



## **POLITICAL PARTIES JOINT COMMITTEE ON FATA REFORMS**

Standing United for a Brighter, Prosperous FATA

# Press Briefing Statement

I am here to speak on behalf of the representatives of nine political parties- the Awami National Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, Muttahida Qaumi Movement, National Party, Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, Pakistan Muslim League-N, Pakistan Muslim League-Q, Pakistan Peoples Party, and Pakistan Peoples Party-Sherpao.

Our nine political parties acknowledge that the people of FATA deserve the same rights, freedoms, protections and economic opportunities as all Pakistanis and agree on the urgent need to move forward with reforms in FATA. We share deep concerns that the citizens of FATA are denied basic democratic and human rights and economic opportunities afforded their fellow citizens in other areas of the country. Today, we commit ourselves to working with the citizens of FATA to help them achieve the same opportunities and rights as their fellow citizens of Pakistan.

We believe that political, economic, social and administrative reforms in the Tribal Areas are necessary to obtain sustainable peace and development in FATA. A lasting peace in FATA is not only vital for the residents of the tribal areas, it is necessary for the peace and well being of all Pakistanis. We believe that the values and traditions of the people of FATA should be respected and that citizens should take part in determining which reforms they would like to see implemented in the region.

We have therefore agreed to join together on the *Political Parties Joint Committee on FATA Reforms* to work together on reforms in FATA. As a first step, the committee calls on President Asif Ali Zardari to take the following actions:

- To implement the package of reforms that he announced on 14 August 2009 as a first step and to extend the Political Parties Order of 2002 to FATA forthwith.
- We also call on the President to engage in a formal consultative process with the people of FATA and the political parties represented on this committee as early as possible to develop and implement an economic development package for the Tribal Areas to reduce the development gap between FATA and the rest of the country.

These reforms are only the first step in moving towards democracy, social justice and respect for human rights for the people of FATA.

All political parties on the committee have agreed to join our voices to call for these reforms. We plan to use this committee as a forum to hear from the people of FATA on moving FATA reforms forward. We will also use this committee to find consensus on other issues in the future.

We have engaged in discussions for many years on the need to implement FATA reforms, developing understanding and consensus to move forward. We must continue to hear from the people of FATA, but the time has now come to move from words to concrete steps.