

National Round Table Conference of Women Legislators on
“Strengthening Women’s Representation in Political and Legislative Process “
(Islamabad, 29th September, 2011)

DECLARATION

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

Recalling that:

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

Further recalling that

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

Paying tribute to:

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

Recognizing

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

Acknowledging

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

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

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