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Speakers give suggestions to reduce extremism in society

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Islamabad

Speakers urged the stakeholders to give more voice to women and highlight their role in different sectors of society at a consultation session organised by Aurat Foundation.

Dr. Qibla Ayaz, Chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) addressed the gathering and said that our understanding of religion has issues. He said that the government has taken the reins off from public schooling and education and has handed this over to the private sector in order to make money and profit. He said that CII has given a recommendation that national policy of education needs to be reviewed. Dr. Qibla said that we also have problems as individuals. He said that there is a mental construct among

men in this country that women are weak and they cannot work. He urged organizations such as Aurat Foundation to raise this issue. He added that men also have to raise their voice for women's issues and stand with them.

Shahid Rahim spoke about the need and purpose of the SHE -The Peacebuilder project and introduced it to the gathered audience. He said that the project began in May 2022 and will finish in September 2024. He said that a house is created by a builder or an engineer but the beauty of the house is brought out by an architect. He further added that we will organize several other consultations in different provincial capitals in the coming months and will glean recommendations regarding peacebuilding and role of women in peacebuilding.

Dr. Zia-ul-Haq, Director

General of the Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad spoke next and said that Aurat Foundation's data on women is considered the most authentic and original throughout the country. He said that a few people began the countering violent extremism (CVE) project of Paigham-e-Pakistan and now thousands of people are part of this movement. He said that primarily the Paigham-e-Pakistan project is about behavioral change.

He said that one of the gates of the Masjid-e-Nabwi is called Bab-un-Nisa after the female sahabiyat. Dr. Zia further added that women in Pakistan these days are not safe from their protectors. He said that although we claim to be a very religious society but in actuality we are not the best followers of

Islam. He cited numerous brief examples from the times of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which showed that the status of women was equal to that of a man.

SP Beenish Fatima, Deputy Director Cyber Crime Wing, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) said that first we need to understand what is extremism. She said that extremism is prevalent in our society, in our education institutions etc. in different forms. Furthermore, she said that men in homes are in position of authority but in their offices they are not. She said that since male has been given a dominant status in society we feel the need of male to accompany a woman everywhere. She said that the economy will never be able to grow if half of the society remains in their homes and does not engage in productive work.

Dr. Shabana Fayyaz, Head of Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad said that she was the only one woman from her family to start working. She said that the general perception in society is that men cannot eat from a woman's income; however, these perceptions are changing. Additionally, she said that we have not invested in training the women of our country. As an educationist, we have to reduce the violence from our society.

Naela Chohan, Special Federal Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that male and female both have separate responsibilities given from God Almighty. All young men and women should be taught how to respect and behave towards each other and we need an empowering environment as well.