

## **Declaration by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iran on the Occasion of 8 of March, Women's International Day**

The Communist Party of Iran congratulates all the freedom-loving women and men on the occasion of 8 of March.

Today we are all cherishing 8 of March, women's international day in a situation where women's lack of rights has gained horrendous dimensions and their individual and social rights are being violated by the Islamic law. The capitalistic and patriarchal system of the Islamic regime is still keeping the women's freedom, life and human dignity, as half of the population, under the yoke of its dark rule.

Last year the second wave of unleashed repression and attack by the Ahmadinejad's government against social movements started by targeting the women's movement. It seems that in the contemporary history of Iran it has become a part of women's destiny that every time there is despotism, it starts its revenge against society and the freedom-loving movements by first attacking the women's movements.

The capitalistic and patriarchal system together with religion have established and legalized gender discrimination and women's classification as the second gender in the labor market and in such a way that it has made the women's struggle for achieving economic independence from men very complicated and difficult.

The prevailing ideology and the culture of the society which is a culture of the ruling class that considers man as the sole breadwinner of the family is actually serving the reproduction of the cheap labor force for the capitalists and this is one of the factors that this gender based system governs the labor market.

This sex apartheid has abandoned the women between the four walls as the cheap slaves of capital, deprived of unemployment insurance and other social benefits. This economic dependence on men is like a heavy weight to the women's feet that is holding them back in their struggle for achieving their legitimate equality.

Though under the impact of these fundamental limitations the women's share in the labor market is still well below 50%, but even within this limited percentage sex apartheid has a rule in the job classification. Low paid jobs that do not need any skill, part time, temporary and daily paid jobs with low benefits are mainly allocated to women. The rapidly increasing percentage of educated and highly qualified women population among the labor-market-ready women has not made significant changes to this traditional structure and this sex inequality in job division is followed by inequalities in salaries too. In this labor market that is based on sex apartheid, women are the first to be humiliated, maltreated and fired from their jobs.

As the consequences of this sex apartheid in the living environment as well as in the labor market in a society where according to official sources 20% and according to independent research centers 50% of people are living under the line of poverty, poverty is more and more striking the women, the prostitution market share and sex trade is gaining ground, the number of fugitive girls increasing, more women end their lives by burning themselves and in a nutshell women more than any other group in the society become the victims of social vulnerabilities.

While being considered as half of a men works like a chain to women's feet in all levels of social life and while carrying yoke of reactionary captivating laws of the capitalistic and Islamic system, the Iranian women movement has kept up its progress in this economically hard situations.

Though following the second wave of repression, thousands of women were arrested and brought to the illegitimate courts of the Islamic regime under accusations of disobeying the Islamic regulations, the women still kept fighting the anti-women laws of the capitalistic and theological regime at work, inside the family and at all walks of social life.

The number of women going to courts in protest to these laws and women's miserable condition in the family increased, more women rebelled against the patriarch laws. Women aiming at higher educations increased in number. Last year, women become the supporting leg for the radical students movement. The women in Kurdistan heralded the defence line for the rights of the children and their co-destined counterparts and, shoulder-to-shoulder with the working class in Kurdistan, kept the fire of the revolutionary movement aflame. In the fields of press and intellectualism, the number and volume of articles, publications, weblogs and sites that are published and managed by the women activists as well as the prevalence of awareness regarding women's situation in the society has been unprecedented in the Iranian women's history of struggle.

Today in the Iranian society the range and depth of women's inequality and lack of rights as well as their persistent demands for lifting these discriminations has created a situation that different legitimate and illegitimate opposition forces are trying to claim the defence of women's rights by raising parts of these demands. But according to their class nature each of these forces play a specific political strategy in front of the women movement

Among these inclinations, only the socialist inclination can ensure the progress of the women's movement, help the women's movement enter another phase and unite the massive force of working and toiling women in the battlefield. As long as women's movement limits its capacities and activities to the circle of activists and elites they won't be able to find their real and competent position.

Awareness about the roots of oppression against women must be spread among the masses in order to be able to involve the working and toiling women in the struggle. The emphasis must be on those demands which progress in their realization bring in a tangible change in the real life of women. Women must be ensured that with their united struggle they can impose at least part of their demands on this very Islamic regime. The role and impact of the dominating religious culture and laws in establishing and justifying oppression and discrimination against women must be exposed on one hand and on the other hand the struggle of the women's movement should not only target the religious laws but also the capitalistic system as the main factor of oppression against women.

The liberal feminism is not only saving the capitalistic system from the blow by distracting the women's attention from finding the root of the oppression against them, but is also taking the edge off the women's struggle against the Islamic laws by compromising with the Islamic feminism, by laying its hopes in any modification to the Islamic regime's anti-woman laws based on new interpretations of Quran and Islamic laws, by picking the strategy of reform and survival of the Islamic regime as well as depleting the women's movement of its political nature. The one-million campaign which reflects the failure of the reformists in the government and their exclusion from power, reveals most obviously the unsuccessful political strategies and alternative tactics of the liberals in the women's movement.

The socialist inclination with a sharp knowledge of the roots of sex apartheid and oppression against women and by perceiving this reality that the struggle for women's real emancipation is an inseparable part of the struggle against capitalism will take part in any struggle that is aiming for the realization of the women's demands no matter how limited without being concerned about losing its perspective in the face of other inclinations. It tries in this way to provide the women's movement with a socialist strategy.

Let's start cherishing 8 of March the international day of solidarity among freedom-loving women and men against sex apartheid and for achieving real equality between men and women with a more united effort for holding more splendid celebrations and actions on this historical day toward a wider union among the women's movement and working movement.

**Long Live 8 of March Women's International Day  
Long Live Freedom, Equality and Working Government**

**The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iran  
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