



Declaration of Women's Rights

Approved by the Tenth Congress of Komala

The Tenth Congress of Komala, with the aim of further paving the way for the advancement of the women's movement in achieving the goals of equality between women and men, hereby announces the demands of women in the form of a Women's Rights Declaration.

Without doubt, the realization of each clause, or of all the demands contained in this declaration, depends on the unity, vigilance, conscious activity, and step-by-step struggle of women and men who seek freedom and equality. We place activity in this direction on the agenda of the various sections of Komala's organization and call upon all people who believe in equality to engage in persistent efforts for the realization of the provisions of this declaration, in order to set the women's movement in motion alongside the other revolutionary and radical movements of society.

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Economic Rights;

1. Women must enjoy the right to employment and freedom in choosing their occupation.

Having employment and freedom in choosing one's occupation is the right of all members of society, the right of all women and men. All laws that violate this right must be abolished. All legal restrictions concerning women's work in various professions and fields must be eliminated. Women's employment must not be subject to the permission of a husband, father, or brother.

Women must be able to participate in the productive life of society and enjoy economic independence. The state is obligated to facilitate women's employment in society and to take special measures to remove the social and cultural barriers to women's work.

2. Any form of discrimination based on gender in employment is prohibited.

Any discrimination or inequality in hiring or promotion based on gender must be prohibited. The allocation of jobs according to gender must be abolished, and women and men must enjoy equal rights in recruitment and acceptance into all occupations.

3. Women must have opportunities and possibilities equal to those of men in obtaining employment.

In order to eliminate discrimination between women and men in employment, the disadvantages imposed on women by existing social conditions must be compensated for. The level of women's education, skills, and professional expertise must be raised, and the social and cultural conditions necessary for eliminating the division of occupations into "male" and "female" jobs must be created.

To this end, firstly, the state must establish special literacy, educational, and vocational training courses for women. Secondly, educational institutions and mass media must encourage women and men to enter occupational and professional fields that have until now been exclusively or predominantly monopolized by the opposite sex.

4. All occupations must be evaluated and classified according to the same objective criteria.

In occupations traditionally associated with women and in fields where women constitute the majority of employees, wage levels are often lower than in comparable occupations. To eliminate this inequality, basic salaries and all employment benefits in every field must be determined according to the same objective criteria, such as difficulty of work, intensity of work, experience, and workers' qualifications, rather than on the basis of gender.

5. Equal pay must be paid for equal work.

Under identical working conditions, women are often paid less than men. This discrimination must be completely eliminated. For the practical realization of the



principle of equal pay for equal work, basic salaries and all employment benefits in all occupations must be determined equally for women and men.

Various benefits such as housing allowances, child allowances, and similar payments must be granted equally to women and men.

6. Women and men must enjoy equal access to social insurance.

All members of society must be covered by unemployment insurance, old-age insurance, and disability insurance.

Every person over the age of 18 who is ready to work, whether woman or man, and who cannot find employment, must receive unemployment insurance.

Women and men over the age of 55 must receive old-age insurance.

Persons under the age of 55 who become disabled for any reason must receive disability insurance.

These rights must belong to women independently of their employment status or their spouse's insurance coverage.

7. Special facilities must be provided for women who are required to work at night.

Night work should be prohibited for both women and men, except in occupations where social welfare requirements or technical necessities make night work unavoidable.

In such occupations, the state and employers are obliged to provide the necessary facilities and services, including transportation for women working at night.

Parents of children under the age of 3 must not, under any circumstances, be assigned to night work.

8. Employed women must be entitled to 2 days of monthly leave.

Women have the right to 2 days of leave every month, without deduction of salary or benefits, for rest during menstruation.

9. Assigning any harmful work to pregnant women, or any work which, according to medical authorities, endangers the health of the mother or fetus, is prohibited.

Employers are obligated to assign suitable work, without reducing income, to pregnant women employed in such occupations.

If this is not possible, women employed in such occupations must enjoy fully paid leave with full benefits throughout their pregnancy.

10. Dismissal of pregnant women is prohibited.

Many employers, out of profit-seeking motives and to avoid respecting the rights of pregnant women, dismiss them under various pretexts.



Therefore, the dismissal of pregnant women for any reason or pretext must be prohibited.

11. Women must be entitled to adequate maternity leave.

Women must be entitled to 16 weeks of maternity leave, consisting of 8 weeks before childbirth and 8 weeks after childbirth.

The duration of maternity leave may be extended upon a physician's recommendation.

During maternity leave, women must receive their full salary and benefits.

Maternity leave must count as work experience.

Employers may not demote a woman upon her return to work.

12. Parents must be entitled to adequate leave for caring for a newborn child.

In addition to postnatal leave for the mother, either the mother or the father of a newborn child must have the right to at least 24 weeks of leave, without reduction of income, for the care and supervision of the newborn until the child reaches daycare age.

The parents may, by mutual agreement, divide this leave between themselves, or one parent may use the entire leave.

Until the child enters daycare, responsibility for childcare shall rest with one of the parents while preserving wages, funded by the employer or the state social insurance fund.

In addition, in order to facilitate the responsibilities that fathers assume immediately after childbirth, fathers must be entitled to 2 weeks of paid leave at the time of the child's birth.

Parental leave for childcare must count as work experience, and the parent's position must not be downgraded upon return to work.

13. Employed mothers who breastfeed their infants

Must be granted at least two half-hour breaks each day for this purpose.

The working day of mothers who breastfeed their infants must not exceed 6 hours.



Women's Rights in the Family;

1. Women are free in matters of marriage and the choice of a spouse.

Marriage must be a voluntary union based on the mutual desire and affection of both parties. Any pressure by the family on girls to prevent marriage or to force them into an unwanted marriage is prohibited and considered a crime. Offenders are subject to legal prosecution and punishment.

2. Commercial transactions in marriage are prohibited.

All laws, traditions, and customs that turn marriage into a transaction, including bride price, dowry, and any other similar custom or law, are prohibited.

3. For a marriage to be legally recognized, only a civil marriage is sufficient.

Marriage ceremonies and traditions are private matters.

However, for a marriage to obtain legal recognition, only a civil marriage “that is, registration in state offices without any religious ceremony or ritual” is sufficient. A religious marriage has no legal validity, and registration does not require a religious marriage.

Religious teachings promote and spread patriarchal and discriminatory ideas regarding women within the family. Failure to recognize religious marriage helps remove religion and religious hierarchies from family affairs and contributes to the establishment of equal relations between women and men within the family.

4. Marriage of women and men under the age of 18 is prohibited. Religious authorities and individuals who perform religious marriage ceremonies for persons under the age of 18 shall be considered perpetrators of a criminal offense.

Women and men must have the opportunity for physical and mental growth and development before marriage. The minimum age of 18 is intended to ensure that everyone, especially women, can receive the minimum necessary education and personal development before assuming family responsibilities.

5. Sexual relations between adults (over the age of 18) and girls under the age of 16 are prohibited.

Sexual relations between persons over the age of 18 and adolescents under the age of 16 constitute sexual abuse of children and adolescents and are considered a crime. In such cases, the consent of the girl has no legal validity.



6. Polygamy is prohibited.

Polygamy is a remnant of backward tribal and feudal customs that have been reinforced and institutionalized through religion and patriarchal culture, and it must be immediately prohibited.

7. Temporary marriage (Sigheh) is prohibited.

Temporary marriage is a religious justification for prostitution and a form of sexual exploitation.

Women submit to temporary marriage because of poverty and material need, while religious authorities and functionaries act as promoters, intermediaries, and facilitators of this form of exploitation.

Temporary marriage must be declared absolutely prohibited, and those responsible for it must be prosecuted under the law.

8. All laws that place men in a superior position and recognize them as heads of the family must be abolished.

Women and men must enjoy completely equal rights and responsibilities toward one another, toward their children, and in all aspects of family life.

- The place of residence must be chosen by mutual agreement. Any law recognizing only the man's right to determine the family's residence must be abolished.
- A woman's right to work and travel must not be subject to her husband's permission.
- The husband's surname must not automatically become the family surname. After marriage, women and men must enjoy equal rights regarding retaining or changing their surnames and determining the surname of their children.

9. Any use of force and violence within the family, including wife-beating, is prohibited.

Violence against women within the family is a social crime and must be prosecuted independently of whether the woman files a complaint.

10. All religious and customary laws that reduce the punishment of those who commit crimes against women under the pretext of defending honor and family reputation must be abolished.

Cultural backwardness and religious prejudices under the banner of honor and chastity place the physical and psychological security of many women in danger.

Religious governments and many religious and customary laws sanctify, protect, and reinforce these prejudices.

In order to protect women's human rights, such laws must be abolished immediately, and severe penalties must be imposed for crimes committed against women by



fathers, brothers, husbands, or any other individuals under the pretext of defending honor or similar claims.

11. Any discrimination or inequality between women and men in inheritance laws must be abolished.

Religious inheritance laws are based on discrimination against women. Such provisions must have no legal validity whatsoever.

12. The legal privileges granted to men and the paternal line in matters of guardianship and custody must be abolished.

Mothers and fathers must enjoy equal rights and responsibilities regarding guardianship and custody of their children.

Guardianship and custody of children after the death of the father belong to the mother. If both parents die, the court shall decide on the basis of the best interests of the child.

13. Any inequality between women and men in matters of divorce must be abolished.

Women and men must enjoy equal rights to divorce.

The law must recognize separation whenever either party, whether woman or man, wishes it.

- The special religious and legal privileges granted to men regarding guardianship and custody after divorce must be abolished.
- Women and men have equal rights and duties toward their children.
- After separation, the competent court must determine custody arrangements based on equality and on ensuring the best conditions for the growth and upbringing of the children.
- If the mother wishes and is qualified, priority for custody belongs to the mother.
- The state must provide financial support, when necessary, to the parent who assumes responsibility for the children.
- Any discrimination against women in the division of family property upon divorce must be abolished.

14. The rights of motherhood must be recognized independently of marriage.

Women who have children without being married must enjoy all individual and social rights of motherhood.

Their children must likewise enjoy all social rights.

15. Private relations between women and men are to be respected and protected from all forms of interference.

Any interference by the state, individuals, or other authorities in the private relations between women and men is prohibited.



Social and Political Rights;

- 1. The right to vote and to be elected must be equal for women and men.**
Women and men must enjoy equal rights to vote and to be elected to all legislative, judicial, and executive bodies at all local and national levels.
All laws restricting this right must be abolished immediately.
- 2. All laws and regulations that restrict women's freedom of dress must be abolished.**
The type of clothing and manner of dress are private matters for each individual, and no authority or institution, whether governmental or non-governmental, has the right to interfere.
Women must be completely free in choosing their clothing. Determining the type of clothing for women and imposing compulsory veiling are absolutely prohibited.
- 3. Any segregation of women and men in public gatherings, places, and public transportation is absolutely prohibited.**
All imposed restrictions in this regard must be abolished immediately.
- 4. Any discrimination based on gender in education must be abolished.**
All educational courses and programs for girls and boys in schools and institutions of higher education must be equal.
The legal and practical division of educational fields according to gender must be abolished.
At all levels of education, classes must be coeducational.
Women have the right to participate in all sports disciplines and must have access to all sports facilities.
- 5. Special facilities and opportunities must be provided for women's literacy and education.**
Many women have been deprived of literacy and higher education because of their living conditions and social status.
To compensate for this backwardness, in addition to establishing free and compulsory education for all individuals up to the age of 18, special literacy and continuing education classes for adults at various levels must be organized.
The necessary facilities must be provided to enable broad participation of women in these classes free of charge.
- 6. Daycare centers and kindergartens must be established on a wide scale in cities and villages.**
In order to facilitate women's active participation in social life, childcare must increasingly be undertaken by society.



For this purpose, daycare centers and kindergartens must be established extensively in workplaces and urban and rural neighborhoods. Parents must have easy and free access to these facilities.

The state and employers are responsible for establishing and financing these institutions.

7. Women must be freed from the burden of domestic labor, and their participation in social life must be facilitated.

Household work and family care consume the majority of women's time and physical and intellectual energy and constitute a major obstacle to the development of women's talents and a serious limitation on women's participation in social life.

The practical realization of women's individual and social rights and freedoms is only possible to the extent that women are freed from domestic labor.

Domestic work is a shared responsibility of women and men within the family.

In order for both women and men to participate in social life and enjoy personal leisure in addition to household responsibilities, the socialization and facilitation of domestic work are essential.

A substantial portion of domestic labor can and should be organized and carried out by society.

The unavoidable portion of household labor can and should be greatly eased through improved production and distribution of household products and equipment and through better organization of social services.

To this end, the following measures must be undertaken immediately by the state:

- The state is obliged to establish public dining halls and public laundries in all neighborhoods. These facilities must be easily accessible to everyone.
- The state is obliged to expand the provision of services, products, and equipment that facilitate household work, free from profit-driven considerations.
- The state is obliged to expand the production and distribution of products that facilitate childcare in the family while fully observing health and safety standards and without profit-oriented considerations.
- The state must establish specialized local health and medical centers for children so that these centers can regularly provide consultation and services to all fathers and mothers, even in their homes, regarding child nutrition, hygiene, and care during illness.
- The state is obliged to establish children's playgrounds in all urban and rural neighborhoods while fully observing health and safety standards.
- The state is obliged to reform and expand public transportation systems, building architecture, and urban planning so that the safe transportation and care of infants and children is possible everywhere. This helps ensure that caring for children does not force parents, especially mothers, into isolation at home.



- The state is obliged to establish centralized shopping centers in all urban and rural neighborhoods so that purchasing daily necessities and household items can be done easily and with a reasonable expenditure of time by either women or men.

8. To combat patriarchal culture, men must receive special education.

To struggle against ideas and traditions based on the inferiority and humiliation of women, special educational measures for men are necessary.

School textbooks, educational materials, and mass media must consistently challenge patriarchal ideas and traditions and promote a culture of equality between women and men.

Furthermore, in public schools and special training centers, men should participate in specialized courses such as sewing, cooking, and childcare, which have traditionally been considered women's work.

This will facilitate men's practical participation in domestic labor.

9. Special measures must be taken to improve the situation of rural women.

In rural areas, due to the lack of basic facilities and the backward state of production, difficult and exhausting work falls heavily upon women.

In addition to household duties, women are responsible for providing many of the basic necessities of life under difficult conditions and with the most primitive means.

Together with their role in production, these conditions create a harsh and burdensome life for rural women.

To improve the situation of rural women, the state must immediately undertake special measures including the expansion of rural electrification, water supply systems, public bakeries, and the provision of accessible and suitable fuel in all villages.

10. Women must benefit from special health services.

All members of society must have access to free medical and health services.

In addition, women must benefit from special health services. The following urgent measures are necessary:

- In order to prevent or treat women's diseases in a timely manner, special medical examinations for women must be conducted at least annually.
- A nationwide network of maternity hospitals equipped with advanced medical facilities must be established and expanded so that all pregnant women can give birth under the supervision of physicians and qualified midwives in safe and hygienic conditions.
- Pregnant women must receive regular monthly examinations until childbirth. These examinations must continue after childbirth for as long as medically necessary.
- Family planning centers must be established in all urban and rural neighborhoods. These centers must be staffed by qualified personnel and



equipped with adequate facilities. These centers must provide education, counseling, and contraceptive methods free of charge to all visitors. The production and importation of contraceptive devices must be subject to full medical supervision.

11. The prohibition of abortion must be abolished.

Capitalist society places only two options before women who become pregnant unintentionally: either terminate the pregnancy or endure difficult psychological, economic, and social conditions if they continue it. Poverty, inability to provide economically for children, practical obstacles to women's participation in social, economic, and political life, and the social, economic, and moral pressures faced by unmarried mothers all lead many women to seek termination of pregnancy. If abortion is illegal, women are often forced to resort to unsafe procedures performed by unqualified individuals under unhealthy conditions and at great expense. For this reason, the right to abortion must be recognized for all women, provided that the woman's life is not endangered and the fetus is not more than 16 weeks old. The decision must depend solely on the woman's consent and not on the permission of any other individual or authority. Abortions must be provided free of charge in public hospitals and clinics under the supervision of qualified physicians. Individuals who perform abortions without the necessary qualifications are criminals and subject to legal prosecution.

12. Customs and traditions that subject women to humiliation and physical or psychological abuse must be prohibited.

In some economically and culturally underdeveloped regions, reactionary customs such as female genital mutilation and the exchange of girls still exist. Such practices must be prohibited immediately. The state is obliged to take the necessary legal and cultural measures to eliminate these customs and to prosecute and severely punish those responsible.

13. Women must guaranteed legal and social security against the crime of rape.

Rape is one of the most brutal forms of violation of an individual's physical and psychological integrity. In contemporary society, due to patriarchal moral prejudices and religious beliefs, rape is often treated as an offense against family honor and reputation. This frequently leads to concealment of the crime. Humiliation and abuse of the victim by family members or officials, family revenge, and even forcing the victim to marry the rapist are among the consequences that often follow rape. These circumstances frequently discourage women from reporting rape to legal authorities and even from discussing it with those closest to them.



Therefore:

- Rape must be treated as a serious criminal offense.
- Family revenge carried out under the justification of moral or religious prejudice must be prohibited and considered a crime.
- Victims of rape must have easy access to judicial authorities.
- Cases of rape must be handled promptly and without humiliating treatment.
- Victims must receive medical and psychological care.

14. The social causes of prostitution must be confronted. Facilities for a healthy life and economic and educational opportunities must be provided to victims of prostitution in order to facilitate their return to normal life.

Prostitution is one of the forms of oppression imposed upon women in capitalist society, and combating it is essential for restoring women's human dignity. Poverty, lack of social security, legal and practical restrictions on women's employment and economic independence, together with patriarchal culture and morality, are among the causes of prostitution.

Religious prejudices and teachings, as demonstrated by the experience of the Islamic Republic in Iran, strengthen patriarchal culture and reinforce women's subordinate status, thereby contributing to the spread of prostitution.

The eradication of prostitution requires combating all these factors.

In addition, the following urgent measures are necessary:

The state is obliged to provide economic support to victims of prostitution and to facilitate access to education, employment opportunities, and work.

Pimps, traffickers, and those who profit from prostitution must be prosecuted and subjected to severe punishment.

15. Any discrimination against women in political, trade-union, and cultural organizations is prohibited.

Women and men must enjoy equal rights of membership and participation in these organizations.

16. Organization around women's demands and issues is free.

Any organization formed to obtain women's rights, defend those rights, respond to women's needs, or improve women's conditions is free to operate.

The state is obliged to provide these organizations with the necessary facilities and support.

17. Any independent women's organization is free.

Women have the right to establish their own independent organizations in various fields and around any issue.



18. Women's demands must be implemented through democratic methods.

A necessary condition for the genuine realization of women's demands is that their implementation be carried out without distortion or bureaucratic interference and through the democratic participation of the people, especially the broadest possible participation of women.

Therefore:

- The state is obliged to recognize mass and non-governmental organizations (including women's organizations and mass organizations such as workers' councils and neighborhood councils) that struggle and work for the improvement of women's conditions as executive and supervisory bodies for the implementation of women's demands.
- Depending on the issue and the specific demand, the state is obliged to provide these organizations with the resources and facilities necessary for advancing their work.

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