Dear friends and allies,

We’ve put together a template letter (see below) that can be useful to inform many different forms of advocacy to support the Aurat March solidarity campaign:

1. You can simply tailor the letter to make it read from you individually and send it to a Pakistani embassy/official account
2. You can circulate one collective letter in your networks and then send it on to Pakistani officialdom after gathering a critical mass of signatures
3. You can compose tweets/other social media posts using material from the letter, tagging govt accounts, including the Prime Minister himself @ImranKhanPTI
4. Any other method/approach you choose

Please use the hashtag **#WeStandWithAuratMarchPakistan** for all SM content.

**OPEN LETTER to Mr. Imran Khan, Prime Minister, Islamic Republic of Pakistan**

Dear Sir,

We, writers, academics, artists, development practioners, social and political workers, journalists, students, lawyers, and ordinary citizens write to draw your attention to a matter of great alarm and to request urgent action from your government.

On the occasion of International Women’s Day this year (8th March), people from all walks of life organized peaceful rallies and events in many different parts of Pakistan. Some of these events were organized under the umbrella of ‘Aurat March’. The various activities that took place on 8th March both called attention to deep-seated gender discrimination in all walks of life, and celebrated the building of solidarities and popular coalitions of women, girls, men and transpeople across Pakistan despite enormous difficulties and dangers.

Distressingly, the very dangers that these peaceful gatherings sought to highlight escalated dramatically in the days following 8th March. A vicious disinformation campaign was launched in online spaces, targeting especially those women affiliated with the broad umbrella of ‘Aurat March’. The campaign deliberately insinuated that organisers and participants of the Aurat March in many different Pakistani cities raised slogans and displayed banners with blasphemous content.

Honorable Prime Minister, you are well aware that even allegations of this nature represent a mortal threat. While the initial disinformation campaign was vociferously exposed – members of your cabinet including Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Fawad Chaudhry, Religious Affairs Minister Noorul Haq Qadri and PM’s Special Representative on Inter-faith harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi were amongst those who issued statements in this regard – the threats to life and liberty of Aurat March organisers and participants have far from dissipated.

The clearly baseless allegations of anti-Islamic banners and slogans are still being circulated to sustain legal petitions calling for police cases against Aurat March organisers. The lingering threat posed by continuing circulation of these false accusations cannot be understated. If a formal police case were to be registered despite all that has been established, the prospect of unruly elements taking the law into their own hands, as has happened in Pakistan repeatedly, will be greatly enhanced.

Honorable Prime Minister, your intervention in this matter is urgently required. Firm action is called for against those who continue to endanger lives of women in this way. You and your government have on many occasions expressed a commitment to the cause of gender equality, as well as a no tolerance policy for violence and harassment. In taking a clear stance in favour of peaceful Aurat March organisers and participants, who have committed no crime other than to speak up for the rights of women, girls and transpeople across Pakistan, you will be confirming this commitment.

Honorable Prime Minister, we look forward to urgent action that guarantees the safety of Aurat March organisers and participants, and also reduces the space for unscrupulous elements that could subject other principled campaigners for peace, equality and dignity to similarly hateful and dangerous campaigns in the future.

Sincerely,