



## Awaz-e-Niswan (AAN)

### Women Voter's Charter of Demands

Awaz-e-Niswan (AAN) is a non-profit, non-partisan, membership based network open to all women of Pakistan ages 18 years and above. The objective of AAN is to increase the visibility and influence of women voters and their issues among duty bearers including elected representatives through the formation of a vibrant network of women voters that will draw attention and resources to priority areas of concern of female voters and engage with elected representatives and government functionaries. Awaz-e-Niswan has provided political education to young educated women in rural and urban areas, enabling them to mobilize women in their own communities and form local chapters. These women have identified issues relevant to women and taken them up with local government and councilors and MPAs to resolve them. The AAN chapter members came together to develop a Charter of Demands based on their context, to present to legislators, policy makers, government officials and civil society partners. The Charter of Demands resonates with the needs of women and their communities across Pakistan and expresses a hope for addressing these issues within the next five years.

We the members of Awaz-e-Niswan, women voters, have identified the following demands that we HOPE and request our elected representatives, national and provincial, and Local Government will address in the next five years. We demand:

#### 1. Political Representation and Participation

- ◇ All political parties should provide campaign funds for women to contest on general seats and ensure their safety and security
- ◇ Ensure transparent, merit based selection criteria and process for nomination of women on reserved seats, whether as legislators or local government councilors
- ◇ Elected representatives and female legislators should be accessible to female constituents
- ◇ Ensure 33% representation of women in local government
- ◇ Ensure local government function with full resource allocations and powers for delivering effective, gender responsive local governance. Local Government Acts should be amended to equally empower all LG Councilors, female and male, whether on reserved seats or elected, if they are to serve their constituents effectively
- ◇ General and LG elections be conducted at the earliest in areas which are indirectly governed

#### 2. Freedom from Violence against Women

- ◇ There should be a safe, functional, well-resourced and women friendly Darul Aman in each district that is managed by a committee comprising government and civil society representatives
- ◇ Female survivors of violence should be provided appropriate services and protection
- ◇ Rising incidence of suicides among young women in particular districts be addressed with appropriate psycho-social counselling and services to prevent such self-harm
- ◇ Safe, reliable public transport be available for women commuters

#### 3. Legislation and law Enforcement

- ◇ Legislation should be enacted to protect, women, children, minorities and the disadvantaged from violence, especially domestic violence and acid attacks. Existing laws on child marriage restraint, forced marriages, property rights, honor killings, domestic

violence be enforced fully. Awareness of such laws and the cybercrime laws be created among women and the general public as well as law enforcement officials

- ◇ Appoint properly trained female police officers and set up a separate complaints cell for women at each police station
- ◇ Perpetrators of violence against women be awarded strict sentences to deter the rising crimes against women

#### 4. Education

- ◇ Primary, secondary and higher secondary education be made available for girls and women, especially in rural areas.
- ◇ Female teachers should be appointed and their presence ensured in female educational institutions. Their pay scales and career paths should be improved to enhance motivation
- ◇ Vocational and technical skills training that increase opportunities for employment be provided to women
- ◇ Medical University be set up in Balochistan with a quota for women, as well as higher education institutions for women
- ◇ Educational institutions should be free of political interference

#### 5. Health

- ◇ Government health facilities should provide quality care, have adequate drug supplies, be equipped with the latest technology and equipment including ultrasound and should be clean.
- ◇ Trained female medical and paramedical staff and technicians should be appointed to all public health facilities and their presence be ensured Improve maternal health services by ensuring presence of female gynecologists and LHVs especially in far flung communities
- ◇ Ensure safe drinking water supplies and sanitation
- ◇ Establish a cancer hospital in Balochistan

#### 6. Economic Opportunities

- ◇ Enforce wage and labour laws, especially for women as per international labour laws. Enforce minimum wage laws
- ◇ Take measures to provide and enhance employment opportunities for women. Link Chambers of Commerce to home based workers so that their enterprises and products are supported
- ◇ Ensure that economic opportunities and employment generated in resource rich provinces (Balochistan, Gilgit Baltistan) and CPEC are available to local communities and especially to women

#### 7. Extremism Take immediate and effective action to curb the proliferation of extremist education and rising extremism

#### 8. Commission on the Status of Women

- ◇ The National and Provincial Commissions on the Status of Women should be provided resources and autonomy and function without political interference of any kind
- ◇ All appointments (Chair, members) to the Commissions should be based on merit and experience in working on women's rights
- ◇ The Balochistan Commission on the Status of Women should be made functional immediately

#### 9. Connectivity, particularly in remote areas and in Gilgit Baltistan should be ensured through women only facilities. Female students and entrepreneurs face difficulty in accessing the internet

#### 10. Recreational facilities for women (parks, sports) should be made. Eco-friendly tourism, with strict measures on sexual harassment against women, be ensured.