

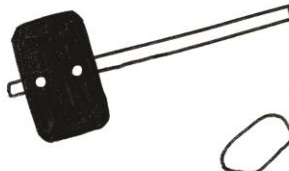


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مارچ
2020
FREERE HALL



The mission of the Aurat March is to unite women, trans and nonbinary people for the cause of gender justice and bring about collective social change based on the principles of inclusion, dignity, freedom and equality. The March will raise voices on diverse issues affecting women, trans and nonbinary people from all backgrounds. We express solidarity for the connected nature of our struggles and work together to dismantle systems of oppression and exploitation.

The Aurat March seeks to achieve the following:

1. An End to Violence

a) We demand an end to gender-based violence: this includes violence against women, trans and nonbinary people carried out and promoted by patriarchal forces as well as state-backed violence targeting activists, religious minorities and marginalized communities. We further demand the criminalisation of orders of honour killings by jirgas.

b) We demand an end to violence against trans and nonbinary people and the enforcement of punishment of those responsible for killing of trans and nonbinary people by the state. We further demand an end to killing of women, trans and nonbinary people under pretext of honour and all those responsible be prosecuted and punished as per the Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences in the name or pretext of Honour) Act, 2016.

c) We demand an end to state-based violence against individuals, communities, activists and their families, as well as an end to the increasing surveillance and militarisation of our everyday spaces

d) We demand that government officials enforce sensitisation of medical and counselling professionals to gender and sexual minorities amongst Government Staff and increase the number of women MLOs across the province. We further demand the implementation of a digitised system for creating and maintaining medico-legal entries and demand an increase in the budgets for existing Dar-ul-Amans and further establish Dar-ul-Amans to deal with the increasing number of cases reported and free legal aid for all victims.

e) We demand that the barbaric and unscientific two finger test used in cases of rape and violence be banned and not be used as evidence in courts.

f) We demand the immediate implementation of the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013 and for the fine included in the punishment to be raised to match the severity of the crime.

g) We demand the development of support programs for victims of violence, abuse and neglect such as subsidised housing, vocational skill-building and employment opportunities.

h) We demand that the state implement its obligations under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018, including the establishment of protection centers and safe houses. We further demand the introduction of mechanisms such as help desks in police stations and courts, for trans and nonbinary people to report violence and harassment.

i) We demand an end to extrajudicial killings in Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir, and demand the release of all missing persons and for the constitution and legal system to be implemented strongly in these cases with no exception.

j) We demand the right to choose who we love and decide to be with. We demand an end to the sexual policing of marginalized bodies.

k) We demand the freedom to write, speak, research and question in universities, workplaces and the media without fear of retribution or censorship.

2. End to Sexual Harassment

a) We protest and condemn sexual harassment in all public and private environments, including schools, colleges, the home, the workplace, and the streets, and perpetuated against all genders. We strive for the uprooting of rape culture and demand accountability from all sexual harassers.

b) We express solidarity with the #MeToo movement and demand that the state makes this a priority and builds effective systems where survivors of violence and harassment are able to report cases of abuse, rape, violence and harassment, without fear of persecution, violence and backlash.

c) We demand the state enforce the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, direct private and public institutions to form committees to report and manage workplace harassment cases, and introduce a fine for non-complying institutions.

d) We demand a concrete measures be taken for state institutions; including the police, FIA and judiciary, to take gender-based violence and reporting of harassment and rape threats seriously without any shaming and harassment towards victims and survivors.

e) We demand the decriminalisation of defamation and repeal of Section 499 and 500 of the Pakistan Penal Code, which are being used to initiate criminal investigation to threaten people who have come forward against their perpetrators and abusers.

f) We demand an end to harassment in all schools, colleges and universities, and formation of harassment committees across all educational institutions. We demand that educational institutions commit to emphasising that persecution and shaming of a survivor is not acceptable. Any instances of harassment and victimisation must be taken seriously and managed appropriately.

g) We demand a fair trial of the outstanding cases of harassment at different universities including the University of Balochistan, and strict action against perpetrators.

3. Economic Justice

a) We demand an economic system that is equitable and transparent, in which all citizens have access to affordable healthcare, quality education, a living wage and workplaces that are free from exploitation, harassment and discrimination.

b) We demand reversal of recent unprecedented price hike of food items (20%) medicines (500% in open market). We further demand that the disproportionate burden of taxes be removed from the working class.

c) We demand that workers of all genders be given the right to earn a living wage and access to safe housing, quality education and affordable healthcare for themselves and their families.

d) We demand that labour of all workers be recognised across all industrial, agricultural, service and informal sectors. All workers, including home-based and domestic workers, must be granted a living wage, the right to collective action, occupational health and safety, and other labor protections as part of the state's policy of democratising the workplace and improving working conditions.

e) We demand immediate enforcement of the minimum wage across all sectors, and for the minimum wage to be fixed on scientific grounds, taking into consideration the rate of inflation and other related factors that impact the life of a worker and their family. We demand that the state remove the classification of educational standards between skilled and unskilled work and impose a universal minimum wage.

f) We demand that the state acknowledge and recognise women's contributions to the care economy through homemaking and caring for their families, and a monetary value be determined.

g) We demand the implementation of employment quotas for marginalised communities, including women, trans and nonbinary people, religious minorities and persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors. The state should work to improve educational, skill development and training opportunities for these communities.

h) We demand that contract work be regularised and all workers on temporary contracts or daily wages be given permanent employment contracts in order to be entitled to statutory benefits and social security.

i) We demand the effective redistribution of land via reforms in civil law of inheritance to ensure equal inheritance rights of women and safeguard of the assets they own to reduce dependence.

j) We urge the state to introduce radical land reforms that redistribute land among the peasantry in order to break the political and social power of big land-owning families. We demand that the Sindh Government review its decision to allow unpaid labour under the Sindh Tenancy Act, 2013, criminalise unpaid work and implement the decision to allow peasants to earn their due wages.

k) We demand that the state take affirmative measures to ensure that children of all genders, including children with disabilities, have access to primary, secondary and higher education by providing the necessary infrastructure and resources.

h) We demand that the state have a system of social security for elderly women and women with disabilities, and enact policies to address their marginalisation in society.

4. Reproductive Rights

a) We believe that women, trans women and gender non binary persons have the right to make informed decisions about pregnancy and childbirth and access to quality and free healthcare and reproductive health services.

b) We demand the right to make decisions about our bodies free from oppression and control. We demand that all women, trans and non-binary people have access to free health care and reproductive health and other health services; decide if and when to get pregnant and make informed decisions about their reproductive and sexual health.

c) We demand that maternity benefits be granted to women and daycare centres be established at workplaces as per the Sindh Maternity Benefits Act, 2018.

d) We demand that maternity services be provided to women across all rural and urban areas. We demand the state take measures to build capacity of health-care workers and health professionals at local levels – nurses, midwives and lady health

workers – to deliver quality and free of cost sexual reproductive health information and services.

e) We demand the state provide free and accessible services and awareness programs to prevent, diagnose and treat STIs and unintended and dangerous pregnancies if needed. We demand the provision of affordable and accessible contraceptive services at all hospitals.

5. Environmental Justice

a) Karachi is home to a number of ecosystems, each facing unique threats, making the city extremely vulnerable to climate change. We reject fossil fuel-based commercial and industrial practices as a means of economic development, the returns of which are in turn inequitably distributed. These practices have polluted our soil, air and water and led to glaring social and economic disparities, especially affecting women disproportionately.

b) We believe that every person and community has the right to access free clean water, clean air, and access to public lands. Our environment and natural resources must be protected for ourselves and future generations.

c) We demand the inclusion of women and marginalized communities in decision and policy making regarding climate change and the environment. This is because the climate crisis impacts women and marginalized communities disproportionately, through a number of ways, including limiting of access to safe drinking water and depleting natural resources that directly impact their sources of livelihood.

d) We demand access to clean air for all citizens by enforcing safe fuel standards and providing adequate green cover to improve air quality and mitigate the effects of urban

e) We recognise that the climate crisis is a consequence of late capitalism, consumerism and inequality and therefore demand an end to corporate exploitation of animals, agricultural land and marginalised communities.

f) We demand the state enforce the Climate Change Act, 2017 and the Environmental Protection Act, 1997 to ensure protection, conservation, rehabilitation and improvement of the environment, prevention and control of pollution, promotion of sustainable development. We demand the effective implementation of the Framework for Implementation of Climate Change Policy (2014-2030) especially of provisions in relation to disaster management, and the migration/displacement that takes place after any disaster (flood, earthquake, etc).

g) We demand institutional, technical and financial restructuring of Sindh's waste management system. We demand the implementation of the Sindh plastic bag ban and fines on non-complying institutions.

h) We demand that Karachi's energy be supplemented with renewable energy sources and energy produced by fossil fuels be phased out.

6. Right to the City

a) We believe that Karachi's city planning only serves the interests of the rich and powerful, and it imagines all citizens as able-bodied, cisgender men. Our city can only be made sustainable when it serves the needs of historically marginalised groups, and can provide access to basic services and amenities to all residents. This includes access to electricity, gas, clean water, healthcare, education and safe transport. Restricted access to these services affects women, trans and nonbinary people disproportionately. We demand that these

considerations be taken into account during the planning process.

b) We condemn the city-wide demolitions that began in 2018 and continue to rob poor people off their homes and livelihoods until now. Carried out under the banner of the 'Anti-Encroachment Drive,' these demolitions are driven by development and political agendas. We demand dignified resettlement for those displaced and demand that they should be given alternative housing and livelihood in nearby areas so that their everyday lives are not disrupted.

c) We demand that informal livelihoods, forms of labour and informal housing be recognised as legitimate and legal. This includes recognising the home as a place of work for many women across the city, especially in Katchi Abadis. We categorically demand that all Katchi Abadis within Karachi be regularised under the Sindh Katchi Abadi Act to ensure their inhabitants lead dignified and secure lives.

d) We demand public spaces to be made safer and more accessible for women, trans and nonbinary people by enhancing lighting infrastructures around the city, setting up an emergency-response harassment helpline and recruiting more female law enforcement personnel.

7. Minority Rights and An End to Forced Conversions

a) We believe that religious minorities face discrimination and various forms of violence particularly targeting women. The continued cases of abduction, rape and forced conversion of girls and women from minority communities poses a serious threat to society by abusive and powerful patriarchal forces in the country.

b) We demand that the government take concrete steps to increase the number of seats for religious minorities, and ensure representation of women and girls from minorities on the seats reserved for women and minorities in the Local Government and Provincial and National Assemblies.

c) We demand that the government take special measures to ensure the implementation of job quotas for women from religious minorities in Pakistan.

d) We demand that the state implements the Hindu Marriage Act 2017 and the Sikh Anand Karaj Act 2017 and approve the rules of business under these laws.

e) We demand that the Sindh Government urgently passes the proposed bill against forced conversion to protect girls and women from forced conversions and forced marriages and take concrete actions to bring perpetrators to justice in a timely and efficient manner.

f) We demand that the Sindh Government establish an autonomous Minority Rights Commission consisting of leaders and representatives of religious minorities and that the commission be assigned to conduct inquiries into cases of forced conversion. This body will provide free legal aid and protection, and be consulted on the provision of support services to victims of forced conversion.

8. Political Participation of Women, Transgender and Non-binary People

a) We believe that political participation of women, trans and nonbinary people is essential to any democracy and society and believe that the state should carry out affirmative action and demand that the state provide enabling conditions to ensure high participation across local, provincial and federal

government and active and safe participation in municipal, provincial and federal elections.

b) We demand restoration of student unions across private and public universities inclusive of women, trans and nonbinary people.

c) We demand that political participation of women, trans and nonbinary people be ensured through quotas in political parties, local bodies, provincial and national assemblies. And Increase the ratio of women, trans and nonbinary people in public offices and decision making roles such as judges, prosecutors, lawyers, protection officers, military officers, diplomats and foreign service officers.

d) We demand that women, trans and nonbinary people as workers, in trade, in businesses and as consumers be given the right to form and participate in unions, in promoting political activities, to galvanise for their constitutional and human rights, not be targeted or discriminated against because of such activities.

e) We demand implementation of drives to register women, trans and nonbinary people who do not presently have CNICs so they can participate in public life and be part of the democratic voting process.

f) We call on the state to uphold women, trans and nonbinary people's democratic right and freedom to hold account to, question and organise, whether within state institutions or on the streets, dissent against the policies of the state, government or those institutions benefitting from the taxes of the people.

g) We demand that no person be labelled as seditious or a traitor when they peacefully organise to question or hold accountability of the state or any non-state actors responsibility in the erosion of human rights and women's rights in particular.

h) We call upon a ban on all arms and severe action against those individuals, political parties, or institutions that exhibit misogyny or discriminatory words, actions or policies towards women as this goes against the very spirit of the constitutional rights of women.

9. Media

a) We protest the sexist treatment of women, non-binary and transgender people in the media and demand societally responsible narratives across news reports, political and cultural analyses, and story-telling.

b) We demand at least one woman reporter investigating a gender-based violence case to ensure it is reported with nuance and does not blame the victim.

c) We demand an increase in women's participation and decision-making positions in media and STEM fields by regulating organisations to ensure a certain percentage of women are hired across all tiers of decision-making.

d) We demand mandatory training on issues related to gender and sexual violence for all journalists.

