

DECLARATION OF EQUALITIES FOR MUSLIM WOMEN

O humanity! Be God fearing of your Lord Who created you from a single soul and, from it, created its spouse and from them both disseminated many men and women. And be God fearing of God through Whom you demand rights of one another and the wombs, the rights of blood relations. Truly, God had been watching over you. (4:1) Qur'an

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا
وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of society to assume among the people of the earth a legally different position from that which they have hitherto been afforded under the laws of many nations, but one to which the passage of time, the nature of equality and equity entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of the legal, scholarly society requires that they should insist upon the rights that will impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be indisputable: that all society is equal, and all women as members of society are worthy of the rights we here demand. Whenever any system of law becomes destructive to these ends, it is the responsibility of those in the legal and scholarly community to refuse allegiance to an unjust system, and insist upon the institution of a new framework, laying its foundations on such principles that will affect equality and just treatment for all of society.

Tradition and caution, indeed, will dictate that laws long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly, history has shown that society will continue on as it always has, and the quiet voices of those oppressed will continue to be drowned out by the loud voices of their oppressors, and become accustomed to it.

But it is the duty of those who hear all voices, who are dedicated to representing the rights of all as individuals, to initiate a new dialogue. We here speak for women who's voices have not been heard.

Such has been the patient suffering of women under this legal system, and it is now our responsibility, the voices of impartial law, to demand equal station to which women are entitled.

We insist upon the right of self determination for all women, to ensure her rights as an individual to make decisions for her own life are paramount. For from this right, all other rights can grow; and

We insist that women have the opportunity to gain permanent custody of children subsequent to divorce, and to ensure the mother is considered an equally suitable option to create a stable family unit; and

We insist that prosecution of crimes against women be swift and neutral, to ensure that woman shall no longer be harmed or killed in the name of “honor” at the hands of their male community members; and

We insist that crimes such as stoning, burning, acid pouring, and mutilation not only be illegal and punishable, but the perpetrators be publicly prosecuted by the courts; and

We insist that women and girls gain greater access to education and all attacks directed at blocking female children from attending school are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, to ensure women have the opportunity to achieve intellectual growth and fulfillment; and

We insist that restrictions on women’s employment be removed, to ensure woman the opportunity to participate freely in their nation’s economy and be afforded economic independence; and

We insist upon gender neutral inheritance rights, to ensure that women no longer statutorily inherit less than their male family members from their common ancestors; and

We insist that women gain equal rights to citizenship and nationality, to ensure that their status as citizens of their nation is protected as an independent individual; and

We insist that women have equal rights and opportunity to end the marital relationship; and

We insist that women do not require permission to travel; and

Now, in view of this legal disfranchisement of millions of Muslim women of this world—in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because these Muslim women are systematically aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their human rights by their governments, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as members of humanity. In entering this great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to obtain our objective. We hope this Convention will be followed by a series of Conventions, embracing every part of the Muslim world. Firmly relying upon the final triumph of the Right and the True, we do this day affix our signatures to this declaration.

O humanity! Truly, We created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and types that you recognize one another.

Truly, the most generous of you with God is the most devout. Truly, God is Knowing, Aware. (49:13) Qur’an

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾
