

Press Release

## International Women's Day's "Pledge for Parity" is Simply Replicating Gender Equality's Failed Strategy for Change

The theme for this year's International Women's Day organized by the United Nations on the 8<sup>th</sup> March is "Pledge for Parity" which is calling its supporters to take strong practical steps to increase gender parity within their societies. It is a continuation of the UN's international campaign, "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality" which the organisation launched with the aim of renewing the commitment of states to implement gender equality policies in their countries. Gender equality, a Western construct born from the oppression of women under Western secular systems, has served as the opium in the struggle for women's rights. It engaged women in a futile, fruitless struggle over decades, with the delusionary promise that simply equalising their roles and rights with men would secure them respect and improve their circumstances and lives. However, despite over a century-long fight for gender equality in the West and across the world, and despite gender equality being enshrined in numerous international conventions and the national constitutions of states from East to West, millions of women globally continue to suffer from violence and exploitation, crippling poverty and illiteracy, crumbling education and healthcare systems, and oppression and slaughter under brutal dictatorships.

The concept of gender equality established in international and national laws for example, has utterly failed to prevent 1 in 3 women globally being victims of violence, or 3 women being murdered every day in the US at the hands of their partner or ex-partner, or 1 in 10 women in Europe from suffering sexual violence. It provided absolutely no protection to the hundreds of thousands of Muslim women who were slaughtered by the Assad regime or killed in the Western colonial wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Nor did it provide adequate sanctuary to the millions of female refugees from these conflicts. It could not stop the butchering of Muslim women in Central Africa or Myanmar or save them from drowning at sea as desperate refugees fleeing persecution. And it provided no protection to Palestinian girls shot dead by Jewish soldiers or Muslim women forced to take off their Islamic dress or subjected to forced sterilizations or abortions by the oppressive Central Asian and Chinese regimes. Furthermore, the gender equality strategy for change offers no sound solutions to the 700 million women across the world who are without adequate food, water, sanitation, healthcare and education today, or the 85 million girls worldwide who are unable to attend school.

The call for gender equality has failed to even dent the scale of these problems and has proven irrelevant to the lives of ordinary women. This is because the belief that the quality of women's lives can be improved by advocating gender parity is based upon a myopic, erroneous view of the true causes of women's problems which are seen from a misleading gender perspective rather than understanding that they result from flawed and harmful capitalist, liberal, nationalistic and other man-made systems. How can respect for women be generated under capitalist regimes that sanction the objectification of women for profit and sexualise them under liberal freedoms? How can the economic rights of women be improved under capitalist systems which favour the rich over the poor and implement liberal free-market policies which strangle economies and burden states with colossal debts leading to an inability to provide adequate public services to their people? And how can there ever be political empowerment of women under authoritarian regimes which silence political dissent through the pretext of terror? Truly improving the lives of women in our Muslim lands requires systematic change. It necessitates the establishment of the glorious Khilafah state (Caliphate) based upon the method of the Prophethood which places the protection and preservation of dignity of women as a central pillar of its rule. This is a leadership which serves as a guardian over the rights of women and has a sound economic system that has a proven record of ensuring that the needs of every citizen under its rule is met and that a first-class education and health care system is delivered to its people. So we call all those who sincerely wish to see a significant improvement in the quality of life of women to support the urgent establishment of this state and reject the so-called gender equality illusion.

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