

Strengthening National and Provincial Legislative Governance

# PROCEEDINGS

DIALOGUE ON

## FIRST YEAR OF INCREASED WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN THE PARLIAMENT:

Lessons, Reflections and The Way Forward

February 09, 2004  
Serena Hotel, Islamabad

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**Prepared By**



Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development And  
Transparency - PILDAT



*As a Part of*  
Pakistan Legislative Strengthening  
Consortium - PLSC



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## DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
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## Acknowledgments

**T**he Dialogue on First Year of Increased Women Representation in Parliament was held at the occasion of the inauguration of a USAID-funded 3-year project of Strengthening National and Provincial Legislative Governance - SNPLG. The inauguration and dialogue were organised by PILDAT on behalf of the Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Consortium - PLSC.

PILDAT wishes to acknowledge the interest, active participation and valuable input and interaction of participating Senators, MNAs and MPAs which made the dialogue a resounding success.

PILDAT especially thanks the speakers for their time, sharing of invaluable ideas and their involvement throughout the dialogue. The speakers included Mr. Gohar Ayub, Former Speaker National Assembly, Ms. Sherry Rahman, Member of the National Assembly, Justice (Retd.) Majida Razvi, Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women - NCSW, and Senator Dr. Kausar Firdous.

We also thank the session chairs at the dialogue including Mr. Chaudhry Amir Hussain, Speaker National Assembly, and Mr. Bakht Jahan Khan, Speaker NWFP Assembly, who, despite various demands on their time, participated in the dialogue and actively chaired and coordinated their respective sessions.

### Disclaimer

PILDAT has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of views in compiling and editing this report. It, however, does not take any responsibility for any omission or an error since it is not deliberate. The views expressed at the dialogue and presented in this report are those of the speakers and discussants and do not necessarily represent the views of PILDAT, PLSC or USAID.



## Executive Summary

**T**he dialogue on Increased Women Representation in Parliament: Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward was organised to reflect on the experiences of women parliamentarians over the past one year, both to address the issues which have been faced in this period and plan for the future.

The dialogue, held on February 09, 2004 at Hotel Serena, Islamabad, was attended by 7 senators, 19 MNAs and 14 MPAs, as well as resource persons consisting of veteran legislators and subject specialists. Divided into two sessions, the dialogue analysed the impact of increased women representation in the Parliament and discussed strategies to improve the performance of women parliamentarians in the future.

Actively participated by legislators, the dialogue enjoyed intense and vibrant interaction in both sessions. Speakers suggested that the overall performance of Parliament, including those of female legislators, has not been ideal during the first year, but special measures need to be taken to enhance the effective representation of female legislators for the future. They believed that female legislators should insist on getting representation in the committees for an effective voice in legislatures. Female legislators should not just raise women's issues but focus on other crucial issues as well.

Female MNAs complained of a lesser opportunity to express themselves on issues in the Parliament. Highlighting issues of female representation, they said that women, whether elected directly or indirectly, face discrimination in one form or the other. To counter this, education is necessary for people to have greater acceptability of women in public life, and for women to have greater visibility in public life.

The dialogue was rife with strong undercurrents of tension between the male and female discussants. Members repeatedly entered into heated debates over the political background, or lack thereof, of both male and female parliamentarians.

A crucial issue most cited during the discussion was the lack of support infrastructure available to legislators, such as research staff, offices for legislators, etc. regardless of gender.



## Background

Pakistan, for the first time in its history has increased the women representation in its Parliament in 2002 General Election to surpass the world average of around 15 per cent. In the previous assemblies, women representation ranged between 0 to 10 per cent. This quantum leap has created a host of opportunities and challenges not only for the women representatives but also for democracy, democratic institutions, political parties and the country as a whole.

Pakistani Parliament and Provincial Assemblies have completed or are about to complete their first year since the revival of democracy and increase in the women representation. Although one year and especially the first year is relatively a short period to assess the impact of increased women representation, it gives us a good opportunity to pause and reflect on the experiences of the past one year both to address the issues which have been faced in this period and plan for the future.

It is in this backdrop that PILDAT, as a part of the PLSC, organised a dialogue on the subject of "First Year of increased Women Representation in Parliament: Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward". It is a reflection of the high degree of importance which the Consortium attaches to the subject of women representation in the Parliament that a dialogue on this subject was chosen to launch the 3-years project of Strengthening National and Provincial Legislative Governance in Pakistan.

Strengthening National and Provincial Legislative Governance project is executed by Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Consortium - PLSC, which is a group of two international organisations namely World Vision and IFES-International Foundation for Election Systems and five Pakistani organisations: PILDAT-Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development And Transparency, The Researchers, IRDO-Integrated Research and Development Organisation, AWARD-All Women Advancement and Resource Development and CCHD-Citizens' Commission for Human Development. PILDAT will lead the legislative training aspect of the project. The Researchers will lead the Civil Society Action Group and will also be responsible for activities in Sindh province. IRDO, AWARD and CCHD will be responsible for the project activities in Balochistan, North West Frontier Province and Punjab respectively. IFES is responsible for national research and media components of the project while the World Vision is responsible for the management and coordination of the project.



### Structure of the Dialogue

The dialogue was divided into two sessions. *Appendix A* carries the detailed programme of the workshop.

Workshop Dossiers were prepared by PILDAT containing information for the benefit of the participants. Among other things such as the programme, profile of participants and speakers, the dossier also included a background paper prepared by PILDAT on the topic of Women Representation in Pakistan's Parliament.

*Appendix B* contains a list of discussants as well as their party and gender profile.





# Inauguration

## Welcome Remarks

**Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob**  
Executive Director, PILDAT



**M**r. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob welcomed Chaudhry Amir Hussain, Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan; Members of the National Assembly, Senate and provincial assemblies; H. E. Ms. Nancy Powell, Ambassador of the United States of America; the speakers of the Dialogue; participants; and fellow members of the Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Consortium-PLSC to the launch of the project.

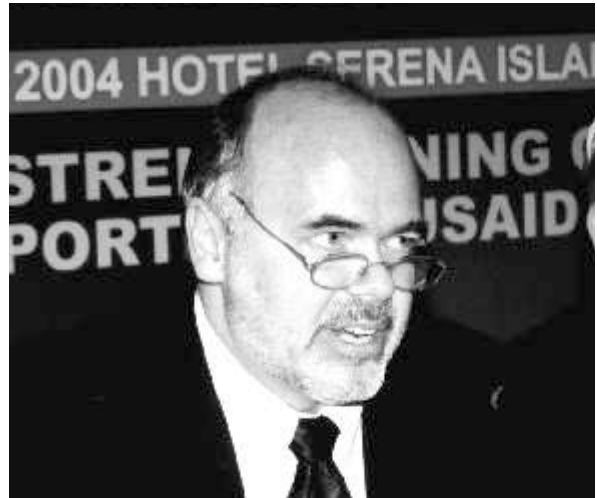
Mr. Mehboob presented a brief introduction of the project of SNPLG, the composition of the PLSC and explained PILDAT's role in the PLSC.

He invited Mr. Ihsan ullah Waqas, Member of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab from MMAP to recite from the Holy Qur'an and formally initiate the proceedings. He later invited Mr. Sigurd Hanson to present his inaugural comments.



### Introductory Remarks

**Mr. Sigurd Hanson**  
Country Director, World Vision



*Mr. Sigurd Hanson's speech is reproduced verbatim below:*

**M**r. Speaker, Ambassador Powell, Ambassadors, Ministers, Members of Parliament, Senators, distinguished guests. Good Morning and Assalam-o-alaikum. Thank you for attending the launch of the Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Consortium.

I hope you and your families had a happy Eid. With the Eid festival just behind us, I was reminded again of the historical importance of sacrifice for making a better world. A life truly worth living is one that in some way sacrifices itself for the benefit of others. This is what lies at the heart of good governance.

My work with international development agencies has taken me to some unique parts of the world. But I have noticed that wherever I worked - whether in various parts of Africa, in Afghanistan, and most recently in Pakistan - the poor often stay poor and marginalized because those of us who are more fortunate and in a position to help do not hear their voices. Thus, their daily struggle to feed and educate their children, along with other basic needs go unnoticed.



We may wish to help, or better, we may wish that the poor themselves could lift themselves out of poverty. But experience has shown us all that often the legislative structures are not working efficiently enough to allow people to express their needs. This is the result - we feel helpless to act, and they feel too hopeless to ask.

Globally, it has become increasingly clear that the poor remain poor not just because they don't have access to basic health care, education, land or credit facilities; but also because of governance issues - local, national, and international.

This is why this programme entitled 'Strengthening National and Provincial Legislative Governance in Pakistan' is so important.

This programme is NOT about party politics; but it is about giving YOU, the representatives of ordinary Pakistanis, the tools to do your work more efficiently. The Consortium aims to give the legislators a clearer picture of the concerns of ordinary people.

Allow me to share with you a simple African analogy to illustrate governance. The lowly mice (Choda Chua) were trying to ask the elephants for help. The mice, however, were too small to be seen, or heard, and risked being hurt by all the other jungle beasts. Still the mice found some help when a clever giraffe offered to assist. They climbed his long legs and then his neck. They were soon able to whisper into the elephants' ears for help. Only then were the elephants aware of the need and able to do something to help.

This governance programme is simply about putting in place more effective mechanisms and structures - the long legs of democracy - to help the ordinary Pakistani to voice his or her opinions to those above that govern.

This programme seeks to strengthen the work that people like you are already undertaking. The process is already underway.

The most exciting thing about the governance programme is that it is almost entirely led by a consortium of highly qualified; highly experienced

Pakistani NGOs. Through this experience, the Pakistani NGO consortium members will be working in the provinces with local civil society groups on how to present their ideas to Parliamentary assemblies.

World Vision Pakistan's role is simply to provide the fiscal, administrative and managerial oversight. My colleagues here have the interesting part, and the part that will make the difference to Pakistan.

Please allow me to introduce the distinguished senior executives of the various consortium NGOs who are seated here and who are all equal partners in this project.

Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob, the Executive Director of the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency - PILDAT. This is a young NGO but it has already become well known for its quality work in the field of legislative development. PILDAT will spearhead the training provided to legislatures and secretariats. It is an honor to have you in the consortium.

Mr. Amjed Pervez is Programme Coordinator with the International Foundation for Election Systems - IFES. The Foundation has supplied world governments with technical assistance in election administration, management and observation. IFES seeks to bolster democracy by developing programmes that strengthen the rule of law, good governance and civil society. IFES has been part of the electoral process in over 100 countries and has developed modern and innovative programmes and activities with the legislature of Indonesia. These have helped enhance the public's understanding and image of that Parliament. Mr. Pervez, we look forward to working with you.

Mr. Aazar Ayaz is Executive Director of The Researchers - TR. The Researchers has, since 1998, worked on a range of civil society activities, including governance, human rights and education, with the cross-cutting theme of gender. The Researchers will coordinate with our partner NGOs who are working in the provinces on civil society issues. His NGO will also oversee civil society programmes carried out in Sindh. Mr. Ayaz, your expertise is most welcome.



Mr. Ajaz Ahmad is the Executive Director of the Integrated Research and Development Organization - IRDO. IRDO has worked on research issues with Unicef, the World Bank, and WFP and has managed civil society projects for many years. Although IRDO works in four provinces, on this project IRDO will be working to encourage civil society involvement and legislative training in Baluchistan. Thank you for being part of this consortium.

Ms. Maimoona Masood Khan is the Chief Executive of All Women Advancement and Resource Development - better known as AWARD. AWARD will be helping to organise and train civil society groups in NWFP to represent their views to Parliament. It specialises in areas of political education, watchdog activities, good governance, income generation, health and issues affecting women. We look forward to working with you.

Finally, another member with a great deal of expertise, Ms. Farah Parvez Saleh, the Executive Director of the Citizens Commission for Human Development - CCHD. This is a leading Pakistani organisation working for the promotion of good governance, women political empowerment and capacity building of elected councilors and local government officials, as well as the greater involvement of women in politics. Her Commission will be working on developing civil society in Punjab. Mrs. Farah, it is a pleasure to have you on the consortium.

Distinguished guests, once again thank you for coming. Today's turnout is surely a reflection of the widespread interest there is in governance issues and how passionately we all feel about building a fairer world, not just for us but also for our children. Thank you.



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**H.E. Ms. Nancy Powell**  
US Ambassador to Pakistan

**M**s. Nancy Powell stated that she was honoured to be present at the inauguration of the programme which she believed would strengthen the national and provincial legislative governance in Pakistan. She said that democracy is largely responsible for bringing greater prosperity, peace and freedom to the people of the world. This is more so in South Asia because democracy has both taken root and has sometimes proved more elusive, she said. Ms. Powell stated that South Asia is a region of remarkable social, economic and technological transformation whose potential can be remarkably increased by greater regional stability and sustained democracy. The US welcomes and would continue to extend its support to these



areas, she assured.

Quoting the US President George W. Bush, she said, "There are essential principles common to any successful society in every culture. Successful societies limit the power of the State and the power of the military so that governments respond to the will of the people and not the will of an elite class. Successful societies protect freedom with a consistent and impartial rule of law instead of successfully applying the law to punish political opponents. Successful societies allow room for healthy civic institutions for political parties and labour unions and independent newspaper and broadcast media. Successful Societies guarantee religious liberty, the right to serve and honour God without the fear of persecution. Successful societies privatise their economies and secure the right of private property..."

She was of the view that legislators are first and foremost the voice of the people. They serve as the forum for the resolution of social and economic conflicts and problems, she said, not just for the wealthy and the powerful but for the under-privileged and minorities, especially women and children. She stated that this legislative strengthening programme reflects the US Government's support for local efforts to create a more effective legislative culture in Pakistan. It is in fact just part of an integrated US economic assistance package, she said, which will bring over US \$1.5 billion in US Government funds to Pakistan over the next five years.

Introducing the assistance programmes carried out by the US Government, she mentioned programmes to train school teachers, improve access to education for girls, and improve the availability of healthcare to people in the economically disadvantaged areas, provide scholarship opportunities for universities in Pakistan and to facilitate and encourage small business opportunities through access to micro-credit and micro-financing. She said that through this particular three year legislative strengthening programme, the US Government has committed \$14 million in grant funds to help built the capacity of national and provincial legislative staff and civil society. She hoped that these measures would increase the Pakistani parliamentarians' ability to be the representatives of the people.



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### Inaugural Comments

**Chaudhry Amir Hussain**  
Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan



*Chaudhry Amir Hussain's speech is quoted verbatim below:*

**H**onourable Mr. Bakht Jahan Khan, Speaker Provincial Assembly of North West Frontier Province; Honourable Alhaj Jamal Shah Kakar, Speaker Provincial Assembly of Baluchistan; Her Excellency Ms. Nancy Powell, Ambassador of the United States of America; Mr. Sigurd C. Hanson, Country Director World Vision; respected parliamentarians; members of the four Provincial Assemblies of Pakistan; members of the Secretariats of National and Provincial Legislatures; respected speakers and discussants of the Dialogue on the First Year of the Increased Women Representation in the legislatures;



respected members of Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Consortium; ladies and gentlemen: Assalam o Alaikum wa Rahmatullah:

I am extremely happy to inaugurate the three years long project of Strengthening National and Provincial Legislative Governance in Pakistan. This project holds a special significance for me and my colleagues in the legislative fraternity in Pakistan because it addresses and relates to one of the most important aspects of our national life. I am glad to note that the project not only seeks to strengthen and develop the capacity of Parliamentarians and the Legislative Staff both at the national and provincial level, it also plans to further promote interaction between the people and the civil society on the one hand and the legislators and legislatures on the other. These are very noble objectives worthy of sustained and systematic efforts and I am confident that the cause of strengthening Democracy and Democratic Institutions in Pakistan will be greatly helped by this Project.

I, on behalf of Pakistani parliamentarians and legislative community, would like to express our deep appreciation for the Government of the United States of America and the United States Agency for International Development for conceiving, planning and now implementing this project of far reaching benefits to the people of Pakistan.

I am glad to note that although this project is funded by USAID, it has a significant and rather predominant Pakistani presence and involvement in the management, decision making and delivery of the programmes. This is a wise approach which will ensure a right blend of international experience and expertise with the local culture, ground realities and sensitivities. This arrangement will also make these efforts more sustainable in the long-run and help in nurturing local expertise for legislative strengthening.

I hope that this project will also help to promote friendly ties between the government and people of the Islamic republic of Pakistan and the United States of America. While we can learn a lot from the American experiences of democracy, we can also promote better understanding among our American friends of the issues which are important

to Pakistan through the opportunities provided by the project.

Although United States and Pakistan practice two different political systems; the United States being a presidential form of Government and Pakistan a parliamentary democracy; there are a number of commonalities which should help create greater interaction and understanding between the two countries. For example both Pakistan and the US are Federations with a number of states and provinces constituting the federal structure. Both United States and Pakistan have a system of local governments. Both have bi-cameral legislature. I also see a lot of similarity in the committee systems of the two countries.

We greatly appreciate the elaborate support infrastructure developed in the US Congress in the form of Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress and other facilities. We in Pakistan can learn a great deal from such arrangements and adapt such models to suit our conditions. We can also learn a lot from the tradition of open and lively hearings of Congressional Committees and make our committee system stronger, livelier and involving greater input of the citizens and vibrant civil society.

I hope this project will provide these learning opportunities for Pakistani Legislators, Legislative Staff and the Civil Society.

Pakistani Parliament has more than ever a large number of educated, young and enthusiastic legislators today. The desire to learn and become more effective parliamentarians is stronger today than ever before. I hope that this project will provide ample opportunities to new and young legislators to learn from their seniors and experts. An extraordinary characteristic of the current legislatures is the presence of a large number of women in these august houses. Their election to the assemblies has created new opportunities and placed heavier responsibilities on not only women legislators but the legislative community and all democracy-loving persons in general. These women legislators deserve special attention and treatment in the capacity-building efforts. I am delighted that this project places a great emphasis on developing the talent and knowledge-base of women parliamentarians. It is





only appropriate that the Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Consortium has chosen the subject of increased representation of women in the parliaments for discussion at the inauguration of this project. It underscores the importance the project places on the women parliamentarians.

I have said this before in the introductory meeting with the members of the Consortium and I wish to repeat today that I personally as the custodian of the National Assembly of Pakistan, the Secretariat of the Assembly and my colleagues will extend their full cooperation to make this project successful. I am sure my colleagues in the Senate and provincial assemblies hold similar feelings for this important project. Strengthening Democracy and Democratic Institutions is not a partisan issue in Pakistan; it enjoys tremendous support across the party lines. We are confident that this consensus will find practical expression in the days to come with the help of projects such as this.

I once again thank the Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Consortium. Last year I had the opportunity to preside over a few capacity-building workshops and Briefing Sessions for parliamentarians organised by PILDAT and I was impressed with the quality of these efforts and the level of participation by the legislators. I am glad that PILDAT is a member of this Consortium. I wish this project and the Consortium the best of luck and pray for its success.



# Session 1

## Lessons Learnt in the First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament

### Introduction

**Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob**  
Executive Director PILDAT

**M**r. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob welcomed the participating speakers, discussants, Senators, MNAs, MPAs and guests at the dialogue. He explained the rationale behind the subject of the dialogue and said that the Consortium remains totally non-partisan on each issue. The Consortium's role, he emphasised, is to build the capacity of legislators by providing them with concise and objective information as well as a platform of informed dialogue and exchange of ideas. He said that the dialogue was not organised to judge the performance of women parliamentarians over the past year but to serve as a platform for serious discourse and interaction on crucial issues for the benefit of the legislators. He said that the dialogue would help in exploring ways to optimise future impact of women representation in the Parliament and to understand the role of women legislators, political parties, leadership, secretariats, male colleagues, the civil society and other entities in influencing the impact of women parliamentarians. Appendix C carries the complete presentation of Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob.



**Mr. Gohar Ayub**  
Former Speaker  
National Assembly of Pakistan

*Mr. Gohar Ayub has served as the Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan from 1990-1993. He has also served as the Foreign Minister of Pakistan during 1997 - 1998. Mr. Gohar Ayub graduated from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, UK in 1956.*

**M**r. Ayub started his speech by pointing out that although women's representation in the assemblies had increased, the number of directly elected women still remained low. He said that women members faced criticism from their male counterparts for only raising women's issues in the assemblies. He further said that although the level of women's participation in politics has dropped internationally, Pakistan is still fortunate to have 21.6 per cent women representation, including both directly and indirectly elected members.

He said that several countries in the region have had female leaders, therefore the region itself does not isolate women from politics. However, he said, most female parliamentarians in the region have entered politics due to the loss of the main male political figures in their families.

He said that nominated members are treated unequally as compared to their elected counterparts. Members should take care to treat each other equally, he said, regardless of how they were elected. He also suggested that female legislators should not only raise women's issues so



that they can avoid criticism from male members. These issues, he said, should instead be discussed among the parties and be raised by the chief whip so that actual legislation can be passed on them.

Although directly elected female representatives deserve credit for their accomplishment, he said, the indirectly elected women should also be encouraged as they too are treated unequally by the men in the assemblies and their views are not taken seriously. He suggested that female members should insist on getting representation in the committees, so that they can participate actively and be taken seriously. He also stressed that female members should be treated with consideration and their needs and special requirements must be taken into account.

Moving to other general areas of parliamentary procedure, Mr. Gohar Ayub suggested that the period of time given before the Adjournment Motion should not be used for other purposes, and the number of participants in matters of public interest should be reduced. He pointed out that most motions passed as Privilege Motions are actually not Privilege Motions, and that care should be taken to conserve precious session time.

He mentioned an expensive electronic voting machine in the possession of the national assembly, which, in his view, has never been used in the assembly voting. He suggested that this machine be used for all future voting instead of the current practice of manual vote counting within the assemblies.

Members' pays and allowances should be higher than they are now, he said. He pointed out that other parliaments in the region, especially India, grant higher pay and allowances to their members. He stressed that staff, offices, and other support infrastructure should also be provided to the legislators.

He concluded by emphasising that parliamentary proceedings should be telecast live on cable television and on state-run television instead of the present practice of telecasting recorded proceedings at midnight when viewership is at its lowest.



**Ms. Sherry Rahman**  
Member National Assembly of Pakistan  
Sindh, PPPP

*Ms. Sherry Rahman was elected to the National Assembly on a PPPP seat. She currently serves as a member of Central Policy Planning Group and Foreign Relations Committee of PPP. A journalist by profession, Sherry Rahman graduated with B.A. Hons. Degree from Smith College, U.S.A, in 1985. She has been Managing Editor of Herald magazine and a founder member of the Human Rights commission of Pakistan. In March 2002 she was awarded the Overseas Award for Excellence in Journalism by the British House of Lords.*

**M**s. Sherry Rahman pointed out that it is extremely difficult for women members to get access to the microphone in the assemblies, but she hoped that things would improve over the coming years. She requested the Consortium to conduct another dialogue in a



year's time in order to better judge the performance of the female members in the Assembly.

She pointed out that there are constant and specific expectations from the female MNAs, whereas their male counterparts are not subject to such severe analysis and expectations. She said that all parliamentarians, regardless of gender, should be expected to perform at a certain level, but that balance of these expectations should not be tilted towards the women.

She said that women who have been elected through a party structure should not be expected to ignore the party's objectives. Women will need to lobby on certain issues within their party before they lobby in the Parliament, she said. She stressed the importance of involving the male leadership on the second tier of party hierarchy, and suggested that women should lobby within their parties to be given representation in all the important committees.

Ms. Sherry Rahman was of the view that women should be considered a part of the democratic process. Women parliamentarians should not be seated separately in the Assembly Hall as this affects the performance and confidence of the members. She suggested that they should be seated according to their party membership.

Female members need to modify their behaviour as well, she said. She pointed out that although women should raise general issues as well as women's issues, they sometimes take it to the other extreme. She termed this as the 'Margaret Thatcher Syndrome' whereby after assuming power women distance themselves from women's issues in an attempt to fit in with the predominantly male membership.

"There is a need for institutional reform," she said, "We perceive the Assembly as a space where we go to raise issues and keep our government accountable." She once again pointed out the difficulties faced by women in the Assembly in voicing their issues. She cited examples of women being maltreated and disrespected in the Assembly. She suggested that 33 per cent of the time should be reserved for women so that they

get a chance to voice their issues. She also stressed that there should be an enforceable code of conduct whereby racial, sexist and religious comments should not be permitted in the Parliament, and that the Presiding Officer should be responsible for implementing and enforcing this code of conduct.

She stressed the need for offices, staff and other support infrastructure for the members adding that the lack of support infrastructure and basic facilities such as lack of offices and staff reflected on the performance of all legislators regardless of gender.

Ms. Rahman pointed out that Pakistani parliamentarians are not allowed to read out prepared speeches from paper unless by permission, whereas this is not the case in other parliaments whereby the MPs often recite speeches containing facts and figures from a paper. She suggested that reading prepared speeches should be allowed so that the parliamentary debate becomes informative and concrete.

Women's punctuality and quorum in party meetings and the Parliament has been exemplary, she said, showing that women are committed to the task and are able to balance their home and family life with their political demands.

She mentioned that two bills on women's issues are still pending. She said that these bills should at least be brought to the floor. Certain issues are intentionally kept off the floor, she said, and this must be changed.

Ms. Rahman suggested that on the issue of parliamentary mentoring, senior parliamentarians should mentor at least four or five freshman parliamentarians a year. This mentoring should usually include information about the written and unwritten, formal and informal, rules and procedures of the Parliament. She acknowledged PILDAT for its crucial role of legislative capacity development and stressed that such exercises on various important policy issues were regularly required to prepare parliamentarians towards a better discharge of their responsibilities.



## Discussion

### Mr. Syed Ihsan Ullah Waqas Member Provincial Assembly of the Punjab MMAP

Mr. Syed Ihsan Ullah Waqas commented that the issue of women's representation in the Parliament is an old one. He suggested that women's representation in the Parliament should be through general elections so that it is representative of the actual trends. He was of the view that up to 80 per cent of the women in the parliament do not actually represent the issues of women; they instead represent the issues of the elite class.

Women who have no history of political involvement, he said, should not be elected to the Parliament; however women who are genuinely involved in politics should definitely enter the Parliament. He said that there are certain women in the Parliament who have been involved in politics and their performance has been

encouraging; however the performance of most indirectly elected women has been abysmal.

He suggested that certain criteria should be in place for women to be elected through reserved seats:

- Candidates must be associated with a political party
- Candidates should have some experience of public interaction
- Candidates' character should be immaculate

### Ms. Sassui Palijo Member Provincial Assembly of Sindh PPPP

Ms. Sassui Palijo stated that it is not easy for a woman to be a legislator in our society, as female MPs face severe political harassment. Citing her own example, she said she was not given the



opportunity to raise issues that were important to her and personal threats were made against her family. She said that although the past year had been a great learning experience for her, she was not able to fulfil her objectives in the Assembly.

She countered the common belief that women parliamentarians are non-serious by saying that they actually work harder and longer hours than most of their male counterparts. Referring to her personal experience, she again cited an example of the obstacles faced by women in the Parliament by relating to an incident that occurred when she was trying to initiate discussion on honour killings. She said she received six warnings



Ms. Sassui Palijo

in one session due to the sensitive nature of the issues raised by her, and was advised to stay within her limits.

Referring to her experience in the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, she said that women MPAs were able to successfully raise several issues such as the Police Act and agricultural issues. However, she said, women MPAs were not allowed to discuss women's issues and other sensitive issues.

#### **Senator Dr. Shahzad Waseem Punjab, PML-Q**

Senator Shahzad Waseem stressed on the discrimination faced by indirectly elected women parliamentarians. He said that the electoral procedure creates a perception that indirectly elected women are not representative of women and instead represent the elite or their respective parties.



Senator Dr. Shahzad Waseem

He pointed out that it is difficult enough for men to contest general elections; therefore it is a tremendous achievement on the part of women to do the same. Having said that, he believed that women should avail the facility provided to them in the form of reserved seats. He said that women who have an earnest desire to excel can use this platform to achieve their goals and no one can stop them from doing so. He said that a parliamentarian's performance is directly related to how he/she accepts his/her responsibility.

He agreed that women should take part in all legislation, but maintained that their first priority should be women's issues, as the rationale behind reserved seats is to ensure the representation of the female population. However, he said that it is a sad fact that even indirectly elected women have not been able to seriously tackle women's issues in the Parliament.

The attitude of male members, he said, has been very discouraging towards female members. He said that this mindset needs to be changed in order to attain male-female partnership in the Parliament as well as through all sectors of society.

#### **Shahzada Mohammad Gushtasip Khan Leader of the Opposition, Provincial Assembly of NWFP, Independent**

Contrary to the discussion thus far, Mr. Gushtasip Khan was of the view that both the ruling party and opposition exhibit a respectful attitude towards the women MPAs in the NWFP Assembly. He divided the proceedings of the assemblies into: legislation and debate. He said that although women had become increasingly active in the debates and





discussions, their participation in the legislative functions remained low. Unlike the Senate and the National Assembly, he said, male members in the NWFP assembly stop speaking and sit down on their seats if a woman member starts to speak, thus showing the honour and respect with which they treat the female members of the assembly. He encouraged the women members to take a more active part in all assembly activities and was



Dr. Hamida Khuhro and Ms. Fareeha Razaq Haroon

hopeful that their role would become more enhanced over the coming years.

#### **Dr. Hamida Khuhro** Member Provincial Assembly of Sindh PML-Q

Dr. Hamida Khuhro highlighted the necessity for educating people to have greater acceptability of women in public life, as well as for educating women themselves to have greater visibility in public life. She said that her experience in the Sindh Assembly proved that there is no discrimination against women members. The only handicaps, she said, is that it is a new Assembly and the newly elected women members are not familiar with the rules and procedures. However, she was hopeful that even this situation would be rectified in a short period of time.

She pointed out towards the lack of support infrastructure to assist the members as a major stumbling block in discharging their duties effectively. She said that several Parliamentary Committees have not become functional, and suggested that a number of these committees should have female chairpersons.

We should be positive about the institutionalisation of democracy in our country," she said. There has been a very good example of cooperation between provincial and national assemblies on issues such as water, law & order, and prices of agricultural produce. She commented that there have been unanimous resolutions passed by the opposition and the ruling parties in the provincial assemblies that have faced a negative response



Senator Gulshan Saeed

from the central government. Central government does not consider the provincial assemblies' resolutions in the decision making process, she said, and this discourages and humiliates the provincial assemblies.

#### **Senator Gulshan Saeed** Punjab, PML-Q

Senator Gulshan Saeed commented that the inclusion of women in the Parliament has been very encouraging. She said that women are now able to raise their issues and initiate debate in the Parliament.

Due to the reserved seats granted to women, she said, we as a nation can stand proud in the international political arena. She pointed out that one of the main problems the female members now face is that there is no support to the women in the Parliament for raising their issues. She encouraged female MPs to take active part in raising and discussing women's issues in the Parliament.



Ms. Asiya Nasir

**Ms. Asiya Nasir**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**MMAP**

Ms. Asiya Nasir observed that women MPs elected on minority seats faced double discrimination as women elected on reserved seats. She said that in her opinion several members elected on reserved seats were performing better than some directly elected members.

She pointed out that female members in the Baluchistan Assembly received support from the male members when the honour killings issue was being debated, but criticised the negative attitude displayed towards women members by members of the media. She also criticised the attitude of the bureaucracy towards women parliamentarians. Ms. Asiya Nasir shared the view that women members should not limit themselves to women's issues, and suggested that they should be equally represented in the cabinet.

**Ms. Naeema Akhtar**  
**Member Provincial Assembly of NWFP**  
**MMAP**

Ms. Naeema Akhtar said that women members' excellent performance over the past year had dispelled all the negative perceptions associated with them. She said that female members had received huge support from the speakers and opposition leaders in the NWFP, and had been able to pass a bill on honour killings without opposition.

Ms. Fauzia Wahab (MPA, NWFP, PPPP) raised a point that those same speakers had encouraged the smearing of black paint over women's faces on billboards. Ms. Akhtar replied by saying that the smearing of black paint was a very honourable gesture to protect the women's modesty, and supported the decision of the speakers.

Continuing her comment, Ms. Naeema Akhtar said that female members must actively benefit from the opportunity presented to them in the form of reserved seats instead of expecting male members to grant them everything.

Ms. Sherry Rahman (MNA, Sindh, PPPP) also raised a point of information and referred to the bill on honour killings that Ms. Naeema Akhtar had mentioned. She informed the gathering that the 'bills' on honour killings were actually 'resolutions', and that the two should not be confused.



Ms. Naeema Akhtar

**Mr. Bakht Jahan Khan**  
**Speaker Provincial Assembly of NWFP**

Mr. Bakht Jahan Khan suggested that women should be represented in Standing Committees and Parliamentary Committees. There is a clear need for democracy to be strengthened in Pakistan, he said.

Stressing the need to address the weaknesses and flaws pointed out by the members, he expressed hope that all issues could be resolved if the concerned parties are committed to acknowledge and address them.



individuals. This combination portends a favourable future for this country, he said.

"We sometimes become too aggressive in our opposition to ideas and groups and this degrades performance," stated Chaudhry Amir Hussain. He stressed that we need harmony, tolerance and brotherhood in all spheres of life. He said that we falsely believe ourselves to be the most patriotic among the citizens of this country and also believe our beliefs to be superior to everyone else's. We should be aware that our opposition is as patriotic as we are, he said, and that they possess the same degree of wisdom and knowledge as we do.

He commented that we have not been able to adopt good parliamentary practices. As an example to clarify this point, he said that when a member raises a point of order, the speaker halts proceedings and focuses only on that point of order. But sometimes the points of order are not justified, he said, and this wastes the precious time of the assembly. He expressed his hope that members of the ruling party and the opposition will cooperate with each other to improve the performance of the assemblies.

Commenting on the large number of educated members in the Parliament who can effectively run the committees, he stressed that the committee system should be given more attention. He pointed out that in a few days the committee chairpersons would be selected and the committees would become functional. The committees will include women and educated members of the Parliament, he mentioned.

Referring the new members of the assemblies to the Research Centre, he promised his and his secretariat's full cooperation, should the parliamentarians wish to gain information about the rules and procedures of the Parliament.

He said he was glad that the dialogue was arranged to enable parliamentarians to identify the opportunities available to women and to analyse the performance of women in view of these opportunities. He expressed his certainty over the success of women parliamentarians in creating a highly respected place for themselves in the assemblies.

### Concluding Remarks by the Session Chair

### Chaudhry Amir Hussain Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan

Chaudhry Amir Hussain started off by saying that it is not possible to judge the performance of women members over the past year as several factors inhibited the democratic institutions from fulfilling their duties in the best manner. He was hopeful that the Parliament will become one of the best in the world, as it contains educated and ambitious



## Session 2

### Optimising the Impact of Increased Women Representation: The Way Forward

**Justice (Retd) Majida Razvi**  
Chairperson National Commission  
on the Status of Women - NCSW



*Justice (Retd) Majida Razvi received her M.A. LL.B. from the University of Karachi in 1962. She served at the Sindh High Court Bench from 1994 to 1999 and was previously enrolled in the Supreme Court of Pakistan as an Advocate in 1981. She was on the panel of the National Bank of Pakistan, United Bank Limited and Habib Bank Limited as a corporate lawyer, and served as Legal Advisor to Pakistan Security Printing Corporation and Security Paper Ltd. She is currently the Chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Women - NCSW, Pakistan.*

**J**ustice(Retd.) Majida Razvi was of the view that a lot of unfair expectations had been attached to the newly elected women parliamentarians. She said that women are hardworking by nature and have great potential for serious work. To further substantiate her view



upon the ability of women she quoted Margaret Thatcher who once said:

“If you want something said, ask a man. If you want something done, ask a woman.”

She stressed that the Government should ensure that political parties award a significant number of tickets to their women candidates and was of the belief that this large number of women would result in positive changes in several sectors of our society.

She said that most of the women in the Parliament have been elected on reserved seats and belong to elite families without their personal political background. Some women with an active involvement in politics, she said, had been pushed aside in favour of the above mentioned women for lack of political clout which was very unfair. She said that Pakistani women do not enjoy equality in any sphere of life, including the political arena.

Justice (retd.) Razvi commented that women in Parliament are discouraged from passing bills and resolutions. They face tremendous pressure from their parties and from male membership of the Parliament eventually resulting in great frustration and depression in women. This raises the question of whether these women will continue to be able to fill the quota in the future.

She then pointed out several hindrances and obstacles that prevent women legislators from conducting their affairs. Certain women confess that the only reason behind their presence in the Parliament is to fill the available spaces in order to support their fathers or brothers, she said. Justice Razvi reminded these women that these spaces are precious and should be filled by only those candidates who are sincerely concerned about women's issues.

On a more optimistic note she concluded by expressing her hope that discriminatory treatment of women would cease, and they would be given equal consideration for important positions within parties, cabinets and committees. She hoped that in future these obstacles would be removed and women would be encouraged to play a fuller role in legislation.



## DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

# PROCEEDINGS



**Senator Dr. Kausar Firdaus**  
NWFP, MMAP

*Senator Dr. Kausar Firdaus is the Secretary General of the Women Wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Pakistan. A Medical Doctor by profession, she served in the Pakistan Armed Forces Medical Corps for two years, and then as a WMO in the Afghan Refugee Camp with UNHCR for four years. She was a Lecturer and Coordinator of Islamic Studies at the Department of International Islamic Medical College, Rawalpindi for six years and is currently serving as a Member of the Senate of Pakistan. She is also the Assistant Secretary General of International Muslim Women Union (South Asia Region) for the past six years.*

Senator Dr. Firdaus, with the help of projected slides, presented a brief history of women representation and participation in the Parliament during the first year. She began by giving statistics of women seats reserved under various constitutions in the history of Pakistan, quoting that reserved seats for women had increased from 15 under the Constitution of 1956 to an impressive number of 60 in 2002 under the



amended Constitution of 1973. She then gave an overview of the political representation of women in various countries, showing that Asia portrays four per cent of women enjoying high and significant positions in politics. Quoting from the World Classification Report of the Inter-Parliamentary Union - IPU, she stated that Rwanda ranks number one in women representation in the National Assembly with 48.8 per cent women representation, whereas Pakistan ranks 31st with 21.6 per cent women representation. She stated that Pakistan ranks higher on this scale than the United Kingdom (47th rank with 17.9 per cent seats), the United States of America (57th rank with 14.3 per cent seats) and India (85th rank with 8.8 per cent seats).

Some of the expectations attached to the increased representation of women, she said, were that gender issues such as violence against women and ignorance of women's rights would be discussed and resolved. She said that women parliamentarians were expected to ensure proper legislation for women on issues such as education, property rights and health. It was also expected that women's acceptability in the decision making process would increase, she said.

Dr. Firdaus pointed out that the foremost concern arising out of greater women participation in public life was the possible effect it would have on their family lives.

Analysing the performance of women parliamentarians, she stated that women have exhibited great potential and their performance can be greatly enhanced through proper training. She warned against women's individual identities being overshadowed by their parties' identities. In the past, she said, the presence of female political leaders such as Benazir Bhutto, Nusrat Bhutto, Begum Ashraf Abbasi and Syeda Abida Hussain, made us hope that the condition of women would improve, but this never happened.

She then presented a statement showing the position of questions, resolutions and motions under rule 194 received during the 2nd to 10th sessions of the Senate 2003-04 in which, out of a total of 2,769 questions, only 201 (7 per cent) questions were raised by women senators.

Similarly, out of 335 resolutions, only 43 (12 per cent) were moved by women senators, and out of a total of 400 motions under rule 194, motions passed by women senators accounted for only 26 (7 per cent) of the total.

Countering an earlier statement pointing at the exclusivity of issues discussed by women parliamentarians, Senator Dr. Kausar Firdaus assured that women parliamentarians equally participate in general discussions regarding issues such as foreign policy, the budget, education policy, the LFO, the Iraq issue, etc. She concluded by saying that the first priority of women should remain their household and children, but that their involvement in public life should also figure highly on their list of priorities. Appendix D carries her complete presentation.



## Discussion

**Ms. Shaheen Atiq-ur-Rehman**  
Member Provincial Assembly of Punjab  
PML-Q

Ms. Shaheen Atiq-ur-Rehman stressed that the increasing poverty in Pakistan necessitates the involvement of women in economic activities; therefore their participation in public life should be accepted and encouraged. Referring to a few suggestions made during the course of the dialogue by her fellow discussants suggesting that the reason behind women's entry into the Parliament is not their personal merit but their family background, she responded by saying that most male members also come to the Parliament because of their families' political background.

She said that it is necessary for all parties to work together and to link up the 40,000 women counsellors in the decision making process by

forming a caucus as they can no longer be ignored or excluded from any sphere of life.

**Ms. Fariha Razzaq Haroon**  
Member Provincial Assembly of Sindh  
PPPP

Ms. Fariha Razzaq Haroon questioned why women were repeatedly being questioned about their performance regarding women's issues. She said that it is also the male parliamentarians' responsibility to address women's issues, and that they too should be held accountable.

On the issue of reserved seats she said that there are several women who have come to the Parliament on reserved seats who are also politically active in their own right, therefore it is not fair to generalise by saying that all women elected on reserved seats are not interested in politics.





Ms. Shaheen Atiq-ur-Rehman

**Ms. Fauzia Wahab**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**Sindh, PPP**

Ms. Fauzia Wahab said that the main objective of reserved seats is to aid the uplift of women and to provide an opportunity to those women who do not have enough representation. She pointed out that all countries with a large proportion of women in the Parliament have reserved seats for women, either in the Parliament, or in the political parties. She said that these reserved seats have provided women with a degree of respectability, but that there should be certain criteria for choosing women who are to be brought into the Parliament. She complained that this provision of reserved seats for women has been misused and abused in certain situations, but assured that having certain criteria in place can prevent this from happening repeatedly.



Ms. Fauzia Wahab

Ms. Wahab blamed the lack of democratic culture in the country for the reservation of men to let their sisters and daughters enter into politics.

She further pointed out that although women from rural areas are elected to the government, it is also however true that no women from the city of Karachi were elected to any level of government. She said that this was evident of the fact that the acceptability of women in the government has yet to be recognised. With time, she hoped, as the visibility and acceptability of women increases, their performance in the assembly will also improve.

Discussing the formation of a caucus for women, she said that our Parliament is currently going through an evolutionary stage and that that it is still a little premature to be thinking about forming a caucus for women.



Syeda Bushra Nawaz Gardezi and Dr. Samia Amjad

**Syeda Bushra Nawaz Gardezi**  
**Member Provincial Assembly of Punjab**  
**Parliamentary Secretary for Home Affairs**  
**PML-Q**

Syeda Bushra Nawaz Gardezi said that she had a great experience in the Assembly during the past year. Furthermore, she said that women legislators need to have more interaction with the public so that they can develop pragmatic solutions to socio-economic problems. She suggested that there should be proper training provided to new legislators at the very basic level. The fact that several housewives contested and won elections is indicative of the fact that they are ready to balance their household assignments and their political duties, she said.



Ms. Samia Raheel Qazi

**Ms. Samia Raheel Qazi**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**Punjab, MMAP**

Ms. Samia Raheel Qazi believed that the performance of women parliamentarians has proven that not only are they able to further women's issues, but they are also willing and able to raise general social issues.

She said that the low performance of the Parliament is not solely the fault of the opposition as the Parliament's performance depends on all members. She suggested that the assembly proceedings should be held more often and the committee system should be activated as soon as possible. In the end she emphasised that the first priority of all female parliamentarians is their homes and families. Men and women are equal but they are not identical, she said, therefore their roles should be clearly understood, keeping these differences in mind.

**Senator Tanvir Khalid**  
**Sindh, PML-Q**

Senator Tanvir Khalid said that several issues had been initiated and lengthy debates had been conducted in the Parliament. She also said that she had faced no opposition from any member of the Parliament, and that therefore it is not correct to say that female members have been ineffective and inactive. However, she said that as a society we tend to discount the importance of anything a woman has to say, and this is reflected in the Parliament as well. It is also not true to say that women have not been given a chance in the

Parliament, she said, as reserved seats are proof enough of that.

**Syed Haider Abbas Rizvi**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**Sindh, MQM**

Syed Haider Abbas Rizvi stated that the reserved seats given to women in the national and provincial assemblies were a very promising step. However, he felt that the newly inducted women did not seem to be taking the right advantage of these opportunities. He believed that if the conduct of the assemblies did not consequently improve, we would return to the scenario that existed before they were given this provision.

He believed that the new perspective brought by women parliamentarians would bring about constructive change and reformation in the system and that there are certain women's issues on which women should rise above party lines. There were instances in the past, such as in the case of honour killings or the Hudood Ordinances, when this did not happen, he said. He also mentioned that certain women parliamentarians have been forced to become back-benchers within the assemblies by their own political parties. It is up to the political parties, he said, to encourage their women members to play a more active part in the assemblies.

He said that the process of change has set in, and a forum for women on a non-partisan basis should now be formed. He said that Pakistan is based on a feudal system the repercussions of which are now also being felt in the assemblies. He urged the



Senator Tanvir Khalid



Ms. Farah Aqil Shah

representatives of the various political parties present at the dialogue to lobby within their parties to encourage and facilitate the women members to play a more active role in the assemblies.

**Ms. Farah Aqil Shah**  
Member Provincial Assembly of NWFP  
ANP

Ms. Farah Aqil Shah was of the view that women members should rise above party lines to address and debate women's issues. She said that women members from the opposition need to cooperate with women members from the ruling parties, especially on issues such as child abuse and various social issues, including those of women. She also mentioned that there is not a single woman member in the NWFP Cabinet - a situation which needs to be seriously considered.

**Mr. Muhammad Waqas**  
Member Provincial Assembly of Punjab  
MMA



Mr. Haider Rizvi, Mr. Ihsan Ullah Waqas, Mr. Muhammed Waqas

Mr. Muhammad Waqas was of the view that women were being treated with reverse discrimination by allowing them extra time and special privileges, and termed this behaviour unhealthy. He said that there is considerable criticism within the parliaments all over the world, but there is enough tolerance to accept this criticism. However, in Pakistan there is no atmosphere of tolerance, he said.

He felt that in order to support democratic culture within parties, every party should have a separate women's wing. He also felt that the women elected to the Parliament should have some genuine political experience.

**Makhdum Khusro Bakhtyar**  
Member National Assembly of Pakistan  
PML-Q



Mr. Makhdum Khusro Bakhtyar

Makhdum Khusro Bakhtyar viewed the reservation of seats for women as the means to an end, the end being social development of women. He said that Agriculture, which is a much debated issue in the Parliament, is an issue that is directly related to women, as they are actively involved in agricultural activities. He said that women should take interest in such issues as well as in the more specific women's issues.

He further said that women's issues should be on every parliamentarian's agenda, regardless of gender. However, a confrontational attitude will not get things done, he said.



**Ms. Mehnaz Rafi**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**PML-Q**

Ms. Mehnaz Rafi thanked PILDAT for holding the dialogue, but felt that women parliamentarians were being isolated from the rest of the members and being questioned on their performance over the past year. She said that every male parliamentarian who is in the Parliament owes his success to the women members of his party and his women voters. She complained that the resolutions presented by women, as well as any debates initiated by them, are discarded without any discussion.

Women are not allowed to fulfil their duties in the Parliament, she said, and stressed the need for



Ms. Mehnaz Rafi

interns and other support infrastructure for every parliamentarian. She said that there should be clear criteria for legislators being elected to the Parliament on reserved seats, such as a minimum required amount of political experience. She suggested that women parliamentarians should be invited to participate in conferences and seminars instead of being invited as passive members of the audience.

**Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi**  
**Member Provincial Assembly of Baluchistan**  
**JWP**

Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi was of the view that newly elected women parliamentarians were being unnecessarily criticised and judged. She said that ut that does not mean that they should be



Ms. Rubaba Khan Buledi

all their shortcomings were being constantly pointed out instead of being overlooked. Men have more experience in politics, but that does not mean that they should be intolerant of female parliamentarians, she said. She stressed that newly elected women parliamentarians should be encouraged and facilitated instead of being constantly criticised for their shortcomings.

**Ms. Bushra Anwar Sipra**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**Federal Parliamentary Secretary for**  
**Environment; Punjab, PML-Q**

Ms. Bushra Anwar Sipra pointed out that every parliamentarian, whatever his/her views, is a Pakistani, and we should remember this fact. She said we should focus on what is being said instead of who is saying it. Women should be able to travel up the government hierarchy to get someone to address their issues, she said, and lamented the fact that women members face difficulties and obstacles within their own parties as well as in the Parliament.



Ms. Bushra Anwar Sipra and Ms. Gul-e-Farkhanda



**Dr. Samia Amjad**  
**Member Provincial Assembly of Punjab**  
**PML-Q**

Reciting an Urdu poem, Dr. Samia Amjad highlighted the tender and gentle nature of women, while hinting at their strength of character and perseverance in the face of difficulties. Through her poem, she presented the ability of women to display a range of contrasting characteristics in response to the situation with which they are presented. Her poem offered a new perspective on the positive contribution of women legislators to the Parliament.

**Senator Pari Gul Agha**



Senator Pari Gul Agha

**Baluchistan, PML-Q**

Senator Pari Gul Agha was of the view that the present government has given an unprecedented amount of importance and power to women, and encouraged women to enter politics. This must be appreciated by all, she said.

**Ms. Mehreen Anwar Raja**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**PPPP**

Ms. Mehreen Anwar Raja pointed out that women parliamentarians had indeed tried to participate in the Parliament's proceedings, but they were harshly discouraged and treated with disrespect. She suggested that women parliamentarians should be provided encouragement and support.



Ms. Mehreen Anwar Raja

**Senator Tahira Latif**  
**Federal Capital, PML-Q**

Senator Tahira Latif said that women should definitely enter the Parliament adding that women are more dedicated than men because they feel that they have to prove themselves. Today's women work on several fronts, she said, the workplace and the home included.

She mentioned the establishment of a crisis centre for women in Islamabad. She said that this centre not only counsels women but also provides them lodging. Encouraging the parliamentarians to invite women to share their problems with them, she commented that today's women cannot be silenced and expected to sit down whenever they are told to do so, and possess the ability to convince others of their beliefs.

**Ms. Gul-e-Farkhanda**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**National Alliance**

Ms. Gul-e-Farkhanda informed her colleagues that according to the new census, women constitute 48.6 per cent of the population. She credited NGOs and progressive individuals for women's current level of inclusion in politics, and stated that her party heads had never placed hurdles in her path or discouraged her from raising certain issues in the Parliament. She said that women's presence in the Parliament should not be considered a burden on the society. Women should not be viewed only as sisters, mothers and daughters, she said, but as individuals in themselves.



**Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Gondal**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**PPPP**

Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Gondal was of the view that women from older established political parties had a more active role in the Parliament compared to their counterparts from newer parties. He insisted that women MNAs should work as research analysts to assist their male partners instead of working as members of the National Assembly.



Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Gondal

**Ms. Razia Aziz**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**NWFP, MMAP**

Ms. Razia Aziz said that one of the greatest obstacles faced by women was the difference of ideologies and opinion between the government and the various political parties. She stressed the need to resolve the conflicts between our principles and ideologies. She believed that three factors influence the performance of parliamentarians which are: vision, mission and programme.

**Ms. Kaniz Aisha Munawar**  
**Member National Assembly of Pakistan**  
**MMAP**

Ms. Kaniz Aisha Munawar commented on the lack of focus and decorum displayed by the participants of the dialogue. She said that the dialogue should have been taken in good spirit and been utilised for the purpose for which it was arranged. She was of the view that some positive



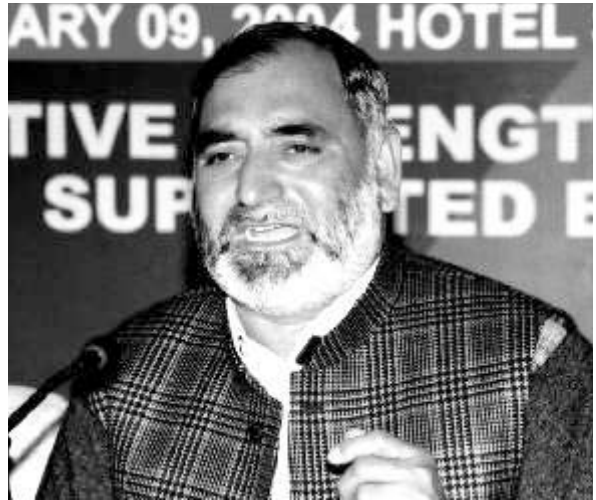
Ms. Kaniz Aisha Munawar and Ms. Razia Aziz

work had been done in the Parliament over the past year, and the importance of this work should not be discounted. Discussing the issue of honour killings, she opined that the core issue is not legislation, but implementation and accountability.



**Concluding Remarks  
by the Session Chair**

**Mr. Bakht Jahan Khan**  
Speaker Provincial Assembly of NWFP



**S**peaker Bakht Jahan Khan commented that the participants and discussants had provided some useful suggestions. He opined that the performance of women parliamentarians had not been lower than that of their male counterparts. In fact, he said, their inclusion had added a new perspective to the proceedings of the assembly. He observed that the women of the NWFP assembly had not restricted themselves to women's issues, but had contributed equally to strengthen democracy and the Constitution and upholding the supremacy of the Parliament. He stated his belief that our democratic institutions would be strengthened and we would achieve prosperity if all organisations work within their parameters and if all parliamentarians are allowed to continue their sincere efforts without hindrance.

Reiterating the views of the Speaker National Assembly, he too stressed the need to study and abide by the Rules of Procedure during assembly proceedings to conserve the limited time available. He was pleased with the conduct of the discussants at the dialogue, commenting especially on the manner in which they displayed tolerance while listening to opposing views. The Speaker expressed his certainty that the day's discussion would be extremely useful in shaping future action in the assemblies.



DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

PROCEEDINGS

APPENDIX A  
**PROGRAMME**



**Programme**

Monday: February 09, 2004

Item	Subject/ Topic/Activity	Time	Speaker
1	Registration	09:30 to 10:00 am	
2	Inaugural Session	10:00 to 10:30 am	
	Welcome Remarks	10:00 to 10:05 am	Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob Executive Director PILDAT
	Introductory Remarks	10:05 to 10:15 am	Mr. Sigurd Hanson Country Director World Vision
	Comments	10:15 to 10:20 am	H.E. Ms. Nancy Powell US Ambassador to Pakistan
	Comments	10:20 to 10:30 am	Chaudhry Amir Hussain Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan
3	Session 1: Lessons Learnt in the First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament	10:30 to 12:30 am	
	Session Chair: Chaudhry Amir Hussain Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan		
	Introduction of the Dialogue	10:30 to 10:35 am	Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob Executive Director PILDAT
	Comments	10:35 to 10:55 am	Ms. Sherry Rehman MNA
	Comments	10:55 to 11:20 am	Mr. Gohar Ayub Former Speaker, National Assembly
	Discussion	11:20 to 12:20 pm	
	Remarks by the Session Chair	12:20 to 02:30 pm	Chaudhry Amir Hussain Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan
4	Lunch Break	12:30 to 01:30 pm	
5	Session 2: Optimising the Impact of Increased Women Representation: the Way Forward	01:30 to 03:20 pm	
	Session Chair: Mr. Bakht Jahan Khan Speaker Provincial Assembly of NWFP		



DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

**Programme**

Monday: February 09, 2004

Item	Subject/ Topic/Activity	Time	Speaker
	Comments	01:10 to 01:50 pm	Justice (Retd.) Majida Razvi Chairperson NCSW
	Comments	01:50 to 02:10 pm	Senator Dr. Kausar Firdaus
	Discussion	02:10 to 03:10 pm	
	Conclusion and Remarks by the Session Chair	03:10 to 03:20 pm	Mr. Bakht Jahan Khan Speaker Provincial Assembly of NWFP
6	Tea and End of the event	03:20 pm	



DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

PROCEEDINGS

APPENDIX B  
**Lists and Profiles  
of Participating  
MNAs, Senators & MPs**



### List of Participating MNAs

1	Asiya Nasir	MMAP
2	Bilqees Saif	MMAP
3	Bushra Anwar Sipra	PML(Q)
4	Fauzia Wahab	PPPP
5	Gul-e-Farkhanda	NA
6	Gyan Singh, Engr.	PML(Q)
7	Jamila Ahmed	MMAP
8	Kaniz Aisha Munawar	MMAP
9	Khalida Mohsin Qureshi	PPPP
10	Kunwar Khalid Yunus	MQM
11	Makhdum Khusro Bakhtyar	PML(Q)
12	Malik Amin Aslam Khan	PML(Q)
13	Mehnaz Rafi	PML(Q)
14	Mehreen Anwar Raja	PPPP
15	Mohammad Akhtar Khan Kanju	PML(Q)
16	Razia Aziz	MMAP
17	Sabir Hussain Awan	MMAP
18	Sahibzada Mian Jalil Ahmed Sharaquri	PML(N)
19	Samia Raheel Qazi	MMAP
20	Zulfiqar Ali Gondal	PPPP
21	Syed Haider Abbas Rizvi	MQM
22	Sherry Rehman	PPPP



### List of Participating Senators

1	Gulshan Saeed	PML(Q)
2	Kalsoom Parveen	PML(Q)
3	Kausar Firdaus, Dr.	MMA
4	Pari Gul Agha	PML(Q)
5	Shahzad Waseem, Dr.	PML(Q)
6	Tahira Latif	PML(Q)
7	Tanvir Khalid	PML(Q)

### List of Participating MPAs

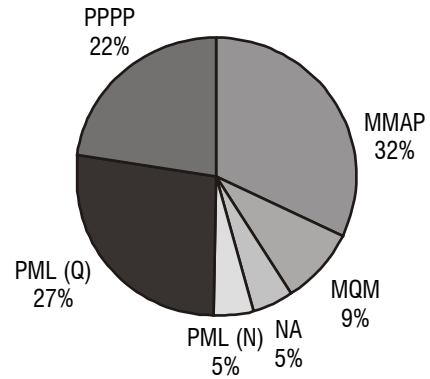
1	Akhtar Hussain Lango	BNP(M)	Baluchistan
2	Amina Khanum	MMA	Baluchistan
3	Farah Aqil Shah	ANP	NWFP
4	Fariha Razzaq Haroon	PPPP	Sindh
5	Hamida Khuhro	PML(Q)	Sindh
6	Muhammad Waqas	MMA	Punjab
7	Naeema Akhtar	MMA	NWFP
8	Rubaba khan Buledi, Dr.	JWP	Baluchistan
9	Samia Amjad, Dr.	PML(Q)	Punjab
10	Sassui Palijo	PPPP	Sindh
11	Shaheen Atiq-ur-Rehman	PML(Q)	Punjab
12	Shahzada Muhammad Gushtasip Khan	IND	NWFP
13	Syed Bushra Nawaz Gardezi	PML(Q)	Punjab
14	Syed Ihsan Ullah Waqas	MMA	Punjab



## Profile of Participating MNAs

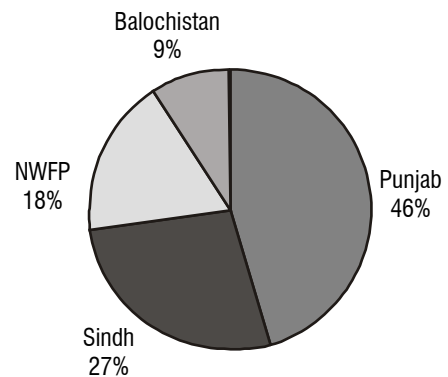
### Party Wise Representation

Party	Attendance in Dialogue		Percentage in Assembly
	Number	Percentage	
MMAP	7	32	18
MQM	2	9	5
NA	1	5	4
PML(N)	1	5	5
PML(Q)	6	27	36
PPPP	5	22	17
Total	22	100	



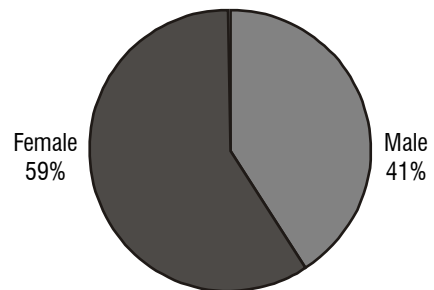
### Province Wise Representation

Province	Attendance in Dialogue		Percentage in Assembly
	Number	Percentage	
Punjab	10	46	43
Sindh	6	27	18
NWFP	4	18	10
Baluchistan	2	9	4
Total	22	100	



### Gender Wise Representation

Gender	Attendance in Dialogue		Percentage in Assembly
	Number	Percentage	
Male	9	41	78
Female	13	59	22
Total	22	100	100

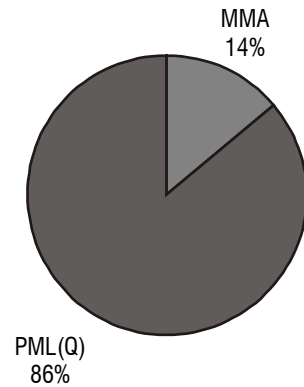




**Profile of Participating Senators**

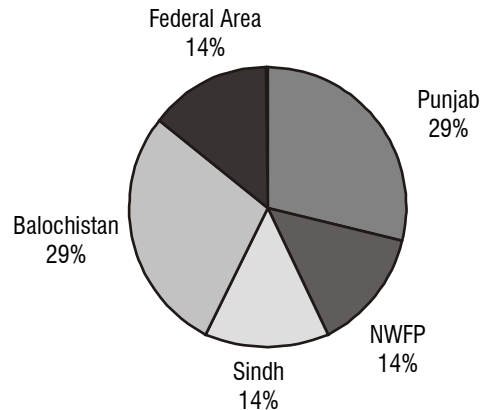
**Party Wise Representation**

Party	Attendance in Dialogue		Percentage in Assembly
	Number	Percentage	
MMA	1	14	17
PML(Q)	6	86	32
Total	7	100	



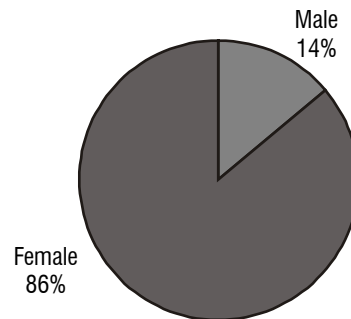
**Province Wise Representation**

Province	Attendance in Dialogue		Percentage in Assembly
	Number	Percentage	
Punjab	2	29	21
NWFP	1	14	22
Sindh	1	14	22
Baluchistan	2	29	22
Federal Area	1	14	4
Total	7	100	



**Gender Wise Representation**

Gender	Attendance in Dialogue		Percentage in Assembly
	Number	Percentage	
Male	1	14	84
Female	6	86	16
Total	7	100	100

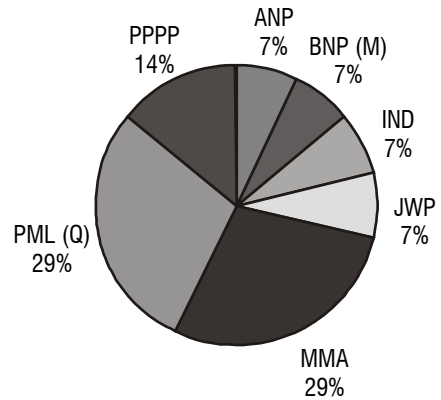




## Profile of Participating MPAs

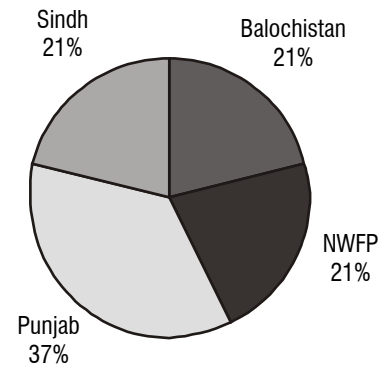
### Party Wise Representation

Party	Attendance in Dialogue	
	Number	Percentage
ANP	1	7
BNP(M)	1	7
IND	1	7
JWP	1	7
MMA	4	29
PML(Q)	4	29
PPPP	2	14
Total	14	100



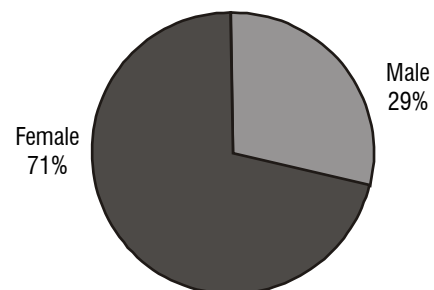
### Province Wise Representation

Province	Attendance in Dialogue	
	Number	Percentage
Baluchistan	3	21
NWFP	3	21
Punjab	5	37
Sindh	3	21
Total	14	100



### Gender Wise Representation

Gender	Attendance in Briefing Session	
	Number	Percentage
Male	4	29
Female	10	71
Total	14	100







DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

PROCEEDINGS

APPENDIX C

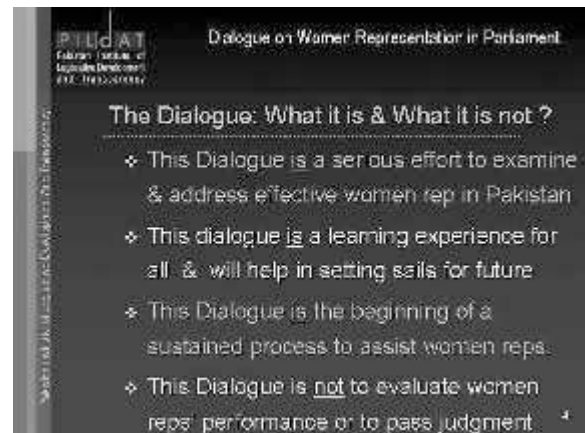
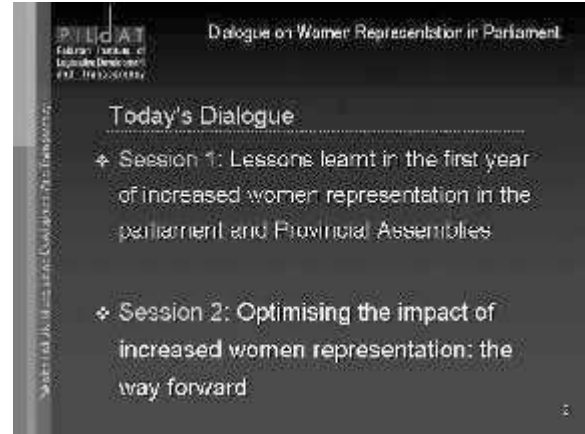
**Presentation by**  
**Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob**  
Executive Director PILDAT



## DIALOGUE ON

### First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament: Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

# PROCEEDINGS





**PILDAT**  
Federal Institute of Legislative Development  
P.O. Box 20000

Dialogue on Women Representation in Parliament

**PILDAT experience with women legislators in 2003**

- ✦ More enthusiastic: 156/466 or 40 % participants in 9 Training Courses were women
- ✦ Religion/Culture no obstacle: Highest percentage from MMA & from NWFP. Mostly Hijab observing.

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**PILDAT**  
Federal Institute of Legislative Development  
P.O. Box 20000

Dialogue on Women Representation in Parliament

**Some Issues in Women Representation**

- ✦ Discrimination against reserved seats?
- ✦ Demands of Family & Public Life - Middle Class
- ✦ Women for Women's Issues?
- ✦ A caucus of Women or on Women's Issues?
- ✦ Greater need & demand for Capacity Building
- ✦ Beyond Quota? Sustainable Options? Parties?
- ✦ Role of Civil Society
- ✦ Role of Women Study Centres/ Universities

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**PILDAT**  
Federal Institute of Legislative Development  
P.O. Box 20000

Briefing & Dialogue on Women Representation in Parliament

**Contents of the Pack**

- ✦ A Background Paper
- ✦ Programme Bulletin – Talking Points for Speakers & Discussants
- ✦ Questionnaire on Caucus of Women's Issues
- ✦ Data Form for Legislators
- ✦ Brief Introduction of the Project & Consortium
- ✦ List and Profile of Discussants
- ✦ Brief for Media: Press Release at close of event

9

**PILDAT**  
Federal Institute of Legislative Development  
P.O. Box 20000

Dialogue on Women Representation in Parliament

**Rules of the Game**

- ✦ Time Management is a part of the Capacity Building – Brief, focused, Crisp Bullet Points.
- ✦ Time Reminders to assist you
- ✦ PLSC is a non-partisan entity. All parties are respected & considered important.
- ✦ Please complete Questionnaire & Data Form and hand over before departure

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DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

PROCEEDINGS

APPENDIX D

**Presentation by  
Senator Dr. Kausar Firdous**



## DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

# PROCEEDINGS

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ  
اسلامی جمہوریہ پاکستان کی مجلس شوریٰ میں  
خواتین کی اضافی نمائندگی کا پہلا سال

### • خواتین کی سیاسی نمائندگی

عالمی نمائندگی  
پاکستان کی تاریخ  
پاکستان کا آئین  
اسلامی تعلیمات

### • خواتین کی اضافی نمائندگی سے وابستہ توقعات، خدشات

خواتین کے مسائل حل ہوں گے  
خواتین کے لئے قانون سازی ہوگی  
خواتین کے حلقے انتخاب کی حالت بہتر ہوگی  
خواتین کی حیثیت و اختیارات میں اضافہ ہوگا  
سیاسی عمل میں شمولیت بڑھے گی  
صنف کی بنیاد پر تقسیم سے معاشرے میں بگاڑ پیدا ہوگا  
خاندان کا ادارہ متاثر ہوگا



### • خواتین کی ایک سالہ کارکردگی

ایوان میں کارکردگی  
جائزے کے نکات  
سینٹ میں کارکردگی اعداد و شمار  
رابطہ ٹریننگ  
حلقے میں کام  
دیگر  
کارکردگی کی روشنی میں حاصل ہونے والے سبق

### • کارکردگی کیسے بہتر کی جائے

سیاسی جماعت	انفرادی حیثیت
دیگر ادارے	اندرون پارلیمنٹ
خصوصی اقدام	پارلیمنٹ سیکرٹریٹ

### • خلاصہ

### • خواتین کی سیاسی نمائندگی

عالمی صورت حال  
منتخب اور نامزد اعلیٰ سیاسی عہدوں پر فائز خواتین (149 ممالک)  
ایشیاء 4 فیصد  
امریکہ 10 فیصد  
یورپ 10 فیصد  
افریقہ 7 فیصد



## DIALOGUE ON

## PROCEEDINGS

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

(رپورٹ یونیسف 1997ء)	(صفر)	35 ممالک میں تناسب
سینٹ	قومی اسمبلی	
30 فیصد	48.8 فیصد	روانڈا 1
18 فیصد	21.6 فیصد	پاکستان 32
16.4 فیصد	17.9 فیصد	برطانیہ 49
13 فیصد	14.3 فیصد	امریکہ 59
10.3 فیصد	8.8 فیصد	انڈیا 87
	4.4 فیصد	سری لنکا 112
	4.1 فیصد	ایران 113

(ورلڈ کا سینیٹیشن رپورٹ)

### پاکستان کی تاریخ

1947ء تا 1997ء 113 خواتین منتخب یا نامزد ہوئیں

### پاکستان کا آئین

15 مخصوص نشستیں	1956ء
8 نشستیں قومی اور 5 ہر صوبائی اسمبلی	1962ء
10 نشستیں قومی اور 5 فیصد ہر صوبائی اسمبلی	1973ء
60 نشستیں قومی اسمبلی، 17 سینٹ	2002ء

### اسلامی تعلیمات

#### قرآن

وہ آپس کے معاملات باہمی مشورے سے طے کرتے ہیں  
(آیت 38، سورۃ الشوریٰ)

اسوہء حسنہ

صلح حدیبیہ کے موقع پر حضرت ام سلمیٰ کا مشورہ

خلفائے راشدین کا دور



• خواتین کی اضافی نمائندگی سے وابستہ توقعات، خدشات

خواتین کے مسائل حل ہونگے

خواتین پرتشدد

بنگلہ دیش عورتوں پرتشدد کے حوالے سے فہرست میں پہلے نمبر پر ہے (47 فیصد)

(UNFPA کی رپورٹ)

خاتون وزیر خارجہ امریکہ بونیا میں خواتین

کشمیری خواتین  
فلسطینی خواتین

سوینا گاندھی  
گولڈامن

خواتین کے لئے قانون سازی ہوگی

جن امور پر قانون سازی تجویز کی گئی:

خواتین کی تعلیم

وراثت کا حصول

کفالت

صحت

ذرائع ابلاغ میں استحصال

حلقہ انتخاب کی خواتین کی حالت بہتر ہوگی

لاڑکانہ۔ بے نظیر بھٹو صاحبہ 1988-1997ء

نصرت بھٹو

بیگم شرف عباسی

بھنگ۔ سیدہ عابدہ حسین (چار بار منتخب ہوئیں)





## DIALOGUE ON

## PROCEEDINGS

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

### خواتین کی حیثیت و اختیارات میں اضافہ ہوگا

امریکہ، برطانیہ، پاکستان

### سیاسی عمل میں شمولیت بڑھے گی

سری لنکا خاتون حکمران 1960ء تا 2004ء

1997ء کل 4382 خواتین 39

پاکستان (جھنگ، لاڑکانہ)

### صنف کی بنیاد پر معاشرے میں بگاڑ پیدا ہوگا

### خاندان کا ادارہ متاثر ہوگا

### • خواتین کی ایک سالہ کارکردگی

بینٹ	قومی اسمبلی	
17	60	تعداد خواتین
13	30	خواتین حزب اقتدار
4	30	خواتین حزب اختلاف
		— ایوان کی کارکردگی
		ایل ایف او
		— جائزے کے نکات
	سوالات	حاضری
	تحریر	احتجاج
	قراردادیں	ناخوشگوار واقعات
	بل	خاندان پر اثرات
	اظہار خیال	آرائش/سادگی



STATEMENT SHOWING THE POSITION OF QUESTIONS  
RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS UNDER  
RULE 194 RECEIVED DURING  
THE 2ND TO 10TH SESSIONS  
OF THE SENATE  
2003-4

QUESTIONS

Total	:	2769
Notice given by Ladies Senators	:	201 (7%)

RESOLUTIONS

Total	:	335
Notice given by Ladies Senators	:	43 (12%)

MOTIONS UNDER RULE 194

Total	:	400
Notice given by Ladies Senators	:	26 (7%)



## DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

## PROCEEDINGS

### • موضوعات، اظہار خیال

17	عراق ایٹو
13	بچٹ
12	پی۔ٹی۔وی
6	خارجہ پالیسی
1	تعلیمی پالیسی
2	قومی شناختی کارڈ
2	ایل۔ایف۔او
1	سزواں ترمیمی بل
10	جنرل مشرف پر حملہ
3	شاہ احمد نورانی کی وفات

### • رابطہ وٹریڈنگ

تقریبات	ملاقاتیں
ورکشاپس	کانفرنسز
بریفنگ	عشائے
	دورے

### • حلقے میں کام

مخصوص نشستیں
ترقیاتی کام
عورتوں کے مسائل
مردوں کے مسائل
پروگرامات میں شرکت
عوامی رابطے



• کارکردگی کی روشنی میں حاصل ہونے والے سابق

اظہار خیال کے موضوعات

گھریلو ذمہ داریوں اور معاشرتی روابط کے بارے میں فکرمندی  
دور دھوپ اور مصروفیت نتیجہ خیز کارکردگی

• کارکردگی کیسے بہتر بنائی جائے

کمی کے عوامل

فطری دلچسپی کا فقدان

بچوں کی فکرمندی

ترقیاتی سکیم

آگاہی و تربیت نہ ہونا

تجربہ کی کمی

• کارکردگی کی بہتری کے لئے

انفرادی حیثیت

علم و آگاہی

ٹی۔وی

اخبارات

رسائل

انٹرنیٹ

کتاب

پارلیمنٹ کارروائی کی تیاری

اہم مسائل

ریکارڈ

ڈسکشن فورمز

مشورہ



## DIALOGUE ON

First Year of Increased Women Representation in the Parliament:  
Lessons, Reflections and the Way Forward

# PROCEEDINGS

ترہیت

دوستوں کا حلقہ  
تجربہ کار معاونین  
ٹریٹنگ کورسز

دیگر

ذات، گھر، اہل خانہ

ترجیحات کا تعین

اندرون پارلیمنٹ

تیاری اور آگاہی  
کارروائی میں دلچسپی  
سینئر پارلیمینٹری  
دیگر ساتھی

پارلیمنٹ سیکرٹریٹ

کمیٹیوں کا قیام  
ترہیت کا نظام

کارروائی کا طریقہ  
ملکی نظام و کارکردگی

دستور پاکستان  
موجودہ ہولیات سے استفادہ  
مشینری سے آگاہی

دفتر و معاونین  
فنڈز



سیاسی جماعت

تجربہ  
تربیت

اہلیت کا معیار

کارکن سے رابطہ

کارکردگی کا جائزہ و محاسبہ

کارکردگی کی اشاعت

میڈیا

خصوصی اقدام

اپنی دینی و معاشرتی اقدار کا لحاظ رکھتے ہوئے

نشستیں

لباس

سہولیات

عمر

سروس سنٹر

رہائش

سکیورٹی



5-A, Zafar Ali Road, Gulberg V, Lahore-54000, Pakistan.  
Tel: (+92-42) 111 123 345 Fax: (+92-42) 575 1551  
E-mail: [info@pildat.org](mailto:info@pildat.org) URL: [www.pildat.org](http://www.pildat.org)

Strengthening National and Provincial Legislative Governance

# PROCEEDINGS

DIALOGUE ON

**FIRST YEAR OF INCREASED  
WOMEN REPRESENTATION  
IN THE PARLIAMENT:**  
Lessons, Reflections and The Way Forward

February 09, 2004  
Serena Hotel, Islamabad