCSW. It can be appreciated that MoWD does not enjoy itself excess of human resources. Consequently NCSW has to steer only with the minimal secretariat. Amendments in the Ordinance have been proposed for enabling NCSW to achieve its mandate and goals after being professionally equipped.
- Under the NCSW's Ordinance, there is a provision for provincial branches and it would be opportune to appoint them at the earliest.

- The idea of a consortium of women's organizations as a powerful partner of NCSW was found feasible that may also help to encapsulate and bring focus to many women NGOs working for the cause of women.
- A joint apex body of all the existing South Asian Women's Commissions was suggested to be developed and affiliated to SAARC.
- The members felt that NCSW should have focal persons of the Commission in each government ministry and public institution.
- During the deliberations it was evident that in Pakistan there is a strong need to develop "Harmonizing Guidelines" which will help avoiding duplication for developing synergies. It is important that all the stakeholders are involved in developing the guidelines and NCSW can take the lead as per its mandate.
- NCSW can hold meetings with a wider range of participation which will include government, NGOS, civil society organizations, international agencies, and donors to prioritize and develop an Annual Plan of Action for gender issues.
- NCSW should continue with its advocacy strategies on legal, social and politico-economic issues.
- Gender sensitized information and legal education should be included in our education system in order to sift myth from reality. Law courses to be so strengthened as to include a component on human rights and gender, to increase the focus on practical skills in order to build the capacity of lawyers and judiciary. This would inculcate the idea of law as a social process and encourage more joint programs.
- Government and judiciary to stop justifying gender discrimination and violence, and culture should not be used as an excuse to restrict women's human rights. Laws should be proactive as opposed to remedial and the state should fulfill their obligations to protect women, prevent violence and gender discrimination. The state is responsible for producing real results in *de facto* exercise of women's equal rights. Specific laws should be drafted addressing the malpractices of forced marriages and selling the girls into marriage for economic gains. Legislation should also be passed for disabled persons, especially children, backed by implementation mechanisms.
- Speedy trials and protection laws for witnesses should be made to benefit women involved in court cases. With regards to violence against women, continued work needs to be done at grassroot and legislative levels. Cross ministerial coordination to be developed to provide multidimensional assistance to women for protecting their human rights

- More specific indicators to be used to generate data on gender for policy change. Present gender indicators work for development and do not address gender equality. Gender mainstreaming to be conducted to focus on gender empowerment. Networking with men is important and women are not to alienate themselves from mainstream. International declarations to be used to advocate for the rights of women. These international instruments can help monitor women's rights and building pressure for change.
- Women's 33 percent representation in politics is positive but should be made more effective. Capacity building of representatives and politicians is needed so that a voice be raised for becoming an agent of change. The impact of increased female representation should be evaluated for impact, effectiveness and recognition.
- Creative expression is one of the most meaningful ways of bringing truth to surface. As its subtlety sharpens sensitivities and protects the cultural and intellectual heritage. NCSW to adopt a strategy for continued interface with the creative minds.

Media Coverage

A-4

POST National

THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2006

NCSW discusses women's rights to inheritance

AFSHAN ZAHOOR

ISLAMABAD: As part of its countrywide drive to take on board all the stakeholders in its efforts for women emancipation and gender equity, the National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW) held a consultative meeting in Islamabad to discuss the women's rights to inheritance and their implementation in Pakistan.

Sharing findings of her research work with the participants, Sayeda Viqarun Nisa Hashmi, policy research officer of the Commission, said in Pakistan most of women were deprived of their rights to inherit property.

In her comparative research work she said Islam ensured equal rights of inheritance to women but majority of women were deprived of the right spec-

ified by the Holy Quran due to their ignorance. At the same time certain customary practices adopted by people were creating obstacles for women to get their rights of inheritance.

The research also revealed that women were cleverly trapped by the male family members to voluntarily withdraw the claim of their share in properties. Some customs like Haq Bakhshwana practiced mostly in Balochistan, NWFP and interior Sindh were cited as main reason of the excluding women from inheriting ancestral property.

The research further revealed that most of the women never fought for their inheritance rights because they could not dare to face long processes of court. Discriminatory attitude toward women, lack of decision making power, family system,

marriage system, barter marriage (watta satta), walwar (money given to girl's family at the time of engagement), non-registration of marriage and birth affected the inheritance rights. In Sindh, the fear of karokari kept most of the women silent and they did not raise voice to claim for their rights to get property.

On the occasion, the participants put forward various recommendations to increase of awareness in the society and asked for field training for women that would enable them to get their due rights.

The participants also supported national recommendation for the prohibition of relinquishment in inheritance and suggested that women must take up gender mainstreaming issue with their families. They also asked for the right of inheritance in case of change in nationality.

منگل 27 جون 2006ء



ہے وزارت خواتین اس کی سپورٹ ہے وہ بھی
نیکرٹ سہولت سپورٹ جینڈر ریٹائرمنٹ ایکشن
پلان میں یہ بات واضح کر دی گئی ہے، جینڈر
پرنسپل کا تقرری بھی حکومت کرتی ہے
اور ممبران
بھی

جائے؟ وہ سزا نہیں
تو قرآن و سنت میں
نہیں وہ کیسے دی جا
نیں اور میں سمجھتی
ہوں کہ مذہب کی
صحیح سوچ رکھنے
والے آج وہی
بات کہہ رہے
ہیں جو کمیشن کی
بنائی ہوئی

انٹرویو: بارہ رضوی

تصاویر: خادم حسین

قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین 2002ء میں قائم کیا گیا
تین سال کے بعد تمام ممبران کی مدت ختم ہو گئی اور
جینڈر پرنسپل بھی ریٹائر ہو گئیں، مگر سابقہ جینڈر پرنس
جیشن (ر) ماجدہ رضوی کے زمانے میں اہم جیشن
رفت یہ ہوئی کہ حدود آرڈیننس پر رپورٹ بنا کر متعلقہ
اداروں میں بھیج دی گئی تقریباً 11،10 ماہ مگر کمیشن
جینڈر پرنسپل اور ممبران کا چناؤ نہ ہو سکے کے باعث کام نہ
کر سکا۔ 2 جنوری 2006ء کو نئی جینڈر پرنسپل ڈاکٹر
عارفہ سیدہ کا تقرر ہوا اور ممبران کا بھی نوٹیفکیشن
جاری ہوا اب یوں ویمن کمیشن نے پانچ ماہ سے کام
کرنا شروع کر دیا ہے۔ جینڈر پرنسپل سے جناح نے
انٹرویو کیا تاکہ جان سکیں کہ حدود آرڈیننس
رپورٹ کہاں تک پہنچی اور مزید کن الجھنوں پر کام
کیا جا رہا ہے۔
جناح: ویمن کمیشن کی حیثیت کے بارے میں بتائیں؟



عورت پر تشدد پہلے سے بڑھ گیا ہے

قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین کی جینڈر پرنسپل ڈاکٹر عارفہ سیدہ سے خصوصی انٹرویو

صوبائی حکومتوں کے تحت بنائے جاتے ہیں قومی کمیشن
برائے خواتین کا بجٹ بھی ملتا ہے۔

جناح: اس بار آپ نے کتنا بجٹ مانگا ہے؟

عارفہ سیدہ: ہم نے اس بار گزشتہ بجٹ سے زیادہ بجٹ
مانگا ہے کیونکہ اس سال ممبران بھی ہیں اور باقاعدہ
کام بھی ہو رہا ہے۔ ہم نے اس بات 8.360 ملین
بجٹ مانگا ہے۔

جناح: ویمن کمیشن آئندہ کس چیز کو فوکس کر رہی ہے اور
کس چیز پر پورس تیار ہو رہی ہیں؟

عارفہ سیدہ: آئندہ ہم پانچ چیزوں پر کام کر رہے ہیں
1 گھروں میں کام کرنے والی عورتوں پر، 2، وراثت
میں بیوہ خواتین کا حق، 3 قصاص و دیت، 4، جعلی لائز
5، سائیکولوجیکل اینڈ سوشل اثرات خواتین پر، جلدی

ان کے بارے میں رپورٹ پیش کر دی جائے گی
جناح: آپ کیا سمجھتی ہیں کہ عورتوں کو ان کے حقوق مل
گئے ہیں؟

عارفہ سیدہ: میں یہ پوچھتی ہوں کہ کیا مردوں کو پورے
حقوق مل گئے ہیں مجھے کسی آدھا گلاس خالی نظر نہیں آیا
میں بھی لٹی سے بات شروع نہیں کرتی۔ ہمارے ملک
کی عورت بہت سے ممالک کی عورت سے بہتر زندگی
گزار رہی ہے۔ پاکستان واحد ملک ہے جہاں
عورتوں کی وزارت بھی ہے اور کمیشن بھی ہے ورنہ بعض
ممالک میں کمیشن ہے تو وزارت نہیں اور وزارت ہے
تو کمیشن نہیں۔ مگر اب معاشرہ اعتراف کر رہا ہے
کہ صلاحیت کم نہیں ہوتی۔ کچھ میں آگیا ہے کہ
عورتوں کو بہت وقت تک کنارے سے لگا کر اڑا
نہیں کیا جا سکتا۔ میں سمجھتی ہوں کہ تمام باتوں میں
وقت لگتا ہے مگر تبدیلی ضرور آ رہی ہے جس کے امید
افزادہ ہیں۔

حدود آرڈیننس رپورٹ کہتی ہے
جناح: یہ بتائیں کہ آج سے 20 سال قبل کے مقابلے
میں آج عورت پر تشدد کم ہوا ہے یا بڑھ رہا ہے؟
عارفہ سیدہ: میرا ذاتی خیال ہے کہ آج تشدد بڑھ رہا
ہے جس کے بہت سے عوامل ہیں اصل میں معاشرے
میں جس جس کا بس چلتا ہے وہ ظلم کر لیتا ہے اور ظلم
کرنے کے لئے عورت بہت آسان نشانہ ہے۔
ہمارے ذہنوں پر وحشت اور وحشت حاوی ہو گئی ہے۔
چند روز پہلے میں اخبار میں پڑھ رہی تھی کہ شوہر نے اپنی
بیوی کے بازو کاٹ دیے، ایک شوہر نے اپنی بیوی کی
ناک اور ہونٹ کاٹ دیے، ایک درندے نے تین
سالہ بچی کو اپنی ہوس کا نشانہ بنایا۔ یہاں تو ایسا لگتا ہے

عارفہ سیدہ: کمیشن کی حیثیت ہمیشہ سفارشات مرتب
کرنے کی ہوتی ہے عملدرآمد کرنا نہیں ہوتا۔ ویمن
کمیشن نے بھی حدود آرڈیننس پر رپورٹ تیار کی اور
اسے قومی اسمبلی، وزارت ترقی خواتین، وزارت
قانون، اسلامی نظریاتی کونسل بلکہ سب متعلقہ محکموں کو
نظر ثانی کیلئے بھیج دیا ہے ہم نے اپنا کام مکمل کر لیا ہے
عملدرآمد کرنا حکومت کا کام ہے۔ اور امید ہے کہ
وہ بہت جلد ہو جائے گا۔

جناح: جب آپ کے کمیشن نے رپورٹ تیار کی تب دو
ممبران نے اختلاف کیا اور ایم ایم اے والے اب بھی
کہہ رہے ہیں کہ ہم حدود آرڈیننس کو نہیں مانتے اس
بارے میں کچھ بتائیں گی؟



کہ انسان چاقور بن گیا ہے ہمارے دلوں سے
انسانیت کا خیال مٹ چکا ہے پہلے کی نسبت برداشت
اور محبت ختم ہو گئی ہے اس لئے تشدد بڑھ رہا ہے
جناح: کیا ویمن کمیشن وزارت ترقی خواتین کے ماتحت
ہے یا اس سے علیحدہ ہے؟
عارفہ سیدہ: قومی کمیشن برائے نسوان ایک خود مختار کمیشن،



عارفہ سیدہ: میں سمجھتی ہوں کہ حدود پر کوئی بحث نہیں
ہے۔ ہم بھی حدود کے خلاف نہیں صرف اتنا کہتے
ہیں کہ حدود رہنے دیا جائے اور تصور برقرار رہا
کہیں گجائش ہے ترمیم کی جائے کیوں کہ قانون ظلم
کرنے کیلئے نہیں انصاف کرنے کے لئے بنائے جا
تے ہیں۔ پھر آتے ہیں کہ کیا غلط قانون کو رہنے دیا

Repeal of Hudood laws demanded

By Bhagwandas

KARACHI, July 26: Scholars, intellectuals and leaders of various civil society organisations have demanded repeal of the Hudood Ordinance, maintaining the ordinance had been promulgated by a dictator quite a big number of women has been victimised through it over a quarter of a century.

They were speaking at a forum organised jointly by the National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW) and the Aurat Foundation here on Wednesday.

They said that the government intended to introduce cosmetic amendments to the Hudood Ordinance and Islamic laws but such initiatives were not acceptable to the civil society that had struggled for more than 27 years to get these discriminatory laws repealed.

They said that the government had signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and was bound to modify all local laws in conformity with its international commitments, but little work had been done in this regard so far.

They observed that people did not dare to speak against the Hudood laws at the time they were promulgated because they had assumed that they were in accordance with Islam. However, owing to the long struggle waged by the civil society over a couple of decades now, not only people had started discussing the issue without any fear, but the government had also been forced to review the laws.

Presiding over the forum, NCSW chief Arfa Zehra Sayeda said that nobody could oppose the 'Hudood Allah' as these had been prescribed to ensure justice and equality in society. But whatever fabricated by human beings and promulgated in the name of Hudood laws was not in conformity with Islam and could be changed and repealed like other laws if these were found discriminatory against any section of society, particularly women.

She said that the NCSW had already sent its recommendations to the government and now it was latter's turn to act.

Justice Javed Iqbal said that Islam had been exploited by vested interests to mislead masses and achieve their goals, and the Hudood laws were one such example which had been promulgated by a dictator to prolong his rule. He called for immediate repeal of the laws.

He was of the view that the present government also was amending these laws just to create and spread the impression globally that it believed in 'enlightened moderation'.

Justice Iqbal suggested a review of the entire judicial system, and said that judges, besides holding trials, be empowered to conduct investigation into the cases in hand to ascertain facts before convicting someone.

Justice Nasir Aslam Zahid said that the Hudood laws were contrary to Islamic teachings and the Constitution both of which guaranteed gender equality in every field.

He also suggested that a case of zina should not be registered unless the complainant brought four witnesses and if the four witnesses were not produced, then not only the case should not be registered but the complainant be awarded 80 lashes for making a false accusation.

Justice (r) Shaig Usmani pinpointed discrepancies in Hudood laws, and indicated that under these laws, adultery and rape were similar crimes. He observed that it was up to the police whether to register a case under PPC or the Hudood laws. This discretion, he said, made police to exploit the accused. He was of the view that these laws were full of flaws and if amendments were made to them, these laws would complicate the situation further.

A religious leader, Dr Tufail Hashmi, said that only four clauses of the Hudood Ordinance were in conformity with Islam while the rest 97 were in conflict with Islamic teachings. He pointed out that nobody had been punished under the Qazaf clauses of the Hudood Ordinance, under which evidence of a woman was not acceptable.

Iqbal Haider of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan stressed on creating awareness of Hudood laws in masses, especially of the rural areas as the government would listen only when a popular movement was

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DAWN
Thursday, July 27, 2006

Repeal of Hudood laws demanded

Continued from Page 17

launched to force it to move. The civil society alone would not be able to achieve the goal of getting Hudood laws repealed, he added.

He apprehended that the recent presidential ordinance on release of women on bail could also be misused by unscrupulous elements who might try to use women for their wrongdoings and get them released on bail easily.

PPP MNA Sherry Rehman said that she had submitted bills long ago for the repeal of the Hudood and other laws discriminatory against women but the same had not yet been taken up in the parliament.

MPA Shama Mithani of PPP, Mariam Palijo of Sindhiyani Tehrik, Rasheeda Patel of the Pakistan Women Lawyers Association, Shaista Zaidi of Bazm-i-Amna, Khalida Qadri of War Against Rape, Zahid Farooq of the Urban Resource Centre, Danish Zuberi, Beena Khan, Hassan Pathan and Nuzhat Shirin were among others who spoke at the forum.

The News International, Wednesday, July 26, 2006

Rights of divorced women highlighted

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Ineffectiveness of prevailing laws relevant to the divorced women in Pakistan and loopholes in the legal system were highlighted in a consultative advocacy forum on "Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Women in Pakistan", organised by National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), on Tuesday.

The discussion was based on the in-depth policy research carried out by Syeda Viqar-un-Nisa Hashmi, policy researcher from NCSW Islamabad, on the rights of divorced women. She said that out of the prevailing 51 Family Laws, only seven are linked to the rights of divorcees and those too are not explicitly defined for a woman to maximally benefit from it.

There is no legal provision on the rights of a female divorcee in Family Laws except a provision on Parsi women's right to remarry and the entire authority to interpretation of these lies in the hands of the judiciary, which is unfair. Rights of the divorced women, as enlisted, are dower, maintenance for the woman during and after Iddat, maintenance for children (if any), guardianship and custody of children, return of dowry, right to remarry, decent and kind treatment and a share in inheritance in the case of Talaq-al-Marz, that a wife of an ailing husband has right to his property in case of his death.

These rights, though guaran-

teed by Islam, are unfortunately defunct in the country. She said that there is a lack of provision regarding divorced women's right to dower and there is no provision for a mother's right to the custody of her child in Guardian and Wards Act either.

However, Rashida Patel, President Pakistan Women Lawyers Association (PAWLA) argued that the legal proceedings do not take more than three months time and claim for the dower amount (Mehar) would only delay the legal process.

Nada Saleem, a resident of Defence area and a victim of these problems, talked about the incompetence of union councilors. Her case was highlighted during the session where she said that she had filed a divorce against her husband 90 days ago but is being denied the right by a counselor in Gulshan-e-Iqbal who refuses to proceed with her case by terming it to be an unjustified demand.

Nada said that she is upset with the complicated proceedings and that the question of validity cannot be raised as her husband had contented and given her the right to divorce at the time of their marriage.

A participant added that because the Nikah is a legal contract whose terms and conditions are mutually approved and signed by the bride and the groom, the court should not be allowed to question the rights guaranteed by either

one of them to the other. She added that she was ready to forego her dowry and dower amount but could not afford delay in legal processing any longer.

Simi Kamal, NCSW member from Karachi, said that the problem lies at the legal end federal laws have to be reviewed in conformity with Shariah as the women seeking divorce have no such requirement to go to a counselor for manifestation of their demands. She said that such problems give birth to social stigma and embarrassment faced by the divorcee.

Despite ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), women are not guaranteed their due rights in Pakistan. It was recommended that the return of dowry should be made mandatory on the husband and the wife must be given property declaration owned by him.

The NCSW is a statutory body working for the emancipation of women, equalisation of opportunities and socio-economic conditions among men and women and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. The main functions of the commission include examination of laws, policy and other measures taken by the government for women development and to make suitable recommendations to the concerned authorities.

روزنامہ نوائے وقت کراچی (2) 26 جولائی 2006ء

عائلی قوانین میں مطلقہ کو تحفظ حاصل نہیں: وقار النساء ہاشمی

ملائیشیا، ترکی، گیمبیا اور ایران میں طلاق یافتہ خواتین کو شوہر کی جائیداد سے حصہ ملتا ہے
مشاورتی فورم سے سبکی کمال، اقبال حیدر ودیگر خطاب

شوہر کی جانب سے مہر کی ادائیگی شادی کی شرط ہے اسے طلاق کیساتھ مخصوص نہ کیا جائے۔ شادی رجسٹر ہونی چاہئے۔ قانون دان رشیدہ نبیل نے کہا نکاح نامے کے تمام اندراج شادی کے وقت پر کئے جائیں اور عورت کیلئے تفویض طلاق کا حق بھی حاصل کیا جائے۔ فورم میں موجود ایک خاتون نے بتایا انہیں تفویض طلاق کے حق کے باوجود علاقے کا کونسلر سرٹیفکیٹ نہیں جاری کر رہا۔ مقررین نے مصالحتی انجمن میں خواتین کی شمولیت اور عدالتی کارروائی کو مختصر کرنے پر زور دیا۔

کراچی (لیڈی رپورٹر) قومی کمیشن برائے حیثیت خواتین کی جانب سے عائلی قوانین کے پاکستانی خواتین کے حقوق پر اثرات کے موضوع پر مشاورتی فورم منعقد کیا گیا۔ کمیشن کی ریسرچ افسر وقار النساء ہاشمی نے طلاق یافتہ خواتین اور عائلی قوانین کے بارے میں کمیشن کی رپورٹ پیش کرتے ہوئے بتایا کہ پاکستان میں 51 فیملی لاز ہیں جن میں سے سات قوانین طلاق اور بچوں کی تحویل سے متعلق ہیں تاہم ان میں سے کوئی قانون طلاق یافتہ خواتین کے حقوق متعین نہیں کرتا۔ ایسے کسب کا فیصلہ عدالت کی صوابدید پر چھوڑ دیا گیا ہے جبکہ قرآن میں ان کے متعلق واضح احکام موجود ہیں۔ وقار النساء نے کہا ملائیشیا، ترکی، گیمبیا اور ایران میں طلاق یافتہ خواتین کو شوہر کی جائیداد میں سے حصہ دیا جاتا ہے، انہوں نے کہا پاکستانی فیملی کورٹ ایکٹ کی شق (4) 10 کے مطابق خلع لینے کی صورت میں عورت کو مہر واپس کرنا پڑتا ہے۔ جبکہ قرآن یہ پابندی نہیں عائد کرتا، نیز طلاق المرض کی صورت میں بھی عورت مرحوم شوہر کی وراثت میں حقدار ہے جبکہ عائلی قوانین کے مطابق اسے عورت کے دوبارہ شادی نہ کرنے سے مشروط کیا گیا ہے۔ سندھ سے دیمین کمیشن کی رکن سبکی کمال نے کہا قرآن پاک میں واضح احکام کے باوجود خلع، بچوں کی تحویل جیسے معاملات میں خواتین کو طویل عدالتی کارروائی سے کیوں گزارا جاتا ہے، عائلی قوانین میں خواتین کے حقوق واضح کئے جائیں اور طلاق یافتہ عورت کو شوہر کے گھر میں حصہ دار قرار دیا جائے۔ نیز بچوں کی تحویل کے باوجود عورت کو ولایت کا حق نہیں ملتا جس کی وجہ سے اسے تمام دفتری کارروائیوں میں مشکلات کا سامنا ہے۔ قانون دان اقبال حیدر نے کہا

The News 7th August 2006

Recommendations for draft law to protect home-based workers finalised

Muhammad Qasim

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW) suggesting an industrial worker status for the home-based workers has finalised recommendations for legislation to protect them from financial exploitation and harassment of employers.

The commission has finalised the draft legislation on the basis of a research report conducted by the commission in collaboration with other rights organisations. "The survey was conducted in all the four provinces of the country with targeted and random cases and now in the light of the findings of that survey, the commission has finalised its recommendations," a member of the commission said.

The commission has sought the status of industrial workers for all the male and female working as servants and maids in different houses and their employ-

ers, the occupants of the house, have no obligation towards the protection and rights of their employees.

The establishment of a regulatory body has also been called for to deal with the issues of home-based workers. The regulatory body will compile data and register the particulars of the workers. The commission envisages that all the home-based workers will get registered with the body where they will also inform about the particulars of their employers.

"The home-based workers are not covered under any law. Presently they are not recognised as a worker under the existing law and they are very much vulnerable to all types of exploitation and harassment including financial, physical, mental, psychological and above all sexual. That is why there is dire need for a legislation to protect them and their rights as a human being

and a worker," said the member.

A number of cases of physical torture and sexual assault have been reported to the commission.

The commission has recommended that the proposed body will have the mandate of monitoring and also work as complaint authority. Aggrieved workers can file their complaints to the authority and the authority will have the right to initiate prosecution against the employer of a home-based workers.

The commission has also recommended a minimum age for home-based workers to avoid child labour and to protect poor children from harassment.

"The conditions in which the housemaids work are reported to be very uncongenial. The survey report has revealed that majority of these workers were prone to gain diabetes, hypertension, asthma, backache, arthritis and myopia. In many cases the middlemen who arranges a job for

jobless worker also becomes a source of financial exploitation," said the member.

The Alliance Against Sexual Harassment at Workplaces (AASHA), a group of nine women's rights organisations, has already voiced for the home-based workers and reported that no law had been protecting maids from physical exploitation. Over six million girls aged under-18 are employed as maids, facing risks of abuse and exploitation, the alliance reported. Maids are not included in labour statistics and there is no monitoring authority observing their working conditions, AASHA added.

"We have recommended new laws for the government to remove this anomaly."

According to estimates of the international organisations, 70 to 80 per cent of Pakistani women face domestic abuse and majority of them are home-based workers.



PARTICIPANTS in a seminar on impact of family laws on the rights of divorced women in Pakistan. — Dawn

Amendments to family laws urged

By Our Reporter

LAHORE, Aug 18: Speakers at a seminar have demanded necessary amendments to family laws to protect the rights of divorced women.

The seminar on "Impact of Family Laws on the rights of divorced women in Pakistan" was held by the National Commission on the Status of Women at a hotel here on Friday. Retired judges of the Supreme Court and Lahore High Court, lawyers, politicians and intellectuals attended while the discussion was initiated on behalf of the commission by its policy research officer Syeda Viqarunnisa Hashmi.

Supreme Court's former judge Dr Javid Iqbal said that the incidence of dissolution of marriage had increased considerably in Pakistan on the ground of non-compatibility between the husband and wife. He said that quarter of century back when he was a judge of the Lahore High Court there were no less than 4,000 cases of dissolution of marriage pending in the court and now their number might have increased tremendously. One of the reasons for heavy backlog of divorce cases was the tendency among the lawyers to seek adjournment of hearing of their cases resulting in slow disposal of the cases pending in the courts. He suggested that the lawyers seeking such adjournments without any valid reasons should be imposed fines. Another reason was shortage of family courts that must have female judges. Since women in Pakistan do not like their family affairs to be discussed in open trial before a large number of people arrangements should be made to try them in camera by the family courts.

He said that while a woman had every right to seek a divorce called 'khula' but she cannot make it a ground for dissolution of her marriage merely because

she desired it without, however, adding some other grounds for divorce. The Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act should be amended to include 'khula' as one of the grounds for divorce. Moreover the Act has many such grounds for divorce like 'lian' and 'zihar' which were in vogue in Arab countries but not in Pakistan. Thus there was no need for such grounds for divorce. He said that dower was the right of divorced women which could not be surrendered though they were forced to give it up in case of 'khula'.

Another retired judge of the Supreme Court Zia Mahmud Mirza said that women had a right to maintenance even after divorce and the family laws should be amended to give protection to the divorced women. He also opposed the section 10 sub-section 4 of the Family Courts Act, 1964, as its provisions were against the women's rights for economic security. He said that the number of family judges should be increased to dispose of the heavy backlog of family cases and competent family judges should be appointed.

Jamaat-i-Islami Naib Amir Maulana Aslam Saleemi said that the entire Family Laws Ordinance, 1961, should be repealed as it was repugnant to the Holy Quran and Sunnah and it was vehemently opposed by about 200 ulema when Ayub Khan had promulgated the ordinance. Instead, he said, a new law should be framed and enforced in consultation with the religious scholars and legal experts. He said that the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1934, was the legacy of the colonial rule and does not meet the requirements of Muslim society whereas laws must conform to the social values of a society. He said that no minimum of dower could be fixed as it was the right of mar-

ried women to receive as much dower as agreed upon at the time of marriage. Once the pious Caliph Hazrat Umar had desired to fix the minimum dower amount when a woman had courage to oppose him on the ground that it was against the provisions of the Holy Quran and Sunnah, Umar dropped the idea thanking the woman that she had saved him from taking a wrong decision.

Lahore High Court's retired judge Mrs Nasira Javid Iqbal said that dower was the right of married women the payment of which could not be withheld and so was the dowry. She said that family courts should have exclusive jurisdiction of family cases only and there was a great need for increasing the number of family judges to dispose of the pending cases. She said that family courts had no necessary facilities which must be provided to them to dispose of the increasing number of family cases. She said that arbitration law was made in haste and it should be amended.

Another woman advocate Shamsa Ali opposed the repeal of the Family Laws Ordinance and said that necessary amendments could be made to protect the rights of women.

Earlier, the Research Officer of National Commission on the Status of Women Syeda Viqarunnisa Hashmi discussed in detail with the help of slides the rights of divorced women under the Family Laws of Pakistan in the context of Islamic law, the Holy Quran, Sunnah and international commitments of Pakistan with particular reference to their rights of dower, maintenance, maintenance of children, if any, return of dowry and gifts, re-marriage, decent and kind treatment, share in inheritance in the case of Falaq-Mariz (divorce by ailing husband).

DAILY EXPRESS

ایکسپریس روزنامہ

اسلام آباد کراچی لاہور پشاور ملتان فیصل آباد گوجرانوالہ سرگودھا اور رحیم یار خان سے ہیک وقت شائع ہونے والا واحد قومی روزنامہ

جلد 4 شمارہ 306 بدھ 13 رجب المرجب 1427ھ 9 اگست 2006ء 25 ساراں 2063 پ فون: 2654226 صفحات 16 قیمت 6 روپے

ظاہری کی جرح و سرخس کی لڑائی

عالمی قوانین کو قرآن و سنت سے ہم آہنگ کرتے ہوئے سہل بنایا اور مطلقہ عورتوں کے حوالے سے قوانین کو تعلیم بالغاں پر وگرام میں شامل کیا جائے

طلاق کورٹ کے ذریعے ہونی چاہئے، شگفتہ ناز، سکیمیں محمود جان، ڈاکٹر احمد علی، حزب اللہ کا خیل، رخشندہ ناز کا ورکشاپ سے خطاب

پشاور (ایڈیٹر رپورٹر) قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین کے زیر اہتمام دو روزہ مشاورتی ورکشاپ کے اختتامی سیشن میں شرکاء نے ملک میں عالمی قوانین کو آسان بنانے بعد اعلیٰ نظام کو بہتر بنانے اور رائج قوانین پر سختی سے عملدرآمد (باقی صفحہ 5 نمبر 24)

بقیہ نمبر 24

کرائے پر زور دیتے ہوئے کہا ہے کہ عورتوں کو انصاف کی فراہمی کیلئے ضروری ہے کہ طلاق کی رجسٹریشن کو لازمی قرار دیا جائے بلکہ طلاق بذریعہ کورٹ ہونی چاہئے اس سلسلے میں دوسرے اسلامی ممالک کے نظام سے بھی استفادہ حاصل کیا جاسکتا ہے مشاورتی ورکشاپ کا موضوع "مطلقہ عورتوں پر عالمی قوانین کے اثرات" تھا جبکہ ورکشاپ میں مختلف قانونی ماہرین، سول سوسائٹی کے نمائندوں کے علاوہ ایم پی اے شگفتہ ناز ایم این اے رضیہ عزیز ایم پی اے ڈاکٹر سکیمیں محمود جان پروفیسر ڈاکٹر احمد علی حزب اللہ کا خیل ڈاکٹر محمد رشید صدیقی، ایم اے آفریدی ایڈووکیٹ رخشندہ ناز ڈاکٹر مہر تاج روحانی اور سرست بلالی نے بھی خطاب کیا اجلاس میں شرکاء نے کہا کہ تمام عالمی قوانین کو قرآن و سنت سے ہم آہنگ کرتے ہوئے اسے سہل بنایا جائے جبکہ عوامی آگہی کیلئے پائیر سیکنڈری سکولوں تک نصاب کا حصہ بنانا چاہئے مطلقہ عورتوں کے حوالے سے قوانین کو تعلیم بالغاں پر وگرام میں شامل کر کے اسے ضروری قرار دیا جائے شرکاء نے کمیشن کی جانب سے طلاق کی صورت میں شہر کو جرمانہ عائد کرنے طلاق کے بعد تاحیات نان نفقہ کی ذمہ داری مرد کو دینے اور زور طلاق کا اختیار تاحیثی کو دینے کی بجائے عورت کو دینے کی سخت مخالفت کرتے ہوئے اسے عورت کے ساتھ مزید ظلم قرار دیا جبکہ اس کے لئے تمام قوانین کو اسلامی نظریاتی کونسل سے پاس کروانے اور تاحیاتوں میں پیش کرنے پر زور دیا گیا۔

THE BALOCHISTAN TIMES QUETTA

Friday August 25, 2006

NCSW holds consultative advocacy forum on Women's Rights

QUETTA: (APP) — The participants of the forum held here Thursday under aegis of National Commission on the Status of Women and UNDP on "Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Women in Pakistan" suggested that the law courts should be strengthened at lower level and law must freely be implemented in order to secure rights of women.

They said that laws must be reviewed regularly. Obligations and rights of both man and woman be included in curriculum so that a person may get correct knowledge of the matter in his very early age. The husband should be forced to pay 'Mehr' to his divorced spouse. Both man and women be informed about the consequences coming ahead after separation. Reconciliation proceedings in courts be prolonged so that the spouses could have time to reach better reconciliation.

The NCSW initiated a policy research on the rights of divorced women in order to assess the level of adequacy and effectiveness of prevailing Family Laws in terms of their impact on the status and rights of divorced women in Pakistan.

The commission was established in July 2000 under ordinance No: 26-2000. Main objectives of the commission are the emancipation of women, equalization of opportunities and socio-economic conditions amongst women and men and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Moreover, it also examine laws, policies, programs and other measures taken by the government for women development and gender equality to assess implementation and make suitable recommendations to the concerned authorities where considered necessary for effective measures.

Syeda Viqarun Nisa Hashmi elaborated the rights of divorced women (Muslim and Non Muslim) under Islamic Law, Holy Quraan, Sunnah and consensus of the Islamic Jurists through her research findings. She explained gaps in prevailing legal system, family laws and how the rights of a divorced woman could be ensured.

She said that there was legal provision on the rights of divorced women except a provision, which upheld remarriage right of a Farsi women.

Syeda Viqarun Nisa Hashmi said that Islam had given rights of dower, maintenance, maintenance for children (if any), guardianship and Custody of children, return of dowry, remarriage, decent and kind treatment and share in inheritance in the case of Talaq-al-Mariz.

She said that the term dower has not been defined by the prevailing family laws. No distinction has been made between Khul'a and dissolution of marriage on the grounds identified in Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act 1939.

There are no legal provisions in respect of divorced women for maintenance during and after 'Iddat', past maintenance and maintenance for the child. Moreover, there is no security mechanism for the protection of destitute divorced women.

She further explained that the prevailing laws have not recognized the mother as natural and legal guardian and custodian. The forum was held to share its research findings and collect valuable inputs about the problems faced by the divorced women and their resolutions. /

FRIDAY AUGUST 25, 2006

Country's laws be framed in conformity with Qura'an-o-Sunnah'

True Welfare Islamic State can guarantee peoples' rights

By Saeed Chohan

QUETTA: Participants of a consultative meeting of NCSW have called for making Pakistan a true welfare Islamic State for which our fathers had dreamed of as only such a State could only guarantee and protect the due rights of the men and women.

All the country laws should be framed in conformity with Islam and that of Qura'an-o-Sunnah considering it (Islam) as the Supreme Law of the country, as the rights of the men and women have been well expressed, defined and protected in it.

Islam should be made the Supreme Law of the land and it

should be inculcated in the entire system to deliver justice to the people without any gender discrimination.

Equal opportunities of education, access to the amenities of the life has the right of every human being and as such it must be given to them without any bias and prejudice.

This and similar views were expressed by the panelists and participants of the consultative meeting of the National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW) held on the "Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan".

here at a local hotel on Thursday afternoon.

The panelist was comprised Professor senior lawyer and human rights activist, Mir Aurangzeb Advocate, Qari Anshad Yamin and former Additional Session Judge, Malik Inayatullah Khan.

The former Chairperson of the NCSW, Justice (Retd) Majida Rizvi also joined the meeting, later.

The member of NCSW from Balochistan Professor Mrs. Farkhanda Aurangzeb conducted the meeting while the Policy Research Officer NCSW, Syeda

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: Participants of a consultative meeting of National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW) held on the "Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan".

Country's laws be framed...

Contd. from back page

Viqar-un-nisa Hashmi made a presentation on the research study "Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan." Among the participants were the parliamentarians, social and human rights activists, senior lawyers, judges of subordinate courts, representatives of various non governmental organizations, senior officials of the social welfare department, academicians, religious leaders and the journalists. Prominent among the participants were the MPA Ms. Samina Saeed, Vice Chairperson HRCP Balochistan, Mir Zahood Shahwani, the UNDP's Coordinator, Captain @ Javed Khan, prominent religious scholars Dr. Attaur Rehman, Maulana Abdul Mateen Akhonzada, Dr. Quratul Ain Bakhtiar, senior lawyers Hashim Kakar, Muhammad Tahir, Iftekharul Haq, Coordinator Women Political School Project, Ms. Fauzia Shaheen, besides others. Former Governor Balochistan Brigadier @ Abdul Rahim Durrani also attended the meeting.

The participants were of the strong view that Islam is the best religion in the world that guarantees the rights of the human being, so we are lucky to have it and as such enforce it in true letter and spirit. They at the same time called for not making it (Islam) and its teachings controversial for the vested interests.

MMA's MPA Ms. Samina Saeed, presenting her viewpoint on the Family Laws and the rights of the divorced women in the

country, said that the rights that had been bestowed upon the men and women in Islam and Qura'an-o-Sunnah are enough, what's needed is to grant them.

She also strongly stressed that the country laws should be framed according to Islam and Qura'an-o-Sunnah. Commenting on the study, Ms. Saeed made recommendations to improve it giving the same a pure Islamic colour and bringing it in conformity with Qura'an-o-Sunnah.

She expressed the hope that the recommendations would be incorporated in the final report.

The participants were critical of non implementation of certain laws that exist in the country saying that this untoward practice led to the frustration and injustices particularly to those under privileged class and downtrodden of the country.

They stressed on the need to create much needed awareness among the people about their obligations and rights so that they could maintain a balance in the life.

Rather there is a need to impart the fundamental education to the people especially our children and younger generation, and what it should be decided first by those who matter. For this a righteous education system should be in place, said a renowned social activist, Dr. Quratul ain Bakhtiar, who heads the Institute of Development Studies and Practices (IDSP).

In her brief address on the occasion, Justice (Retd) Majida

Rizvi said that the equal opportunities should be given to the men and women to avoid gender discrimination in all spheres of the life. Commenting on the topic, she said that in Islam, a husband is obligatory to look after one's spouse or for that matter one's separated better half and is also responsible for her maintenance and other necessary expenditures. If there's a welfare state then it would be responsible for the maintenance of the divorced women, she added.

She said that under very special circumstances, a female is forced to opt for Khula or divorce, and needless to mention the circumstances are created by the men. Earlier, Ms. Hashmi shared the draft study on

the rights of divorced women in the country with the participants.

On the occasion, she pointed out that out of total 51 family laws just seven/eight are related with the rights of divorced women. So, then is a need to improve the situation.

Ms. Hashmi said that the objective of the study conducted i to assess the level of adequacy an effectiveness of prevailing family laws in terms of their impact on the status and rights of divorced women in the country, besides formulating policy recommendations in this regard. Sharing with the participant the scope of study, she said that she has tried to ascertain that what are the rights of the divorced women (Muslim and non-Muslim) under the prevailing family laws in the

country as well as to identify the gaps in the prevailing legal system.

The participants also put forth recommendations to improve the family laws, and that particularly are related with the rights of the divorced women in the country.

روزنامہ ”اوصاف“ لاہور (4) 19 اگست 2006ء



قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین کے زیر اہتمام سیمینار میں جسٹس (ر) ڈاکٹر جاوید اقبال، ضیاء محمود مرزا، جسٹس (ر) ناصرہ اقبال اور ڈاکٹر شاہدہ حیدر شریک ہیں۔

فیملی کیسز کا فیصلہ 6 ماہ کے اندر ہو جانا چاہئے، جسٹس (ر) جاوید اقبال

ججوں کی تعداد میں اضافہ ضروری ہے، ناصر جاوید مغربیت کو فیملی لاز میں لانے کی ضرورت نہیں: چودھری محمد اسلم سلیسی

خواتین ججوں کی تعداد بڑھائی جائے نیشنل کمیشن برائے خواتین کے زیر اہتمام سیمینار میں شرکاء کا اظہار خیال

لاہور (ایڈیٹر رپورٹر) فیملی کورٹس میں تعداد میں اضافہ کے ساتھ وہاں خواتین ججوں کی تعیناتی کو یقینی بنایا جائے۔ مقدمات کا فیصلہ 6 ماہ کے اندر ہو جانا چاہئے ان خیالات کا اظہار جسٹس (ر) جاوید اقبال نے نیشنل کمیشن برائے خواتین کے زیر اہتمام ”پاکستانی خواتین پر فیملی لاز“ کے اثرات کے موضوع پر سیمینار سے خطاب کرتے ہوئے کیا۔ سیمینار میں جسٹس (ر) ناصرہ جاوید اقبال، چودھری محمد اسلم سلیسی، نائب امیر جماعت اسلامی نے مہمان خصوصی کے طور پر شرکت کی جسٹس (ر) جاوید اقبال نے مزید کہا کہ فیملی لاز میں ترمیم کے بجائے سہولیات کی فراہمی کو یقینی بنانا چاہئے کیونکہ حالیہ چند برس میں تین تین نکاح کے کیسز میں بے پناہ اضافہ ہوا ہے اس صورتحال کے پیش نظر فیملی کورٹ میں ججز کا نہ صرف اضافہ کرنا ہوگا بلکہ ججوں کی اکثریت خواتین پر مشتمل ہونا چاہئے۔ فیملی کورٹ میں موجود کیسز کا فیصلہ 6 ماہ کے اندر ہو جانا چاہئے 20 سال قبل فیملی کورٹ میں 60 ہزار کیسز زیر

التوا تھے جس کی شرح میں اب تیزی سے اضافہ ہوا ہے اس کو کنٹرول کرنے کے لیے بہتر لائحہ عمل کی ضرورت ہے جسٹس (ر) ناصرہ جاوید اقبال نے کہا کہ فیملی لاز کو انگریزوں کا قانون کہا جاتا ہے جبکہ علماء کی کثیر تعداد نے متفقہ طور پر یہ قوانین بنائے تھے۔ اور ججوں کی تعداد میں اضافہ ضروری ہے نائب امیر جماعت اسلامی چودھری محمد اسلم سلیسی نے کہا کہ ہمارے معاشرے میں بیوی کے ساتھ جو ظالمانہ سلوک کیا جاتا ہے وہ نہیں ہونا چاہئے مغربیت کو فیملی لاز میں لانے کی ضرورت نہیں ہے ہمارے ہاں جو خلع کے طریقے رائج ہیں انہیں کو استعمال کرنا چاہئے عدالت کو فیصلہ کرتے وقت یہ دیکھنا چاہئے کہ آیا باپ بچے کی نگہداشت بھی کر سکتا ہے یا نہیں اس کے پاس اتنے وسائل بھی موجود ہیں یا نہیں اس موقع پر سید افضل، علی عمران، عورت فاؤنڈیشن، اقلیتوں کے پیئر جیکب، ایڈووکیٹ شمس علی اور دیگر شرکاء نے بھی اظہار خیال کیا۔

Down International August, 29



FARZANA Bari of Pattan speaks at a seminar on Hudood laws in Islamabad on Monday. NCSW Chairperson Dr Arifa Syeda Zahra is also present.—Photo by G.A. Zaidi

DAWN Islamabad, TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2006

Speakers for abolition of Hudood laws

By Our Reporter

ISLAMABAD, Aug 28: Highlighting different lacunas and legal and procedural flaws in Hudood ordinances from religious and human rights perspective, speakers at a seminar called for its abolition in totality.

Terming some of the proposed amendments positive and progressive, the speakers expressed their doubts about the fate of proposed amendments in "discriminatory" Hudood laws.

Speaking at the seminar on "Hudood Ordinances: Time for repeal" organised by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) on Monday, Dr Arfa Sayeda Zehra from National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), Nasreen Azhar of Women Action Forum, Islamabad; Dr Farzana Bari of QAU's Centre of Excellence in Gender Studies, and former IGP Mohammad Saeed Alrai discussed different aspects of the subject.

Dr Arfa Sayeda Zehra, sharing her perspective about the serious lacunas in the Hudood ordinances, reiterated the NCSW stand of repealing Hudood laws instead of mere amendments.

She cited the NCSW 2003 report in which after genuine and consultative process, the learned members had concluded the abolition of these laws.

Nonetheless, she appreciated the present government's initiative but questioned its sincerity because the proposed amendments were not forwarded to standing committee of the National Assembly.

Highlighting the inability of successive governments, she said for the first time in 27 years of enactment of Hudood ordinances, there was a positive talk of amendments in these extremely discriminatory laws.

She said amid heavy and historic representation of Maulvis in the politics and "Maulvi-Jagirdar powerful nexus", the present government's initiative to amend the Hudood laws was a positive step.

Dr Farzana Bari of QAU's Centre of Excellence in Gender Studies, besides demanding the repeal of Hudood ordinances, said that the undemocratic, non-consultative, faulty and political-hatched Hudood ordinances have been violating the human rights since their inception.

that the state and religion be separated. She lamented that the initiative was nothing but a politically motivated step to achieve two political gains.

She made it clear that the two intended political gains of the government were to proliferate its image as a women-friendly government and more importantly to create a divide in the resistance and unity of the opposition.

Dr Bari was very critical of the role of political parties of the arena since according to her all of them were same when it came to the women rights.

She said that irony of the fact was that one military dictator due to political compulsion introduced the Hudood ordinances while the other was amending it for same political benefits. In both cases the women remained at the centre.

She urged the civil society to actively play its role for the repeal of these discriminatory laws as the civil society was conceptually and intellectually clear but it failed to create popular support and public pressure.

Mohammad Saeed Alrai, while giving an exemplary analysis of the situation, stressed the urgent need for reinterpretation of Islamic laws and an end to selective and partial implementation of some of the Islamic laws.

He said every Islamic law had a dimension of reformable approach but unfortunately the Islamic laws had virtually never been interpreted in their true spirit and context.

While quoting some examples from the Islamic history, he made it clear that Islam always stressed for the prevalence of reformative approaches instead of just giving punishments to offenders.

Nasreen Azhar moderated the session and deplored that the government's intention to amend Hudood laws was not to win justice for the people but purely political gains.

During the vibrant question-answer session, the participants of the seminar also questioned the sincerity of the government and its intended political gains.

They also feared that after the "assassination" of Akbar Bugti and emerging situation in Balochistan the government would now not be able to withstand against the expected pressure of MMA and would possibly withdraw from its plan of introducing amendments.

Islamabad, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2006

side...

CONSULTATION

Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women



n's rights: Page 18



UNDP research officer Viqarun Nisa Hashmi speaks on the rights of divorced women in Islamabad on Tuesday. Dr Tufail Hashmi, Council of Islamic Ideology chairman Dr Khalid Masood and Begum Feroza are also present.—Online

Steps to protect divorced women's rights urged

By A Reporter

ISLAMABAD, Aug 29: There are no provisions in the family laws to protect the rights of divorced women in the country.

This was stated by religious scholars and representatives of civil society organisations at a consultation titled "Impact of family laws on the rights of divorced women in Pakistan" here on Tuesday.

The consultation was organised by National Commission on the Status of Women and presided over by chairman Council of Islamic Ideology Dr Khalid Masood.

Eminent scholars Dr Farooq Khan, Dr Tufail Hashmi and policy research officer Viqarun Nisa Hashmi also attended the discussion.

The participants said there were gaps in the prevailing legal system, interpretation of Islamic laws and the international commitments of the government, which were hurdles in the way of divorced women getting their

rights.

They said there was neither provisions regarding divorced women's right to dowry nor penalty for its non-payment, adding that the mechanism for the enforcement of rights of divorced women outside the court and security mechanism for the protection of destitute women were also absent in the country.

The participants said it was unfortunate that mother was not recognised as the natural and legal guardian and custodian of their children and there was no mechanism for the registration of divorces and payment of compensation to women divorced without any valid reason.

They said there were procedural complexities to enforce the payment of maintenance, and the country lacked an effective judicial setup from where divorced women can seek justice.

The divorced women face

embarrassment, live with a social stigma, face waiver of rights, suffer in silence and their dependence on others leads to exploitation, the speakers said.

They stressed strengthening of support system for the divorced women like shelter houses and legal aid services particularly in the areas where no such facilities are available. Shelter houses must have links to vocational centres, they added.

They recommended establishment of family courts monitoring committee at the federal, provincial and local levels. The federal committee should be presided over by the chief justice of Pakistan, the provincial ones by the chief justice of the respective high court and local committees by the district judges.

They also proposed that topics related to human rights should be introduced in the syllabi of higher secondary school and college levels.

روزنامہ ”خبریں“ ملتان (4) 2 ستمبر 2006ء



ملتان: نیشنل دوسن کمیشن کی تقریب سے جنس (ناصرہ جاوید اقبال ڈاکٹر فاروق خان نسیاء الرحمن رحمت زیدانی خطاب جبکہ ڈاکٹر عارفہ زہرہ اور عزیز لودھی سنج پر بیٹھے ہیں۔

حدود آرڈیننس میں ترامیم سماجی ضرورتوں کے مطابق ہوگی: ڈاکٹر عارفہ زہرہ

فورم ”حدود آرڈیننس“ میں چیئر پرسن قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین ناصرہ جاوید اقبال فاروق خان عزیز لودھی کا خطاب

ملتان (خاتون رپورٹر) چیئر پرسن قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین ڈاکٹر عارفہ سیدہ زہرہ نے کہا ہے کہ میں اپنے کمیشن کو ”وقار نسواں کمیشن“ کہتی ہوں۔ حدود آرڈیننس حدود اللہ نہیں ہیں۔ ان سے معاشرے کو جو ضرر ہوگا تو ان میں ترامیم بدلتے وقت اور سماجی ضرورتوں کے مطابق ہوں گی۔ ان خیالات کا اظہار انہوں نے آواز فاؤنڈیشن کے زیر اہتمام فورم ”حدود آرڈیننس“ کی صدارت کرتے ہوئے کیا۔ جسٹس ریٹائرڈ ناصرہ جاوید اقبال ڈاکٹر محمد فاروق خان، محمد نسیاء الرحمن اور ڈاکٹر محمد عزیز لودھی مقررین تھے۔ عارفہ سیدہ زہرہ نے کہا کہ حدود آرڈیننس میں ترامیم کا دروازہ 27 سال بعد کھلا ہے۔ حدود آرڈیننس میں ترامیم کے مجوزہ ترمیمی بل کتابچہ کی شکل میں شائع کیا جائے گا۔ محمد فاروق خان نے کہا کہ موجودہ ترامیم میں ریپ کیسز میں کسی قسم کی شہادت درکار نہیں بلکہ واقعی ثبوت و میڈیکل رپورٹ ہی موثر ہیں۔ آواز فاؤنڈیشن کے محمد نسیاء الرحمن ناصرہ جاوید اقبال پروفیسر محمد عزیز لودھی نے کہا کہ عورتوں کے حقوق کی آواز مغرب نے نہیں بلکہ مذہب اسلام نے بلند کی ہے۔ نیشنل ویمن کمیشن کی رحمت زیدانی سنج سکرٹری تھے جبکہ اوپن ڈسکشن میں خالدہ پروین، بشری خانم، منصور کریم سیال، سہیل جاوید، ریاض، عظیم اقبال بلوچ، مشتاق لغاری، ارشد نذیر، صوبی حسن نے حصہ لیا۔

روزنامہ جنگ ملتان (4) 2 ستمبر 2006ء

حدود آرمینس میں ترامیم وقت کی اہم ضرورت ہے: عارفہ زہرہ

یہ آفاقی قانون نہیں ہے جسے بدلنے سے گناہ سرزد ہو جائے گا، کانفرنس سے خطاب

ملتان (ایڈیٹر رپورٹر) چیئر پرسن قومی کمیشن برائے حقوق نسواں حکومت پاکستان ڈاکٹر عارفہ سیدہ زہرہ نے کہا ہے کہ حدود آرمینس کو زندگی میں معاشرتی اور سماجی سطح پر رونما ہونے والی تبدیلیوں کے ساتھ بدلنا وقت کی اہم ضرورت ہے۔ یہ کوئی آفاقی قانون نہیں ہے جس میں ترامیم سے گناہ سرزد ہو جائے گا۔ ان خیالات کا اظہار انہوں نے قومی کمیشن برائے حقوق نسواں حکومت پاکستان اور آواز فاؤنڈیشن پاکستان کے زیر اہتمام حدود آرمینس کے اثرات و مضمرات اس عنوان سے قومی کانفرنس سے خطاب کے دوران کیا۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ عصمت دری کے قانون میں عزت گنوانے والی مجرم قرار دی جاتی ہے۔ جسٹس (ر) ڈاکٹر ناصرہ جاوید اقبال نے کہا ہے کہ خواتین کو معاشرے میں عزت کا

مقام دینے کیلئے ترمیمی بل منظور کیا جائے۔ مذہبی سکالر ڈاکٹر فاروق خاں نے کہا کہ حدود آرمینس کی تمام شقیں قرآن و سنت کے متصادم ہیں۔ آواز فاؤنڈیشن کے چیف ایگزیکٹو ضیاء الرحمن نے کہا کہ حدود قوانین سماجی مسئلہ تھا جس کو سیاسی بنادیا گیا ہے۔ ڈاکٹر اورلیس احمد نے بھی خطاب کیا۔

خیالات کا اظہار انہوں نے قومی کمیشن برائے حقوق نسواں حکومت پاکستان اور آواز فاؤنڈیشن پاکستان کے زیر اہتمام حدود آرمینس کے اثرات و مضمرات اس عنوان سے قومی کانفرنس سے خطاب کے دوران کیا۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ عصمت دری کے قانون میں عزت گنوانے والی مجرم قرار دی جاتی ہے۔ جسٹس (ر) ڈاکٹر ناصرہ جاوید اقبال نے کہا ہے کہ خواتین کو معاشرے میں عزت کا

روزنامہ جنگ ملتان (12) 3 ستمبر 2006ء

تیزاب پھینکنے پر موت کی سزا کی سفارش کی جائیگی: ڈاکٹر عارفہ

پاکستانی عورت آج بھی امید اور ناامید کے درمیان زندگی بسر کر رہی ہے قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین کی چیئر پرسن کی گفتگو

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ڈاکٹر عارفہ

بقیہ

گردی کیلئے سزائے موت کی شق شامل کی جائے گی کیونکہ انسانی زندگی کو مسخ اور ایک شخص سے آزاد اور فعال زندگی کا حق چھین لینے والے بھی معاشرے میں زندہ رہنے کے قابل نہیں۔ گزشتہ کئی دہائیوں میں اگر مناسب قانون سازی کر دی جاتی تو آج ہر دوسری پاکستانی عورت تشدد اور تا کر دہ گناہوں کی سزا کاٹ رہی ہوتی۔ ایک سوال کے جواب میں انہوں نے کہا حدود آرڈیننس کے ذریعے خواتین کی زندگی عذاب بنا دی گئی تاہم یہ بات خوش آئند ہے کہ 1979ء میں بننے والے قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین نے مختلف تجویزاتی مسائل اور عمومی رائے سے گزرنے کے بعد 50 فیصد کامیابی حاصل کی ہے جس سے آسپلی میں تحفظ خواتین بل پیش کیا گیا ہے جس سے برسوں بعد خواتین کو روشنی کی کرن نظر آئی ہے کیونکہ اس سے پہلے حدود قوانین کے نفاذ سے زنا اور زنا بالجبر میں امتیاز ختم ہو گیا تھا۔ انہوں نے مزید کہا ہے کہ ترمیمی بل میں زنا بالجبر، عورت کے اغوا اور خرید و فروخت پر 10 سے 25 سال تک سزا مقرر کرنا اچھا اقدام ہے البتہ ان ترمیم پر جس کمیٹی فکر کو اعتراض ہے انہیں چاہئے ایک جگہ اکٹھے ہو کر صلاح مشورہ کریں اور مناسب تجاویز دیں کیونکہ معاشروں کی فلاح لڑائی جھگڑے سے نہیں بلکہ مل جینھ کر ہوتی ہے۔ آج بھی پاکستانی عورت امید اور ناامید کے درمیان زندگی بسر کر رہی ہے جبکہ کمیشن کو مزید فعال بنانے کیلئے بھی خواتین کو سرگرم عمل ہونا چاہئے، یہ وقت کی ضرورت ہے۔

ملتان (لیڈی رپورٹر) قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین کی چیئر پرسن ڈاکٹر عارفہ سیدہ زہرہ نے جنگ سے گفتگو کرتے ہوئے بتایا ہے کہ پاکستان میں خواتین پر تیزاب پھینکنے کے بڑھتے ہوئے واقعات نے معاشرے کو خوف میں مبتلا کر دیا ہے۔ حدود آرڈیننس میں ترمیم کے بعد کمیشن اس پر باقاعدہ قانون سازی کیلئے سفارشات پیش کرے گا جس میں تیزاب باقی صفحہ 9 بقیہ نمبر 22

DAWN Islamabad, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2006

Women's commission made fully functional

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI, Sept 7: A three-day strategy building workshop organised by the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) for its members began here on Thursday.

Chairperson of the commission Dr Arifa Syeda Zehra said that the workshop, which is a part of a UNDP-funded project, 'Institutional Strengthening of NCSW', had been organised to develop the strategic programme of the commission for the next three years.

She said that instead of generalising on gender concepts, this workshop would focus on the study of specifics of the ground situation, like tribal laws and customary practices/attitudes, including those affecting minority women, and their implications; political participation of women like right to vote, candidature and involvement in decision-making process; socio-economic conditions like population, health, education empowerment, environment, employment, etc; and other related issues.

She said that the members would also review the National Plan of Action, the National Plan for Development and Empowerment of Women, the Poverty Re-

duction Strategy, the Gender Reform Action Plan and the CE-DAW to come up with a strategic advocacy plan of the Commission.

She said that the workshop would provide a direction to the commission whereas further support could be directed and/or solicited from the government and other relevant organisations on the basis of this strategic programme.

Under the project, some of the commission members would also visit other countries like Jordan, India and Philippines, where similar women commissions were functioning, to learn from their experiences, she added.

According to her, an international conference would be organised in Lahore in November this year where women delegates, actively working in the field of women empowerment and gender issues, would be invited so that they could share their experiences with their local counterparts. Delegates from Nepal, Bangladesh, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America were also expected to attend the moot.

Dr Arifa said that the commission was a statutory body working for the emancipation of the

women, equalisation of socio-economic and other opportunities and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

The main functions of the NCSW included examining the policies, programmes and other measures taken by the government for women development and review all policies, laws, rules and regulations affecting women's status and rights in relation with gender equality.

The NCSW chairperson said that the commission had not been fully operational for a couple of years as a majority of its members had retired and no meeting could be held for want of quorum. However, she said, after the new members having been nominated now, the commission had become fully functional.

Members of the commission are Shahida Haider, Dr Perveen Shah, Ms Simi Kamal, Naheed Ali, Prof Mehr Taj Roghani, Dr Tahira Kamal, Prof Farkhanda Aurangzeb, Erum Wali Khan, Dr Begum Jan, Dr Feroza Ahmad, Ashi Chanda, Dr Faqir Hussain, Dr Tufail Hashmi, besides the secretaries of the Finance, Women Development and Human Rights Divisions who are ex-officio members.



University of Sindh

JAMSHORO SINDH, PAKISTAN.

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Dated

13-9-06

PRESS RELEASE

Daily Regional Times, Karachi

SU promotes 39 employees/drivers of technical sections

JAMSHORO: The University of Sindh here on Tuesday has promoted 39 employees/drivers of technical sections under technical scheme as approved by the University's Syndicate. The technical scheme was reviewed by two committees, which had been constituted by the Syndicate and in light of reports submitted by committees, the syndicate of the University approved for the implementation.

Under technical scheme the University has been awarding promotions under personnel grades to 40% technical staff working on technical posts in different sections. Considering eligibility at least 5 years service as basic criteria the University of Sindh under technical scheme awarded two grades to employees working in grade five or above under on the technical posts. The University has promoted 11 drivers in grade-13 to employees of grade-11. 9 drivers in B-9 from B-7, eleven drivers of b-9 to B-11.

Four Drivers of B-11 to B-13 and Four drivers of B-13 to B-15. The Registrar University of Sindh, Dr Saeed Ahmed Soomro and Members Syndicate and Professor In-charge Transport Prof. Agha Riaz Hassan distributed promotion orders among the employees. The Registrar on this occasion congratulated the employees on their promotions and said that due to shortage of funds and cut in grant by Higher Education Commission the matter about promotions under technical scheme was delayed. He said that the due to personal efforts made by Vice Chancellor University of Sindh Mr.Mazharul Haq Siddiqui the technical scheme has been implemented.

Holiday on account of Qalander's Urs

The Registrar University of Sindh has announced on Tuesday that the University will remain

closed on Wednesday the 13th September, 2006 on account of Urs of Qalandar Lal Shahbaz

Provision of basic rights and status to women stressed

The scholars, educationists, advocates and representatives of society, while expressing their views in a forum on "Inheritance Laws and Women Rights" have stressed for providing basic rights and status to women in society and education for its awareness. They were of the opinion that the educated people who are well aware about the rights of women, should educate women about their rights and status in society. The forum was organized jointly by National Commission on the Status of Women and Institute of Women Development Studies University of Sindh here on Tuesday. Dr. Anifa Syeda Zehra President National Commission on the Status of Women presided over, while

Vice Chancellor University of Sindh, Mr. Mazharul Haq Siddiqui was the Chief Guest and Dr. Rafia Ahmed Shaikh, Dean Faculty of Social Sciences was Guest of honour on the occasion. The speakers including noted lawyers, educationists and writers highlighting problems of women in the remote areas said that majority of women are unaware about its rights and laws available for its betterment. They said that not only illiterate but the literate women are also lacking towards awareness towards laws for their rights. In her presidential remarks, Dr. Syeda Arifa Zehra said that we jointly must fight for paying dignity of women in the society and added that human is human and every human have right of the dignity. The Vice Chancellor University of Sindh, Mr. Mazharul Haq Siddiqui expressing his views said that the house is basic Unity of any society and added that the society must initiate by paying respect and dignity from home.—RT

DAWN Islamabad, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2006



NCSW Chairperson Dr Arfa Sayeda Zehra and MNA Mehnaz Rafi at the launching ceremony of posters on Qisas and Diyat law and women rights to inheritance in Islamabad on Friday.— Photo by Ishaque Chaudhry

The News International, Saturday, September 30, 2006

Inheritance law marginalised: CII chief

Rasheed Khalid

ISLAMABAD: Dr Khalid Masud, Chairperson, Council of Islamic Ideology, has said that the inheritance law had been marginalised despite clear injunctions in Holy Qur'aan in the country.

The CII chief was speaking at the launch of posters by National Commission on the Status of Women here Friday. Begum Mehnaz Rafi, chairperson, NA Standing Committee on Women's Development, was the chief guest.

Dr Khalid Masud said that on issues of inheritance, Qisas and Diyat, we are still following tribal customs.

He said that Qur'aan ordained women's inheritance as Hudood-dallah which are unquestionable, but some choose to take to the streets on man-made laws which are not called Hudood in the Qur'aan. He said that in "honour" killing, the male relatives of the female victim, instead of being compassionate, becomes tyrants.

Ruling PML-Q MNA Mehnaz Rafi said that Quaid-i-Azam strongly enunciated women's role in the Independence Movement and beyond. She said that now unfortunately, society sees women as commodities. She endorsed the NCSW's call for the repeal of the Hudood Laws. She asked whether our society was shameless or immoral before the enactment of

Hudood Ordinances in 1979. She recognised that the struggle of women's movement led to the formation of the NCSW.

Herself a renowned artiste, Begum Rafi said that posters are a powerful medium for awareness-raising and should be widely disseminated in both urban and rural areas, where marriage to Qur'aan is used to deprive women of their right to inheritance. She said that feudal lords give women a dowry, not a share in property. Women are forced to choose between brothers and property, she lamented. She said that Islam was a progressive religion that gave right of inheritance in property to women who were buried alive in that society. She said that Diyat was supposed to be a reconciliatory effort to end disputes by paying money, but now is used for forced marriages and killing. She condemned the "thekedars of Islam" who wanted to silence our voices. We will not be silenced, she declared.

Dr Faqir Hussain, member NCSW and Registrar Supreme Court, said that the posters are on the topic of "women's share in inheritance" and "Marriages as compensation for murder." He said that Islam is categorical on inheritance and the law exists but is never enforced. He said that Islam is the first to allow women to own and inherit property, and

that courts should have jurisdiction to start suo moto proceedings if after the death of parents, women's share in property is not transferred. He commended the NCSW's study and hoped that a future mechanism would be evolved.

Dr Arfa Sayeda, Chairperson of NCSW, in her vote of thanks said that the commission would continue to try its best to serve the cause of women and would surmount all the obstacles. She said we want our rights, not as concession or charity. She said that when we follow Islam in letter and spirit it is considered as some one else's agenda.

She said that changing societal behaviour is very difficult which even our Constitution could not do so. Should we let the conscience of the nation remain dormant? she asked. When it comes to women issues, not only the laws are changed but even the procedure of law-making is changed, she regretted.

The posters displayed on the occasion had messages like "Dowry is not the substitute of inheritance," "We share parent's love and affection. Why are we denied our share in inheritance?", "Giving of a woman/girl in marriage as compensation for murder (badl-e-sulh) is unacceptable," and "Are laws hostage to social pressures?"

The Nation | Sunday, October 1, 2006

NCSW discusses minorities' rights



ISLAMABAD: Dr Arfa Syeda Zahra, presides over NCSW consultative meeting on "Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan."—Staff photo

ASMA GHANI

ISLAMABAD - The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) organised a Consultative Meeting on its policy research exclusively with minorities on the "Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Women in Pakistan" here on Saturday.

The objective of the consultative meeting was to share the research findings, which NCSW has conducted and to have valuable output from the participants. The meeting consisted of two sessions chaired by the Dr Arfa Syeda Zahra, Chairperson NCSW.

First session was on the "Impact of Family Laws on the Rights of Divorced Women in Pakistan" while the second one dealt with "Women's Rights to Inheritance and its Implementation" with special reference to minorities.

Representatives of minorities from different communities at provincial and national level attended the meeting and discussed their problems. Dr Arfa Syeda, while giving the brief introduction of the commission said, it was a statutory body es-

tablished in the year 2000, vide Ordinance No. XXVI 2000 dated 17th July 2000.

"The objectives of the NCSW are the emancipation of women, equalization of opportunities and socio economic conditions amongst women and men and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women," she said.

The commission realised that most of the divorced women are denied of their due rights which is the potential violation of women's basic human right and thereof cannot be ignored in the light of the demands, constitutional guarantees and international commitments of the Government of Pakistan.

Umesh Kumar S. Chimnani, Oath Commissioner and Notary Public said a woman whether she be a daughter, sister or wife should be given equal property right like her brother, father and husband. "Hindu women's right to inheritance must be absolute like in Muslim law."

He said, "boys from majority (Muslims) trap Hindu girls in love affair and propagate them to change religion to get married. After marriage girls face prob-

lems because families don't accept the girls despite they have changed the religion."

He said strict law must be promulgated to check conversion at early age for the betterment of the society. "It does not make difference if 50 or 100 people change religion but it should have been dealt with fairly."

One of the participants said the 1925 act related to inheritance was not as bad but the problem was in the implementation. Participants giving suggestions to improve minority rights said, "separate schools and colleges for minorities should be established with Hindu staff."

Dr. Arfa Syeda while concluding the meeting said Pakistan was created so that we could live together and there should have been such kind of educational system, which could bring together people from all the religions.

Representatives of minorities will consult all the points discussed in the meeting with their relative communities and bring together feedback, which will be discussed, in next meeting scheduled on 8th October.

THE NEWS

Monday, November 20, 2006



ONE FOR ALBUM: British Prime Minister Tony Blair with Dr. Arifa Syeda Zehra, Chairperson, States of the Women Commission, Mrs. Shehr Bano Walahaji, Dr. Maleeha Lodhi, Pakistan High Commissioner in the UK, Dr. Ijaz Shafi Gilani, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, International Islamic University Islamabad, Dr. Suhail Omer, Director Iqbal Academy, Dr. Anwar Hussain Siddiqui, President IIUI, Senator Prof. Khurshid Ahmad, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, IIUI Rector Dr. Manzoor Ahmad and Council of Islamic Ideology Chairman Dr. Khalid Masood during a visit to the International Islamic University Islamabad Sunday.

Blair visits Faisal Mosque, attends dialogue on contemporary issues

ISLAMABAD: British Prime Minister Tony Blair Sunday visited Faisal Mosque and attended a dialogue organised by International Islamic University on 'Contemporary issues in Islam'.

The British prime minister first visited the historic Faisal Mosque, where he was received by Dr. Manzoor Ahmad, Rector of the International University, and Dr. Anwar H. Siddiqui, President of the university.

Prime Minister Blair was impressed with the beauty of the Faisal Mosque, its unique architecture and breathtaking location at the foothills of Margalla in the center of federal capital.

Then he attended a free and informal discussion on 'Contemporary Issues in Islam' with a select group of scholars and intellectuals

at the auditorium of the International Islamic University.

Chairman Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Secretary General Pakistan Muslim League Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed led the dialogue.

British Prime Minister Blair participating in the discussion said in his view, Palestine issue was the core and it should be resolved in a just manner.

Senator Mushahid said the issue of extremists is a universal threat to mankind and need collective efforts from the world to tackle it.

He told the British Prime Minister that Al-Qaeda like extremist elements are also present in the West in the shape of 'neocon'.

Mushahid said Muslims are being victimized because of the issues of Iraq, Palestine and Kashmir.

He said, "We are grateful to the Western public opinion and political parties who through their demonstrations in London, Rome, Berlin, Paris and Madrid helped averting a clash of civilization."

Mushahid urged the British Prime Minister to play his due role in resolving the issues confronting Muslim Ummah. He said what happened in the Muslim world had impact within the Western society because a large number of Muslims live in Europe.

The dialogue was held with Dr. Manzoor Ahmad, Rector of the University, Dr. Khalid Masud, Chairman Islamic Ideology Council, Senator Professor Khurshid Ahmad, Dr. Maleeha Lodhi, High Commissioner of Pakistan in UK, Dr. Anwar H. Siddiqui, President of the International Islamic

University, Dr. Arifa Syeda Zehra, Chairperson of the States of Women Commission, Dr. Mohammad Suheyl Umar, Director Iqbal Academy, Dr. Ijaz Shafi Gilani, Dean of Social Sciences, IIU, Sir Mark Lyall, British High Commissioner in Pakistan, and Shaher Bano Walahaji.

An intense, free and frank dialogue was held between the participants on current issues pertaining to the Muslim world, its relations between the western and Muslim civilizations.

The role of UK and Europe in resolving the Palestinian and other disputes confronting the Muslims was also discussed on this occasion.

Relations between Pakistan and UK Universities were also highlighted in the discussion. — APP

Daily Times
Sunday, December 10, 2006

WP Act will never be changed, undone

We are ready for bluffers: Musharraf

■ President says bill would have prompted mass protests if not dealt with properly ■ Says he is in uniform and will remain tomorrow

By Ali Waqar

LAHORE: President General Pervez Musharraf has said that the Women's Protection Act will not be changed or undone. "Whatever has been passed is passed and can't be undone," Gen Musharraf said on Saturday in an address at the concluding session of an international conference, titled 'The Other Self: Conflict, Confusion or Compromise', and arranged by the National Commission on the Status of Women and the United Nations Development Programme.

Gen Musharraf said the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal's threat to resign from parliament if the legislation were passed was a bluff. "Let us see who resigns from the parliament, we are ready to deal with the situation," he added.

He said passing the Women's Protection Bill was a serious challenge. "The Hudood Ordinance is not only a religious issue but also political and administrative," he said. "People would have come on the roads if this bill had not been dealt with properly," he added.

The president said the Hudood Ordinance was not one ordinance about women issues but also four other laws, which were not touched. The government had not touched the Hudood law banning alcohol.

Gen Musharraf reiterated that the legislation was in com-



LAHORE: President Musharraf addresses the conference on Other Self: Conflict, Confusion or Compromise on Saturday. APP

pliance with Islamic injunctions. "Our country is the Islamic Republic of Pakistan ... and no law can be passed against the Quran and Sunnah in this country," he said. He said every Islamic school of thought or cleric had their own interpretation and the difficulty was determining which interpretation was correct. "And many have been opposing this bill just because they are opposing me or they have vested interests," he said.

He said the Council of Islamic Ideology was the only recognised body with the authority to determine whether laws were Islamic or un-Islamic, and the council had cleared the Women's Protection Act.

Gen Musharraf said Pakistan was unfairly singled out as a coun-

try where women were treated poorly, saying these issues existed worldwide. He said the Mukhtar Mai and Dr Shazia Khaild cases had defamed Pakistan, despite the fact he had done all he could to help them out.

Online adds: Gen Musharraf announced on Saturday that he would remain in uniform, and reiterated that the next general election would be held in 2007.

"I am always uniformed and will remain uniformed tomorrow," Gen Musharraf said while talking to journalists after the conference. Talking about discrimination against women, the president said that women's trafficking, vani and forced marriages were some of the issues which needed immediate attention.

The Nation, December 10, Sunday

Recommendations for empowerment of women

OUR STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE - The participants of the conference gave the following recommendations to ensure empowerment of women in the country:

Economic:

1. There is a need for enabling legislation for mandatory joint male-female ownership of land and assets:

a. Owners of agricultural land and livestock;

b. Patrimonial inheritance between sons and daughters;

c. Matrimonial property and assets.

2. All public sector policies, programmes and projects need gender responsive budgeting, monitoring and evaluation to gauge their impact and effective implementation.

3. The GRAP programme needs to be implemented more effectively.

Legal

1. The Government and progressive political parties need to support the NCSW's research findings and recommendations for action on the laws pertaining to Qisas and Diyat, Shahadat and Hudood.

2. The law pertaining to 'Hon-

our' Killings ('H'Ks) - enacted in January 2005 - needs to be reviewed and amended as follows:

a. The State will act as shield in all cases of murder in the name of 'ghairat' or 'honour' - as such killings are considered a crime against the State.

b. All legal provisions for compromise, waiver and forgiveness (muafinamas and raazinamas) need to be removed from the existing laws.

c. The pretext of 'sudden and grave provocation', accepted by both the police and presiding judges to condone and acquit 'H'Ks must not be accepted any more, as the existing legislation forbids it, because such killing is always premeditated and planned murder (qatl-e-amd).

3. There needs to be an increased number of women judges, especially on matters pertaining to family laws.

4. Family courts need to be housed in separate premises from other courts, to facilitate women's access and utilisation of legal safeguards.

Political

The provision of reserved seats needs to be increased to 33 per cent as a minimum.

Academics, activists voice ideas for women empowerment



LAHORE: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz addressing International Conference arranged by National Commission on the Status of Women. The other self-conflict, confusion or compromise. - APP

LAHORE - The first international conference 'The Other Self-Conflict, Confusion or Compromise' organised by National Commission on the Status of Women brought together academics, women rights activists and government planners at one platform to voice ideas and proposals for the emancipation and empowerment of women.

The plenary session 'Justice Delivered or Denied' was chaired by the Attorney General of Pakistan Makhdoom Ali Khan.

Sociologist and Coordinator of Shirkat Gah (Women's Resource Centre in Pakistan) Farida Shaheed made a presentation on 'Justice for Women- Between Formal and Non formal Systems in Pakistan'.

Shaheed said women's lives were situated in a complex web of influences that derive from personnel and political developments, cultural and structural environments and local, national and international concerns.

"At any given time this web of influences determines for an individual women what is possible or out of bound. Based on the experiences of the Women Law and Status Programme of Shirkat Gah, she made an input on how these forces operate in Pakistan, the impact of non-formal adjudication processes running parallel to the state legal system and how the tension influences the delivery or denial of justice of women. She dilated on how women's strategies

for survival and well being can be best supported.

Geetha Devi from India, who is a practicing advocate in the High Court of Karnataka for the past 14 years, shared her views on 'Justice delivered or denied'. Her paper envisaged justice in a broader sense of recognition of rights for women, the enjoyment of rights by women; and the commitment made by the state parties under the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women that obligates the state

to address these situations.

She delved into various sources of law like codified laws, personal laws and customary law; the parallel structures i.e., the formal courts and courts recognised by religious groups and the Sharia law.

Member of Punjab Bar Council and the Lahore High Court Bar Association Osama Siddique spoke on 'Martial Laws and Lawyers' The Crisis of Legal Education In Pakistan and Key Areas of Reform. He evaluated the nature and event of the prob-

lems confronting legal education in Pakistan and also proposed some reforms. Given the wide ambit and complexity of the topic he focused initially on providing some snapshots of independent evaluations of the state of legal education in the country over the past almost six decades.

Renowned human rights activist of Bangladesh Salma Ali's presentation was on 'Field experiences and policy changes'.

Her paper analysed the constraints to access justice, detect future challenges, and projects

good practices in this area, identifying areas of action in Bangladesh context.

It first reviewed published researches and surveys and then moved on to outline Bangladesh Women Lawyer's Association's field experiences.

It concluded by providing recommending a stricter enforcement of laws, serious efforts to affect a change in police attitude towards women and the existing methods of investigation of criminal cases, and argued that there is a need to form an Independent Human Rights Commission/ Women Rights Commission.

Director, School of Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Delhi, Renu Singh's presentation was on 'Including The Excluded- an Indian Perspective'.

The presentation was about the educational status of children with disabilities in India from an equity perspective and highlighted the findings of a study conducted in government schools of Delhi.

Resident Representative UNDP Pakistan chaired the second session on 'Governance and development'.

Farrah Naz has 18 years of experience of working with women's rights groups. For the last three years she has been working in Afghanistan. She read a research paper on 'Bonds of honour: experiences of Afghan women in Northeast Afghanistan'.

The paper presented the images associated with honour of the family in the society in the Northeast Afghanistan and describes their affect on women. The paper argued that the changes in society during and after the war has resulted in more insecurity, marginalisation of women and the poor and increased incidences of violence against women.

Bandana Rana from Nepal presented a paper on 'Gender and governance: Post conflict challenges'. "The impact of armed conflict on women and girls is incalculable. Women are forced to take on more responsibility for family security and well being, often without the necessary resources or social

support," she said.

Manjan Radjavi from Canada, who is a professor at Dawson College and research director at McGill University Centre for Research and Teaching on Women, presented paper on 'Governance and Development: Using International Law for Policy Change'.

The paper probed the manner in which the culture of international legal declarations enters into social organising for securing women's rights at the local

level; and how the language of duties, obligations, and privileges, and definitions of justice and person intersect with other social discourses and practices. It also delved into the role of women's NGOs in furthering the provisions of international law.

Rukhsana Zia's paper was on 'Governance and Gender: Conflict, Compromise or Acceptance: The Punjab Experience'. The paper tried to delineate the various elements of governance that are prized and how the pro-

posed 'good governance' and unique gender dynamics, defined by cultural and religious influences, play out in Pakistan, specifically in Punjab.

The session last presentation was by Evelyn S. Dumanan (Philippines) on 'Eliminating compromise and expediting delivery of justice to violence against women victims'. The paper was about Philippines commitment to implement the international policies on women.

- Enmaria Soriano

'Law colleges have become clubs for practising lawyers'

OUR STAFF REPORTER

have permanent faculty. The visiting faculty is there to just while away the time.

LAHORE - It does not matter what the rights guarantee, but what is more important is their interpretation. We have to see how these rights are interpreted and applied.

Attorney General of Pakistan Makhdoom Ali Khan stated this, while wrapping up the first session of the conference. He strongly criticised the legal education in Pakistan and maintained that it did not have high standards. "There are 45 law colleges affiliated with 11 universities in the country. These colleges have become clubs for practising lawyers. Only perhaps two of these colleges

are good. The rest are just a place where lawyers go to practice their craft. There is no legal analysis in the education given at these colleges. There is no practical examination. The whole exam system is outdated and there is no research. The teaching methodologies are outdated. It is no surprise that you have judges and lawyers that the whole society complains about. After three years of inadequate legal education, these people are unleashed on the public," Khan said.

He said LUMS had now introduced a more comprehensive legal education programme and that could improve the situation.

Kashmiris to get support for legitimate rights: PM

OUR STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE - Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has said the general elections will be held on time with the ruling PML participating in them along with its present allies without any change.

He was talking to journalists at the inaugural session of the two-day International Conference 'The Other Self-Conflict, Confusion or Compromise' first of its kind held in Pakistan undertaking a lot reforms for women empowerment these days, held at a local hotel on Friday under the aegis of National Commission on the Status of Women.

"For the first time in the history of Pakistan this government will complete its five year tenure, which will be a positive sign for the people and democracy in the country. The elections will further improve the democratic system. People of Pakistan are well aware and will support the government for continuation of democracy," Aziz said.

On a query about the MQM and PML differences, he said every party has right to express itself. "In democracy everyone has right to fully express himself."

"MQM is our ally and we are moving forward by taking our allies along with mutual understanding and consensus," the PM said.

About the incident of an IB employee accused of planting explosive near the boundary wall of NWFP CM Secretariat, Aziz said joint investigation was underway and the initial findings had shown that it was not a serious issue involving a low ranking employee throwing some explosives in a drain. "The final report will clear everything and will be made public," he promised.

Aziz maintained that Kashmir was an important issue for Pakistan. "We want to settle the issue through talks. The blood of Kashmiris and Pakistanis is the same and we will continue to support them in their legitimate rights," he said.



LAHORE: Audience at International Conference. - APP

بقاعد تصدیق شد اشاعت ABC CERTIFIED شام کے تمام اخبارات کے نیاہ

عوام

کراچی روزنامہ

Daily Awam Karachi

طلاق کے حوالے سے عائلی قوانین قرآن و سنت کے مطابق نہیں ہیں

قرآن اور سنت میں سماجی تحفظ کا پورا پورا خیال رکھا گیا۔ عائلی قوانین میں اسے طے کرنا ہم سمجھتا ہیں۔ مہر، اخراجات، جہیز اور وراثت کے معاملات کے لئے عورتوں کو عدالت میں کیوں جانا پڑتا ہے طلاق مرد کا حق ضرور ہے لیکن وہ بغیر کسی مقبول وجہ کے عورت کو طلاق نہیں دے سکتا۔ کراچی (اسٹاف رپورٹر) طلاق کے حوالے سے عائلی قوانین میں ترمیم ضروری ہے، موجودہ قوانین قرآن و سنت کی عمل بیروی ہیں۔

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بہتر ہے۔ ان خیالات کا اظہار پالیسی ریسرچ آفیسر نیشنل کمیشن آف ویمنس آف ویمن سیدہ وقار انصاف باہمی نے "عائلی قوانین کا اثر طلاق یافتہ خواتین کے حقوق پر" کے موضوع پر خطاب کرتے ہوئے کیا۔ وہ موضوع کے حوالے سے اپنی تحقیق پیش کر رہی تھیں۔ جس کا مقصد ماہرین قوانین سے عائلی قوانین کے حوالے سے رائے لینا تھا۔ نیشنل کمیشن آف ویمنس آف ویمن کے تحت ہونے والی اس تحقیق کے حوالے سے چاروں صوبوں میں ایڈوکیسی فورم منعقد کئے جائیں گے اور ماہرین قوانین کی تجاویز کی روشنی میں طلاق یافتہ خواتین کے حقوق کے حوالے سے عائلی قوانین میں ترمیم کی جائے گی۔ اسے خطاب میں وقار انصاف باہمی نے کہا کہ قرآن و سنت نے عورت کے سماجی تحفظ کا پورا خیال رکھا لیکن ہمارے عائلی قوانین میں اس بات کو اہمیت نہیں دی گئی۔ طلاق یافتہ عورت کے حوالے سے مہر، اخراجات، جہیز اور وراثت وغیرہ کے مسائل کے حوالے سے ہمارے عائلی قوانین خاموش ہیں، جب قرآن و سنت عورت کو یہ حقوق دیتے ہیں تو پھر عائلی قوانین کیوں نہیں دیتے، خواتین کو کیوں ان کے لئے عدالتوں میں جانا پڑتا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ پاکستان سیدہ کنونشن پر دستخط کرنے والے ممالک میں شامل ہے لیکن اس کے باوجود ہمارے یہاں خواتین کے حقوق کی صورتحال ابتر ہے۔ قومی کمیشن برائے خواتین کے اس پروگرام میں اقبال حیدر، رشیدہ فیصل، جنس (ناصر اسلم زاہد، بیسی کمال اور زہرا سمیت دیگر افراد نے شرکت کی اور تحقیق پر اپنے خیالات کا اظہار کیا۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ طلاق مرد کا حق ضرور ہے لیکن وہ بغیر کسی وجہ کے عورت کو طلاق نہیں دے سکتا، اگر وہ ایسا کرتا ہے تو وہ قرآن و سنت کے قوانین کے خلاف ہے۔ صدر کے احکامات کے مطابق طلاق کا کیس 3 ماہ کے اندر نمٹانا لازمی ہے لیکن حقیقت یہ ہے کہ ہمارے یہاں طلاق کا کیس ڈیڑھ سال سے پہلے عمل نہیں ہوتا۔

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2006

Education facilities for women stressed

RABBIA ARSHAD

LAHORE: Speakers at a two-day conference organised by the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) underlined the need for better education facilities for women and awareness campaigns to check double standards in society.

Speakers on the conference titled 'Other-self: Conflict, Confusion or Compromise' said women would have to struggle to get their rights.

The first session of the conference titled 'Family and Society: Image and Honour' was chaired by Tourism Minister Nilofer Bakhtiar, the conference's second session 'Politics: Shadows of power' was chaired by Standing Committee on Women's Development chairperson MNA Mahnaz Rafi. The third session 'Expressions in Creativity' was chaired by poet Zehra Nigar.

Speaking on the occasion, Nilofer said the Women's Protection Bill (WPB) was the result of 27 years long struggle of women activists.

MNA Mahnaz said it was the duty of women to get united and struggle to get their basic rights. Simi Kamal, NCSW's member, said there were some flaws in law due to which women's rights could not be ensured.

Anna Vanzan, a scholar from Italy, said women were not aware of their basic rights and



LAHORE: Federal Tourism Minister Nilofer Bakhtiar, Zia Awan, Bilqis Tahir, Anna Vanzan and Simi Kamal sit on the stage at a conference. — ONLINE PHOTO

non-government organisations should launch awareness campaigns. She read out her research paper on 'Exporting dishonour: the practice of honour killing in the Pakistani community in Italy'.

Samia Bashir, a woman activist from Sudan, said women in Sudan did not take interest in male-dominated politics but they were working in various other fields.

Bilquis Tahira, an activist from Islamabad, said male writers presented women as precious things but they did not provide them with rights.

Zia Awan, a human rights activist, speaking on 'Family and Society: image and honour' said society followed conserva-

tive values without understanding their results. He said NCSW should work as an independent body funded by other NGOs.

Farrukh Khan, a student from Lahore University of Management Sciences, said cleric always supported a male dominated system because women were not aware of their rights.

Kishwer Naheed and Zahida Hina criticised double standards in society and said poetesses were not encouraged to publish romantic poetry.

On the conference's first day, Makhdoom Ali Khan, Attorney General of Pakistan, was the chief guest. Advocate Geeta Devi from India spoke on "Justice Delivered or Denied."