

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**The National Commission on the Status of Women and the Election Commission of Pakistan celebrated National Working Women Day and acknowledged women's role in the private sphere of their homes, the economic realm and elections.**

21 December 2018, ISLAMABAD: DAI-Tabeer and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) organised an event to commemorate National Working Women Day at the Commission in Islamabad. It was attended by political economy experts, the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), the ECP, DAI-Tabeer and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

In his opening remarks, Mr. Babar Yaqoob Fateh Muhammad, Secretary, ECP welcomed the presenters and participants, and discussed the importance of acknowledging the efforts of working women as they have increasingly played a significant role in both private and public spheres of life.

Dr. Ali Cheema, Professor, Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) presented research on the importance of women as voters. He stressed the need to bring more women into the voter net. Dr. Ayesha Khan, Director at the Collective for Social Science Research (CSSR) presented a piece of research titled 'Women in Politics: Gaining Ground for Progressive Outcomes in Pakistan' which focused on the impact of increasing women's political participation. She said women's participation in elections tends to lead to inclusive decision-making with progressive outcomes. Subsequently, Ms. Naheed Aziz, consultant NCSW presented the organisation's election observation report which focused on factors contributing to women's low electoral participation. These included the gender gap in the electoral rolls, the lack of female election and security staff in various polling stations, and missing facilities in several polling stations. She concluded with recommendations to make elections more conducive to women's participation.

Closing remarks were given by the Honourable Chief Election Commissioner, Justice (R) Sardar Muhammad Raza Khan who reiterated that women's participation is important in all sphere of life, especially in politics and elections. He recognised the support and participation of NCSW, DAI-Tabeer, LUMS and CSSR, making note of the ECP and its contribution to increasing women's electoral participation. He concluded that ECP's goal remained conducting inclusive elections where all citizens, especially women, can participate.