

One Unit

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One of the main arguments of the secularists in Pakistan was that the Ulema were divided on sectarian lines and they were not in a position to agree on one concept of Islamic system. They considered that the Ulema had given such confusing interpretations to the precepts of the Quran that the unity of purpose in Islam was lost. They believed that the Ulema of various schools of thought were incapable of giving a rational and systematic constitutional plan, which could be acceptable to the bulk of the Pakistani Muslims. In order to counter this argument and to demonstrate unity, 31 Ulema from different shades of opinion: Sunnis, Ahl-i-Hadith and Shias, gathered at a convention held at Karachi from January 21 to 24, 1951. After thorough discussions they formulated a programme of 22 principles which according to them were irreducible minimum for an Islamic State. The formula given by them is commonly known as the Ulema's 22 Points.

1. Ultimate sovereignty over all Nature and Laws belongs to Allah Rabb al-Alamin.
2. Quran and Sunnah as the basis of all Law. Current laws considered in conflict with the Sharia to be abrogated or suitably amended to conform with the Shariah.
3. The State to be based on principles and ideals of Islam and not on any geographical, racial or linguistic concepts and considerations
4. The State to enjoin practices prescribed by the Quran and Sunnah and to prohibit those forbidden by it. Beliefs of various sects to be taken into consideration while reviving or establishing Islamic customs, practices and law.
5. The State to strengthen bonds of unity and solidarity with the Muslim world.
6. The State to undertake responsibility for providing the basic needs of its citizens who are unable to earn their own livelihood irrespective of religion, race or creed.
7. All citizens to enjoy fundamental rights granted by the Shariah such as safety of life and property, freedom of religion, worship, freedom of expression, assembly and movement, freedom to work and to enjoy equality of opportunity etc.
8. No citizen would be deprived to fundamental rights except under the law of Islam and no court of law would sentence a citizen without providing him with an opportunity for defence.
9. Recognized Muslim sects were to enjoy full religious freedom within the limits of law. They had the right to impart education to their own followers in their own way. Their personal law was to be

governed by the laws of their own sect and the law courts were to respect these sectional laws while dealing with members of the sect.

10. Similar freedom was to be enjoyed by non-Muslim citizens of the State in respect of their religion, education and culture. Law courts were to respect their religious law and custom while dealing with cases involving personal law.
11. All agreements and treaties entered into with non-Muslim subjects of the State were to be honoured in accordance with the Shariah. Non-Muslim citizens were granted fundamental rights on par with Muslim citizens.
12. The Head of State was to be a Muslim male citizen of the State.
13. All responsibility for running the State was vested in the Head of State who could delegate his authority or part thereof to any individual or institution in the State.
14. The Government constituted by Head of the State was to be a consultative and not dictatorial character. The Head of the State was required to discharge his responsibility in consultation with the elected representatives of the people.
15. The Head of the State had no right to rule the country by abrogating the whole or part of the Constitution.
16. The institution responsible for electing the Head of the State had the power also to remove or suspend him.
17. The Head of the State enjoyed no immunity and was subject to law like any other citizen.
18. The accountability to the law of the land was equally applicable to all members of the government and functionaries of the State.
19. The judiciary was to be independent of the executive.
20. Propagation of such ideas and ideologies as are considered contrary to the fundamentals of Islam was to be prohibited.
21. The State was to be a unitary nature. Different regional racial, tribal or linguistic areas constituting the territory of the State were not to enjoy the right of secession.
22. No interpretation of the Constitution which was repugnant to the Quran and the Sunnah was to be considered valid.