

Respect for Women Stated in Holy Qur'an

Introduction:

This discussion paper mentions only some of the most fitting quotations from the Holy Qur'an, in keeping this paper short. Almighty God is the Supreme Spirit and absolute Supreme Power beyond the ability of humans' descriptions and their materialistic imaginations. It must be remembered that Almighty God created Adam and Eve from earthen clay using His same formula for both. The only difference between them is gender for procreation; and the descendants which followed over several thousands of years continue on the same formula.

Women have equal rights in enjoying the same respect as men and accordingly women must not be seen at lower elevation within any society of whatsoever description.

Discussions:

- 1)** In terms of modern science, human body organs are successfully transplanted between genders and blood transfusion are also successfully transfused between the genders. That proves equality of human body tissue materials and so proving equality of men and women. Accordingly, this equality also leads to recognition of fundamental human rights to both men and women.
- 2)** The Constitutions of most countries provide for equality between genders and the rights of men are not at higher elevation than women. The same overarching principles are also enshrined in the civilian laws of most other countries, which are practising open democracy.
- 3)** Humanity is the best of all creations, which Almighty God has so magnificently made as men and women and both men and women are equal Trustees of that creation and planet Earth.

- 4) Women must be fairly respected as women are made of the same biological materials as men apart from their gender differences. Both men and women are descendants of the pioneers Adam and Eve. This is stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ4:1** *"O people, keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind), and spread from these two many men and women. And keep your duty to Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship. Surely Allah is ever a Watcher over you."*
- 5) The rights and privileges given to all men in the Holy Qur'an are the same for all women. Both men and women are equally required to guard their chastity and earn respect in society. This is stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ33:35** *"Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, and the believing men and the believing women, and the obeying men and the obeying women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the charitable men and the charitable women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the men who guard their (own) chastity and the women who guard, and the men who remember Allah much and the women who remember — Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward."*
- 6) Women are also required to worship Almighty God and fulfil all the prescribed functions as assigned to mankind in entirety. Men together with women are required to enjoin good and forbid evil. This is stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ9:71-72** *"And the believers, men and women, are friends of one another. They enjoin good and forbid evil and keep up prayer and give the due charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. As for these, Allah will have mercy on them. Surely Allah is Mighty, Wise. Allah has promised to the believers, men and women, Gardens, in which rivers flow, to abide in them, and goodly dwellings in Gardens of perpetual*

abode. And greatest of all is Allah's goodly pleasure. That is the mighty achievement."

- 7) Women must be respected as they provide comfort to men and their families. Both women and men have love and compassion between them and that extends to their children. This is stated in most subtle words in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ7:189** *"He it is Who created you from a single soul, and of the same did He make his mate, that he might find comfort in her. So when he covers her she bears a light burden, then moves about with it. Then when it grows heavy, they both call upon Allah, their Lord: If You give us a good one, we shall certainly be grateful."*
- 8) Women are required to participate equally with men in providing the general needs within the household administration, and performance of religious obligations such as giving out alms in charity, practise fasting and leading their life of purity. This is stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ4:124** *"And whoever does good deeds, whether male or female, and is a believer — these will enter the Garden, and they will not be dealt with unjustly in the least."*
- 9) Women can also be pleading to Almighty God as men plead and Almighty God has also prepared for women for their forgiveness and then their ultimate rewards in Heaven. This is stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ16:97** *"Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We shall certainly make him live a good life, and We shall certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did."*
- 10) Women must be respected even as servants and women have same rights to marriage, regardless of their socioeconomic status. This is stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ30:21** *"And of His signs is this: that He created mates for you from yourselves that you might find quiet of mind in them, and He put between you love and compassion. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect."*
- 11) This is further reinforced with the injunction stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ16:72** *"And Allah has made wives for you from*

among yourselves, and has given you sons and daughters from your wives, and has provided you with good things. Will they then believe in falsehood and deny the favour of Allah?"

12) Women must also be respected in public places. Accordingly, women are required to lower their gaze and dress respectfully, to achieve self-respect in public places. For women to dress respectfully means clothes covering the whole body, but displaying their full face, both hands up to their wrists and both feet up to their ankles. This is also given in the Holy Qur'an (below). The idea behind that injunction is that full face must be shown for definite recognition, and both hands must be shown indicating whether or not the women are married. Both feet up to ankles must be shown to give a gap between the women's lower clothes and the surface being walked upon. Lower clothes must not drag on ground as that will cause accumulation of all kinds of dirt, become smelly, and make it difficult for the women to go to prayer. Muslim women are also required to pray five times daily. Muslim women must lower their gaze and they are also required not to outwardly display in public their jewellery, except to those persons living in their family's household. Over-attraction of outward decorations and jewellery may lead to social problems, robbery and the women's personal security. Muslim women are not allowed to wear anklets with bells¹ in public places for the same reasons. This is stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ24:31** *"And say to the believing women that they lower their gaze and restrain their sexual passions and do not display their adornment except what appears of it. And they should wear their head-coverings over their bosoms. And they should not display their adornment except to their husbands or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers'*

¹ Anklets with bells in India are called "*ghantee ke saath paaya*" in Hindi as घंटी के साथ पायल and in Pakistan in Urdu as گھنٹیاں ساتھ پازیب

sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or those whom their right hands possess, or harmless male servants, or the children who do not know women's nakedness. And they should not strike their feet so that the adornment that they hide may be known. And turn to Allah all, O believers, so that you may be successful."

- 13)** Women must not be compelled into marriage and allowed waiting time until suitable match has been found. The respect for women includes caring for them, even if they are servants and protecting them and not letting them drift away into prostitution. This is most compulsively stated in the Holy Qur'an at **HQ24:32-33** *"And marry off those among you who are single (to spouses), and those who are fit among your male slaves and your female slaves. If they are needy, Allah will make them free from want out of His grace. And Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing. And those who cannot find a match must keep chaste, until Allah makes them free from want out of His grace. And those of your slaves who ask for a contract (to buy their freedom), give them the contract, if you know any good in them, and give them something out of the wealth of Allah which He has given you. And do not compel your slave-girls to prostitution when they desire to keep chaste, in order to seek the frail goods of this world's life. And whoever compels them, then surely after their compulsion Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."*

Conclusions with Recommendations:

- a) Recognition that over the last several thousands of years, as far back as scripture records reveal, men and women were created from the same formula and men and women qualify of their equal respects.
- b) The drift in not recognising women as having equal rights as men has gradually penetrated into many societies and that correction needs to be brought about by leaders of all societies; and then

reviewed ensuring that restoration of equal rights has taken effect.

- c) The need to instil recognition of equality of men and women and so to giving both men and women equal respect must be widely practised throughout each organization, commencing with the younger generations of people, who will become exemplary leading adults of the future.
- d) This change perhaps may not be able to happen in a very short time and requires mentoring them from an early age, which is more manageable into their becoming progressive seniors and in leading their societies. This change requires strategic planning, which in turn needs a working budget.
- e) Multi-religious discussions on different pathways of life and the general behaviour of all other persons within each society are better understood as cultural obligations by those dedicated practitioners.
- f) The above recommendations should be conveyed to all Muslims' congregations, using established protocols of each gender, bearing in mind that considerable research into the matter has already happened as part of the process of preparing this researched discussion paper.
- g) The discussion should not be wasted by inaction and Muslims as Faith leaders must endeavour to influence their younger generations towards the correct paths, in their respect for women as prescribed in the Holy Qur'an.

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