

Minutes of the Meeting

Activity: WMW Asia Region Meeting

Date: 16th September 2021

Venue: Online via Zoom

Total Participants: 09

Total countries participated: 05

Moderated by: Bushra Khaliq, IC Member, WMW

Agenda item 1: The Current Challenges- Feminist Perspectives and Struggles

Agenda item 2: WMW Election for IC members, Procedure, Nominations for upcoming IC meeting

Proceedings:

Yasmin from Afghanistan; said “Inside Kabul women are not safe. Constitution doesn’t limit the women’s freedom of speech and rights. But all of the sudden, you wake up, and you get to know that Taliban has taken the government and now the Afghan women are invisible”. She further said, that Women have left their jobs due to the fear of being killed by the Taliban. Few women include journalists and social activists are working on ground and staying in Afghanistan. Majority of the women are facing mental violence and do not have the right for decision making. Their voices are shut. Girls cannot go to school. Women only allowed to visit the female doctors. Health system is in worse condition. Medicines, food are expensive or not available. Besides this, Women at the grass root level are taking roads and raising their demands”.

All the participants extended solidarity with the Afghan women and people.

Salima Sultana, Bangladesh share salient features of National Development Policy (NDP) in Bangladesh and demanded to end discrimination through fair and equality based policies. Sexual Harassment and domestic violence ratio is very high. Sadly, policies are developed but not implemented. She urged to implement the NDP and pro-poor economic policies in the country. Women movement is vibrant and fighting against patriarchy.

Jean Enriquez, Philippines highlighted about the economy crisis and the effects of the corporate sector, indigenous people and farmer rights. The government in Philippines is violent and authoritarian, provides directives to the police to kill the people if found involved in the drugs, leaves orphans and widows behind. On the other side, Violence against women is increasing across the country. Women farmers are becoming poorer. It is a combination of economic and social violence women are struggling for. MNCs and corporate sector interests are also the common issue and be the Govt must be held accountable for this.

Nalini, Sri Lanka talked about the rising religious extremism, authoritarian democracy and corruption in the country. Women in general and informal sector are worst hit by the COVID-19.

The neo-liberal policy is being fastly implemented and Rule of law is compromised. Corruption from top to bottom exists and getting complexed day by day. Customary laws, the law of sexual harassment is discriminatory. Divorce act needs to be reformed. The drugs are supplying from sea, land, and people are suffering. Inherited politics shifted from one family member to another is evident that leaves no space for common people and the women to enter into the politics. 25% quota is fixed in the local governments for women. The South Asia is struggling against poverty, patriarchy, corruption and religious extremism.

Bushra Khaliq, Pakistan said Pakistan and Afghanistan share the borders and Taliban are being supported by us since decades. Pakistan foreign policy recognizes the Taliban regimes either is today or was in the history, majority of the Pakistanis never supported Talibans. On the other side, the situation of Violence Against Women in Pakistan is alarming because of deep rooted patriarchal mindset. They are being assaulted, raped, harassed on streets. This is encouraging to see the feminists' movements are united. We mark the movements like WAF, AASHA, Aurat March as successful examples in Pakistan, but still there is a long way to go. Feminist social solidarity is the key to peace and social justice.

Way Forward;

- WMW Public Opening Forum (online) is scheduled on 23rd October 2021, would be an opportunity to connect with other social movements and allies.
- Three-day 12th International council meeting of WMW on 29th-31st October 2021 where regional, political, social, and economical context, internal movement, New international secretariat etc. (The detailed agenda will be shared soon).
- All NCBs would nominate three delegates and one observer to participate in both events.
- Another Asia level webinar would be organized soon on the role of China as imperialist power is an important for political discourse across Asia region. Jean urged to invite Japan, Korea, and China.

Election & Endorsement:

- All participants elected Bushra Khaliq to continue for the next period for Asia region
- Philippine and BanglaDesh also endorsed Francoise for the Oceana region

Vote of thanks: Bushra thanked all for the recognition and electing for next tenure. She encouraged to mobilize other women, movements and allies to strengthen the WMW efforts for a vibrant global feminist movement.

We resist to live!!! We march to transform