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Free Ali Wazir

Joint Statement of Solidarity with PTM by Feminist Groups across Pakistan

- News from around the world -

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We, as feminists who uphold the peaceful resolution of conflict, stand in solidarity with the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) in their struggle for fundamental rights. We condemn the violence that took place on May 26th in the Khar Qamar area of North Waziristan in which 13 civilians were allegedly killed and 46 were injured as a result of army firing. According to the testimonies of eyewitnesses and video footage released on social media, the protesters were unarmed and were peacefully protesting the illegal detention of local residents.

Following this event, Ali Wazir, an elected MNA, was arrested under charges of terrorism. There are also rumours that he has been tortured while in detention. Furthermore, Mohsin Dawar was arrested on May 30th and also charged with terrorism.

Since this time, a curfew has been imposed in Waziristan, which has led to food and medicine shortages, thus putting local residents' lives at risk. This is a form of collective punishment. Before this, prominent human rights activist Gulalai Ismail's home was raided and an FIR was lodged against her also on terrorism charges on May 23rd.

We believe all three are innocent and have only been exercising their democratic right to peaceful protest in accordance with the Constitution.

Following this wave of violence and repression, we as feminists demand that:

1. A Senate commission is constituted to investigate the massacre at the Khar Qamar checkpoint so that those responsible can be held accountable and punished.
2. Lift the curfew in Waziristan so that people can have access to food and medicines.
3. Hand all control of all administration, including law enforcement, in former-FATA to civilians in accordance with the 25th amendment.
4. Release Ali Wazir and all protestors arrested with him and drop all charges against them.
5. Release Mohsin Dawar and drop all charges against him.
6. Drop the FIRs lodged against Gulalai Ismail.
7. Hold free and fair trials of all persons arrested in the former-FATA before civilian courts.
8. Allow the media and human rights observers access in Waziristan in order for events to be covered impartially.
9. Lift the unofficial media blackout on the PTM at the national level.

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As feminists, we support the PTM's democratic right to non-violent protest, and we oppose all forms of violence and repression against them and the residents of Waziristan.

Saturday 1 June 2019,

Women's Action Forum (Lahore)

Women's Action Forum (Peshawar)

Women's Action Forum (Islamabad)

Women's Action Forum (Quetta)

Women's Action Forum (Hyderabad)

Women's Action Forum (Karachi)