

The visit of Mrs. Fakhriya Zulqarnain
The First Lady of A J and Kashmir to
Belgium and the Netherlands



6-8, June 2007



Prime Minister of AJ Kashmir Sardar
Attique Ahmed Khan

Herewith on behalf of Gender Concerns International I would like to state that it was a matter of great honor for me to welcome the First Lady Mrs. Fakhriya Zulqarnain here in the Netherlands and in Belgium. This visit was a result of an intense work of the past 8 months regarding the formation of AKWA. The First Lady is active and interested in encouraging the participation of women in the reconstruction of post earthquake AJ & Kashmir.

Last autumn we finalized the draft on our **Hello Sirs Campaign** which aims to highlight the concerns of women in Kashmir region and raise international awareness about it. In that connection in December 2006, I traveled to Muzaffarabad and met among other officials with the **Prime Minister Mr. Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan of AJK**. *The Prime Minister promotes green and skilled Kashmir for all people in Kashmir and especially for its women.* In that meeting the Prime Minister advised me to meet with Mrs. President Zulqarnain, the First Lady of AJK. It is within this context that the idea of **All Kashmir Women's Association' (AKWA)** was emerged. The visit of the First Lady to Europe furthers the targets of Hello Sirs Campaign. I am pleased to present a summarized report of this valuable visit in the following pages but prior to this, here below, a brief sketch of our prime activities regarding the Gender Concerns in Kashmir region.

Thank you

Drs. Sabra Bano

Director



Sabra Bano & Women in Srinagar 2005



Sabra Bano and Women in AJ Kashmir 2006



Women Interaction, Srinagar 2005

Gender Concerns International and Women in Kashmir, 2004-2007

- **The Hague, 2004**, organized a meeting with Kashmiri women from Srinagar
- **Srinagar, September 2005**, an International Women Sharing Experience Interaction
 
- **Muzaffarabad, Bagh and Jandala, October-November 2005**, earthquake related Dutch Gender Consultancy Mission
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- **Belgium and the Netherlands, April 2006**, organizing a visit of some young women from the earthquake affected areas of Pakistan and Kashmir.
- **Muzaffarabad, 2006**, supporting First Step Tent School in Muzaffarabad
 
- **Azad Kashmir, 2006**, meeting with Prime Minister, the First Lady, representatives of women NGOs and women in many tent shelters
- **Brussels, January 2007**, meeting Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan and requesting reassurance of his support for AKWA initiative
- **Belgium and the Netherlands, June 2007**, facilitating the visit of the First Lady
- **The Hague University, June 2007, The Paradise Turned to Hell:** Supporting Final Integrated Project by the students of The Hague University.

Brussels, Belgium
Discussion Forum: Women Human Rights and Duties
June 6th 2007



Mrs. Fakhriya Zulqarnain, Sabra Bano and Somine Susskind at
Amazone Women Center in Brussels, Belgium



Discussion Forum at the Amazone Women Center in
Brussels, Belgium

The Hague, Netherlands
Public Meeting: Gender Justice and Peace in Kashmir
June 7th 2007



At the City Hall Vice Mayor Mr. Sander Dekker welcomes
the First Lady Mrs. Fakhriya Zulqarnain
The Hague, Netherlands

We thank Gemeente The Hague
for its warm and valuable support to us regarding this visit

We thank Mr. G. Dijkstra and Mr. B. Lagerwaard at the International Department and
are truly grateful to Mr. G. Dogan from OCW Department

Haarlemmermeer, Netherlands
The Prospect of Cooperation
June 7th 2007



The First Lady Mrs. Fakhriya Zulqarnain is received by
Mr. Tom Horn the Alderman of County
Haarlemmermeer



The First Lady adapting an apple tree
Olmenhorst Estate

Haarlemmermeer, Netherlands
The Prospect of Cooperation
June 7th 2007



The First Lady with some inspiring women from Haarlemmermeer



Mrs. Fakhriya Zulqarnain at a lunch meeting

The Hague, Netherlands
MDGs and the Challenges of Earthquake Reconstruction
June 7th 2007



Mrs. Fakhriya Zulqarnain speaking about the Millennium Development Goals
In the Theater Foyer Diligentia in The Hague



Sabra Bano, director of Gender Concerns speaking about
UN Resolution 1325 and its relevance to the Kashmir Conflict, at the Theater
Diligentia in The Hague.

The Hague, Netherlands
MDGs and the Challenges of Earthquake Reconstruction
June 7th 2007



Mrs. Simone Filippini Head Directorate Emancipation (DSI/ER)
during the questions and answers session



The audience at the Diligentia Theater



Thank You Mr. President Honorable Mr. Zulqarnain



Schiphol Airport (Left to right) Sabra Bano, Mrs. President, Mr. President, W. Heitlager, Mrs. Yasmeen Khan, Mr. Z.U. Khan (Advisor to the president) and Nawal Qazi Heitlager

Gender Concerns International was honored to welcome His Excellency President Zulqarnain in the Netherlands.

This was a private visit but we managed to have reassurance from Mr. President AJK regarding his personal attention to the women and development issue in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.



Gender Concerns International

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